



**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
OPEN UNIVERSITY**

DOCTOR OF COMMUNICATION

RHODA G. CAMPILLAN

**KDRAMA AND FILIPINO TV SERIES DEMYSTIFIED: A COMPARATIVE
CLOSE READING ANALYSIS OF ITS TECHNICAL
AND NARRATIVE ELEMENTS**

Dissertation Adviser:

BENJAMINA PAULA G. FLOR, Ph.D.
Faculty of Information and Communication Studies

21 July 2023

Permission of the classification of this academic work access is subject to the provisions of applicable laws, the provisions of the UP IPR policy and any contractual obligations:

Invention (I)	☐ Yes or ☒ No
Publication (P)	☐ Yes or ☒ No
Confidential (C)	☐ Yes or ☒ No
Free (F)	☒ Yes or ☐ No

Student's signature:

Dissertation adviser signature:

University Permission Page

KDRAMA AND FILIPINO TV SERIES DEMYSTIFIED: A COMPARATIVE CLOSE READING ANALYSIS OF ITS TECHNICAL AND NARRATIVE ELEMENTS

“I hereby grant the University of the Philippines a non-exclusive, worldwide, royalty-free license to reproduce, publish and publicly distribute copies of this Academic Work in whatever form subject to the provisions of applicable laws, the provisions of the UP IPR policy and any contractual obligations, as well as more specific permission marking on the Title Page.”

“I specifically allow the University to:

- a. Upload a copy of the work in the theses database of the college/school/institute/department and in any other databases available on the public internet*
- b. Publish the work in the college/school/institute/department journal, both in print and electronic or digital format and online; and*
- c. Give open access to the work, thus allowing “fair use” of the work in accordance with the provision of the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines (Republic Act No. 8293), especially for teaching, scholarly and research purposes.*

RHODA G. CAMPILLAN, 21 July 2023
Signature over Student Name and Date

Acceptance Page:

This paper prepared by **RHODA G. CAMPILLAN** with the title: **"KDRAMA AND FILIPINO TV SERIES DEMYSTIFIED: A COMPARATIVE CLOSE READING ANALYSIS OF ITS TECHNICAL AND NARRATIVE ELEMENTS"** is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Course.

BENJAMINA PAULA G. FLOR, PhD
Chair

(Date)

GRACE JAVIER-ALFONSO, PhD
Member

(Date)

ARMINDA SANTIAGO, PhD
Member

(Date)

DIEGO S. MARANAN, PhD
Dean
Faculty of Information and Communication Studies

21 July 2023

Biographical Sketch

Campillan's fascination with Korean dramas began in late 2017. The first Kdrama that she watched was *Descendants of the Sun*. After she completed viewing all the episodes, she told herself that there was no turning back. While a Doctorate student at UPOU, she contemplated making Kdrama as her topic for her dissertation. Her primary purpose was to benchmark Kdrama's technical and narrative executions as a basis to help improve and develop the creation of Filipino TV series.

Her research interests include popular culture and communication education. It always excites her if there are research presentations abroad.

Rhoda Garzon Campillan hailed from Bacolod City, Philippines. She finished her undergraduate degree in Broadcast Communication from the University of the Philippines Visayas - Cum laude. Meanwhile, she completed her Master of Development Communication degree from the University of the Philippines Open University.

She is currently the Academic Supervisor of the AB Communication program of the University of San Agustin located in Iloilo City, Philippines.

Acknowledgement

This dissertation is a product of hard work, perseverance, determination, and undying faith. This would not have been made possible without the help and contributions of the following persons and institutions.

I am in debt and forever grateful to the University of San Agustin for sending me to graduate school as one of her scholars.

My heart goes to my parents, Ramon and Edna Garzon, for their unconditional love and for giving me all the support that I need while finishing this dissertation. *Palangga ta kamu Nay and Tay.*

My love and gratefulness to my sisters, Caroline and Christine, for being the best sisters ever. To my sister, Caroline thank you for letting me borrow your laptop and for buying me an office chair. To my brother-in-law Jan-jan and my little boy Cody, my heart goes to you two for all the love that you gave.

My utmost appreciation to my friends at San Ag (Tikya, Gordie, Hya, Remi, Leng, Mother Gee) for being my cheerleaders and providing me with a strong support system. Your trust and prayers led me to where I am now.

My gratitude goes to Dr. Ma. Cecilia D. Alimen for being the first person to introduce me to qualitative research, for trusting my capabilities, and for assisting me in my dissertation. I would not have been able to do research without you guiding me. *Love you Iloy.*

My heartfelt thanks also go to my DComm classmates, particularly to Dr. John Ponsaran, for listening to my challenges and giving me sound advice to help me get through my dissertation journey.

My indebtedness goes to my ever supportive and brilliant adviser, Dr. Benjamina Paula G. Flor. I would not have been able to finish this dissertation without your guidance and valuable input. I am sharing this victory with you, Doc.

My gratefulness also extends to Dr. Gigi Alfonso and Dr. Arminda Santiago for helping me refine and improve my study. Your valuable comments immensely improved the quality of this dissertation.

To my husband, Jay, and daughter Viona Zelene, thank you for being my inspiration in finishing this degree. I love you both! This one is for you guys!

Finally, I express my thankfulness to God Almighty for being my source of wisdom and knowledge. Without You, Lord, I am really nothing. I truly believe that I was able to finish this dissertation because of Your divine providence. To God be the glory!

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband Jay and my daughter Viona Zelene; to my parents, Ramon and Edna; my sisters Caroline and Christine; and to all the fans of Korean and Filipino drama.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
University Permission Page	ii
Acceptance Page	iii
Biographical Sketch	iv
Acknowledgment	v
Dedication	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xi
ABSTRACT	xvii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	15
Objectives of the Study	16
Significance of the Study	17
Scope and limitation of the Study	18
Definition of Terms	19
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Television Narrative	22
Asian Drama	25
Korean Drama	26
Filipino Drama	33
Narrative Structure	39
Cultural Critical Analysis of Media	41
Production Marketing and Promotion	50
Of Philippine and Korean Television	
Series	
Theoretical Underpinning	53
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	
Research Design	66
Text	67
Data Collection Methods	69
Data Gathering Procedures	70
Data Analysis	70

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
Korean Drama	72
Deconstruction of Extraordinary Atty. Woo...	74
Technical Elements	75
Narrative Elements	166
Mythmaking in Extraordinary Atty. Woo	241
Filipino Drama	243
Technical Elements	246
Narrative Elements	315
Mythmaking in House Arrest of Us	371
Drama Framework	374
CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	376
BIBLIOGRAPHY	385

List of Tables

Table 1 Korean drama information	73
Table 2 Ciematography main theme and subthemes	75
Table 3 Directing main theme and subthemes	97
Table 4 Editing main theme and subthemes	113
Table 5 Production design main theme and subthemes	122
Table 6 Lighting main theme and subthemes	134
Table 7 Graphics main theme and subthemes	143
Table 8 Audio main theme and subthemes	158
Table 9 Narrative main theme and subthemes	170
Table 10 Filipino drama information	245
Table 11 Korean drama cinematography compared with Filipino drama	258
Table 12 Korean drama directing compared with Filipino drama	268
Table 13 Korean drama editing compared with Filipino drama	275
Table 14 Korean drama prod design compared with Filipino drama	284
Table 15 Korean drama lighting compared with Filipino drama	291
Table 16 Korean drama graphics compared with Filipino drama	304
Table 17 Korean Drama audio design compared with Filipino drama	313
Table 18 Korean Drama narrative compared with Filipino drama	370

List of Figures

Figure 1 Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding model	58
Figure 2 MCU using shallow depth of field	83
Figure 3 MCU using shallow depth of field	84
Figure 4 LS of the conference room	85
Figure 5 MS of the lawyers	85
Figure 6 CU of Atty. Woo	86
Figure 7 High angle shot to introduce a new character	87
Figure 8 Bird's eye view using camera drone	88
Figure 9 Bird's eye view using camera drone	88
Figure 10 OTS using dirty single	89
Figure 11 OTS using dirty single	90
Figure 12 Oblique or Dutch angle	91
Figure 13 Oblique or Dutch angle	91
Figure 14 Meaningful mise-en-scene	93
Figure 15 Meaningful mise-en-scene	94
Figure 16 Consistent use of the whale symbol	99
Figure 17 Illustration of the quick changing of shots	100
Figure 18 Visual storytelling of a character	101
Figure 19 Visual storytelling flashback	102
Figure 20 Visual storytelling flashback	103
Figure 21 Visual storytelling flashback	103
Figure 22 Sandwich pattern	104
Figure 23 Realistic style	105

Figure 24 Realistic style	106
Figure 25 Creative transition	107
Figure 26 Creative transition	108
Figure 27 Creative transition	109
Figure 28 Creative graphics	110
Figure 29 MTV Style	111
Figure 30 Color grading of introduction video	114
Figure 31 Black and white flashback	115
Figure 32 Colored flashback	115-116
Figure 33 Black and white flashback	117
Figure 34 Colored flashback	117
Figure 35 Push transition	118-119
Figure 36 Fade out	119
Figure 37 Fade out	119-120
Figure 38 Neutral colors	123
Figure 39 Neutral colors	123
Figure 40 Bedroom design of Atty. Woo	124-125
Figure 41 Bedroom design of Oh San Yeon	126
Figure 42 Office design of Hanbada CEO vs. Taesan CEO	127
Figure 43 Wardrobe of Atty. Woo	129
Figure 44 Wood interior as motif in the drama	132-133
Figure 45 Dimlight	135
Figure 46 Orange backlight	136
Figure 47 White light	136
Figure 48 Orange light	137

Figure 49 Golden hour	138
Figure 50 Blue light	139
Figure 51 Orange light	139
Figure 52 Orange light	140
Figure 53 Orange light in Dr. Romantic 2	140-141
Figure 54 Orange light in Vagabond	141
Figure 55 GPX in episode 4	143
Figure 56 GPX in episode 4	144
Figure 57 GPX in episode 5	145
Figure 58 GPX in episode 6	145
Figure 59 GPX in episode 7	146
Figure 60 GPX in episode 12	146
Figure 61 Animated graphics	148
Figure 62 Animated graphics	148
Figure 63 Animated graphics	149
Figure 64 Animated graphics	149
Figure 65 Graphic design to introduce an episode	151-152
Figure 66 Graphic design to show highlights	153-155
Figure 67 Paper model of the Sperm whale	156
Figure 68 Orca whale in the court room	157
Figure 69 Sperm whale swimming above the city scape	157
Figure 70. ES-FS-MS Combination	247
Figure 71 Cinematography used in conversations	248
Figure 72 Three Shot in a Conversation	248-249
Figure 73 Establishing shot	249

Figure 74 Establishing shot with tracking	250
Figure 75 Camera Movement	251
Figure 76 Reactions of family members captured in panning	252
Figure 77 Zoom In to the Faces of Yaya Marie and Roger	252
Figure 78 Tracking shot	253
Figure 79 Creative Shot	255
Figure 80 Creative Shot	255
Figure 81 Creative Shot	255
Figure 82 Unstable shot	257
Figure 83 Unrealistic Portrayal	261
Figure 84 Unrealistic Portrayal	262
Figure 85 Unrealistic Portrayal	262
Figure 86 Dragging Scene	264
Figure 87 Dragging Scene	264
Figure 88 Scene Continuity Issues	266
Figure 89 Scene Continuity Issues	267
Figure 90 Scene Continuity Issues	267
Figure 91 Continuity Issues	268
Figure 92 Flicker Transiiton	271
Figure 93 Cross fade	271
Figure 94 Fade out to black	271
Figure 95 Zoom in transition	272
Figure 96 Video Mosaic	273
Figure 97 Wood Style	277
Figure 98 Symbolic Object	279

Figure 99 Wardrobe of Korics	281-282
Figure 100 Wardrobe of Q	282
Figure 101 Wardrobe of Papawan	282
Figure 102 Wardrobe of Sylver	283
Figure 103 Wardrobe of Rufus	283
Figure 104 Yellow light and white light	287-288
Figure 105 Blue and White Light	288
Figure 106 Blue and White Light	288
Figure 107 Red light	289
Figure 108 Reflection of Light	290
Figure 109 Shadow	290
Figure 110 Shadow	291
Figure 111 Fonts exude playful aura	293
Figure 112 Series Title	294
Figure 113 Episode number and title	294
Figure 114 Animated text in bumpers	295-296
Figure 115 Animated Graphics	296
Figure 116 Kumu Style	299
Figure 117 Message Notification Interface	299
Figure 118 Text Message interface	299-300
Figure 119 Virtual meeting room interface	300
Figure 120 Cellphone prototype	300
Figure 121 Search Engine Interface	301
Figure 122 Manugang Moves	303
Figure 123 Big Red X Mark	304

Abstract

Kdrama & Filipino TV Series Demystified: A Comparative Close Reading Analysis of its Technical and Narrative Elements

Anchored on John Fiske's Codes of TV Production, Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding Mode, and Jacques Lacan's Psychoanalytic Theory, the study compared and analyzed two high rated shows on Netflix, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, a Korean drama text and *House Arrest of Us*, a Filipino TV series based on technical and narrative elements as well as meanings and contexts through close reading. A highly budgeted *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* had a strong synergy of cinematography, directing, editing, production, lighting, graphics, and audio design that led to a superior output. As a textual medium, it served as a vehicle for knowledge sharing, inclusion of popular culture, presenting multi-faceted characters, and boasting of a strong plot. On the other hand, while *House Arrest of Us* shared several similarities, variations in the manner of execution, creative choices, and cultural differences differed. In terms of the narrative elements, *House Arrest of Us* also integrated popular culture, transformed the text using literary devices, information education, and *Koreanization* of the text. The difference lay in the integration of Filipino songs and dances, the exploration of various comedic styles, and the tackling of current local issues. The *House Arrest of Us* showed improvement in their craft even if they were greatly challenged in terms of budget, staffing, and production culture. Hence, there is a need to sharpen the skills of the production crew, lobby for government support to fuel the creative economy, introduce a change in the industry of drama production, and forge a strong public and private partnerships.

Keywords: Korean drama, Filipino drama series, Close reading analysis, Technical elements, Narrative elements

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale & Background of the Study

TV dramas are a staple of television programming. These texts are rich sources of narratives that highlight various themes, values, ideologies, and social issues. When the text captures the audience's attention because it is both familiar and new, they tend to continue consuming the content, thus being exposed to various meaningful interactions and contexts throughout the process.

In recent years, "transnational TV shows have increased in popularity" (Ju, 2020). Transnational means "television without borders," "cross-border television," "trans-border television," "global television," or "satellite television" (Desai, 2005). The audiences stay in their own countries, but they can consume content from Western nations and neighboring Asian regions. Netflix, as an online streaming service, is viewed as instrumental in enabling audiences from other countries to view TV program packages produced in other countries (Desai, 2005).

Transnational TV offers viewers an opportunity to enjoy a sophisticated form of serialized storytelling designed for repeated viewing that traditional television does not offer (Osuri, 2016). This paradigm shift in the TV media landscape, aided by technological convergence, transformed traditional television dramatically.

Korean dramas shown on Netflix are Asian dramas that appeal to the hearts and minds of viewers around the globe. Ju (2018) explained that Kdramas "have proven

especially compelling to other Asian viewers." Filipinos are avid Kdrama viewers. According to Tomada (2021), "Kdrama viewing among Filipinos on online streaming platform Netflix grew to 350 percent in 2020."

There is no doubt that Korean drama has cemented its footing as one of the leading TV narratives. According to studies by Espiritu (2011) and Igno and Cenidoza (2016), its unusual, unique, and diverse stories are its major strengths. Truth be told, the story is just one aspect of the many factors that contributed to the global appeal of Korean dramas. On the surface, the visual and narrative aesthetics stand out. However, the embedded meanings in the text are waiting to be explored and deconstructed.

On the other hand, if Filipinos are active consumers and participants in the Korean drama culture, they are also the worst critics of Filipino dramas. During the pandemic, Kdrama on Netflix served as a diversion for most Filipinos amid the anxiety they felt at that time. As they continued to consume Kdramas, they began to question the quality of Filipino dramas and compare them to the Koreans. "Filipino teleseryes or dramas trail behind when it comes to offering Filipino audiences a high-quality viewing experience" (Clemente, 2020). In this light, this study on the construction of the Korean drama text was done to determine the contribution that can be made to the institution of the creative economy in the Philippines.

It is interesting to investigate how Korean drama texts are constructed in terms of their technical and narrative elements and, at the same time, analyze the meanings and contexts that are embedded in the narrative using close reading or close textual analysis. It is likewise motivating to look at how Filipino dramas construct their own text compared to that of the Koreans. Learning how Kdramas are communicated on a holistic and critical level will unravel what is beneath the surface (Brummett, 2019). The meanings that will surface will perhaps serve their purpose of communicating the drama text that will lead to

emerging roles and processes. Furthermore, the patterns based on the interpretation will illustrate how actions in communicating dramas are shaped.

The textual analysis on the formalist and narrative elements of Korean drama is incomplete without contextualizing the process and asking the question “why such stories are told in particular ways”. The contextualization of the technical and narrative elements of Korean drama will use the lens of Political Economy of Communication specifically the four core tenets of Mosco (2009): history and social change, social totality, moral philosophy, and praxis.

History and Social Change in the Korean Context

The broadcasting system of South Korea was monopolized by the state in its early days. During the military dictatorship, KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) and MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation) were under the direct control of the state. These public networks produced practically all contents, specifically television drama to be aired on TV. It was only in the late 1980's, when South Korea regained its independence, that a private player joined the industry: SBS. SBS (Seoul Broadcasting System) was Korea's first commercial channel. However, compared to the public networks, SBS was rather weak. These compelled law makers to introduce the 1990 Broadcasting Act or the “independent production quota system”. This gave way to independent producers to enter the market. According to Oh (2018), the purpose of this law was to ensure that there was diversity of content offered to the audience. It would also serve as a check and balance tool directed to the “monopolistic power” of broadcasters. Furthermore, “the new quota system had the effect of gradually shifting drama production from broadcasting stations to independent production companies” (Ibid). The number of independent producers increased in number because of the unanticipated popularity of Korean dramas in the early 2000s. The influx of new independent production houses resulted in the exodus of

high-profile directors from broadcasting stations to independent producers. They were offered a big amount of money to mount Korean dramas. Filming and lighting crew turned into free-lance work and took advantage of working in both broadcasting and independent producers. The 1990 Broadcasting Act was the game changer in achieving social change in the way Korean dramas were produced. Aside from the terrestrial stations, the entry of independent producers in the market changed the production landscape. This action resulted in diversified content and the big three (KBS, MBC, and SBS) no longer monopolized drama production.

The Korean drama *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was produced by ENA, a pay television network operated by Sky TV. Sky TV had several name changes over the past few years. It was initially called SkyHD then changed to HDOne and then Channel N. When it was still called Channel N, it offered foreign movies and TV series to the audience. It was only in 2014 that Channel N was renamed Sky Drama. After six years, Sky drama was changed to SKY, and again, changed into ENA in 2022. ENA is positioned in the market as a pay TV network that works like pay per view. ENA collaborated with AStory, a leading drama production company. It produced popular TV series such as *Kingdom* (2019) and *Kingdom 2* (2020). ENA operates as a cable TV network while AStory operates as an independent producer. When tracing the history of the production of Korean dramas, it can be seen that independent producers gambled with their chances in the market. They needed to hit it big in order to recover their expenses. Oftentimes, “small sized independent production houses fail because they do not find an on-air station, and in many cases, because the programs on which everything has been staked records poor ratings” (Oh, 2018). In the case of AStory and ENA, they made a wise gamble. They rejected the offer of Netflix to finance *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* and acquired the rights. They sold their overseas and domestic broadcasting rights (Boram, 2022). Instead of

Netflix benefiting from the cultural content, AStory and ENA have turned the tables and took advantage of the situation.

The situation of South Korea in achieving social change could be attributed to the Conflict theory which traces its roots to Karl Marx. This theory states that “society is by nature unequal and competitive.... the rich and powerful control the rest of society by exploiting vulnerable groups” (Soken-Huberty, 2020).

Social Totality

In Social totality, the political, economic, and social factors of Korean drama production were factored in. The production of Korean dramas were pegged at 36.6 million Korean won per episode two decades ago. By 2021, approximately 700 million Won would be spent per episode, excluding streaming services. These sky rocketing production costs could be attributed to ambitious plots and concepts, foreign shoots, visual effects demand and wider range of distribution channels (Conran, 2021). Aside from the actual production cost, a huge amount is also used to defray salaries of above the line and below the line creative workers. Above the line workers include star actors, ace writers, and high profile directors, while the below the line are those supporting and extra cast members, on the spot crew members, and camera workers.

If much is paid, then much is expected. The results of technical and narrative textual analysis of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* have demonstrated a high level of expertise in both areas. The budget for the drama series was pegged at 20 billion Won or 850 million pesos (Enriquez, 2022). *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was produced both for the domestic and foreign markets and Netflix offered to stream the drama series. As can be seen from above, “International demand and the streaming market have raised the value but also the expectation for quality, both creative and technical. To compete on the global stage, production values had to play catch-up over the last decade or so” (Conran,

2021), which explained the high quality of the cinematography, editing, directing, lighting, production design, graphics design and audio design. Korean dramas needed to be the best because they had to compete with other cultural products in the world stage. Hence, they were required to produce world class outputs. In order to contribute to the creative economy, cities or local governments became financial and administrative sponsors. They financed the building of elaborate sets which would be used for filming. In return, they could earn income through tourism, avail of tax incentives offered by the national government and get free publicity through acknowledgement of the cities as sponsors at the end of every episode (Oh, 2018).

The global stage exhibits a lucrative nature, hence, “it is imperative for the industry to tailor productions to serve them” (Ibid). In terms of the narrative of Korean dramas, Oh (2013) theorized this as addictive storytelling which explains the fascination of viewers. Narratives are created as a result of fierce competition for ratings. Hence, primetime serials employed extremely formulaic, sensational narrative elements and style. In the textual analysis result of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, it revealed that it retained the Korean drama classic elements, and just added other elements to complete it. “Narratives, dialogues and visual illustrations in Korean TV dramas are thoroughly tailored to cater to commercial sponsor and major importers” (Ibid). Furthermore, the formulaic nature of Korean dramas is customized to the preferences and tastes of the mass audience....and so mass culture is inseparable from formulas.

The political economy of communication of Bernard Mieve and David Hesmondhalgh (1989) clearly elucidated the dynamics of the Korean drama industry. They emphasized that “each industry operates using its own logics and emphasizing particular types of products and particular ways of producing them”. There is an interplay

between the society and the content which means “these industries influence and are influenced by society at large through the content and matters of policy and law”.

Moral philosophy

Korean’s production culture involves what Oh (2018) theorized as Live production. This refers to last minute live filming. According to Oh (2018), live production is a standard practice in the Kdrama industry. The process is quite hectic which results to last minute changes in script and in editing. Feedback from the audience resulted in last-minute changes in script. The creative team puts a high premium on the comments and feedback of the audience. It is their primary goal to please their audience and would deliver their requests no matter what. This is termed as audience’s discursive consumption. Aside from audience feedback, another consideration of the Kdrama producers is to reduce production costs. To be able to reduce costs, the number of days for filming needs to be reduced, resulting in the labor exploitation of the film crew. Workers experienced sleep deprivation, exhaustion and psychological trauma. In fact, there were a “few well documented cases which resulted to fatalities such as the assistant producer of tvN’s *Drinking Solo* who committed suicide because of the extreme working environment and props department member who died from brain aneurysm due to overwork on *Kingdom*” (Conran, 2021). “Cultural production is built on labor exploitation, mirroring the labor intensive, export-oriented industrialization during the development era” (Ibid).

In this particular scenario, the Marxists tenets clearly explain the context.

The bourgeoisie maintains its dominance over the proletariat class by generating in it a false consciousness manifest in the ideas that the relationships in society are natural, that success is a function of willpower (and those who are successful

deserve their success), and those who fail have only themselves to blame. When necessary, the ruling classes use force (Berger, 2016)

In the case of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, this particular production culture was not highlighted. The textual analysis showed the competence of the filming crew in mounting the drama series. The only way to confirm the working conditions of the crew who worked in the drama is through KII or key informant interview or FGD or focus group discussion which this dissertation was not be able to do.

Praxis

Praxis refers to action and intervention. The issues which were highlighted in the production culture of Korean drama were budget woes of independent producers and the labor exploitation of the filming crew. In the case of budget woes, the Korea Communications Commission, Republic of Korea's broadcasting regulator, loosened its policies concerning product placement in TV programs on national networks. This allowed Korean drama producers to display corporate logos and sponsors in their dramas. Oh (2013) noted that "since this law came into effect, there has been a fundamental transformation in the channels of production funding and more importantly in storytelling in Korean television dramas." In the case of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the drama had only one product placement embedded in the narrative drama. It was a cosmetic brand used by Atty. Choi and Dong Geurami. The logos of the corporate sponsors were displayed after the end credits. The implication of action, the drama could secure additional funding to fuel the drama production. There were several channels of funding which the producers could use. The financial stream came from government support, product placement, corporate sponsorship and cities/municipalities sponsorships. Hence, they had the liberty to integrate several elements to enhance their narratives (e.g., visual

effects, animated graphics, etc.) There was an interplay between the public and private which enabled Korean dramas to dominate the world market.

In terms of labor exploitation, the government proposed standard labor contracts. The goal of this law was “to combat notorious working conditions on drama sets” (Conran, 2021). The talks for standardized contracts “took place in 2019 and stipulated, among other things, a 52-hour work week” (Ibid). However, this was not yet implemented. Conran (2021) predicts that when this “mandate does take effect, dramas will have to adjust shooting schedules and it will have a direct implication in the production costs.”

On the other hand, the textual analysis of the digi-movie series *House Arrest of Us* revealed flaws and mishaps in the execution of the technical and narrative elements. However, the mistakes cannot be directly blamed on the production crew who mounted the series. They were also victims of the systemic challenges in the production culture of Filipinos.

To be able to contextualize the technical and narrative elements of the Filipino drama series, the lens of Political Economy of Communication specifically the four core tenets of Mosco (2009): history and social change, social totality, moral philosophy, and praxis was used.

History and Social Change in the Philippine Context

“The Philippines was the first to have a television station in Southeast Asia and one of the first to put one in Asia” (Santos, 2017).

The first telecast was recorded in 1953 via DZAQ-TV. The Lopez family became the major player in the broadcast industry in the 1950's. DZAQ-TV was bought by the Lopezes from Judge Antonio Quirino. DZAQ-TV was renamed Bolinao Electronic Corporation and later to Alto Broadcasting System. In 1956, the Chronicle Broadcasting Network accommodated the TV operations. CBN used to be an FM station.

ABS merged with CBN in 1969 and became ABSCBN. GMA Network, on the other hand, was established in 1961, eight years before ABSCBN would merge.

The broadcast operations of TV networks ceased during the Martial Law. It was only in 1986 when the Lopezes regained ownership of ABSCBN. “They bounced back to topnotch position as a major media monopoly in the Philippines” (Ibid).

Commercial networks dominate the TV broadcast landscape in the Philippines. Hence, it is profit-oriented and so audience feedback through ratings matters immensely. Advertisers are attracted to programs with high ratings. The higher the number of commercials in a program, such as a TV drama, the greater the income for the network.

Drama and soap operas dominate program formats in TV. “3 hours of primetime programming is allotted to TV serials from Monday to Friday” (Ibid). TV serials or soap operas served as a form of entertainment for Filipinos. It is a form of diversion from the daily hustle of life.

On the other hand, Movie Television Regulatory Classification Board or MTRCB and Kapisanan ng mga Brodcaster sa Pilipinas or KBP are regulatory bodies which monitor the compliance of networks to their respective policies. MTRCB is mandated to “regulate and classify movies, television programs, related publicity materials and/or promotional materials thereof (MTRCB, 2023), while KBP “aims to include the promotion of an independent and free broadcast media, responsible broadcasting, enhanced public service by broadcasters, advancement of innovation in broadcasting, and the development of Philippine broadcasting” (KBP, 2023). MTRCB was instituted in 1985 through Presidential Decree 1986 while KBP was organized on April 27, 1973. MTRCB focuses more on classifying TV programs and movies into General Patronage, Parental Guidance, Strict Parental Guidance, and the like, while KBP is more focused on setting broadcast standards on programs such as for news and public affairs, analysis and

commentaries, children's programs, quiz shows, contests, public participation programs and promotion.

Laws and policies which covers drama production in the Philippines are more institutional, or are a network's prerogative, rather than state-based. Every network has their own policies and guidelines that govern how TV drama must be produced, based on their own standards.

Based on the information at hand, the Philippines has moved one step up in order to achieve a paradigm shift in drama production. Since drama serials are no longer concentrated on free TV alone, but can also be viewed and accessed through online streaming applications such Netflix, this is an important first step in order to achieve full cultural transformation in the system that would lead to social change. The case of *House Arrest of Us* being included in the catalogue of Netflix is an example of this paradigm shift.

However, in terms of improving the technical and narrative executions of Filipino drama, this dissertation was not able to find existing Philippine law that promoted the improvement of drama production, similar to that of South Korea, where "there is a reform in Korean regulatory policy in which a system of training for broadcasting professionals was institutionalize" (Santos, 2017) and the "creation of culture industry department in Korea in 1999 helped tremendously in the sourcing of directors, writers, actors, and other production team." (Ibid). The private and public sectors in Korea also worked hand in hand in assisting cultural workers. One example would be, "the export-import Bank of Korea provide loans to small companies producing cultural products like TV shows" (Ibid). If the lawmakers in the Philippines would be able to institutionalize a law that will cover cultural products and cultural workers, particularly in TV production, an authentic social change in this area may be achieved.

Social Totality

The political, social, and economical aspects of the drama serial production in the Philippines will be given emphasis to contextualize lapses, mishaps and good practices of *House Arrest of Us*.

Television “is a capital-intensive industry” which means that for it to become functional, there is a need to purchase innovative equipment and facilities and hire competent people.

Networks in the Philippines are commercial industries. The business thrives on the income paid by advertisers. Advertisers base their decision to air their commercials in a specific program on high ratings. As such, networks adjust to the taste of the *masa*, their primary audience, when they craft programs such as dramas. This could be the reason *House Arrest of Us* sounds and looks *makamasa*. The platform may have changed but the audience remains the same. Netflix could be accessed by Overseas Filipino Workers abroad and they could be the target market of *House Arrest of Us*. Since the drama production is audience centered, good concepts were not explored, which point to the Filipino audience not yet ready for out of the box concepts. Although GMA network was brave enough to tackle LGBTQ++ stories in their dramas and even produce the first historical drama, this move was still a small step to achieve change.

In terms of budget, the networks usually provide the budget for the production of dramas. There were times that the budget is insufficient for all the expenses of the production team. This resulted to flaws in the production as evidenced in the drama *House Arrest of Us*. The pandemic protocols and restrictions perhaps also contributed to the mishaps in the quality. In short, the social environment at that time, could be one of the reasons why the drama committed some mistakes.

However, despite these inadequacies, Filipinos could pull off a show given a meager budget. To quote UP Professor, Dr. Gigi Alfonso, this could be attributed to the- “the aesthetics of poverty”. In this sense, the system could be improved if the government intervenes and revisits laws that would be beneficial to the industry. The networks could also review their policies on collaboration with the government and initiate changes.

Moral Philosophy

If South Korea has a production culture called *Live Production*, the Philippines has also its own version *Hand-to-mouth Shoot* wherein parts of the episode will be shot earlier in the day and aired later that night. The editing immediately follows after the shoot. There are various implications to this practice. Sometimes, quality of the drama is compromised. Santos (2017) revealed that “additional special effects are not done despite the technical capacity of the network to make such effects”. In the case of *House Arrest of Us*, the directors and crew may have had time constraints in the completion of episodes resulting in lighting, directing, and continuity issues. This could also result in overworked crew, which would happen if the team has to comply with the deadline of the network/producer, compromising the physical and mental health of the crew.

In 2016, showbiz personalities and production crew appealed to have a cut-off in their taping and shooting. The call for change was spearheaded by the Actor’s Guild of the Philippines, Film Academy of the Philippines, and Director’s Guild of the Philippines. It is an open secret in the industry that actors and the crew go beyond their working hours in order to finish a project.

“Yung concern natin ay maging healthy naman yung
workers. Mas healthy mas madaming magagawa at mas
gaganda ang obra natin [*Our concern is for our workers to*

be healthy. If they are healthy, they will be efficient in their outputs, and they can accomplish more],” Leo Martinez, Director General, Film Academy of the Philippines (Dumaual, 2016)

The Actors Guild of the Philippines signed a memorandum of agreement with all film producers in 1990 that the maximum work schedule should not exceed 12 hours. This was based on the Department of Labor and Employment Advisory No. 32 Series of 2004. The Director’s Guild of the Philippines vowed that they would try to start the change for the betterment of the industry. Dumaual (2016) in his news report, challenged the industry to be united in this worthy cause and for the government to assign an agency that will monitor and regulate the industry’s labor policies. The only way to verify whether the 12-hour work schedule is being implemented at this day and age is to interview actors and production crew members.

Praxis

The issues that were highlighted are budget concerns and overworked production workers. In terms of budget concerns, at this point, the networks still shoulder the expenses in drama production and in other programs. No written literature could verify whether there is a government intervention regarding this concern though there was a recent discussion regarding drama production which was taken up during the Film Development Council of the Philippines 2023 budget hearing in the senate. In this hearing, actor and Senator Robinhood Padilla wondered why Filipinos are fascinated with Korean dramas, while Senator Estrada proposed banning foreign shows in the Philippines “in order that Filipinos would show support for local movies the way they do with foreign

productions” (Cruz, 2022). This led to public discussions on KDramas and Filipino dramas, with celebrities such as Chito Miranda and Pokwang disagreeing with the proposal of Estrada, saying “the local film and TV industry should receive more government support, similar to Korea”. (Ibid) Hence, this issue remains unresolved.

The Philippines has a long way to go in terms of implementing changes in the industry that can institutionalize a creative economy. The government is a key factor in this goal. It was very evident in the textual analysis in this dissertation that Filipinos are capable of producing world class outputs provided they are given the proper support through budget, capability building, and benefits.

As a Korean drama fan for almost six years, the researcher has watched and observed several dramas, and thus had compared them to Filipino productions. This dissertation attempted to articulate the needs of the creative industry in the Philippines through textual analysis. During the analysis of the data, texts were viewed objectively, and all issues observed, whether positive or negative, were included in the analysis. In this dissertation, understanding fandom was realized. By looking at the technical and narrative elements, meanings and insights were drawn from continuous interaction with the Korean drama text and an appreciation of the uniqueness of the Filipino drama series text was also realized.

Statement of the Problem

Research on serial dramas, such as Korean dramas, focused more on audience reception studies. There were a few studies that used close reading analysis as their method of analyzing Korean drama texts. However, the focus is on determining the melodramatic mode, as in the case of Hartzell (2019). Research on Filipino dramas, on

the other hand, is also on reception studies, except for the study of Sanchez (2014), which looked into the prevalence of Korean aesthetics in Filipino *teleseryes*. This dissertation investigated the meanings communicated by Korean and Filipino drama texts in terms of their technical and narrative meanings, which paved the way for theorizing and creating a drama production framework that helped shape the way dramas were constructed.

The general research question that this research aimed to answer was: How is Korean drama similar or different from Filipino drama in terms of its technical and narrative elements when close reading analysis is utilized?

The following are the research questions for this dissertation:

1. How are Korean dramas constructed in terms of their technical and narrative elements?
2. What are the similarities and differences between Korean drama and Filipino drama in terms of their technical and narrative elements?

Objectives of the Study

This dissertation aimed to analyze the similarities or differences of between Kdrama and Filipino drama in terms of its technical and narrative elements using close reading.

Specifically, this dissertation sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determine how Korean dramas are constructed in terms of their technical and narrative elements; and
2. Compare and contrast the similarities and differences between Korean and Filipino dramas in terms of their technical and narrative elements.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to contribute to the discipline of Communication in several ways. One is the study of messages or texts. An in-depth examination of a text and the context that surrounds it will lead to the unraveling of the important components of communication in the text. The second is the creation of messages. This study sought to find clues in the text that will aid in revealing the motivation and strategy of the creator of the message, in this case, the creators of Korean drama and Filipino drama. By doing so, the impact of these messages will be revealed in the process, thereby instituting the freedom to change or alter how these messages will be crafted. The third is the interpretation of the message. The meanings of the Korean drama text and the Filipino drama text that will unfold in this study will lead to emerging roles and processes in the field of drama production. This study will likewise showcase the value of polysemy in communication.

Aside from its contribution in the area of communication, this study could also benefit several sectors.

1. Scriptwriters weave the narrative of the drama. This study will provide them with a writing framework on how to meet the expectations of their audience and assist them in the process of meaning-making. Furthermore, this study will provide them with an idea of how to make choices about whether to follow or violate genres, that will affect an audience.
2. Directors execute the creativity of the writer. This study will assist them in understanding how to combine coherence and sequence in their texts flawlessly. A coherent text clearly communicates the theme, effect, tone, or meaning, while a text that is properly sequenced flows naturally and clearly from one state to the next.

3. This study will give TV Producers a framework that will direct them to initiate actions in order to challenge the status quo of the creative economy.
4. This study is beneficial to media educators by strengthening education as the main agency of cultural propagation. The results of the study will also serve as material for discussion in the classroom, which will enrich the knowledge of media and communication students.
5. This study will be a learning material for communication and media students in exploring the principal components used to construct the text and, at the same time, will serve as an eye-opener in the manner in which they critically read TV text.
6. This study will be an addition to the increasing research and body of knowledge on television. This will help researchers in their pursuit of new knowledge in terms of critically analyzing the meanings of television texts.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study employed a close reading analysis of the top Korean dramas shown on Netflix. The drama was chosen based on the following criteria: a) it aired on Netflix between 2020 and 2022; and b) it was part of the top dramas in the Philippines as of 2022, based on data released by Flix Patrol, a website that provides video-on-demand charts and streaming ratings worldwide. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* (Yoo In Sik, South Korea, 2022) thus was the chosen sample to be analyzed in the study. It has a total of 16 episodes. Though other KDramas also topped the charts during the same period, they were excluded as they did not meet the criteria set by this research (originality, genre, and so on). Hence, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was chosen as the sample because it was a modern drama that tackled different social issues.

After the analysis of the selected Korean drama, the results were compared to those of the Filipino drama. The top-rated content on Netflix Philippines as of February 2021 was the Filipino drama *House Arrest of Us* (Richard Arellano, Philippines, 2020). This drama had a total of 13 episodes. The same inclusion criteria were followed in choosing the Filipino drama for this dissertation, with the basis for the choice of *House of Arrest of Us* on news reports regarding its success on Netflix. Similarly, other choices of top Filipino dramas for the same period were rejected due to length and other extraneous factors.

All episodes of the sampled TV drama were included in the study to ensure a holistic analysis of the texts which could not be achieved if only representative episodes were included.

Definition of Terms

Close Reading Analysis	is also known as close textual analysis, investigates the relationship between the internal workings of discourse to discover what makes a particular text function persuasively (De Castilla, 2018). In this study, close reading analysis is the method that will be utilized to analyze Korean and Filipino dramas.
Text	is an artifact that stimulates meaning (De Castilla, 2018). In this study, the text refers to both Korean and Filipino drama.
Korean drama	is a miniseries format that usually consists of 16–20 episodes with an episodic runtime of approximately

one hour (Hartzell, 2022). In this study, Korean drama refers to the text being studied.

Filipino drama

is a form of melodramatic serialized fiction that shows a part of the typical Filipino life along with its families, values, culture, corruption, and poverty (Cruzat et al., 2020). In this study, Filipino drama refers to one of the texts being studied.

Communication

seeks to comprehend sources and receivers, functions and purposes, channels, languages, codes, content, references, types of information and ideas, understanding, and actions (McQuail, 2005). In this study, communication refers to "ideas, understanding, and actions generated from the close reading analysis of Korean dramas and comparative analysis of Korean and Filipino dramas.

Technical elements

refer to methods filmmakers and videographers use to convey narrative and information. They include camera and editing processes, sound and visual effects, and even certain types of dramatic performances (Rankin, 2022). In this study, technical elements refer to cinematography, lighting, directing, editing, visual effects, and audio

These are the basis for the analysis of the texts in this study.

Narrative Elements

refer to information about a story that makes a story (Brummett, 2019). In this study, narrative elements refer to plot, characters, and setting and structure. These are the basis for the analysis of the texts in this study.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Television Narrative

Television narratives, according to Porter et al. (2002), "serve as our society's major storyteller, reflecting our values and defining our assumptions about the nature of reality." Every day, audiences are confronted with different types of messages delivered through TV and other modern-day platforms. Indeed, "television is replete with narrative forms and genres" (Allarath and Gymnich, 2005). TV narratives are quite unique compared to other forms of narrative because they follow different conventions. "TV narratives usually do not spend much time on exposition and instead try to create suspense as quickly as possible to secure the viewer's attention" (Ibid.). As in the case of series and serials, storytelling is not linear compared to films and novels. This characteristic of TV narratives is called a continuous storyline, while the other is character development (Ibid.).

"The relationship of viewers with TV characters is an important part of their involvement with the medium" (Cohen, 1999). In TV series and serials, for example, characters remain constant, and there is an "illusion that they continue their lives actively between episodes (McQuail, 2005). A fan of the program is interested in the journey of the character, especially how they survive challenges and develop relationships (Porter et al., 2002). Hobson (1982), Liebes, and Katz (1990) revealed that the "plot of the serial revolves around a set of characters with which the audience is meant to develop strong relationships" (Cohen, 1999). Furthermore, Rose (1985) noted that "characters, rather than the events, are the show's main vehicle for influencing audiences (Ibid). In short, characters play a big role in conveying the message of narrative text to its audience. It is the characters that excite the viewers to keep on watching the program. In fact, to highlight the emotions of the characters, "camera shots consist mainly of close-up and medium

shots... great television are those that reveal the thoughts and feelings of individual characters" (Hueth, 2019).

Vladimir Propp (1928–1968) pioneered the study of "the way narratives generate meaning" (Berger, 2016). Propp emphasized that narratives can be best understood through the functions of their main characters (Ibid). Furthermore, characters "constitute the fundamental components of a tale" (Ibid.). While Propp proposed that characters are the most important element in a narrative, Chatman argued that characters and plot are of equal importance. Viewers are interested in the characters beyond the medium of television. Cohen (1999) added that "the responses to characters, then, are determined not only by character attributes but also by how their role in the plot is perceived." Hence, this information pointed out that characters defined TV series and serials. They served as a vital factor in putting together the narrative text.

In terms of continuous storylines, TV series and serials are characterized by their manner of processing. "The series organized stories according to a principle of linearity, while serials preferred parallel processing with a network of concurrent storylines involving different subgroups of the permanent cast of characters interacting and interweaving on varying time scales" (McQuail, 2005). Dramatic series, according to Hueth (2019), is the most common among television dramas. The nature of series is that "it includes the same characters and complete stories with main characters overcoming a problem or reaching a goal each week," while serials are characterized as "episodic drama with continuously ongoing plotlines... each episode is a continuation of the previous episode and the same plotline". CSI, NCIS, Law and Order, and House are examples of dramatic series, while 24, Bones, Arrow, Game of Thrones, and Grey's Anatomy are examples of dramatic serials. Today, hybrid forms are the trend in TV drama. Hybrid forms refer to "serialized

narratives that combine features of series and serials, aspiring to the soap form" (Allarath and Gymnich, 2005).

The continuous aspect of the plot of serials is called the story arc. Story arcs illustrate "how the story starts. As the character(s) experience(s) conflict, complications, and setbacks, the character's emotional intensity rises until it hits a climactic peak and then drops down during the resolution" (Hueth, 2019). However, in series or serials, the climax and resolution do not happen in one sitting. The story continues on, and it is as if the characters go on with their own lives. In Korean dramas, for example, cliffhangers are common at the end of the episode. This strategy motivates the viewers to watch the next episode because they are interested in knowing how the character reacted or solved the challenge posed to him or her. As Hueth (2019) assumed, "unresolved conflict at the end of each episode means the audience will be back next week." This formal technique "employed in TV series will not only be considered as a structural feature but as narrative modes that are meaning producing" (Allarath and Gymnich, 2005).

Todorov (1977), as cited by Miyose (2015), enumerated the progression of most TV stories and formats. These are: 1. A state of equilibrium at the outset; 2) A disruption of equilibrium by some action; and 3. A recognition that there has been a disruption; 4. An attempt to repair the disruption; 5. A reinstatement of equilibrium. Miyose (2015) underscored that Todorov (1977) asserted that most narratives follow the process laid out in his five-stage plans.

Character development and continuous storylines make TV narratives unique from all other narratives. Porter, et.al. (2002) noted that the "familiarity of recurring television characters drew viewers to a series, week after week." Viewers are drawn to these characters not only "by character attributes but also how their role in the plot is perceived." Hence, these two characteristics complement each other very well to make TV narratives

interesting to the audience. A writer must be able to create a unique character, and he or she must take advantage of the continuous storyline to highlight his story.

Asian Drama

The TV drama *Dallas* (Leonard & Katzman, USA, 1978) is the benchmark of how a TV drama has made its mark in the minds and hearts of the viewers. “In the early 1980s, it achieved an unprecedented state of international visibility generating local attempts at emulation (Dissanayake, 2012). Furthermore, “television drama has evolved in Asian countries in the last three decades or so and presents us with a fascinating picture of the complex intersections of modernity, culture, globalism, localism, consumerism, and traditional aesthetics”(Ibid). It is in this study, that Dissanayake (2012) revealed the importance of the narrative structure of Asian Television dramas. She observed an interesting aspect of the narrative discourse which is “the relation between standalone weekly episodes and the totality of the narrative”. She also observed how directors of Asian dramas ensure that the content they showcase is visually striking and at the same time targets emotions and values.

Asian dramas were very popular not only in their country of origin but also in other countries as the content spread to other Asian nations. Media liberation in the 90s prompted East Asian countries to veer away from television programming importation and focus more on intraregional trade in TV programs (Oh, 2018). “The youth who were born in the 1990s grew up watching Korean, Chinese, and Japanese television dramas, listening to K-pop songs, and idolizing East Asian actors and singers (Espiritu, 2011).

The first to take advantage of transnational appeal are Japanese dramas. One of the most popular dramas that hails from Japan is *Oshin* (Sugako Hashida, Japan, 1983). It captured the hearts and minds of fans from Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka (Dissanayake, 2012). It did not take long before Korea joined the

bandwagon. The Kdrama *Winter Sonata* (Yoon Seok-ho, South Korea, 2002) cemented Korea as the number one producer of quality dramas. "It was the drama series *Winter Sonata* that created the Korean drama fever in East Asia, exerting a phenomenal influence on and beyond the drama industry" (Oh, 2018). The popularity of *Winter Sonata* paved the way for the spread of the *Hallyu* Wave.

Korean Drama

KBC, or Korean Broadcasting Corporation, was the first to air TV drama series in Korea in 1962 (Santos, 2017). KBC became the Korean Broadcasting Corporation in 1973 as the station transitioned from a commercial station to a public broadcasting corporation (Ibid.). On the other hand, it was also in the 1970s when "Korean households properly began buying TV sets" (Kdrama: The Complete Guide to Korean Dramas', 2022). The early versions of dramas featured historical figures and historical events; however, they were not able to reach a large number of viewers (Ibid.). In the 1980s, when colored TV was made available to the public, modern dramas started to hit the small screens. "In South Korea, the melodrama genre transitioned from cinema to TV, where it was serialized and branded *Hanguk drama*" (Hartzell, 2019). The background during this period is dark and daunting for the creative industry as they operated in a "highly censored environment" (Ibid.). However, it was only in the 1990s that "Korean Soap Operas gained world attention" (Santos, 2017). Not much has been written about the history of Korean drama. Most literature delves into the journey and success of the Korean wave in general.

Hallyu is a term coined by the Chinese press to denote the unprecedented success of Korean dramas in the 1990s. Now, *Hallyu* refers to the "increasing spread of various South Korean cultural products, including television programs, pop music, films, online games, fashion, and smartphones" (Ju, 2018). Technological advances in broadcasting content have paved the way for more audiences to appreciate Korean cultural products

such as Kpop and Kdrama. There are now more platforms that serve as channels for these products in order to increase their transnational circulation. Among these platforms are YouTube, Netflix, Viu, and others. "Television and the Internet have come to exemplify a highly successful case of synergy in media convergence, as both media activate audiences to create a more participatory culture" (Ju, 2020). Now, audiences can appreciate and enjoy Korean dramas in their own time, space, and convenience and can even interact with other viewers using various social media platforms.

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when Korean dramas penetrated the market outside of Korea. One source claimed that it was in 1997 that the family drama *What is Love* (Park Cheol, South Korea, 1991) and the Romance *Star in My Heart* (Lee Jinsuk & Lee Chang-hoon, South Korea, 1997) which aired in China, started its overseas popularity (Kim, 2021). But a leading scholar on Korean Pop Culture noted that as early as 1993, the Kdrama *Jealousy* (Park Shin Woo, South Korea, 1992) had already begun the trend (Ibid).

Several reception studies were conducted during the 2000s in order to explore the reasons for the popularity and consumption of Korean dramas. Iwabuchi (2008), Kim (2013), Lee (2010), and Ju (2010) concluded that "Asian fans enjoyed a cultural affinity with Kdramas by identifying with Korean ways of life, values, physical appearance, and love relationships" (Ju, 2020). In the study of Espiritu (2011) on Filipino women's reception of TV dramas, "the young Filipino women expressed cultural affinity with the culture, storylines, values, and environment in Korean and other Asian television dramas". Moreover, in the study of Igno and Cenidoza (2016), Korean dramas elicited so much appeal among Filipino people because of "good-looking actors and actresses and the drama storyline." These reasons are on the surface level. But looking at the reasons in depth, "Filipinos have a sense of identification with Korea" (Ibid.). Both countries

experienced colonialism, shared the same values, put a high premium on close family ties, and are expressive and romantic (Ibid.). However, for US viewers, "they consume romance narratives of Kdramas... they view Kdramas as not only entertaining fantasy but also a realistic comfort, especially for female reviewers' emotional involvement" (Hyejung, 2020). For Latin America fans, they continue to consume Korean dramas because of "emotionally charged scenes and intricate plots," which also mirror their own TV production (Kim, 2021).

Neflix's VP for Content (Korea, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand), Tomada (2021), summarized the global appeal of Kdramas as "the diverse stories, production quality, and relatability across all genres". These assumptions were supported by Kim (2021), who said Kdramas have "high production value, intense and often engrossing storylines, quality acting, and bold and skillful storytelling that tackles societal issues, personal struggles, and universal themes such as family, friendship, and love" Looking at these reasons, the common denominators of the phenomenal appeal of Kdramas are their stories and production quality. However, this is not the only factor contributing to their worldwide success.

A former professor of Cinema Studies at New York State University narrated that as early as the 1980s and 1990s, Korean production executives were already benchmarking Japan to learn their style and structure, which gave birth to the 12-episode miniseries format and a smorgasbord of genres to choose from (Kim, 2021). The South Korean government also made sure that they developed their broadcasting infrastructure to cater to the increasing demand for Kdrama content globally. In the early years, the state monopolized the broadcasting industry via its two channels, KBS (Korean Broadcasting System) and MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation). "Under the state-controlled system, the two broadcasting stations produced virtually all television dramas, and their

in-house crews constituted the labor force in drama production" (Oh, 2018). It was only in 1991, when the very first commercial TV station was established in Korea, SBS (Seoul Broadcasting System), that another broadcasting station started producing content (Ibid.). Aside from the terrestrial TV stations, there were also multiple cable channels in the country and several independent producers. Oh (2013) described that Korea is "into a multi-media, multi-channel broadcasting era, further contributing to extensive drama producing and airing".

In Korean dramas, there are two distinct genres. These are historical and modern dramas. Historical dramas, or *Sageuk*, span from 50 to 100 episodes and last for several months, while modern dramas air for at least two to three months (Oh, 2013). Robert Allen (1995) introduced the concepts of open and closed serials. Most Korean dramas are categorized as closed serials because "they have a few strong central figures that interact to develop one major storyline" (Ibid.). There are challenges that confront the creators of historical and modern dramas. Historical dramas must make sure that stories continue "without losing tension," while modern dramas strive to keep the audience's attention. The most palatable theme in Kdramas is the Cinderella theme (Oh, 2018), wherein a rich man and a poor woman fall in love, or between a *chaebol* and an ordinary woman. However, in the study of Hartzel (2022), she reported that melodrama is another genre that characterizes Korean dramas because "it is uniquely equipped to interrogate societal problems". Critics of Kdramas say that creators rely on "conventional repertoires" and the "star system" , instead of "developing more systematic and creative measures such as collective writing, investing in fresh themes, and producing more polished and sophisticated plotlines" (Oh, 2018). The observations of the critics might be true, but despite the formulaic structures of Korean drama, it was still able to maintain its global

appeal because of the effort of the Korean Creative Industry to "recycle familiar narratives using well-known formalist techniques" (Hartzel, 2022)

According to Lim (2017), the "idiom of a conventional Kdrama" consists of the following: it is "portrayed as a chronological continuum, one-way progression, and three fixed segments". The three fixed segments of the structure consist of "a past that becomes immutably fixed, a present that transits into the past as it asserts temporal existence, and a future that is partially defined yet still unknown till it takes the position of the present as it comes into being". This research focused on Two Kdramas *Signal* and *W Two Worlds*, and it assessed the "temporal flexible structures" of these two texts.

The Kdrama text adopts the characteristics of both series and serials. The continuous storyline is very common in Kdramas. "Majority of the miniseries run for only one season and have a clear, beginning, middle, and end... within this structure Kdramas follow patterns of narrative structure and artistic conventions" (Hartzel, 2022). The Korean creative industry is exposed to various influences. However, the most prominent are those from "Hollywood, Japan, and HongKong". The continuous media flow from these countries "resulted to hybridization of genre conventions within Korean drama texts". In short, a Kdrama text reflects the different influences of these powerful nations. In the study of Hartzel (2022), she posited that "Genre conventions are salient because they remain familiar even when transposed to a new culture". In other words, genre conventions are universal.

In the creation of characters, Kdramas usually bank on the love rectangle, formula, which they also adopted from Japanese drama. There are usually "four main characters consisting of two males and two females... the top male and female protagonists make up the lead couple, and the other pair acts as a sub-couple" (Oh, 2018). The love rectangle is evident in Korean dramas such as *Descendants of the Sun* (Lee Eung-bok & Baek

Sang Hoon, South Korea, 2016)), *Ghost Doctor* (Boo Seong-Cheol, South Korea, 2022), and *Doctor Strange* (Jin Hyuk & Hong Jong Chan, South Korea, 2014), among others. Furthermore, the male protagonists of Kdramas are usually dashing, powerful, and strong but possess a deep wound (Oh, 2013). In *Ghost Doctor* (2022), Cha Young Min (Jeong Ji Hoon) was the lead protagonist in this series. He was a genius heart surgeon but exuded a very mean attitude. His being mean was attributed to various wounds in the past. He thought he was dumped by his girlfriend, whom he loved very much. He experienced bullying and discrimination in the workplace because he exhibited exceptional talents, even if he was just an intern. Being mean was his way to cope with the painful wounds of his past. In *K2* (Kwak Jung Hwan, South Korea, 2014), Kim Je Ha (Ji Chang Wook) was an ex-military turned body guard. He possesses exceptional skills in gun handling, firing, and martial arts. He has a strong personality, but he keeps a deep wound in his heart -- the death of his girlfriend who was killed right in front of him.

According to Oh (2013), there are two narrative models which “predominate Kdramas. These are addictive storytelling and speculative storytelling. She compared Kdrama to a sort of drug that when consumed, the audience cannot stop themselves but to continue consuming the content. Korean creatives employ “extremely formulaic and sensational narrative elements and styles” to win in the ratings game (Ibid). It is speculative because the dramas are created to accommodate “commercial sponsors” through product placements embedded in the narrative. In the Kdrama *Nevertheless* (Kim Ga-ram, South Korea, 2021), Park Jaehon (Song Kang) bought Pizza Alvolio for his friends in school in one of the scenes. Jaehon opened the pizza box, and the delicious pizza was focused on the screen. *Song Kang*, who played Park Jaehon in the series, is the endorser of Pizza Alvolio. In *Crash Landing on You* (Lee Jung Hyo, South Korea, 2019), there were many scenes which included *Subway Sandwich* in the narrative. These

are examples on how Kdramas fit product placements into their narratives to please their sponsors.

Kdramas are also categorized as close serials. Robert Allen (1995) categorized serials as open and closed serials. According to him, open serials do not have "central indispensable characters and no ultimate moment of resolution" (Oh, 2013). While a closed serial is characterized as having a few strong central figures interact to develop one major storyline" (Ibid.), In *W Two Worlds* (Jung Dae-Yoon, South Korea, 2016), the main story revolves around Kang Cheol (*Lee Jong Suk*) and Oh Yeon Joo (*Han Hyo-joo*). Kang Cheol interacts with the following characters in his own universe: his bodyguard Seo Do-yoon (*Lee Tae-hwan*), his secretary, and his girl best friend Yoon So-hee (*Jeong Eu-Gene*). While Oh Yeon Joo's life is surrounded by her dad, Han Oh Sang Hoon (*Kim Eui-sung*), fellow doctor and friend Kang Seok-beom (*Kang Ki-Young*), and her dad's illustrator, Park Soo-bong (*Lee Si-eon*), all of them interact in the narrative to create one major storyline.

The genres also predict the narrative structure and narrative elements that will compose the Kdrama text. In the study of Harztel (2022), she examined the melodrama genre of Korean dramas. In this type of genre, characters are usually "simplistic, lacking in complexity, and ascribing to a clear moral code". This kind of genre is usually utilized to highlight societal problems in the Korean community. "Melodrama is uniquely equipped to interrogate societal problems because the protagonists are victims of the world they inhabit" (Ibid.). In *Scarlet Heart Ryeo* (Kim Kyu Tae, South Korea, 2016), Hae Soo (*IU*) is a character from modern times and was transported to the Joseon Era. Her character is simple, jolly, and happy-go-lucky. She is not a complex character, so to speak. She became a victim of palace politics because of her involvement with princes. Hae Soo is a noble, but after the death of her cousin, she worked in the palace as one of the royal

maids. Hae Soo's close relationship with the princes does not make her one of them. She is still a maid. Hence, she does not have the power to eliminate injustice and oppression in the palace.

Filipino Dramas

Filipino dramas are popularly known as *teleserye*. *Teleserye* comes from the compound words *tele*, which means television, and *serye*, which means series. The concept of combining the features of "continuing series" and the "sophisticated artistry of filmmaking" was first introduced by the media giant ABS-CBN in 2000 (Sanchez, 2022). The soap *Pangako Sa'yo* (The Promise) (Olivia Lamasan, Philippines, 2001), which starred Jericho Rosales and Kristine Hermosa, showcased the Filipino brand called *teleserye*. For Sanchez (2022), in his essay that tackled the history of soap operas in the Philippines, the birth of the *teleserye* "marked a new understanding of what TV soap opera is, in the face of an ever-changing viewership landscape."

Before the Filipinos achieved this kind of success in TV drama production, the industry underwent major challenges characterized by experiencing political turmoil in the country, adapting to the paradigm shift in technology, and adjusting to the new ways of drama storytelling.

Before Filipinos appreciated television, which paved the way for soap operas to be viewed as both audio and video, it was radio that started it all. It was in 1922 that the Americans established three radio stations in the country (Braid and Tuazon, 1999). It was in 1938 that early forms of serial dramas were introduced on radio, which was shaped by American soap opera conventions (Sanchez, 2022).

Television came to Philippine shores in 1953, which unfortunately catered only to the rich and affluent. The programming at that time consisted of imported canned programs from the United States, which was viewed as more practical compared to

producing local shows (Braid and Tuazon, 1999). The first provincial television stations were established in 1968 in Cebu, Dagupan, and Bacolod (Ibid.). Braid and Tuazon (1998) furthermore reported that in the 1960s, local programs accounted for only ten percent of the programming. Most of the shows on air at that time were American shows, which, for Braid and Tuazon, contributed to the colonial mentality of the Filipinos.

The first broadcast license was granted to James Lidenberg, who owned Bolinao Electronics Corporation. In 1953, BEC was renamed Alto Broadcasting System after it was bought by Antonio Quirino, the brother of the Philippine President Elpidio Quirino (Zapanta, 2020). The Lopezes acquired ABS in 1957 and merged it with their own Chronicle Broadcasting Network. Hence, ABS-CBN was formed (Sanchez, 2020).

It was ABS-CBN that first launched the first soap opera, *Hiwaga sa Bahay na Bato* (Jose Miranda Cruz, Philippines, 1962). The series was written by Jose Miranda Cruz (Sanchez, 2020). The story was about a “hunchback who terrorizes a family in a heritage home in the countryside” (Sanchez, 2022). In the next two years, Filipinos were able to watch *Santa Zita and Mary Rose* every Sunday. “The soap is a light drama about a group of maids... it stressed that housemaids are also human beings and should be treated by their employers” (Francisco, 2002). *Hiwaga na Bato and Santa Zita and Mary Rose* showcased the growth of soap operas in the Philippines. *Hiwaga na Bato* showcased its aural strength, or as what Sanchez (2022) puts it, radio sensibility, while *Santa Zita and Mary Rose* showed the traditions popularized by theater (Ibid.).

The growth of soap operas in the Philippines halted after President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr., declared Martial Law in 1972. The impacts include closing the tri-media and spreading propaganda in favor of the administration. Marcos viewed the existing media negatively in a sense that “it contributed heavily to national paralysis and instability that in the end required massive reforms and a crisis government” (Braid and Tuazon, 1999).

This period showcased TV soap operas bearing “epical pathos and melodrama” (Sanchez, 2022). Filipinos were able to watch block time-produced classics such as *Gulong ng Palad* (Marcial Sanson, Philippines, 1977) from 1977 to 1983. This soap was successful on the radio before it transitioned into television. The soap “promoted family values as depicted by the characters *Aling Idad* and her kids *Luisa and Peping* (Fransisco, 2002).

In the next few years, RMN produced *Flordeluna* (1978), while GMA launched *Annaliza* (1980). These two dramas were shot using one camera set-up and utilized the studio as their set. It was during post-EDSA that two media giants, ABS-CBN and GMA, competed in terms of “innovations and ratings” (Sanchez, 2022). During this time, changes in the concepts took place. Producers and directors veered away from “conventional female character-driven plots” (Ibid.). A male-driven plot was exhibited in the two soaps, *Agila* (Eddie Romero, Philippines, 1987) and *Valiente* (Herman Escueta, Philippines, 1992). During this period, soap operas were placed in the post-noontime show timeslot and gained a following.

After that, *Mara Clara* (Emil Cruz, Jr. Philippines, 1992), which aired from 1992 to 1997, became an afternoon drama favorite. The viewers followed the journey of the two characters, Mara and Clara, who were swapped when they were babies. This soap catapulted the careers of *Judy Ann Santos*, who played Mara, and *Gladys Reyes*, who played Clara.

From block time producers, soap opera production went into the hands of networks, which “intended to air programs that fit corporate vision and packaging” (Sanchez, 2022). Another major shift during the 90s was the moving of the timeslot of soap operas from the post noontime show to primetime. The 1990s witnessed the rise of *Marimar* on the ratings board. *Marimar* (Beatriz Sheridan,Mexico,1994) was a canned

Mexican telenovela that aired on RPN. *Marimar* “singlehandedly altered the public’s viewing habits” (PEP, 2007). This telenovela gave the public a new perspective on telenovela viewing. It drifted away from “long, winding narratives... each episode is packed with plot revelations and twists, interesting character development and on-location shots” (Sanchez, 2022). It also opened the doors for foreign texts to be shown on local television (PEP, 2007). The *Marimar* craze forced the networks (ABS-CBN and GMA) to invest in importing Latin American telenovelas. For some time, Filipinos watched Mexican telenovelas such as *Maria Mercedes* (Beatriz Sheridan, Mexico, 1992), *Rosalinda* (Beatriz Sheridan, Mexico, 1999), *Paloma* (Luis Velez, Mexico, 1995), *Lazos de Amor* (Miguel Corcega & Monica Miguel, Philippines, 1995), and among others.

The impact of the success of *Marimar* motivated networks, especially ABS-CBN, to improve and innovate soap opera production. During the late 1990s, primetime hits such as *Mula sa Puso* (Wenn Derramas, Philippines, 1997), *Esperanza* (Jerry Lopez Sineneng, Rory Quintos & Don Miguel Cuaresma, Philippines, 1997), and *Saan Ka Man Naroon* (Keiko Aquino-Galvez & Rondel Lindayag, Philippines, 1999) dominated Philippine television. “Filipino producers reinvent local soap operas by exploring new themes and enhancing production value through multi-camera set-ups and digital technology” (Sanchez, 2022).

The transformation of *teleserye* during the late 1990s also gave way to new formats emerging. *Fantaserye*, or *telefantasiya*, was introduced. The magical world created through these formats gave the audience a chance to live and breathe in a fairy-tale universe through the different stories presented in the *fantaserye*. *Mulawin* (Don Michael Perez & Dode Cruz, Philippines, 2004), *Encantadia* (Mark Reyes, Philippines, 2005), and *Marina* (Wenn Derramas, Philippines, 2004) served as a respite for Filipinos. Aside from the *fantaserye* format, ABS-CBN also produced TV dramas that depicted Filipino values

and culture in heartwarming texts such as *Honesto* (Jerry Lopez Sineneng,et.al,, Philippines, 2013), *May Bukas Pa* (Jerome Chavez Pobocan, Jojo Saguin, & Eric Salud, Philippines, 2009), and *100 Days to Heaven* (Malu Sevilla, Jojo Saguin, Don Cuaresma, Philippines, 2011). These kinds of stories mirrored the undying faith of Filipinos, and these texts gave hope to the viewers amidst trying times.

Eventually, the Latin American *telenovela* fad slowly died down, while the “Asian novelas” were slowly peaking and dominating Philippine TV. The Filipinos were especially fond of Kdrama, or Korean drama, from among the Asian novelas because they “indulged in novel concepts and storylines” (Sanchez, 2022). They were entertained by Kdramas such as *Stairway to Heaven* (Lee Sang Soo, South Korea, 2003), *Full House* (Pyo Min Soo, South Korea, 2003), and *My Name is Kim Sam Soon* (Kim Yoon Cheol, South Korea, 2005). They were introduced to the history and culture of Korea via *Dae Jang Geum* (Lee Byun- hoon, South Korea, 2003) and *Jumong* (Lee Joo Hwan, South Korea, 2006). They were exposed to “tragic, ambiguous, or unpredictable endings” through *Autumn in My Heart* (Yoon Seok Ho, South Korea, 2000), *Winter Sonata* (2002), *Summer Scent* (Yoon Seok Ho, South Korea, 2003), *Spring Waltz* (Yoon Seok Ho, South Korea, 2006), and *Lover’s in Paris* (Shin Woo-Chul, South Korea, 2004) (Ibid.). Tropes such as “coming of age, familial love, individual, and social integration” were highlighted (Ibid.).

In the recent Philippine *teleserye* landscape, mainstream television is no longer the only option for a platform. Although GMA is still airing content, the move by the government to shut down ABS-CBN curtailed the audience’s freedom to watch their favorite soap operas on the said network. The closure forced the Filipino audience to look for alternatives. Fortunately, streaming services were on the rise. Netflix became popular among viewers. During the pandemic, local productions were halted for months, and viewers turned to Netflix and other streaming services to entertain themselves. This

paradigm shift resulted in the investment of networks in streaming services such as iWantTFC and GMA Pinoy TV. iWantTFC is a platform that had merged with iWantTV, which was the earlier version of the over-the-top content platform launched by ABS-CBN. iWantTFC is an OTT content platform of ABS-CBN that boasts of its “extensive library of regularly updated content of currently airing ABS-CBN shows, movies, newscasts, lifestyle programs, award-winning documentaries, originals, religious programs, and acquired series from Thailand’s GMMTV (Mercurio, 2020). The premium subscription costs P 119 pesos while the standard subscription is pegged at P59.00 (Ibid.). If the subscriber opts for a free subscription, then his viewing experience is limited. GMA Network has its own GMA Pinoy TV launched in 2005, which targets Filipinos abroad. Its catalogue contains programs produced by the Network such as dramas, documentaries, and news, among others.

Aside from multi-platforms, Filipino producers and writers also explored other concepts and narratives to offer viewers. GMA Network, in particular, produced narratives that "tackled issues of identity and heroism in the midst of various conditions of suppression" (Sanchez, 2022). TV dramas such as *Katipunan* (King Mark Baco, Philippines, 2013), *Ilustrado* (King Mark Baco, Philippines, 2014), and *Amaya* (Mac Alejandre, Philippines, 2011) were launched on air. *Maria Clara at Ibarra* (Zig Dulay, Philippines, 2022), which had just recently aired, created a positive impression among viewers. It is a historical-fantasy series that follows the journey of Klay, a nursing student who aspires to work abroad and ends up being transported to the world of Jose Rizal’s novels (Iglesias, 2022). The "series aims to give everyone the opportunity to learn about past societies, systems, ideologies, and cultures during the time of Jose Rizal in the 1800s" (Ibid.). Furthermore, GMA Network is also at the forefront of experimenting with controversial and sensitive themes to tackle on Philippine TV. *My Husband’s Lover*

(Dominc Zapata, Philippines, 2013), *The Rich Man's Daughter* (Dominic Zapata, Philippines, 2015), and *Destiny Rose* (Don Michael Perez, Philippines, 2015) became voices of the LGBTQIA+ communities in mainstream media.

Narrative Structure

Philippine drama is a form of melodramatic serialized fiction (Caiga et al., 2020). Some scholars say that "most of the Philippine soap operas have romantic, conservative themes" (Aguisado, 2017). Both Caiga et al. (2017) and Aguisado (2017) agree that *teleseryes* carry narratives that showcase Filipino "families, values, culture, corruption, and poverty," among others. "Teleseryes are structured in realism combined with romance and melodrama—a vestige of the prevailing inclination of Philippine culture towards social realism" (Sanchez, 2022).

A teleserye is aired on primetime block five days a week. Each episode is approximately one hour long. The "episode undergoes a proper cutdown to several sets of sequences that create cliffhangers to keep viewers hooked" (Sanchez, 2022). Each gap is "interspersed" with commercial breaks. Aside from primetime, teleseryes also air in the following timeslots: post-noontime shows, and pre-noontime shows.

The staying power of the teleserye depends on its performance in the rating game. In the early 90s, a teleserye can last for years, such as in the cases of *Mara Clara* (1992–1997), *Mula sa Puso* (1997–1999), *Esperanza* (1997–1999), and *Saan Ka Man Naroon* (1999–2001). In the current times, television series are completed within a few months of airing, except for *Ang Probinsiyano* (Malu Sevilla, et.al, Philippines, 2015), which starred Coco Martin, Susan Roces, and Jaime Fabregas, among others. The series started airing in September 2015 and wrapped up on August 12, 2022. It became a part of Filipino households for almost seven years. *Ang Probinsiyano* was lauded for its bravery in

tackling current issues in the country in its episodes. National issues were presented in a fashion that a common person can grasp and easily understand.

Teleseryes banked on a formula to entice viewers and followers. They use “love teams, astounding manorial or feudalistic settings, and complex plots and subplots that keep audiences hooked for years until its end” (Sanchez, 2014). It is also common for teleseryes to make their female lead characters suffer at the hands of their villains, who are mostly their family members. Sanchez (2014) would call them “stock oppressors”. They are composed of wicked grandmothers or stepmothers, scheming mothers or aunts, and in some cases, fathers and uncles.

Filipino dramas are usually in the Filipino language. However, because of the Netflix era, Filipino dramas that are currently part of the catalog have subtitles for an international audience. One Filipino drama that earned the number one spot on Netflix is the digital movie series *House Arrest of Us* (2020). Netflix was interested in the drama even before filming halted. It is a comedy-romantic drama that captured the hearts of Filipinos in the diaspora, particularly OFWs.

The contemporary era witnessed the transformation of soap operas in the Philippines. Filipino producers and writers are working doubly hard in "exploring new themes and enhancing production value of the dramas through multi-camera set-ups and digital technology" (Sanchez, 2022). There are changes implemented in the plot and temporality of the narratives. Audiences were treated to faster pacing, exciting storylines, and fresh formats. Soap operas produced by the networks crossed over from mainstream to online streaming. However, despite the efforts exerted to improve Filipino drama, criticism cannot be avoided. During the pandemic, when everyone was forced to stay at home, Filipinos entertained themselves by watching series on streaming apps such as Netflix. Jose Javier Reyes, a prominent director in the Philippines, lamented how

teleseryes "are still stuck with the same old predictable and formulaic plots that we keep recycling over the years" (Clemente, 2020). He posted his thoughts on his Facebook account, and it went viral. The post received numerous comments. One of the netizens commented on the post that "it is high time to venture outside the box," and another netizen prodded the Filipino director to "step up the plate and promulgate the necessary changes in the local TV industry" (Ibid.). However, netizens are unaware of the many factors that contributed to the challenges experienced by the industry. Santos (2017), in her paper *Synergies: Production, Marketing, and Promotion of Philippine and Korean Television Series*, discoursed that "government support and funding are the missing keys in the production process, marketing, and promotion in the Philippines." These are major factors that catapulted the Korean Cultural Industry into the International Market. This assumption was confirmed by Liza Dino (2022), former FDCP Chair, on her Facebook post "*the core challenge ng local entertainment industry is FUNDING- both from the government and the private sector...Korean Film Council's budget is 5 billion a year. Sa FDCP, I started with 76 million in 2016, after 6 years, 290 million a year. Still not enough* (the core challenge of the industry is funding from the government and the private sector. The budget of the Korean Film Council is five billion a year. In FDCP, I started with 76 million in 2016, after six years, 290 million a year and still not enough). Hence, aside from production values and narratives; budget and funding is still one of the major factor that could enhance, improve and develop soap operas and other creative content. And at the same time, these will also fuel the creative economy to become functional and effective.

Cultural Critical Analysis of Media

Cultural studies "examine the strands of meaning that can be made from discourse and how they relate to social practice; it also examines the struggle of conflict over meaning" (O'Donnell, 2017). Furthermore, cultural studies explore the relationship

between text, history, audience, and criticism (Ibid.). According to O'Donnel (2017), there are several types of culture: national culture, family culture, television culture, religious culture, community culture, and global culture. In binding all social groups to culture, communication is the key. McQuail (2005) added that "the cultural approach has its roots in the humanities, in anthropology, and in linguistics; its methods favor the qualitative analysis and interpretation of texts". As Fiske (1987) would put it, "Television broadcast programs are replete with potential meanings." In cultural studies, TV as a channel is viewed as an instrument that "forces a consciousness of the population about issues of class, power, and dominance" (Pernia, 2004).

It was the British who first reported meaning-making in the context of culture (O'Donnel, 2017). The British Cultural Studies Movement's Robert Williams was able to pinpoint exactly the basic tenet of cultural studies when he raised a query on "how a work relates to the shared condition of time and what meanings a work has when it is absorbed into the lives of the audience (Ibid.).

One particular study that used close reading as its method and conducted a cultural-critical essay is the study of Sanchez (2014) entitled *Koreanovelas, Teleseryes, and the Diasporization* of the Filipino/the Philippines. In this study, Sanchez examined three *teleserye* texts: *Princess and I* (2012), *A Beautiful Affair* (2012), and *Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw* (2012). He attempted to discuss the "*diasporization* of the Filipino and the Philippines, as constructed in the soap operas mentioned earlier."

In this paper, Sanchez (2014) theorized the concept of Korean Turn which was used to describe how "Koreanovelas are seen through the Philippine lens and embody a national desire, a national fantasy, not only for but also to be this nation". In short, Korean Turn refers to how the local soap opera production adopts or integrates Korean drama aesthetics into the local content. The Korean Turn according to Sanchez can be attributed

to how Korean dramas' narratives are presented—fast-paced storytelling or tighter plotting".

As a result of his theorizing, he came up with two processes for the Korean Turn. These are transformative and acculturative. Being transformative starts with buying a franchise of Korean Soap operas to localize and produce". Transformative, according to Sanchez (2014), is the move of Philippine TV production "to make the Korean Wave its own". Acculturation occurs when Korean aesthetics are evident in the "process of transformation", as exemplified by *transproduction*.

The three texts examined showed how the Filipino/Philippine diaspora is represented in the narratives and how the "Korean turn" is embedded in the discourse. *Princess and I* features stories of royalties in a fictional space called the Kingdom of Yangdon. According to Sanchez (2014), the genre alone is a clear manifestation that it is Korean inspired because royalty is uncommon in the "Philippine contemporary storyline". Even the looks of the male leads are a splitting image of Hallyu stars. On the other hand, dispossession is very much at the center of *Princess and I*. Dispossession of "throne, ethnicity, and history" in the case of Kathryn Bernardo; identity for Daniel Padilla; and interestingly, for Enrique Gil, his character's desire to "reclaim self" in the story. The diasporic discourse is obviously shown through the character of Sharmaine Suarez, who plays an overseas Filipino worker in the story.

The *Beautiful Affair*, according to Sanchez, is the most post colonially readable of all texts. It was a heavy drama that starred John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo and was set in Europe. The characters are in Europe not to work but for a vacation. For Sanchez, "their being re-located in European space became a meaning-making practice of returning to the origins of post-colonial imaginaries." The in-depth reading of this text tries to illustrate

the "revolutionary potential of placelessness". The soap authenticates the Filipino's desire to look for his lost self and nationality in a diasporic space.

Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw tackled organized crime in the narratives, with "love enduring all odds" as its theme. Sanchez described this text as a flop if it is going to be based on standards. However, despite the inadequacies, the soap was able to illustrate the "common images and characterizations of Filipinos in diaspora". The feelings of being lost and dispossessed were heightened.

Sanchez (2014) concluded that the manifestation of the Korean turn in local productions must be treated as a moment of reflection and "discerning critique". He likewise added that soap operas must continue to be active in their role in showcasing stories that concern the country, especially on matters such as diaspora and the "positionality of Filipinos in the global arena."

Another study that used close reading as its method is Kathryn Grace Hartzell's 2019 Master of Arts thesis entitled *Melodramatic and Formulaic: The Global Appeal of Korean Television Drama*. Hartzell (2019) analyzed five Korean dramas that were popular among English-speaking viewers. Close reading was the method used in order to examine the use of melodramatic mode in Korean texts. This study also used two other methodologies aside from close reading. These were: a critique of the hybridized genre signifiers and a survey of Korean drama fans living outside of South Korea". The five Korean drama texts examined were representative of five different genres, such as melodrama, action/adventure, crime, mystery and thriller, and historical. The chosen texts were *My Mister* (2018), *Healer* (2014), *Because This is My Life* (2017), *Signal* (2016), and *Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo* (2016). These texts were analyzed based on characterization, formalist elements, hybridization, and framing. According to Hartzell (2019), "Hollywood melodramas were popular in Korea during the Japanese occupation

and through the partition of the Korean peninsula." South Korea's brand of melodrama was modified as a protest to the "orientalist lens" of the Western, particularly of Hollywood. Directors produced dramas and embedded in their texts the "trauma of Korea's occupation and displacement of Korean people during the 20th century". Hybridity and glocalization theories are the theoretical underpinnings of the study which help explain how "genre conventions replicate, subvert, and challenge Western viewer expectations." Hartzell compared the Western view of melodramas to that of the Koreans. For the Westerns, melodrama "is a form associated with theatricality rather than cinematic realism" as opposed to the Korean's version as "genre of realism conveying the experiences of social life".

Hartzell's (2019) close reading of the five texts gave a glimpse of how Kdramas were constructed based on characterization, formalist elements, hybridization, and framing in the context of the melodrama genre. In *My Mister*, the characters are "readily sorted into good and bad". The Korean drama's tone was highlighted: "restraint despite heightened circumstances" The mise-en-scene used palettes such as gray and muted colors, and the scoring is dominated by "simple melancholy piano accompaniment". The text tackles a variety of issues prevalent in South Korea, such as corruption in the "real estate development industry, the precarious position of the elderly, pressure created by family, and the high cost of healthcare."

Healer, being an action-adventure genre, showcased "Hong Kong movie conventions" displayed in the different martial art stunts of the main protagonist, played by *Ji Chang Wook*. Hollywood-style car chases are also included in the text. A jazzy theme and tenser synthesized chords score the drama. It had the feel of a Hollywood spy film. One of the interesting formalist elements is the use of the "panopticon effect" through various symbolic objects such as diegetic cameras, audio recording devices, and screens.

According to Hartzell (2019), "these are frequently used by villains and heroes." Panopticon, according to Merriam-Webster (2022), is "a circular prison built with cells arranged radially so that a guard at a central position can see all prisoners". The symbolic objects mentioned are metaphors used to signify the surveillance being done by the villains in the text. On the other hand, colonial mimicry is embedded in the text. "Colonial mimicry is a form of hybridization in which colonial power is represented only partially, creating an ironic effect" (Hartzell, 2019). This concept is present in *Hwalkuk films*, wherein "Korean directors criticize colonial authority" *Korean Hwalkuk* "is a male-dominant action film genre that emerged during the Japanese Colonial Era" (Kang, 2017).

This Is My Life encodes its protagonist as "serving both the melodramatic heroine and the romantic comedy heroine" (Hartzell, 2019). The text is unique in the sense that it utilizes an opening theme that is an "up-tempo number of accordion music, cartoon sound effects, and chimes" (Ibid.). The concept is somehow a representation of Manhwa, or Korean comic storytelling, and is largely influenced by Shojo Manga, of which the Koreans are active consumers. The romantic comedy genre used in the text is "an important vehicle for the show's critique on patriarchal traditions...like melodrama, it personalizes this topic with parental figures representing traditional values that constrain the younger generation's pursuit of happiness" (Ibid.).

The Korean drama *Signal* is considered by Hartzell (2019) to be a non-diegetic text. Diegetic, according to Merriam-Webster (2022), means existing or occurring within the world of narrative rather than as something external to that world. Bynon-diegetic means that the occurrence in the text is external to the narrative space. On the other hand, the heroes of this drama "adopt the tropes of detective fiction" (Ibid.). Its formalist elements, particularly the cinematography, are "both highly stylized and gritty film noir" (Ibid.). Film noir is characterized by "black and white cinematography, inexpensive

scenery and settings, diagonal lighting schemes, contrasting figures in shadows, and if possible, foreboding images and music" (Hellwig, 2020). The strength of this drama in terms of hybridization is the "use of true crimes...which adds a veneer of realism to the cases and taps into their power in South Korea's national imaginary".

The last text closely read by Hartzell (2019) was *Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo*. This is a *sageuk* drama that tells the story of a heroine who experienced oppression and violence perpetuated by her boyfriend and was given a chance to travel back to the Goryeo period. She woke up in an era in which she only read history books. On her journey to Goryeo, she met Prince Wang So and other princes. Eventually, she was caught up in the intrigues and politics in the palace. The main characters, specifically Ha-jin and Prince Wang So, were encoded as "prototypical melodrama heroines" (Ha-jin) and "figures out of a gothic romance" (Prince Wang So). The shifting of the tones was very evident in the text. As Hartzell (2019) put it, "the tone changes rapidly between comedy, high drama, sweeping romance, and melodrama". The cinematography contributed a lot to showing the "emotional states of the characters". It was very obvious that the drama was highly budgeted because of its "lavish historical sets, costuming, and camera work." In *Moon Lovers*, Hartzell (2019) concluded that it was a hybrid of two genres, melodrama and *sageuk*. Aside from this, Chinese *wuxia* elements and a Hong Kong brand of action were also combined into the already established genre. *Wuxia*, according to Hartzell (2019), refers to indigenous practices in literature, opera, and the oral narrative tradition. He also labeled *Moon Lovers* a fusion drama. Even though the text was a remake of a Chinese drama, this suggests a contraflow to the usual practice; the drama was able to display the hallmarks of melodramatic tradition, which are excellence in sentiments, fated relationships, dramatic irony, and a world filled with cruelty.

Dafira Zur, an Associate Professor in the Department of East Asian Language and Culture and scholar of Korean literature from Stanford, attempted to deconstruct the Korean drama text. She theorized *Korean Twist* and *Dark Twist* to describe the text. The story arcs are predictable and very familiar, but viewers can very well relate to the *Korean Twist* in the sense that the "characters are deferential to their elders, and the sons and daughters featured in the stories are filial" (De Witte, 2021). Moreover, while watching Kdramas, the audience is ushered into experiencing a *Dark Twist*. They are confronted with "suffocating expectations, crushing poverty, and profound secrets that must not be revealed" (Ibid.). Viewers are also treated to "polished and attractive actors" (Ibid.). And the scripts are balanced in the sense that writers always make it a point to add humor to the lines and the plot. The Kdrama text is genius because it can "humanize the most aloof billionaire and could set the audience to actually care" (Ibid.).

On the other hand, the study of Igno and Cenidoza (2016), entitled *Understanding Hallyu in the Philippines*, discoursed that Filipinos are receptive to cultural imperialism brought about by different *Hallyu* cultural products. For the authors, cultural imperialism refers to the imposition of the culture of one nation on another. Filipinos, who have a background of colonization, do not resist having a new culture introduced to them; instead, they are glad to be influenced. The study of Igno and Cenidoza (2016) likewise tackled the concepts introduced by Joseph S. Nye, which are hard power and soft power. Koreans are using their soft power "in order to influence people to accept their culture, ideologies, or policies". Filipinos' fascination with *Hallyu* can also be very well traced back to the Philippines Cultural identity, which is "a hybrid of different cultures". Spain, the United States of America, and Japan colonized the Philippines, resulting in the molding of the idea of inferiority complex into the Filipino psyche. In other words, Filipinos view their own culture as inferior compared to that of other nations. Igno and Cenidoza (2016) put it as

"Filipino's cultural identity was based on its position against other nations in terms of the latter's standards" (Ibid.).

Korean dramas in the Philippines thrive because "Filipinos have a sense of identification with Korea" (Ibid.). Both countries have a background of colonialism, and they share similar values such as "communal patriarchy, close family ties, and aspirations". Furthermore, the authors posit that "we tend to see similarities in cultural views and ways of life in these dramas, which are reflective of our Filipino culture."

Similar to the study of Sanchez (2014), which looks into how Korean aesthetics are reflected in Philippine teleserye, the study of Quirante and Sugbo (2010), on the other hand, focuses on the "construction of Malaysian Culture from Two TV Soap Operas". Although this study is a reception analysis, the findings are relevant to this dissertation. The authors chose the texts Muli (2007) and Kahit Isang Saglit (2008) because both teleseryes were co-produced by Malaysia. The texts "dealt with mixed marriages and romantic relations between Malaysians and Filipinos". It also depicted "human problems and sufferings." The encoding of the text, as interpreted by the authors, is purposely intended to gain a greater return on their investment". This study also affirmed the study of Igno and Cenidoza (2016) on the context of how Filipinos view other cultures; they use a "frame of reference for their own culture."

Most of the literature read and reviewed focused independently on the different aspects of television and Korean drama. Most methods used were reception analysis, which delved more into the audience. There is a gap in the literature in terms of combining the two (Teleserye and Korean drama) in one study and finding out how these texts were constructed using formalist and cultural-critical lenses.

Production Marketing, and Promotion of Philippine and Korean Television Series

In the study of Santos (2017), entitled *Synergies: Production, Marketing, and Promotion of Philippine and Korean Television Series*, the ways and means by which Philippine and Korean Television series approach their respective productions are discussed. The author described the dynamics of the production, marketing, and promotion processes of Koreans and Filipinos as synergy. This means that different elements collaborate with each other in order to form a powerful force that "greatly affects business, politics, and culture both within and outside the medium."

The two countries' have major differences when it comes to ownership. Korea's broadcasting stations are mostly owned by the government, while in the Philippines they are a private enterprise. Hence, government support and incentives are freely given to producers. The business sector is "encouraged to put capital into the culture industry, purchase new and high-end equipment and set of facilities for cultural presentations. There are also major reforms in terms of regulatory policies implemented in Korea which helped boost their creative economy. This includes, "1. ownership was opened to commercial broadcasters; 2. outsourcing of production programs became obligatory; 3. a system of training for broadcasting professionals was institutionalized and 4. a policy supporting participation in trade fairs was enacted" (Kim, 2011). Furthermore, there were several initiatives started which contributed greatly to the success of the Hallyu Wave. Among these are "the independent producer may apply for a loan from the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA)... the agency has partnered with the Export-Import Bank of Korea to provide loans to small companies producing cultural products like television shows"; and "schools in Korea created culture industry departments which became a source for future directors, writers, actors and other production members."

On the other hand, in the Philippines, the government has not yet seen the impact of a creative economy and has not yet developed a system that will encourage private and public partnerships to invest in producing cultural products. Former FDCP Chair Liza Dino Segueria (2022) confirmed this: "Ang core challenge ng local entertainment industry is funding, both from the government and private sector... Korea thrives because there is SUBSTANTIAL government funding to finance small to ambitious projects, from incentives to investments. *Mga korporasyon ang nag iinvest sa mga Kdramas kaya ang taas ng production value ng mga content nila* (The production value of the content is very high because the corporations invest their money in Kdramas)". Dino-Seguiria lamented that there should be a change in mindset to "develop better-quality content". Even former Vice President of the Philippines, Leni Robredo, is aware of the challenge the creative economy faces. To at least start a change, it is important to "create a culture that fosters artistic excellence by ensuring the welfare of artists, their protection, education, and opportunities through government support... and also to define the role of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts" (Lazaro, 2022). Robredo also suggested that "promotion should extend to the local government units and treat culture as an essential key to effective local governance" (Ibid.).

Koreans produced their dramas with two major objectives in mind: "drama for the foreign market and for local consumption". Dramas produced for the foreign market are usually created in a short span of time. It is usually pegged to 12 to 24 episodes because producers need to release the drama immediately or "even simultaneously during its run in Korea." Furthermore, "scripts, length, and complexity of productions are adjusted based on many factors, including audience feedback, ratings, and sponsorships." In the Philippines, drama production can also be classified into two categories: adaptation and original story. The most popular adaptations are those from other foreign TV shows.

Recently, ABS-CBN produced an adaptation of *Dr. Foster* (Tom Vaughan, United Kingdom, 2015), which was first aired in Europe and was also adapted as *The World of Married* (Mo Wan-il, South Korea, 2020) in the case of Korea. *The Broken Marriage Vow* (Connie Macatuno & Andoy Ranay, Philippines, 2022), which starred Jodi Sta Maria and Zanjoe Marudo, became successful in the ratings game and even got Sta. Maria an acting award.

In terms of scripting, a Korean TV series has one writer and one director throughout the series. The episodes air twice weekly and run for approximately an hour. In the Philippines, there is usually one head writer and several other writers for the show. There are also multiple directors which handle the first unit and the second unit based on their expertise. Furthermore, *Teleseryes* in the Philippines are aired from Mondays to Fridays and run for about 30 minutes, with commercials in each gap. There are attempts by the Philippine producers to achieve special effects and techniques, like in the cases of *Ang Probinsiyano*, *Encatadia*, and *Ilustrado*. However, “the impressiveness of its production techniques and effects cannot match the greatness of production values infused into a Korean action, fantasy, or *sageuk* drama.” There is a disparity when it comes to the concept and variety of stories. “We are losing our very own audiences to Korean content because there aren’t enough local producers who produce the kind of content that Filipino audiences prefer to watch and consume” (Dino-Seguerra, 2022). Filipino director Jose Javier Reyes agreed to the contention of Dino-Seguerra, ““*Eh, tayo nagkakapalitan pa rin ang mga babies sa ospital, may nawawalang diary, may kabit na kampon ni Satanas, kulot pa rin ang buhok ng kontrabidang babae habang banat ang inaaping martir na bidang babae, laging late pa rin ang pulis sa krimen, palpak ang lahat ng kidnappings, alagad ng kadiliman ang lahat ng mga mayaman, hindi nilikha ni Lord ang mabait na biyenang babae at stepsister at laganap pa rin ang hindi magamot-gamot*”

na amnesia na mas masahol pa sa COVID19. (We are still patronizing tropes such as baby switching in hospitals; lost diary; mistresses which come from hell; female villains wear curly hair; the suffering protagonist has smooth skin; the policemen are still late in the crime scene; failed kidnappings; the rich are painted as evil and so is the mother-in-law and sister-in-law; and the amnesia of characters has no antidote like COVID 19)” (Clemente, 2020).

In terms of promotions on television, both countries share similar practices such as “teaser, full plug, character spots, spots with time and date, rider, brand bugs, behind the scenes, music videos, television appearances as guests, and news features” (Santos, 2017). Both countries also maximize the use of different platforms to promote the drama. These are radio promotions, print promotions, public relations, below-the-ground marketing, and social media.

Theoretical Underpinning and Philosophical Assumptions

The focus of this research is on the creation and interpretation of messages. “The content and form of a text are usually constructed, invented, planned, crafted, constituted, selected, or adopted by the communicator” (Griffin, et.al., 2019). Moreover, “messages do not interpret themselves” (Ibid.). Griffin (2019) cited Herbert Blumer, whose explanation of meaning-making is accurate. He said that “humans act toward people or things on the basis of the meanings they assign to those people or things”. In television studies, meaning “lies in the power of symbols to signify something and in the viewer’s potential to derive meaning from the symbol” (O’Donnell, 2017).

This study utilized interpretive, cultural, and critical lenses. In the interpretive realm, truth is theorized to be socially constructed through communication. It means that it is largely subjective. Interpretive scholars focus on conscious choices made by individuals.

The interpretive approach, according to Griffin (2019), is "a linguistic work of assigning meaning or value to communicative texts; it also assumes that multiple meanings or truths are possible." Polysemy exists because "viewers interpret their own experiences, lifestyles, values, and other cultural practices into their interpretation "(O'Donnell, 2017). In this sense, "qualitative research is interpretive because it aims to produce and create meanings out of the data collected based on the researcher's understanding" (Abila and Fernandez, 2020).

The cultural lens sought to understand how communication serves its purpose of being the main driver in binding social groups to culture. It is concerned with finding out the "role of media as hegemonizing and homogenizing instrument through the use of the popular print and broadcast channels for forcing a consciousness of the population about issues of class, power, and domination" (Pernia, 2004).

While the critical lens focuses on unmasking communication practices to stimulate change, The critical lens challenges the present status quo. It also looks into the interaction of the real and knowledgeable with structure, agency, and dialectic (Baran and Davis, 2012). Furthermore, the critical lens "assumes that all human actions are meaningful and that it is necessary to interpret them in order to understand the total human experience" (Pernia, 2004).

Although the study is inductive, the ontological assumption can be grounded in the socio-cultural tradition of communication theory. According to Craig (1999), the socio-cultural tradition sees communication as a symbolic process in the reproduction or production of social order. It is all about context, culture, and social practices. Moreover, the study examines how communication participates in understanding, appreciating, and preserving cultural heritage. In addition, Apuke (2018) mentioned the discussion made by Ochieng that articulated that in the socio-cultural tradition, communication is considered

a process that involves concepts like social structure, norms, rituals, identities, and collective belief systems. Meanwhile, Chang'orok (2017) concluded that this tradition holds that reality is not an objective set of arrangements outside us but is constructed through communicating in groups, society, and cultures.

This dissertation's theoretical underpinning is largely hinged on John Fiske's Codes of TV Production, Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding Mode, and Jacques Lacan's Psychoanalytic Theory.

John Fiske's Codes of TV Production

The concept of code in television “refers to a range of audio-visual systems that have the capability to construct meaning” (O'Donnell, 2017). In other words, a code is a system of symbols that could communicate meaning. Television, as a channel, is filled with meanings. For Fiske, TV is the “bearer, provoker, and circulator of meanings and pleasure” (Ibid.). Fiske categorized these codes into three (3). These are *reality, representation, and ideology*.

Reality “is encoded by certain social codes that relate to appearance, speech, sound, and setting” (O'Donnell, 2017). It is a product of cultural codes (Mambrol, 2019). O'Donnell (2017), in her book on Television Criticism broke down appearance, speech, and setting into specifics.

Appearance	Skin color, clothing, hair, make-up, speech, facial expressions, and gestures
Speech	Spoken language, accent, dialect, formal, or vernacular style
Sound	Natural sounds (e.g., wind and rain)

	Artificial sounds (e.g., sirens, music)
Setting	Place and Objects

On the surface, finding meanings on these codes, require more information for one to arrive at a certain conclusion. Furthermore, these social codes are subject to multiple interpretations, and it depends on who is the decoder. On the other hand, when these social codes are the elements in a TV program, they are then encoded by the next level, which is representation.

Representation codes are encoded through the technical aspects of TV, such as the camera, lighting, sound, music, and editing. The encoding process “transmits conventional representational codes for the purpose of conveying the elements such as narrative, conflict, character, action, dialogue, setting, casting, etc. “(O’Donnell, 2017). Collectively, these elements comprise the television style. It is through these technical aspects that TV viewing is enjoyed. Communicating reality or naturalness is one of the major considerations at this level. Social codes must be represented realistically. In other words, social codes must align with the culture known to the viewers. Cultural codes that are buried or embedded in representation are best explicated at the third level, known as ideology.

Pernia (2004) argues that the confluence or combination of technical and cultural representational codes reflect socially acceptable values, such as materialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and other racial and class values of the dominant social group, from which emanates ideological codes. Coherence and social acceptability make up ideological codes (O’Donnell, 2017). Social, representational, and ideological codes converge to create a preferred meaning supported by ideology. As in the case of Korean drama, it patronizes the ideology espoused by Confucianism. The values such as

“honorifics, ancestral worship, and social conventions” are embedded in the narratives (Jackson, 2017). To communicate these ideologies, social and representational codes are encoded, which in turn shape the ideology.

During the decoding process, which includes interpretation and meaning-making, the concept of pleasure is experienced by the decoder. O'Donnell (2017) notes that by experiencing pleasure, the viewer is liberated from ideological dominance and, by doing so, enables him to make his own meaning and interpretation. The social identities of viewers play an important role in the choices they make about what to see and sense. "The concept of pleasure is another indicator that viewers make active choices regarding the meanings they decode" (Ibid.).

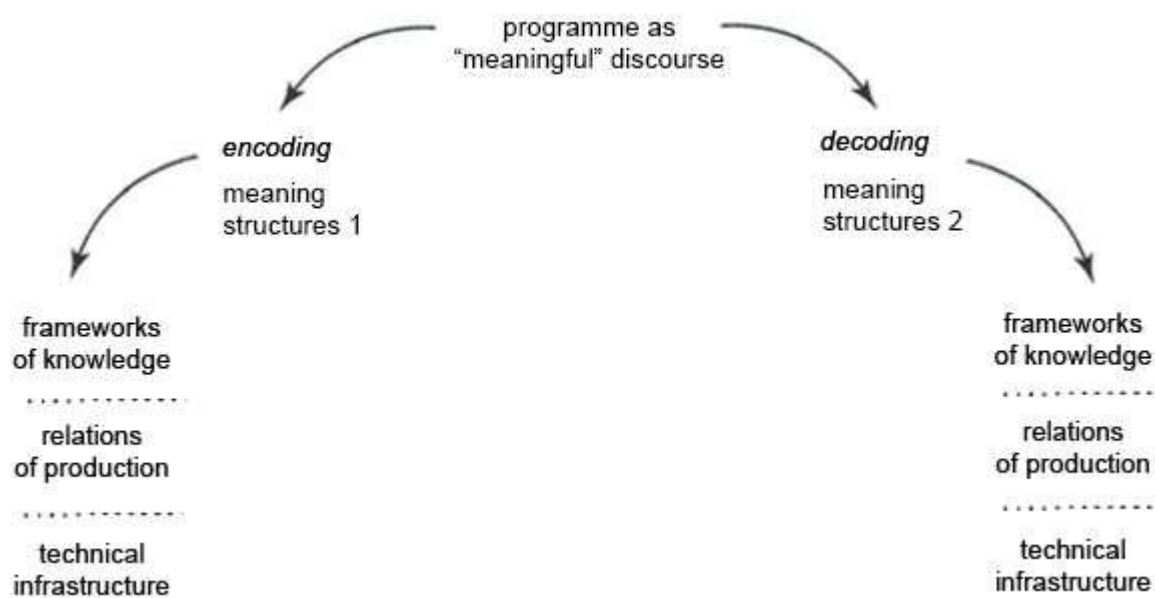
Stuart Hall's Model of Encoding and Decoding

Hall introduced a four-stage theory of communication. These are production, circulation, use (distribution or consumption), and reproduction (Co, 2015). These stages are independent or autonomous of each other. Autonomous, according to Hall, means that “the coding of the message does control its reception but not transparently; each stage has its own determining limits and possibilities” (“Stuart Hall Encoding Decoding,” n.d.). Hall further explained that messages have “a complex structure of dominance because each stage is imprinted by institutional-power relations” (Ibid.). The traditional communication process is viewed as linear, and it has been criticized. Truth be told, the process of communication is a “complex structure in dominance”, which is only sustained through the expression of interrelated practices (production, circulation, distribution, consumption, and reproduction). These practices have their own modes, structures, and requirements for their reality.

Stuart Hall is credited for his perspectives and theories on the reception of messages by their audiences. The encoding and decoding model was created as a form of critique to the earlier schools of behaviorism and positivism, which espoused the idea that if the audience cannot decipher or decode the message, there is a failure of communication. For Hall, it is not a failure of communication; instead, it is systematically distorted communication. This happens when the meaning that the encoder wants to convey does not match the interpretation of the decoder (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1.

Stuart Hall's Encoding and Decoding Model



Barlibo (2020) explained that for Hall “the process of communication is the process of meaning and messages being organized through codes”. In the process of creating and organizing the message, there are determinate moments, or these are periods where the underlying meaning is determined. The determinate moments are encoding and decoding. The underlying meaning embedded in the message is in discursive form, or it is “constructed within a discourse” (Ibid.).

In the process of encoding, the discourse in which a particular message is encoded is composed of frameworks of knowledge, relations of production, and technical infrastructure. For example, in Korean dramas, before the message is encoded or before it can be called a full-blown drama discourse, the production needs to have the frameworks of knowledge “concerning the routines of the production, historically defined technical skills, professional ideologies, institutional knowledge, definitions and assumptions, assumptions about the audience, and frame the constitution of the program through this production structure” (Stuart Hall Encoding and Decoding, n.d.). Relations of production come into play when the production team “draws topics, treatments, agendas, events, personnel, images of the audience, and definitions of the situation from other sources and other discursive formations within the wider socio-cultural and political structure of which they are a differentiated part” (Ibid.). Technical infrastructure refers to the equipment, products, and materials that are used for the message to be transformed into a television code, like, for example, in Korean dramas, where sets and costumes are important for the drama to communicate the message realistically or naturally.

Similarly, in decoding, the discourse is still comprised of frameworks of knowledge, relations of production, and technical infrastructures. Although, the experience is different for the encoder and the decoder. The decoder for example has knowledge of the genre of the Korean drama he is watching, and he is able to share and discuss the episodes with his friends or fellow fans which affects the way he interprets the message.

Even if the discourses are made up of the same elements, they operate in different ways because the nature of encoding and decoding is entirely different from each other. For Karl Marx, in the production process, the encoding aspect is predominant than the consumption because the production is the starting point of the message (Co, 2015).

However, the encoding process may limit the decoding process, but it cannot prescribe a certain way to decode the message (Barlibo, 2020).

Furthermore, one of the characteristics of a message or a text is polysemy which means it has multiple meanings or it can be interpreted in several ways. “Fiske argues that polysemy is a necessary feature of truly popular media culture, since the more potential meanings there are, the greater the chance of appeal to different audiences and to different social categories within the total audience” (McQuail, 2005). In the context of Korean drama, the idea of Fiske is relevant. The drama text is filled with “potential meanings” encoded by its creators. This could be an explanation why the audience of Kdrama is not just limited to Asian audiences, but it also appeals to other audiences with different cultures as well. Newcomb (1991), as cited by McQuail (2005) affirms Fiske’s idea, he said that “texts are constituted out of many different languages and systems of meaning such as codes of dress, physical appearance, class and occupation, religion, ethnicity, region, social circles, and many more”. In short, in Korean drama for example, the way they use their language and how the characters interact with each other in the narrative bear many meanings in relation to any or several of these other languages.

In relation to polysemy, there are two important concepts in communication. These are the denotation and connotation. Denotation is the literal meaning while connotation is sort of an association of a meaning to a certain sign. According to Hall, these two concepts, are not realistic in the sense that reading of meanings is not limited in the surface or superficial levels, but it always delves on the connotative meanings. However, it is also important to know the distinction between the two because readers of the text could distinguish in “a certain society and culture what is general accepted as literal or connotative” (Barlibo, 2020). The society creates the dominant cultural order. In other words, societies input a map of preferred meanings or preferred readings. “The

discourses of particular examples of media content are often designed or inclined to control, confine or direct the taking of meaning, which may in turn be resisted by the reader" (McQuail, 2005). In other words, "it is the preferred readings that are identified by analysis of overt content- the literal or surface meaning plus the ideology" (Ibid).

The focus of this dissertation is on the encoding process rather than decoding. The interpretation of the text will be based on the reading and not on the production experience. The emphasis of this study is on how Korean and Filipino serial dramas are constructed and how they are communicated to the viewer.

Jacques Lacan Psychoanalytic Film Theory

French Psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan was always mentioned in the accounts of Marxist Louis Althusser. Hence, Lacan inspired the first wave of psychoanalytic film theorists' Christian Metz, Jean Louis Baudry, and Laura Mulvey. The first wave focused on "formal critique of cinema's dissemination of ideology and especially the role of cinematic apparatus in the process" (McGowan, 2011). Through the years, there is a transition in the focus of psychoanalytic film theory from "looking for ideology in the cinematic apparatus to its filmic structures" (Ibid).

Lacan's contribution to psychoanalytic film theory is the concept of the "mirror stage," which is relevant to this study. Lacan introduced "Lacan's Infant and Cinematic Spectators". The concept states that "the mirror stage occurs in infants between 6 and 8 months of age, when they misrecognize themselves while looking in the mirror" ('Cinema Mirror', 2022). Christian Metz and Jean-Louis Baudry got their inspiration from Lacan and used his theory to explain their own version of psychoanalytic film theory. "The film screen serves as a mirror through which the spectator can identify himself or herself as a coherent and omnipotent ego" (Ibid.). The spectator identifies its power with the camera. The camera gives the spectator the illusion that he has control over what he sees. In cinematic

discourse, the camera serves as the eye of the viewer and is hidden from the spectator. Once the presence of the camera is made known to the spectator, he loses his power and instead becomes a part of the cinematic event. The spectator now has a sense of awareness that the "film is a product and not simply reality" (Ibid.). This is the reason why there is film editing in order to show the viewers the "supposed" reality. "The cinematic experience perpetuates this ideological deception through the mirror relationship it sets up for the spectator" (Ibid.). To relate Lacan's concept to this study, the TV dramas featured set up their mirror for the audience, and this perpetuates ideological deception in the sense that the audience experiences "an illusion of controlling an event that is not actually under one's control" (American Psychological Association, 2022). There is an illusion of agency in this case. To illustrate this more clearly, TV dramas offer viewers different ideologies, and they want the viewer to accept these ideologies while hiding their real purpose. The viewer thinks that he is part of the creative process when, in fact, he is not. Hence, to avoid being subjugated by the process, there is a need to unearth the meanings that are hidden. By doing so, power is regained because of this awareness.

Political Economy

The concept of political economy as a branch of communication was also utilized as one of lenses in this dissertation. This kind of approach in studying media focuses on "the ways in which media is produced distributed and consumed, rather than on analyzing the interpretations of the signs and symbols found within the text" ("3.1 political economy – Media and society: Critical approaches," 2023). The term politics and economy cannot be separated because they interact in several ways and means. Using this lens, one will be able to understand the complex interactions between "nation states, international organizations, legal institutions, frameworks, cultural traditions and heritages, media corporations, technologies and economic pressures" (Ibid). In the context of this study,

the production culture of the Koreans and Filipinos can be understood and contextualized using these lenses. The quality of these dramas could not just be attributed to the formalists and narrative elements but also to the political economy which surrounds the production, both of which could also help explain the context.

There are four central characteristics that further define Political Economy Communication according to Mosco (2009). These are history and social change; social totality; moral philosophy or ethics; and praxis.

History and social change refer to looking at the subject and tracing its roots and comparing it to the present day. The goal is to find out who spearheaded social change. Social totality means looking at the whole picture and incorporating economic, social, and cultural aspects into the analyses. By doing so, the missing aspect of the society is determined, which will result in identifying a possible solution to address the issue. Moral philosophy, on the other hand, delves into “assessing the moral implications of a situation and how it impacts society as a whole. And lastly, praxis, according to Mosco (2009), is a combination of practice and theory. Praxis looks into action and intervention.

The beginnings of the modern political economy could be traced back to the scholarly work of Adam Smith and Dave Ricardo. The concept of political economy during the 18th and 19th centuries could be best explained as "the value of the goods and commodities produced is directly related to the amount of labor that goes into making the product" (Ibid.). Karl Marx took an interest in the theories of Smith and Ricardo, and so he published *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. The concepts such as commodity, surplus-value, and labor theory of value, which are fundamental aspects in understanding the context of political economy, were discussed in his book. Up until now, these concepts have been relevant in understanding media systems.

Douglas Kellner and Meenakshi Gigi Durham (2001) introduced a political economy approach to understanding modern media systems, which is very relevant in this dissertation. According to this approach, “cultural production and distribution are accordingly profit- and market-oriented in such a system”. Furthermore, there are times in which the textual analysis cannot cover all aspects of the culture that is being established. Hence, it is best if “the system of culture in which they are produced and distributed can help elucidate the features and effects of the texts.”

The culture industry emanated from the thoughts of Frankfurt scholars Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1944). The culture industry refers to the organized production wherein cultural goods are said to be "mass-produced, homogenized, and easily consumed, which results in an influx of a passive society that accepts the ideologies thrown at them and that they are easily manipulated". To be able to apply this to the contemporary situation of the media system, a cultural industry is not a single entity but rather should be termed a cultural industry. These cultural industries, which can be referred to as TV networks and content creators, compete for the "time, attention, and resources of those consuming their goods and services". This is the reason why audience viewership and ratings exist. The purpose is to measure the number of audiences that watched the programs produced. Programs and contents were produced in a manner that will be appreciated by the audience, and the values espoused are aligned with their own. Bernard Miege and David Hesmondhalgh (1989) emphasized that "each industry operates using its own logic and emphasizing particular types of products and particular ways of producing them". There is an interplay between society and the content, which means "these industries influence and are influenced by society at large through the content and matters of policy and law". Hence, in the context of this study, the production

culture of K-dramas and Filipino drama series could be very well understood using a political economy approach.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design of this dissertation is qualitative. Creswell (2013) defined Qualitative research as research that begins with “assumptions and the use of interpretive and theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or group ascribe to social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change” (Creswell, 2013, p. 66).

Creswell (2013) went beyond the usual conceptual definition of qualitative research. He added pertinent details such as data gathering, and data analysis methods used in qualitative research. This dissertation used the social constructivism framework as a guide. This interpretive framework's ontological philosophical assumption speaks of "multiple realities as being constructed through lived experiences and interactions with others." Its epistemological assumption posits that “reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched” (Ibid.). It uses "inductive emergent ideas", which are obtained from various methods such as interviewing, observing, and analyzing text. In this dissertation, multiple realities can be obtained through the interaction of the researcher and the texts.

Close reading was employed to analyze the Filipino series and Kdrama texts in order to extract the socially shared meanings. Close reading is defined as "a mindful, disciplined reading of an object with a view to a deeper understanding of its meaning" (Brummett, 2019). In this kind of approach, the "texts or messages" were closely read. The texts read in this research were *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* (Yoon In Sik, South Korea, 2022) for the Kdrama text and *House Arrest of Us* (Richard Arellano, Philippines, 2020) for the Filipino series.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo was examined based on its various formalist elements, which are divided into two categories: technical and narrative. The results were then be compared to *House Arrest of Us*. The purpose of this method was to know how Kdramas are communicated using a formalist and narrative lens and to compare it to how Filipinos construct their own text. Both texts were analyzed based on their contexts and actions, which contributed to meaning making. By doing so, the goal of "communicating the insights about the meaning of the text will be achieved" and likewise the target of theorizing a framework or theory for TV drama will be realized (Brummett, 2019). Aside from close reading, the lens of the political economy of communication was used to explain the context behind the meaning-making of the sampled texts.

Texts

Extraordinary Attorney Woo

This Kdrama has 16 episodes and began airing on Netflix on June 29, 2022. It follows the story of a lawyer in the spectrum who has an IQ of 164 and exhibits an autistic trait called echolalia. Her condition resulted in her being socially isolated from the community. "It has been Netflix's most watched non-English show for over a month, following a path blazed by fellow South Korean smash *Squid Game*" (*Agence France-*

Presse, 2022). As of August 2022, a month after its airing, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* registered an "additional 53.89 million hours of views and sits at the 6th spot on the most popular list (as of the writing) with 369.66 million hours viewed" (Hicap, 2022).

This Kdrama tackled the sensitive issue of autism, which sparked debates in South Korea. "Some families of autistic people in South Korea have described the show as pure fantasy, saying that the character of Attorney Woo is unrealistic" (Agence France-Presse, 2022). However, contrary to the claim that story is pure fantasy, and that Woo is a fictional character, her condition, high functioning-autism, actually exists in the South Korean community (Ibid.).

Extraordinary Attorney Woo was written by Moon Ji Won, who is known for the drama *Innocent Witness* (2019). *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was directed for TV by Yoo In Sik, who was well known for mounting *Dr. Romantic 1* (2016) and *Dr. Romantic 2* (2020) as well as *Vagabond* (2019). He was also tasked with directing Season 3 of *Dr. Romantic*. Yoo was also awarded Best Director for Dr. Romantic in the 53rd Baeksang Arts Awards.

House Arrest of Us

House Arrest of Us (2020) is a Filipino digi-movie series that stars Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla, better known as KathNiel in the Philippine Entertainment Industry and to their fans. Its pilot episode aired on October 2020 and ended in January 2021. This drama is composed of 13 episodes and is airing on Netflix, ktx.ph, and IWantTFC.

This digi-series was mounted using film style according to lead actor Daniel Padilla, which, according to Padilla, was "the first time that when we shoot the scenes, we do it in film style" (WuzzUp.ph, 2020).

This series was acquired by Netflix even before the 13 episodes were completed according to Crystal San Miguel, one of the writers. “*We’re very grateful this early na na acquire na ng Netflix at nagustuhan na nila yung napanood nila kahit hindi pa tapos yung 13 episodes (We’re very grateful because Netflix acquired the series this early and they like it even though the 13 episodes are still ongoing)*”, he had mentioned (Villano, 2021).

Similar to the Korean drama text, *House Arrest of Us* held the number one spot in Netflix Philippines’ top ten most watched content in the country when it premiered on Netflix last February 2021 (ABS-CBN Corporate, 2021).

This series was written by a group of writers headed by Carmi Raymundo Raymundo, well known for her works *Hello, Love, Goodbye* (2019), *Starting Over Again* (2014), and *One More Chance* (2007). She won a Star Award as Movie Screenwriter of the Year for her movie *Hello, Love, Goodbye* (2019). She also has a total of 20 nominations given by various award-giving bodies such as *Star Awards for Movies*, *Asian Academy Creative Awards*, *FAP Award*, *FAMAS Awards*.

Meanwhile, it is directed by Richard Arellano. He is credited for the following dramas: *The Iron Heart* (2022), *Flower of Evil* (2022), *Ate ng Ate Ko* (2020), *Make it with You* (2020), *Bagani* (2018), and *La Luna Sangre* (2017).

Data Collection Method

This dissertation used TV drama, specifically Korean and Filipino dramas, to collect data. Each episode in the selected dramas was examined and underwent a close reading. The data collection method commenced in January 2023 and ended in April 2023. The 16 episodes of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* were viewed first. The first round of viewing was for the purpose of coding the technical data. Another round of viewing was intended to code the narrative data. After completing the Korean drama, *House*

Arrest of Us was viewed. The same process was used in this phase. During the viewing process, frames were paused in order to have a clear view of the scene for meaning extraction.

TV dramas are considered artifacts and materials; they are "important sources of information because these store ideas, cultures, communal beliefs, and values, or personal minds" (Abila and Fernandez, 2020). As such, aside from the TV dramas, documents and written literature were utilized in order to "provide objective and material evidence" that will support the close reading strategy.

Data Collection Procedure

This dissertation used close reading in order to interpret meanings embedded in the text, and at the same time find out emerging roles and processes. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*'s 16 episodes on Netflix were viewed first for the initial reading. Data collection began with episode 1, and during the viewing process, initial observations were noted on the matrix prepared. The 16 episodes were reviewed again for the clarification of the findings. No limits were imposed on the review of the dramas; the episodes were watched repeatedly to double-check interpretations and notes. Furthermore, written literature and documents were consulted to support the initial results. After this, the 13 episodes of *House Arrest of Us* were viewed. It followed the same procedure as the previous text. After the two dramas were viewed and reviewed, the writing of the results and interpretation began.

Data Analysis Technique and Procedure

This dissertation used qualitative data analysis, specifically close reading. Close Reading offers two approaches to the analysis of the text: these are the deductive and

inductive approaches. For this study, the inductive approach was used. According to Brummett (2019), the inductive approach deals with "working from the 'bottom up' examining a specific text to see what can be learned that will be useful... beyond this textual experience". A "theory may eventually be formed that provides people with a map to the territory of that text" (Ibid.). Different techniques were utilized in the close-reading analysis. Among these were examining the form, which included narrative, coherence and sequence, tension and resolution, alignment, and opposition. It also analyzed genre, persona, politics, ideology, and argument, and tropes. The goal of this dissertation was to formulate a theory or a framework in drama that will be helpful in the institutionalization of a creative economy in the Philippines.

After the data collection, the data were analyzed and interpreted from May 2023 to June 2023. The notes and observations underwent thematic analysis in order to identify and interpret the themes that emerged during the analysis. The themes that emerged during the analysis were placed in different columns of the matrix created. The notes and observations were then categorized according to the different themes in the matrix.

The major themes for the technical elements (Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Lighting, Production Design, Graphics Design, and Audio Design) were already determined by the researcher prior to data collection to serve as guide in identifying what technical elements to examine in the episodes.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion begin with the title of the drama, plot summary, main characters, director, screen writer, and genre to give context to the sampled texts.

Korean Drama

Extraordinary Attorney Woo was aired on Netflix in 2022. It garnered positive reviews among critics and viewers alike because of the way Attorney Woo was portrayed as an autistic lawyer and how the plot intertwined with the various social issues tackled. Netflix categorized the drama as Courtroom TV/ legal drama and social issue drama. In websites, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*'s genre is a legal drama. The genre dictates the tropes and the presentation of the plot/story. Since this is a legal drama, it is expected to tackle legal cases. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* stuck to the standards of the genre of a legal drama. In its 16 episodes, it presented a total of 14 cases. The cases are controversial and perhaps significant in Korean society. It bravely told such stories as those persons with autism, the plight of the LGBTQ++ community, academics in Korea, heritage conservation, gambling proliferation, adultery, mental disability, and sex. This legal drama is unique for having a female lawyer with an autistic spectrum disorder as the protagonist.

Yoo In-Sik is the director of this drama. He is known for directing Korean dramas such as *Dr. Romantic 1* (2016), *Doctor Romantic 2* (2020) and *Vagabond* (2019). He won two Baeksang Art Awards for his creative works: *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* (2022) and *Dr. Romantic 1* (2016). The Baeksang Awards, "honor excellence in South Korean film television and theater" (MacDonald, 2023). This is one of the most prestigious awards in South Korea. On the other hand, the "Best Drama Daesang Award (Grand Prize) was

presented to Park Eun-bin for her role as Woo Young-Woo in in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*” (Ibid).

The screen writer for this drama was *Moon Ji-Won*. She is popularly known for penning the following Kdramas: *Innocent Witness* (2019), *Rabbit Hole* (2012) and *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. She was nominated for Best Screen Play for her TV drama *Innocent Witness* (2019) in the 2019 *BaekSang Awards*.

Table 1 presents the profile of the Kdrama, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*.

Table 1.

Korean Drama Profile

Drama Information	
Title	Extraordinary Attorney Woo
Plot Summary	A newbie lawyer on the autism spectrum starts working for a big law firm. Through her cases, her unique insights on the world as she handles legal cases are revealed and she makes friends along the way, learns to resolve relational conflicts, and falls in love for the first time (Dramabeans, 2022).
Main Characters	Park Eun-bin as Attorney Woo Kang Tae-Oh as Lee Junho Kang Ki-young as Atty. Jung Myungseok
Director	Yoo In-Sik
Screenwriter	Moon Ji-Won
Gen	Drama, Courtroom TV, Korean, Social Issue (Netflix, 2022)
Number of Episodes	16

Deconstruction of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* Based on Technical and Narrative elements

The Korean drama *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was deconstructed in terms of its cinematography, directing, editing, production design, graphics, lighting, and audio design. These were the focus of the close reading analysis under the technical elements category because these components are the top-most consideration in the TV program production process. Owens (2016) enumerated the important aspects of planning and performance: “shooting the action, video recording, additional image sources (graphics, animations, video effects), program sound, lighting, set and scenic design, make-up and costume and editing.” On top of these activities, the director spearheads the attainment of producing a creative output by effectively combining these elements.

On the other hand, the drama’s narrative element was interpreted based on the concepts culled in various literatures on Korean drama text such as narrative structure, social Issues tackled, familiar conventions, unique and diverse stories, embedding of culture in the narrative and integration of familiar values. These concepts were considered as important aspects that hook audiences on Korean drama. The technical and narrative elements were predetermined before the data gathering process commenced. However, as the close reading progressed, there were themes and concepts which emerged in the text for both technical and narrative elements. Close reading and thematic analysis was used to deconstruct the text and discover the meanings therein.

Technical Elements

Cinematography

The main theme is called Dynamic Visual Rendering: Korean Eye. The cinematography of Extraordinary Woo is dynamic, innovative, combines creative shots, angles and composition, conveyed meaning in the visuals and experiments speed of motion.

The camera is considered as the eye of the viewer. It is through the eye that the viewer is given the opportunity to take a glimpse of the fictional world and to journey together with the protagonist. Korean drama provides an extraordinary eye which enabled the viewers to enjoy every episode because they are treated to a visual delight. Condez (2023) in his lecture pointed out that the “Camera is the representation of the audience. Let the audience experience the story through camera shots. You do not need to explain”.

To contextualize, cinematography is defined as “the work, position, or operation of the camera” (Central Connecticut State University, 2023). The director of photography oversees cinematography. He is “making sure the shots look good and that they have appropriate pace and dynamic visual energy” (Mamer, 2014). In the Korean drama, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the following sub themes emerged during the analysis: dynamic shots, innovative style, creative combination of shots, angles, and principles of composition and meaningful visuals (**Table 2.**).

Table 2.

Cinematography Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Eye: Cinematography	Dynamic Shots
	Innovative Style
	Creative Combination of shots, angles, and Principles of composition
	Meaningful Visuals
	Use of Speed of Motion
	Innovative Style

Dynamic Shots

Dynamic in the context of cinematography is a moving camera. The director of photography in the sampled drama maximized the different types of camera movements: tilting, panning, slow zoom, dollying, tracking, and zoom out. This seems to be a common practice in Korean dramas, where shots are almost always in constant movement. Even if there are times that a show employs steady shots for a couple of seconds, the next frame will employ movement again.

Tilting, for example, was evident in the sampled drama. True to the conceptual definition of tilting which is “used to reveal new elements within the frame” (Mamer, 2014), *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* (2022) used tilting in several of its episodes. One example was in the opening billboard (OBB) where the face of Attorney Woo was kept as a surprise as most shots were taken with her back to the camera. On 1:17:06, however, tilting was used to introduce her before it transitioned into another scene. This may mean that by using tilting you can keep the subjects under wraps before the big reveal. It has a psychological effect on the viewers because their excitement is delayed and so they would want to view some more to satisfy their curiosity.

Another example was in Episode 2 during the wedding scene. In 1:09:16 the bride and the groom were introduced to the guests. The focus of the camera was the crystal chandelier, then the camera tilted down to show the couple on stage. In 1:09:08 the chandelier was defocused, and the couple was the highlight on screen. This may mean that the occasion was lavish and expensive by just merely looking at the crystal chandelier and the stars of the occasion which were the couple on stage.

In Episode 3, 58:52, Kim Jeong Hun was introduced by his mother to Atty. Woo and Atty. Jung. Kim Jeong Hun was a suspect on the death of his brother. He is a big guy,

and he is a person with autism. He was introduced using a medium shot when he entered the door and then it shifted to over the shoulder shot to show the reactions of the two lawyers. Tilt up was used to re-emphasize his presence and visually it created the effect of Atty. Woo looking up at him. It gave the impression that Atty. Woo was looking at a big man because of the effect of tilting.

Extraordinary Atty. Woo was consistent in using the function of tilting in the drama and primarily the purpose was to show something new. This camera movement was used in Episodes 1, 2, 3, 5, 11 and 15.

Panning is defined as a shot “[in] which the camera is simply swivelled horizontally on a tripod (Mamer, 2014). Like titling, panning is used “to reveal new elements within the frame- elements of which the viewer may have been unaware” (Ibid). In the drama, panning was used in several frames.

In Episode 4, 1:03:27, panning was from right to left. The starting point was the defocused wall, and it panned to the left where Atty. Jung was seen sitting on his desk. The previous scene was Lee Junho leaving a gift on the table of Atty. Woo. To shift to a new scene, panning was used.

In Episode 5, 1:02:47, the same panning technique was used. The starting point was the defocused brown wall on the left and the camera went to the right, showing Atty. Kwon Min-woo sitting on his desk.

In Episode 6, 1:01:52, panning was used to reveal graphics. The starting point was on the left, where two lawyers were sitting together with the North Korean defector and the camera moved to the right where the graphics were shown. The graphics explained the relationship of the imprisoned North Korean defectors to the two others suspects. The function of panning was satisfied in the three examples: to show or reveal new information. However, instead of just using panning to reveal something new; the director of

photography made use of blurred walls and added graphics. According to Mamer (2014), with the revelation of new information, “we can create associations, and in some cases, a sense of causality.” Panning was extensively used in episodes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15.

In panning, the viewer was treated to a variety of visuals. This makes the viewing experience enjoyable as it avoids dragging scenes.

Another camera movement which are used in Kdramas is the dolly zoom. This camera movement was used effectively in the movie *Munich* by Steven Spielberg (Studiobinder, 2022). A dolly zoom can be performed using a dolly. A dolly, “is a wheeled vehicle with a camera-mounting device...the more sophisticated designs have seats for the camera operator and the assistant, with movement manipulated by a variety of complex controls” (Mamer, 2014). In the drama, dolly zoom specifically push-in or moving in of the camera to “clarify detail, identify objects of importance, and amplify emotion” (Ibid) was used.

In Episode 6, 42:48, the camera used this technique (push in) in a slow manner to highlight the judges, the prosecutors and the lawyers sitting at the center of the court.

In Episode 15, 1:06:13 the camera was pushing in to show the office set up of Raon and an employee stretching his hands upward then in 1:06:04, the camera was pushing into the employee who just stretched his hands. This sequence established Raon as an IT office and the pushing into the employee indicates that he was the focus of the next sequences. It made the viewers feel close to the scenes and made them believe that they were actually in the office looking at the employee.

The dolly is also used in tracking. Tracking means that the camera is following the subject normally. The dolly is usually positioned on the side to follow the movements of the characters.

In Episode 5, 35:22, Lee Jun Ho and Atty Woo visited Director Hwang in his office. The dolly was positioned on the side, and it followed Lee Jun Ho and Atty. Woo. The dolly, as it moved, passed by the different equipment in the office. This gave the illusion of the viewer actually following the two characters and watching where they were going.

In Episode 1, 27:21, Atty. Woo went to the court for the first time. Atty. Woo was walking, and the dolly was tracking her, passing through the glass doors. “When the camera is mounted on a dolly, it can also move alongside an action in what is called a tracking shot” (Mamer, 2014). The use of the dolly was prominently used in the following episodes: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 15.

Aside from dolly zoom, the drama also used zoom in to magnify the reaction of the subject or to put emphasis on the face of the subject.

In Episode 8, 29:23, the camera zoomed in to the face of Gwang Ho and then transitioned into a flashback. In this case, the zoom was not only used as a magnifying tool but an aid to transition to a new scene or a flashback.

Another example was in Episode 13, 1:00:34, the father of the landlord of Atty. Woo visited her to seek her legal opinion regarding the collection of fee when tourists passed by the access road going to Hwangjisa. The camera zoomed in slowly to the face of Atty. Woo to show her excitement that the court hearing was going to be held in Jeju Island. This excited her because she can see dolphins in Jeju.

Aside from the use of zoom in, zoom out was also used. In Episode 2, 35: 54, the camera was focused on the court logo, and it slowly zoomed out to reveal the face of the judge and the lawyers of both parties. This action gave the audience a glimpse of the scenario where the two parties negotiated.

In Episode 3, 1:08:58, the camera focused on the nameplate of Atty. Woo on the door of her office, and it slowly zoomed out to show that Atty. Woo was looking at her

nameplate intently. In using the zoom out, it gave the audience an opportunity to see something that was hidden from their view. In the first example, the judges and the lawyers were hidden from the audience's sight. While in the second example, Atty. Woo was the one hidden and through zooming out, she was revealed. Zoom out was prevalent in episodes 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16.

The Korean drama has an eye that constantly moves. The movement makes the viewer journey with the character in different milieus and through the roller coaster of emotions. The dynamism of the camera makes Kdrama watching more engaging.

Innovative Style

Innovative, in this context, means the creativity of the director of photography to include shots which look special or extraordinary. The director does not employ the usual MS, CU, or FS but rather gives a fresh approach to the scene.

In Episode 1, 15:57, while Atty. Woo stated her argument in court, news arrived that the plaintiff died while on the way to the hospital. With the use of a dolly, a circular motion was added to the simple close up (CU) of Atty. Woo. This could be interpreted as Atty. Woo's world spinning because of the unexpected news. It made the audience feel Atty. Woo's emotions through the visuals. By opting not to use CU only, the director's addition of this movement innovated the shot. As such, the action gave more meaning to the frame. As Mamer (2014) said, "A shot has to do something because, whatever its content or purpose, its presence will have an impact".

Another example in Episode 2, 1:07:16 showed the bride stepping on her gown, when it slipped. This accident exposed her bosom and the Buddha tattoo on her back. As the groom approached her and attempted to cover her, the shot turned around in 360 degrees and then it went back to the normal angle. The director opted not to just use CU or close up to get the reaction of the bride, he injected the scene with this approach to

show that this particular accident will impact on her life. A simple shot was innovated to aesthetically show the frame composition.

In Episode 5, 1:04: 04, Atty. Woo opened the refrigerator to get water. The camera was placed inside the refrigerator. This kind of shot was very similar to ASMR videos popularized by YouTube. ASMR stands for autonomous sensory meridian response. ASMR was coined by Jennifer Allen in 2010 (Lopez, 2018). These are videos which show “mundane tasks” such as housekeeping, grocery shopping, or even “spraying a water bottle, tapping, stirring a bowl of soup, etc.” (Ibid). These videos, research say, activate ASMR in a person. A viewer who watches homemaking vlogs on YouTube or Facebook reels will find this type of CU shot where the camera is placed inside an enclosed space very common but surprisingly it could also be found in Kdrama.

Another innovative shot is the use of flat lay. In Episode 8, 1:027, Dong Gurami was preparing *gimbap* for breakfast. Atty. Woo slept in her house the previous night because she had a misunderstanding with her dad. The camera was positioned in a high angle shot to show the ingredients of *gimbap*. This is an example of flat lay. According to Innis (2016), the origin of the flat lay “was in the form of knolling, an ingenious organization method first dreamt by Andrew Kromelow, a janitor at the Frank Gehry furniture shop”. In film for example, “flat lay usually appears as an overhead shot, top shot or God’s eye view” (Ibid). This technique is also popularly used in fashion, food, and social media. A flat lay “is simply an image shot directly from above - a bird’s eye view of an array of carefully arranged objects” (Nikon, 2016). Innovative shots were observed in episodes 1, 2, 5, 8, 13, 14, and 15.

Creative Combination of Shots, Angles, and Principles of Composition

Korean drama prides itself on its cinematography and is considered as a standard

even in Filipino productions. Daniel Padilla, the lead actor in the Filipino teleserye *2Good2BeTrue*, appreciated that their show is said to radiate a Kdrama feel specifically in the cinematography aspect, “Nag e-evolve naman yung cinematography natin dahil siyempre, ayaw naman nating mahuli sa lahat - the Koreans and everyone. Lahat naman tayo natututo du’n e, so kailangan nating sumabay...Maganda, at least, na set natin ‘yung bars kung pa’no. Pero hindi pa ‘to ‘yung mataas. Mag e-evolve pa tayo nang mas maganda pa. Simula pa lang ‘to (Our cinematography is evolving. Of course, we do not want to be left behind by the Koreans and everyone else. We all learned from them, and we need to level up with them. At least for now, we have started to raise the bar, but we still need to evolve. This is just the beginning)” (Cruz, 2022). In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* the Korean eye was flawless. It was able to achieve a creative combination of different shots, angles, and principles of composition. In one scene, for example, there are different shots and angles and the shifting of one shot to the other is very quick.

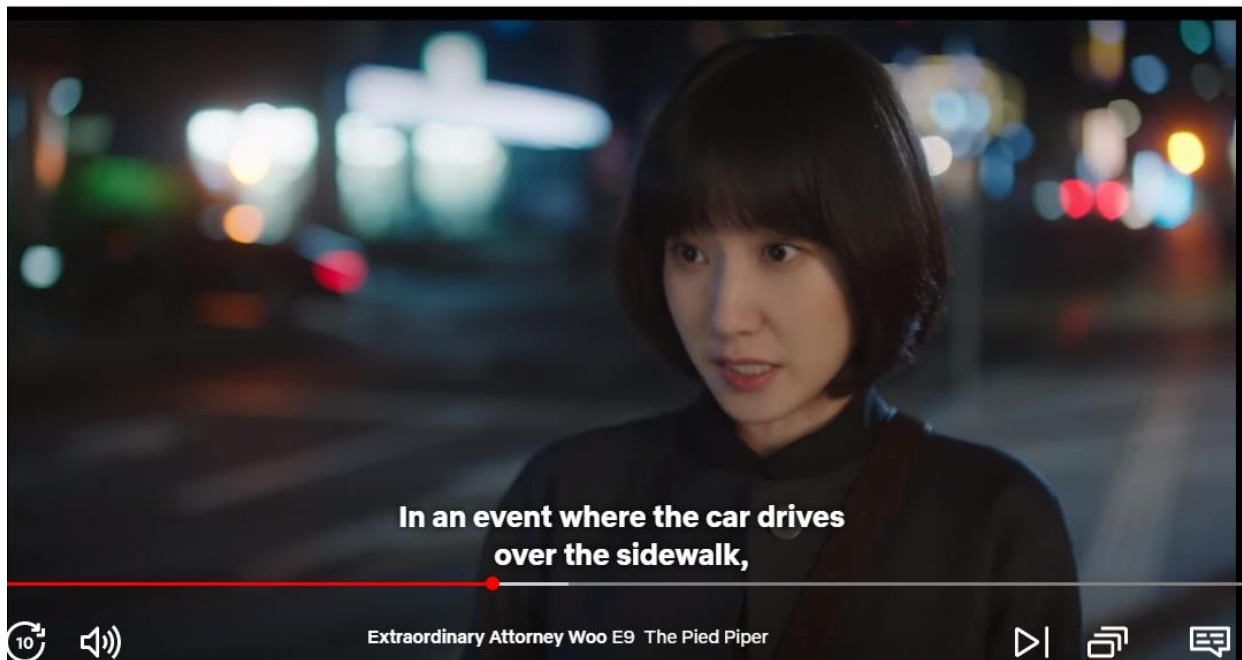
As an example, in Episode 9 of the Kdrama at 1:09:50, the episode began with an aerial view of a school. Cars and a school bus were seen lining up. The camera slowly zooms in to the area. The next shot was a full shot of children running, with some children being fetched by their parents. In that scene alone, there were a total of at least six different shots showing the different scenarios such as children running towards the school bus a child getting inside the bus and children running in different directions. Moreover, it also showed the interior activities in the bus.

Kdramas follow a certain pattern in their cinematography, and this was evident in the different episodes. The shallow depth of field was noticeable especially if the shoot is MCU or medium close up. Shallow depth of field “enables you to isolate a subject spatially, keeping it sharp with blurred surroundings, and avoids the distraction of irrelevant subjects” (Owens, 2016).

In Episode 9, Lee Jun Ho and Atty. Woo were walking on the sidewalk, the shot began with a MS of the two then it shifts to MCU of Atty. Woo. The cinematographer used shallow depth of field in this shot (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2.

MCU shot of Atty. Woo using shallow depth of field



Another example is in Episode 13, 37:16. The lawyers went to Jeju Island for an out of town court hearing. Atty. Jung told the rest of the lawyers that there was a noodle shop in the island which served delicious noodles. But when they went to the place, the noodle shop was already closed. When they left the shot, Atty. Jung looked at the noodle shop intently and he looked disappointed and sad (**Figure 3**)

Figure 3.

MCU of Atty. Jung using shallow depth of field



In a scene where there was more than one character, the scene usually began with a full shot to show the characters then it would shift to an individual MS of the character. It looked like each character had a camera assigned to them to get their reactions. This scene construction is called the master scene technique where the sequence “long shot-medium shot-close up (LS-MS-CU)” is used. It represented “a process of moving closer to the action, of moving from a random view to much more specific information” (Mamer, 2014). The sample is Episode 16, 1:16:55 where there was a meeting among lawyers to discuss their latest case of data breach in Raon. The scene began with a long shot of the lawyers entering the meeting area. When they sat down, the shot was medium shot and then when one of the characters was speaking the shot was medium close up. These scenes show “The elements (people, objects, and places)... presented in the grouping and the order that the director desires to create dramatic and engaging scenes” (Ibid). **Figures 4, 5, and 6** depict these examples.

Figure 4.

Long shot of the conference room

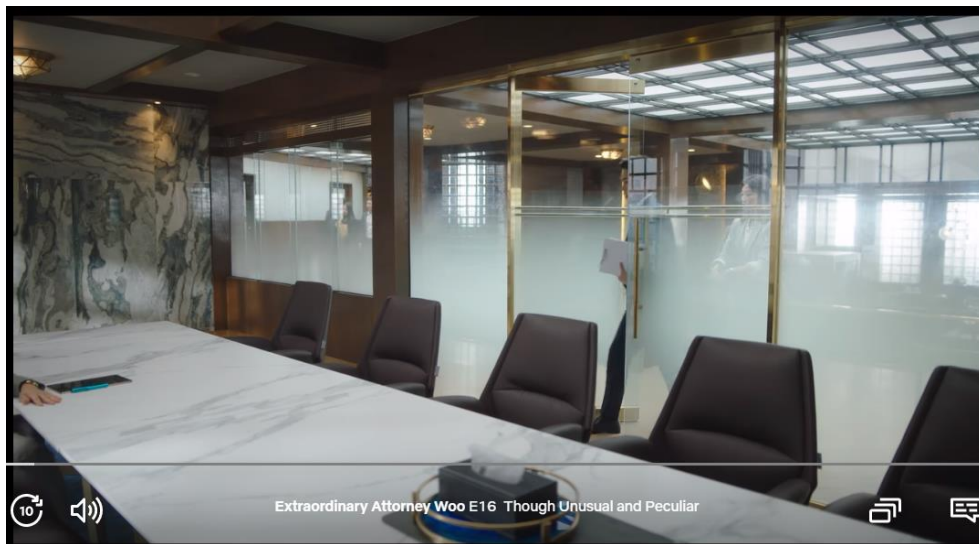


Figure 5.

Medium Shot of the lawyers



Figure 6.

Close up of Atty. Woo

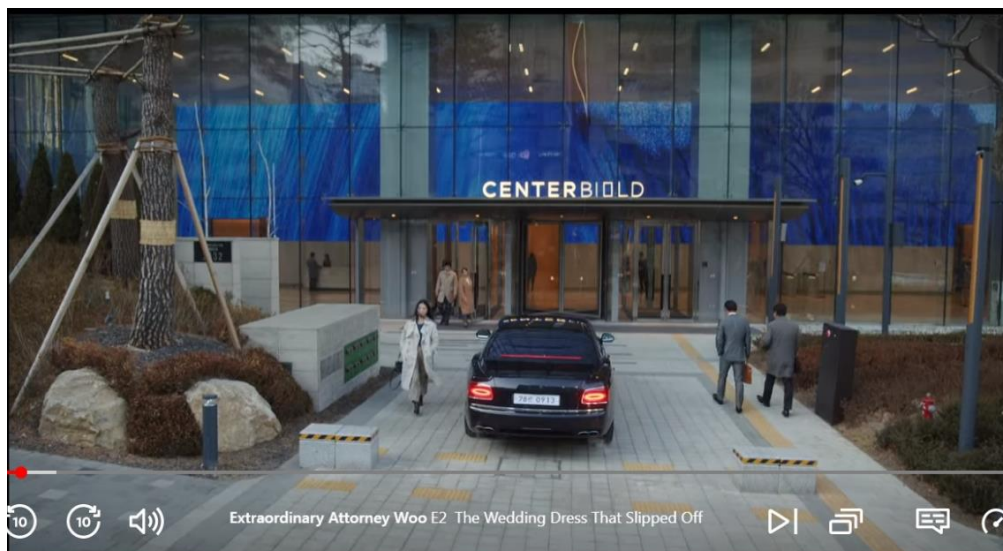
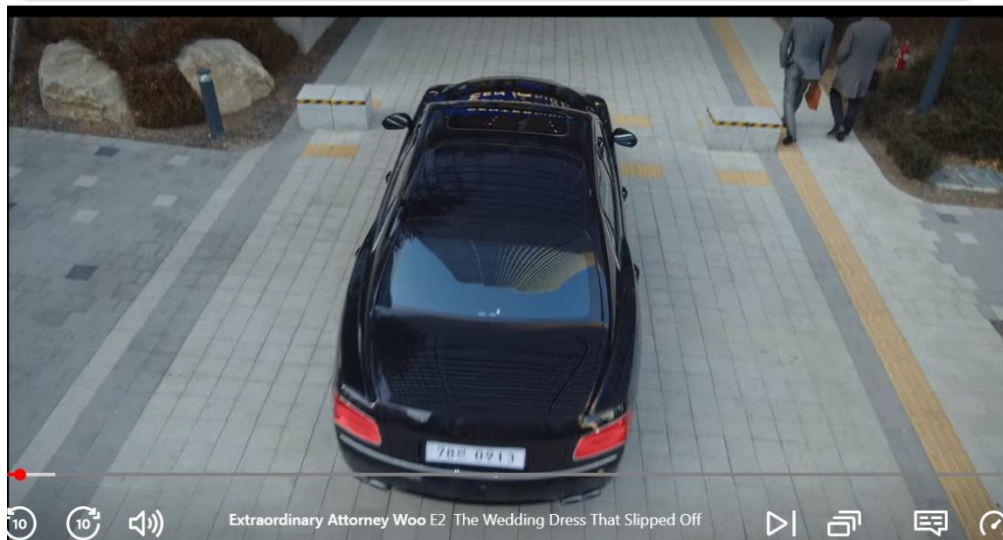


Aside from tilting as a means of introducing a new character, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* also used high angle shot as another variation to this function.

In Episode 2, 1:05: 04, a black car arrived in the scene and the shot was taken from a high angle using a crane or the modern jib arm. "...the crane has full freedom of horizontal and vertical movement (**Figure 7**). The ability to get above or below a subject allows one to vary height in relationship to the subject" (Mamer, 2014). On the other hand, the modern jib arms, "is more compact than the traditional camera crane...it can reach over any foreground objects can support the camera and can move smoothly and rapidly" (Owen, 2016).

Figure 7.

High angle shot as a means of introducing a new character



The crane or modern jib arm are just two of the sophisticated equipment probably used by Koreans in their drama production. They also probably used a camera drone to give the audience a feel of being omniscient. Hence, the bird's eye view was one common angle observable in the sampled drama in relation to the use of crane or modern jib arm.

In Episode 4, 1:08:03, two cars were travelling on the road. The camera drone showed the wide farmland and the travelling cars. It gave a feeling of peeking through the

skies. It was later revealed that the two brothers were riding the cars and their destination was the house of their younger brother (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8.

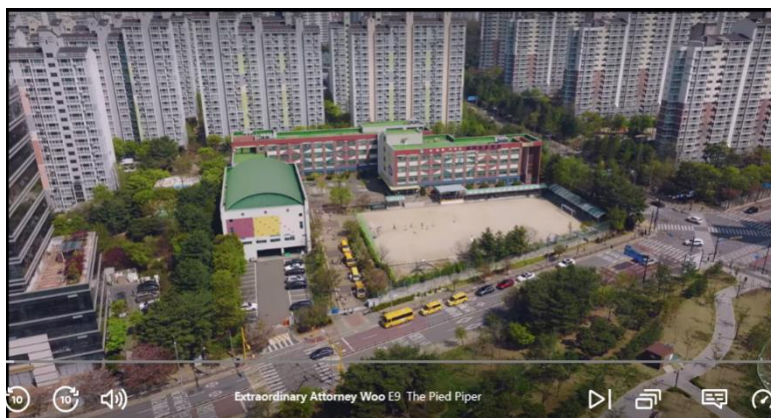
Bird's eye view using camera drone



Another example was in Episode 9, 1:09:50. In this scene, a bird's eye view of the academy where the children study was shown. (**Figure 9**)

Figure 9.

Bird's eye view using camera drone



Another common camera technique used by *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, which contributed to the achievement of creative combination of shots, angles, and principles of composition was the blurring of the foreground in over the shoulder shots. In scenes where characters conversed, this kind of shot was very common. It can be seen in almost

all episodes involving conversation scenes. The director combined over-the-shoulder shots and shallow depths of field. If one were to look at the scene, the speaker in the conversation would be shown prominently on screen because the foreground was blurred. Koreans used the type of OTS shot which is called dirty single, where “there is just a blurred glimpse of the shoulder in the frame, with most of the focus placed on the other character” (Nashville Film Institute, 2023).

In Episode 15, 40:11, there was a conversation between Atty. Jang and Kim Minsik about the data breach that happened in Raon. During their meeting, there was a part of the scene where Atty. Jang talked to Kim Minsik. The shot was over-the-shoulder and Kim Minsik as the foreground was blurred (**Figure 10**).

Figure 10.

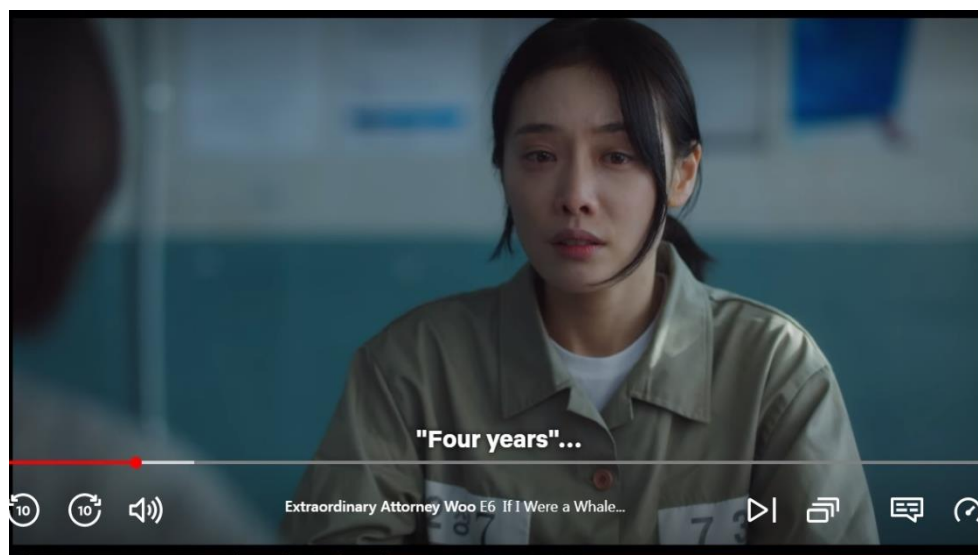
Over the shoulder shot using dirty single



Another example was in Episode 6, 57:55, Atty. Woo and Atty. Choi visited the North Korean defector in prison. They interviewed her about the circumstances that led to her imprisonment. The director once again used the over-the-shoulder shot, specifically the dirty single, in one of the conversations (**Figure 11**).

Figure 11.

Over the shoulder shot using dirty single



One of the most consistent angles used in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was the oblique shot or Dutch angle, in combination with shaking or losing balance in the frame. Usually if this angle is used, danger is about to happen, or the character is experiencing an external or internal turmoil. In oblique shot or Dutch angle, “the camera is tilted laterally on a tripod, so it is no longer parallel with the horizon” (Mamer, 2014). The function of this shot, “is to give an overwhelming sense of the world’s being unbalanced or out of kilter” (Ibid).

In Episode 3, 1:09:24, the parents heard their autistic son screaming. When they opened the door, they saw that he was on top of his brother, lying on the floor. The whole time this scene was playing, the frames were shaking to show the tension happening. The shot was unstable and unbalanced.

In Episode 8, 6:44, Atty. Woo came to meet Tae Soo Mi. She planned to reveal to Tae Soo Mi that she was her daughter. When Tae Soo Mi was not aware yet of what she was about to say, the frame was in its normal angle (**Figure 12**).

Figure 12.

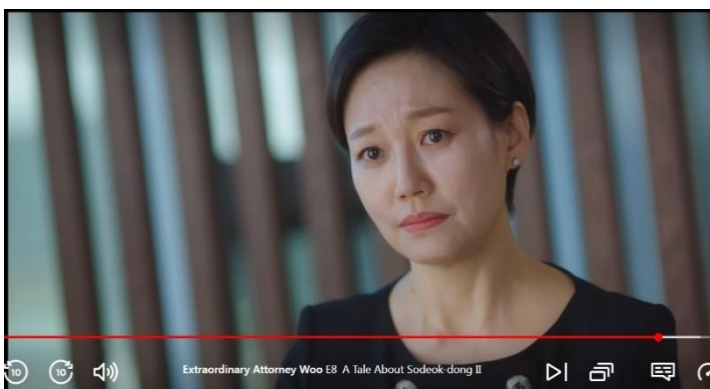
Oblique or Dutch Angle



The background was straight and stable at this point. But when Atty. Woo revealed that she was her daughter, the background bent and showed how Tae Soo Mi was hit by that revelation (**Figure 13**).

Figure 13.

Oblique or Dutch Angle



In the use of this technique, it was able to communicate a lot. This technique showed a scene full of tension because Tae Soo Mi did not expect that the lawyer she was enticing to her law firm was her estranged daughter, the daughter that she abandoned years ago. For Tae Soo Mi, Atty. Woo was a genius and the only person that can face her

head-on during trials. She was caught off guard when Atty. Woo divulged her identity. She was speechless and did not know how to react.

Thus, in using Oblique or Dutch angle, internal emotions were communicated to the viewers without dialogues or lines. The visuals speak a thousand words. The Koreans mastered the art of visual storytelling through the use of various visual elements.

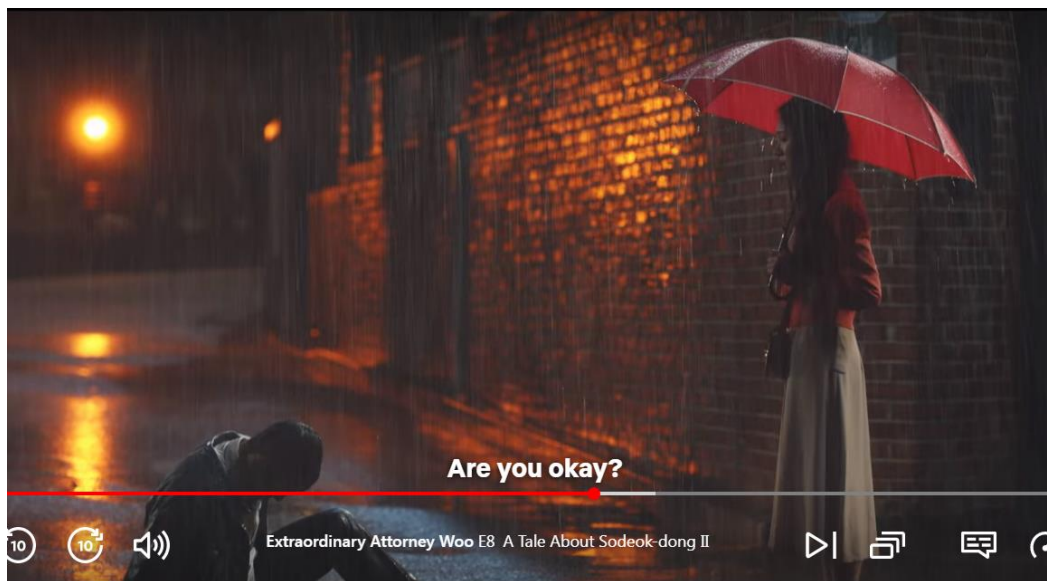
Meaningful Visuals

Meaningful visuals refer to how the *mise-en-scene* creates meaning. *Mis-en-scene* is a French term which means “putting into the scene...it includes those aspects of film that overlap with the art of the theatre: setting, lighting, costume and make-up, and staging and performance” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). In the drama, a meaningful visual was shown in different ways - the position of the actors, the objects, and the kind of shots used in a scene.

In Episode 8, 29:17, the scene was a backstory of Woo Gwangho and Tae Soo Mi in their younger years. This was the time that Tae Soo Mi learned that she was pregnant with Young Woo. Gwangho was begging her to keep the baby. At that time, both were attending law school and the coming of Young Woo was unexpected. It created tension and stress for both as Gwangho explained to Young Woo in the hospital: “political forces were at play that stopped Tae Soo Mi from marrying a guy like him”. The setting was in a street and it was raining hard. Tae Soo Mi was dressed in pink and she had a pink umbrella. While Gwangho was wearing a denim jacket and shirt and was soaked in the rain. He was running after Tae Soo Mi, and he was distraught and crying (**Figure 14**).

Figure 14.

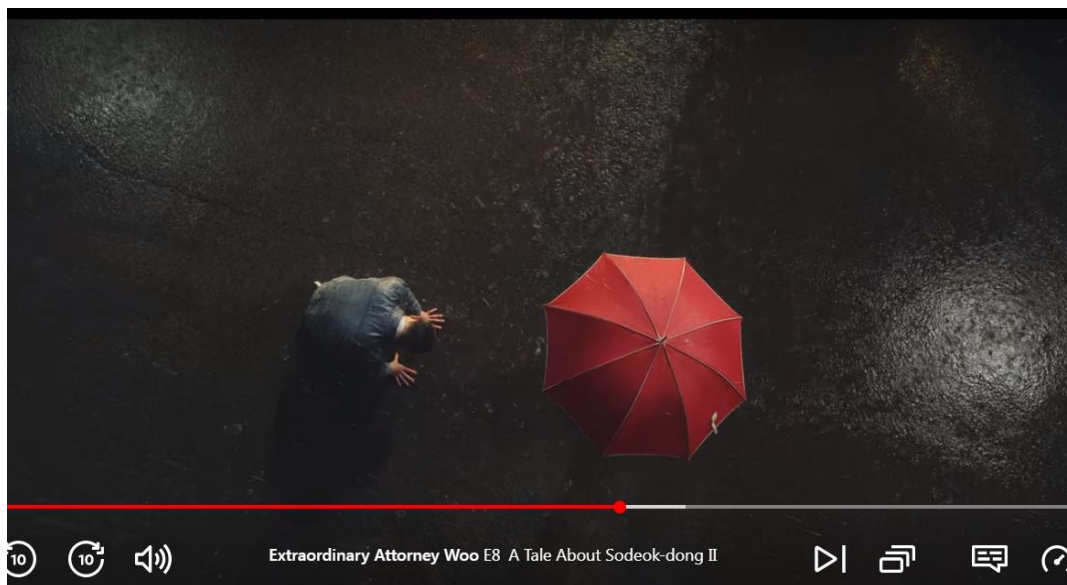
Meaningful Mise-en-Scene



In this scene, Woo Gwangho was in a disadvantageous position. He was on the ground while Tae Soo Mi was standing. Their position in the mise-en-scene reflected their social status in life and their principles. Tae Soo Mi was a daughter of lawyer who owned a law firm while Woo Gwangho was the son of a farmer. She was heaven while he was earth. Tae Soo Mi had a promising future as a lawyer and Gwangho just lost this opportunity because of the circumstances they were in. The orange light that shined added drama to the scene: that despite the rainy and dark atmosphere, there was hope. This kind of lighting is called high-key lighting, which “refers to an overall lighting design that uses fill light and backlight to create relatively low contrast between brighter and darker areas” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013) (**Figure 15**).

Figure 15.

Meaningful Mise-en-Scene



In Figure 15, using high angle shot, it reflected the stand of Tae Soo Mi. The rain stood for the problems pouring on her and Woo Gwangho. The umbrella symbolized her shield against the inconvenient circumstances. She did not want to get wet. She did not want to share Woo Gwangho's burden. On the other hand, Woo Gwangho was willing to get soaked in the rain and face the problem head on. This scene was powerful because it broke cliché: instead of the usual pregnant woman begging for the man not to leave her, it was the man who knelt and begged the woman to keep the baby. The tables have turned, and it broke the stereotype that men in dramas always come from an advantageous standpoint.

Another aspect of meaning was shown in terms of “shaky shots” in moments of trouble and tension. It was used in Episodes 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14 and, 15.

In Episode 10, 19:15, the mother of Shin Hye-young approached Atty. Woo angrily. She was enraged because Atty. Woo spoke before the court regarding the right of the disabled person to love. She said that she wanted to protect her daughter from

predators who take advantage of her body and her money. She mocked Atty. Woo telling her that even as an autistic person, she could not decipher the feelings of the differently-abled. The shots in this scene were shaky as it reflected Atty. Woo's state of mind.

Similarly, in Episode 12, 1:08:26, the husband and wife were discussing their fate in their workplace. The employees were being laid off and it appeared that only the women employees were going to suffer this fate. While the husband and wife were discussing, the camera shot was shaking or uneven. Again, it reflected the emotions of the couple, especially the fear of the future without work. Even without dialogues, the viewer could associate danger with the shots, because the shots were always “shaky” and “unbalanced”. These kinds of shots reflected the emotional turmoil the character is going through. As Condez (2023) has mentioned, “Step back. Let the audience experience the story through camera shots. Empower the audience...trigger their senses”.

Use of Speed of Motion

Slow motion and time lapse are very common terminologies production people always utter. Oftentimes, the manipulation of the speed of motion was attributed to the editor but it will actually “depend on a photographic power unique to cinema which is control over the speed of movement seen on the screen” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). It is the cinematographer's job to achieve this kind of effect. “The speed of the motion presented onscreen depends on the relation between the rate at which the film was shot and the rate of projection” (Ibid).

In Episode 1, 41:16, Lee Jun Ho taught Atty. Woo the art of dancing and counting 1-2-3 so she could conquer her fear of entering and exiting using the rotating door. In the scene execution, the director used slow motion. “...Slow motion footage often functions to suggest that the action takes place in a dream or fantasy...or it could be used for emphasis, becoming a way of dwelling on a moment of spectacle or high drama” (Ibid).

The dancing was a sort of “moment of spectacle”. The director emphasized this scene to show that Lee Jun Ho was someone who will be there for Atty. Woo until the very end. True to this goal, at the end of the series, Atty. Woo was able to conquer her fear and was able to enter the rotating door on her own. Lee Jun Ho was just an instrument for her to take the chance and try things on her own. In all the challenges and victories experienced by Atty. Woo, Lee Jun Ho held her hand and supported her all the way.

In Episode 2, 1:07:56, slow motion was utilized to emphasize the surprised, embarrassed, distraught reactions of the family members of the bride when her gown was stripped off while walking onstage with her groom. The slow motion became key in showing the reactions of the attendees of the wedding. If panning was used, the emotions on the faces could not be captured. Slow motion has a certain degree of power that makes the viewer focus on the scene and feel the emotions. Likewise, this could also add drama to a rather plain scene.

Aside from slow motion, time lapse was also used. Time lapse is a type of speed of motion that “permits viewers to see the sun set in seconds or a flower sprout, bud, and bloom in a minute” (Ibid). To achieve this, “a very low shooting speed is required”.

In Episode 7, Atty. Woo and her colleagues were busy studying the evidence for the case they were handling. Time lapse occurred through her window to show the change in time. The scene started in the evening and was finished in the morning. Attorney Woo was shot with a fast forward motion while she was doing all the reading and highlighting the case materials. This indicated “the hectic rhythms of urban life” (Ibid). The fast forward motion was in sync with the time lapse in the background. In short, both effects were used in a scene simultaneously.

Directing

The directing of *Extraordinary Atty. Woo* is theorized as Skillful Visual Storytelling: Korean Vision, as evidenced by the way the director told the story of Woo Young Woo using visuals, realistic style, and creative approaches.

Korean Vision is the concept formed to describe the kind of directing of Kdrama as reflected in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. It is termed Korean Vision because it is the director that steers the fleet to achieve the objectives set in terms of narrative, cinematography, lighting, production design, casting, and a lot more. If a director failed to have a “vision”, these elements will fail to synergize to produce a quality output.

“The director is responsible for determining the look - the visual character - of the film, rehearsing and organizing the actor’s performances, selecting set-ups and all attendant details, and marshalling all of the forces toward the completion of the material” (Mamer, 2014). As the leader of the drama crew, he is expected to “define the script in terms of both a theatrical, dramatic interpretation and the story’s visual presentation” (Ibid).

In the drama *Extraordinary Atty. Woo*, the following subthemes emerged during the analysis:

Table 3.

Directing Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Vision: Directing	Visual Storytelling
	Realistic Style
	Explore Creative Approaches

Visual Storytelling

In the drama, the director demonstrated his creative vision through visual

storytelling. In the process of commutation, “you take what you see...ilipat ang reality sa something na hindi totoo (transfer reality to fiction)” (Condez, 2023). He added that in films “seeing is better than imagined”. Hence, the director needs to showcase his vision visually. Using the camera as a tool, “the director breaks down the scene into an interrelationship of dramatic perspectives in the form of shots that focus the viewer attention on specific information, characters, dialogue, action and so on (Mamer, 2014)”. The Korean Vision, in *Extraordinary Atty. Woo*, was executed in ways that contribute to meaning making.

First, was the consistency in the communication of a symbol. The whale is a prominent symbol in the drama. In the set-up, the director established early on that when the whale appears, it is the, “eureka moment” for the protagonist (**Figure 16**). During the eureka moment, Atty. Woo would find a solution to the problem presented in the cases that she handled. The sperm whale usually appeared on screen when Atty. Woo entered a trance. Her character set-up was to be a whale lover. One of the characteristics of an autistic person was that she/he is knowledgeable of topics in which she/he is interested. In the case of the drama, Attorney Woo was well-versed when it came to her favorite whales. It should be noted that the characteristics of the whales and sometimes dolphins were connected to the events in a specific episode. In the drama, Atty. Woo mentioned Sperm whales, Killer whales, Blue whales, Right whale, Migratory whales, Indo-pacific finless porpoise, Indo-pacific bottlenose dolphins, Humpback whales, Yangtze River dolphins, Orcas, and Baird’s Beaked whales. In all episodes, information about these whales and dolphins were present except for Episodes 5, 10, 14, and 15. In order to achieve visual storytelling, the director made use of sophisticated CGI or computer graphic imagery of these mammals which could be seen swimming in the Seoul Cityscape, courtrooms, or in the clouds.

The director made sure that his motif for the film is made known. Motif is defined as “any significant repeated element that contributes to the overall form” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). It may be an object, a color, a place, a person, a sound, or even a character trait (Ibid). In the drama, it was an animal – the *whale*.

Figure 16.

Consistent use of the symbol whale in the drama



Second, visual storytelling is through quick changing of shots. This is an editing concern but this was included in this section because the director saw to it that everything is synchronized and synergized. One common observation, in almost all episodes, was the quick changing of shots which also featured different angles and camera positions. In a scene for example, there were at least four to five angles. In the court scene in Episode 11, 32:35 (**Figure 17**), the change of frame happened every two to five seconds. It never stayed on one angle alone. It changed almost every time. The Koreans were consistent in ensuring that the viewers were treated to a visual feast. The quick changing of shots showed that there was so much to see and all angles were covered.

This “quick shift” technique of Koreans was not only limited in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*; this is also a staple in many Korean dramas such as *Crash Landing on You*, *Legend of the Blue Sea*, *The Heirs*, and a lot more modern and historical dramas. It gave the viewer access to the different sides of the scenes. The camera was not only focused on one character alone but it ensured that the reactions of the other characters

were included as well. Their technique for doing this was like directing a musical variety show shots changed frequently in order to avoid boring the audience with new visuals every time. The Koreans wanted to achieve visual variety in this case. “The aim is well balanced blend with variations in pace, tempo, and emphasis” (Owens, 2016). This example scene used the “changes by grouping” technique wherein “visual variety is achieved through isolation, selectively shooting individuals, two-shots, and subgroups” (Ibid).

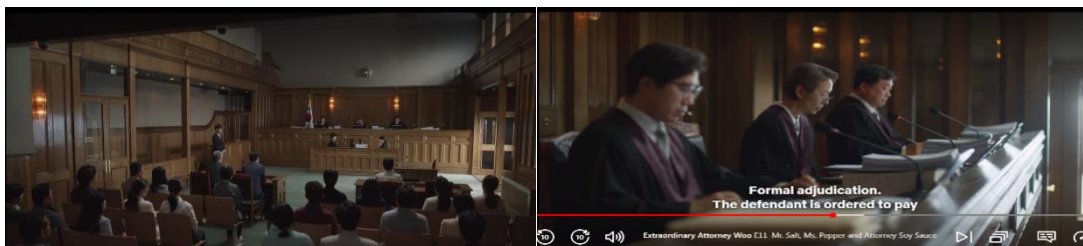
Figure 17.

Illustration of Quick Changing of Shots



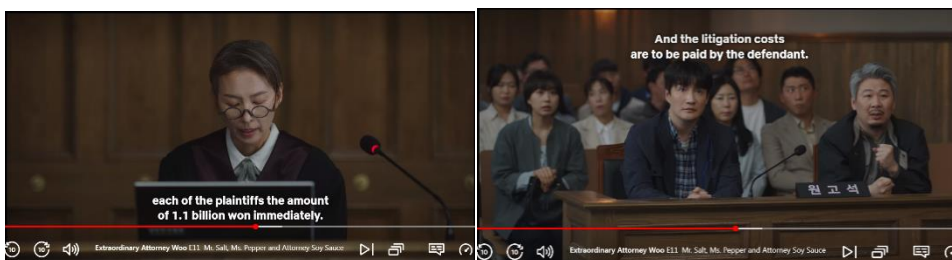
Time stamp: 32: 34

Time stamp: 32:33



Time stamp: 32: 31

Time stamp 32: 28



Time stamp: 32:28

Time stamp 32: 23

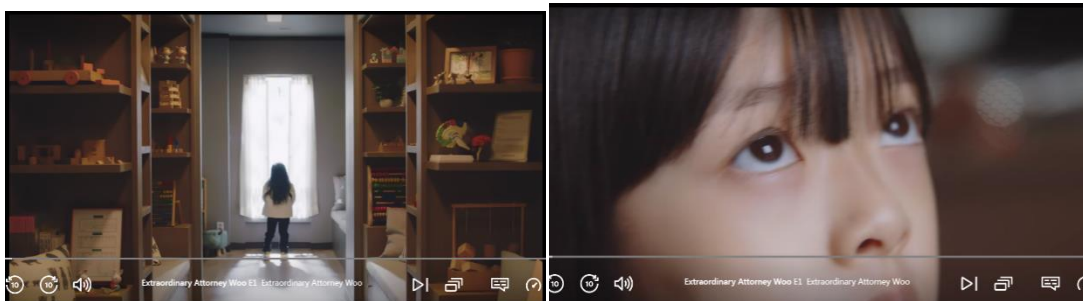
Third, visual storytelling was likewise reflected in the creative decisions of the director in the output in terms of characters, flashback approaches, and temporal order.

Atty. Woo was visualized as the protagonist as early as Episode 1. The director showed how she behaved as a person with autism. She avoided eye contact, exhibited excessive movements, and covered her ears when there was a loud noise. She also ate one kind of dish - gimbap. She had also the compulsion of lining up objects particularly gimbap. The director also established in Episode 1 that Young Woo was a genius. As a child, she could already memorize the provisions of the law. Her autistic behaviors were clearly demonstrated in sequences and scenes. “Most characters wear their traits far more openly than people in real life, and the plot presents situations that swiftly reveal them to us” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The job of the director was to show onscreen these traits through the synergy of different technical elements **(Figure. 18)**

Moon Ji-won, the screenwriter and creator of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, enumerated the characteristics of autistic people and she finds this attractive: “unique ways of thinking, eccentricity, strong sense of justice, straightforwardness, and extremely broad knowledge or memory about certain field of their particular interest.” (Shim, 2022). This was perhaps the basis of the character of Young Woo.

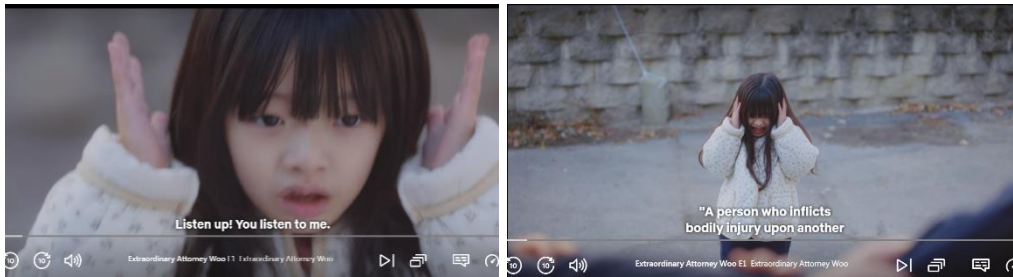
Figure 18

Visual Storytelling of a Character



Young Atty. Woo moving from left to right

She avoids eye contact.



She covers her ears if there is a loud noise She recites a provision from the criminal law book

Fourth, the director used a variety of approaches to show on screen flashbacks or backstories. In a typical backstory, it is in black and white to differentiate it from the current scene. However, in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the director used different approaches to visually tell the backstories or flashbacks. “A flashback is simply a portion of the story that the plot presents out of the chronological order” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

In the sampled drama, in Episode 2, 28:37, Atty. Jung cross-examined one of their witnesses in the case. She was asked if on the day of the fitting, Kim Hwe-jong said something in relation to her gown. The black and white backstory technique was employed to answer the question (**Figure 19**).

Figure 19.

Visual Storytelling Flashback



Another approach to telling the backstory was the use of the voice-over or the narrative voice of the character. In Episode 5, 20:26 (**Figure.20.**), Atty. Woo brought the letter of the CEO of Geumgang ATM, Oh Jin-jong, to Atty. Kwon. The letter commanded

Atty. Woo to read the content. After Atty. Kwon read the instruction, the flashback rolled. The flashback was a combination of re-enactment and narration of Oh Jin-jong. “Narration is the process by which the plot presents story information to the spectator.” (Bordwell & Thompson, 20013). Furthermore, “the narrator may be a character in the story” (Ibid). In the film D.O. A., for example, “the dying man tell{s) his story in flashbacks”.

Figure. 20

Visual Storytelling Flashback



In Episode 9, 57:07, the mother of Bang Gu-pong is telling the lawyers handling their case her flashback of raising Bang Gu-pong (**Figure 21**). She was a single mother whose husband died early but she was able to send her children to Seoul National University. She admitted that she was too busy focusing on other kids that she forgot her own. Instead of a re-enactment flashback, she told the story using the talking head. There was no visual support whatsoever. Although it would have been good to show the flashback visually, the director’s creative decision was just let the viewers interpret the story using the dialogue.

Figure 21.

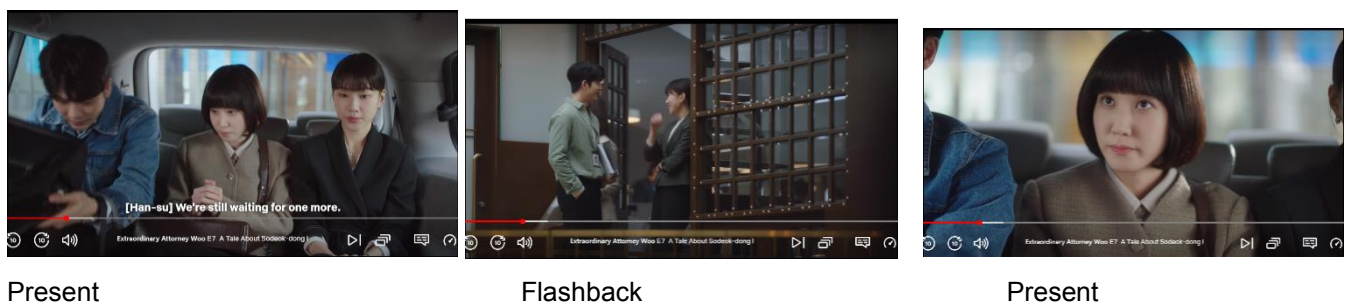
Visual Storytelling Flashback



The director's choice in presenting the flashback followed the pattern of 2-1-3. If the normal flow of narrative is 1-2-3, in *Extraordinary Atty. Woo* it was 2-1-3. This was theorized as the *sandwich pattern* (Figure. 22), in which the present scene plays, then the flashbacks were in between the two present scenes. In deciding which will come first, the director refers to the temporal order of narrative. Directors and filmmakers, "can choose to present events out of the story order" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). By doing so, they can create "complex effects" to the flow of narrative (Ibid).

Figure 22.

Sandwich Pattern



Realistic Style

Visual stereotypes refer to the way "the viewer expects certain things to look" (Mamer, 2014). In production design, for example, "if a script calls for the establishment of an upscale home, certain elements can be used to create that effect". In the context of directing, the execution of a scene must be realistic and believable unless if the genre is comedy. Reality "is encoded by certain social codes that relate to appearance, speech, sound, and setting" (O'Donnell, 2017). Social codes must be represented realistically. In other words, social codes must align to the culture known to the viewers. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, there were two sample instances in which the realistic style of the director was showcased.

In Episode 11, Shin Iisu, after winning the case; decided to divorce his wife. Atty. Woo and Lee Junho happened to visit his wife that day in their restaurant. Shin saw his wife and the lawyers alighted from the restaurant and he decided to cross the road to

reach his wife. Instead of walking, he used his brand new car, and tragedy happened: a truck crashed against his car, killing him. In this particular scene, the director tried to achieve a realistic car crash (**Figure 23**). In the perspective of the viewer, the director was able to achieve his goal. This scene was shot in several angles to show how the accident occurred and how badly the car was hit.

Figure 23.

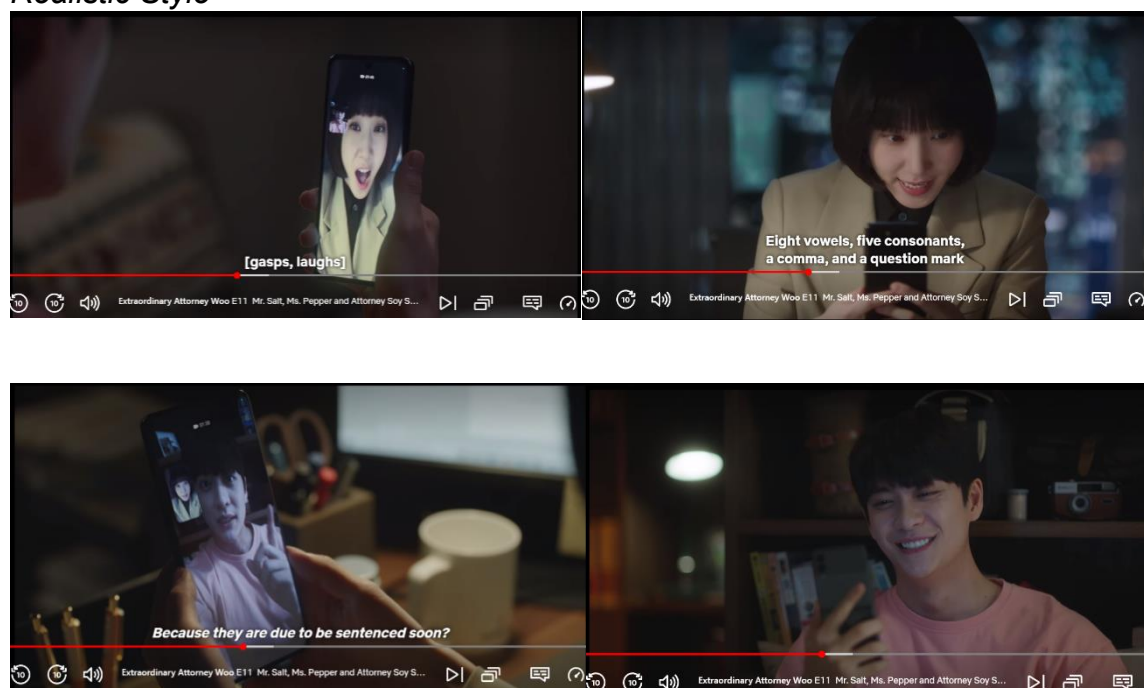
Realistic Style



In another example in Episode 11, Atty. Woo video-called Lee Junho because she missed him. Through this video-call, she told him how her day went and also shared some jokes. The director executed the scene realistically, in which the shots taken by the camera were also the same with what was appearing on the cellphone (**Figure 24**).. There were many options to do this scene, like the usual split screen or the cut to cut. The director, however, opted to present it as realistically as possible. This may be quite challenging because the shots, video call, and editing must sync to achieve a coherent and realistic scene.

Figure 24.

Realistic Style



A director who has a realistic style will most likely satisfy the viewer's expectations of what the scene should look like. It will give the viewer a feeling of authenticity and naturalness because what he is seeing on screen resembles to reality.

Explore Creative Approaches

For the viewer to enjoy the viewing of Korean drama, the television style must be encoded in creative ways. The encoding process "transmits conventional representational codes for the purpose of conveying the elements such as narrative, conflict, character, action, dialogue, setting, casting, etc." (O'Donnell, 2017).

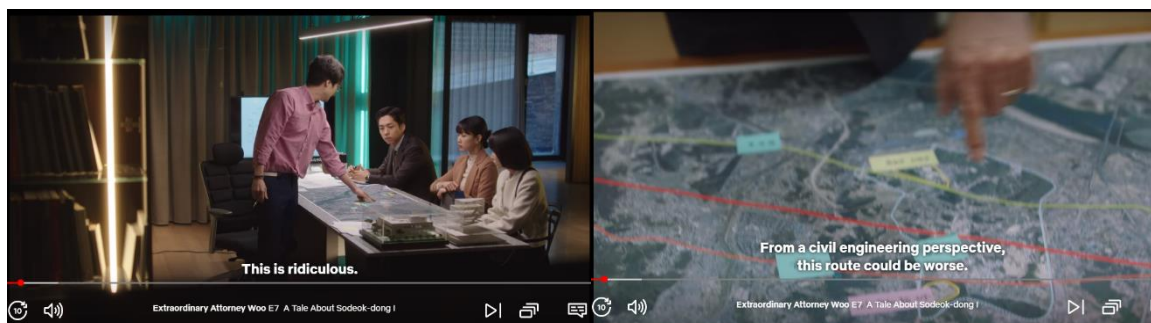
The director of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, explored creative approaches to transmit the representational codes. This was through the use of creative transitions and graphics and adopting the MTV style in scene treatment. There is a separate section for editing and graphics in this dissertation. Since production work is a collaborative effort, this section also included transitions and graphics because of the assumption that creativity in transitions and graphics are part of the vision of the director.

Creative Transitions were very much observable in the episodes of the drama. Transitions, as observed, in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, brought the viewer from one setting to the other or from the present to the past or present into the future. Although typical transitions in a drama for example was cut, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* also used other transitions such as dissolve or wipe but the usage depended on the purpose of the scene. In the sampled Korean drama, the director used movements of humans, and objects as starting point of the transition. A viewer would notice that it was seamless, it is as if the transition was still part of the previous scene when it fact it was already the next sequence.

In Episode 7 1:00:07, the starting point of the transition is the map (**Figure 25**). The map was previously used by the consultant engineer but when the camera focused on the map, the viewer was now brought to the table of the consultant architect seamlessly.

Figure 25.

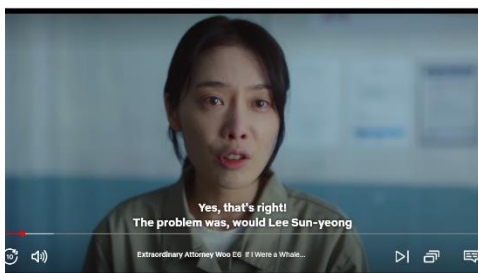
Creative transition



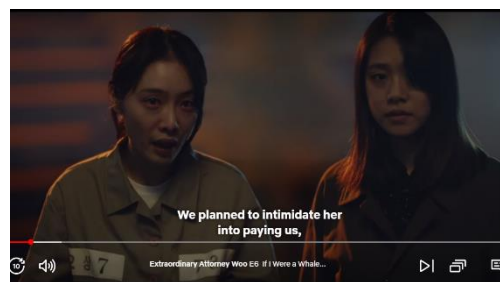
In the example above, an object was the starting point of the transition. In another example in Episode 6, 1:00:46, a person was the starting point of the transition (**Figure 26**). Atty. Choi and Atty. Woo were discussing with the defector the circumstances that led her to the case. Her supposed accomplice Kim Jeong-hui was not present during the time of the discussion. In one shot, the director included Kim in the scene, as if she was there when in reality, she was not. The shot is an MS of the defector then it zoomed out slowly into two MS shots in a split screen where there was no defining line between the accomplice and the defector, except that the blurred background were obviously different but with the same color schemes. The director added red orange light to differentiate the present scene from the flashback.

Figure 26.

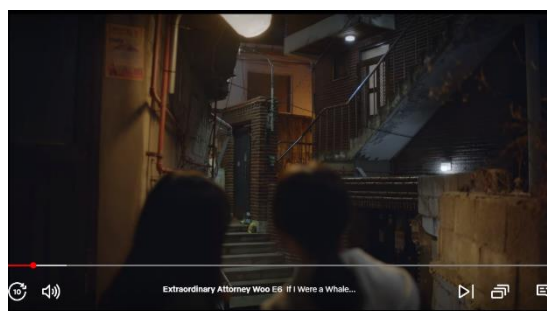
Creative transition



This is the present scene.



Kim Jeong-hui was used as transition in the flashback.



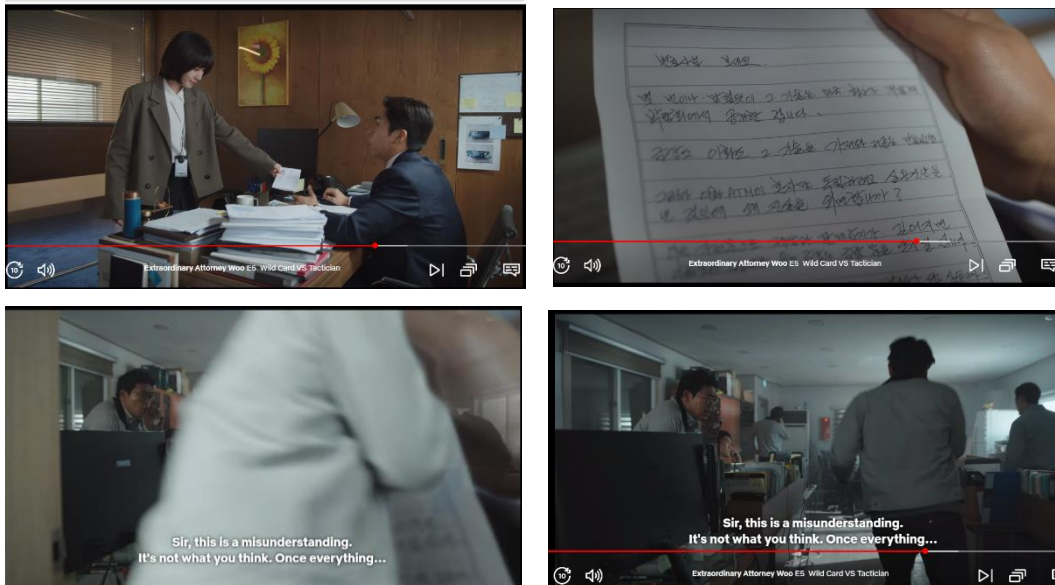
Flashback of the night of the incident

Another example is in Episode 5, 20:34, Atty. Woo brought the letter of the CEO Geumgang to Atty. Kwon. Atty. Kwon opened the letter and it said, “Atty. Woo please read

this". The starting of the transition was the letter and then it shifted to a flashback (**Figure 27**). The first scene was a moving character. The grey jacket of the character in the flashback blended perfectly to the stationery used for the letter.

Figure 27.

Creative transition



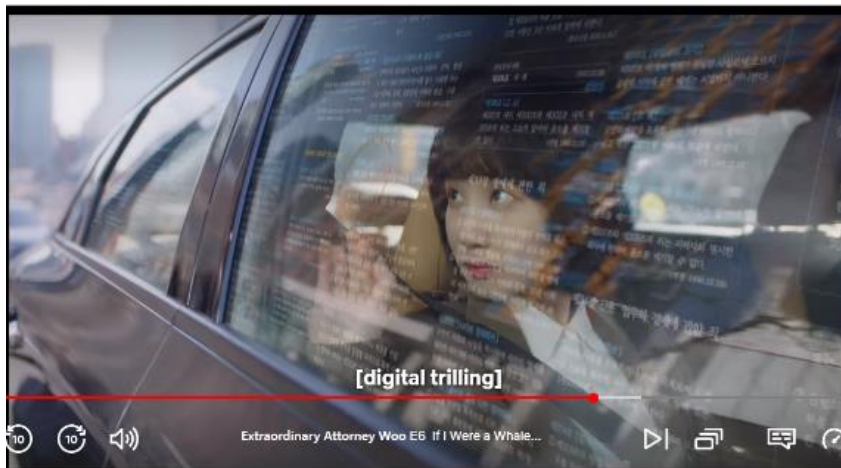
Another creative approach that the director integrated into the scene was the inclusion of graphics as visual support. The graphics only occurred in the universe of Atty. Woo. It was invisible for the other characters. One meaning that can be read in this style was that Atty. Woo had a sharp memory, which was one of the characteristics of an autistic person, according to its writer. The graphics in the drama were animated, colourful, and creative. The director used graphics purposively and it enhanced the scene execution.

An example is Episode 6, 20:50 (**Figure 28**), Atty. Choi and Atty. Woo were in the car. Atty. Choi was asking Atty. Woo if there were laws for refugees because technically defectors were refugees. Atty. Woo confirmed that there was no law which protected refugees. She thought of a material she had read. She turned to the car window as if she

was scrolling a tablet reading the information. Facts and information flashed on the car window and she was trying to check if there was an existing law for refugees.

Figure 28.

Creative graphics



The director was also adventurous when it came to trying video styles. Even if the present was already a post-MTV era, this kind of style is still used, especially in montage videos. Calavita (2007), in his paper "MTV Aesthetics" at the Movies: Interrogating a Film Criticism Fallacy", theorized the term MTV Aesthetic trope which referred to films that adopted an MTV style in their scenes. According to him, the MTV Aesthetic trope is characterized by "frequent use of nondiegetic popular songs for a film's soundtrack, especially for montage sequences of characters dancing, fighting, falling in love, trying on clothes, and so on". In Episode 7, in the scene of the three young lawyers busy doing their research for the case, it was treated like a music video or MTV (**Figure. 29**). Atty. Woo reviewed the materials for the case, while Atty. Choi can be seen surrounded with materials scattered on the messy floor. Atty. Minwoo, meanwhile, was shown eating while reviewing. The lawyers worked round the clock. A non-diegetic music is on the background, which was from the OST of the drama. The editing style in Atty. Woo's scene was fast forward to represent the passing of time.

Figure 29.

MTV Style



Editing

Editing is “the basic creative force, by power of which the soulless photographs (the separate shots) are engineered into living, cinematographic form.” (Pudovkin as cited by Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). A film will not be able to convey its meaning if it is raw and unedited. It will just be series of shots without meaning at all. As the definition says, editing gives life to otherwise series of shots. Editing is more than selecting shots to be included in the final output or adding transitions or graphics. An editor must be able to show the relationship of the shots to each other and in putting together the shots and other visual elements it must create a story based on the script. Editing “...allows the filmmaker to manipulate time, space, and pictorial qualities in ways that shape the viewer’s experience of the film” (Ibid).

Editing in this dissertation was theorized as the Coherent Whole: Korean connect. The editor of the drama was able to achieve the goal of connecting frames together in order to create meaning and attain a cohesive whole.

In editing, a special connection is established among different visual elements. The process of editing involves selecting and cutting. If an editor failed to establish connection between the four aspects of mise-en-scene (lighting, setting, costume, and the movement of figures) and cinematographic qualities (photography, framing, and camera mobility), no output will be formed, hence the word “connect” because when you cut, you need to connect.

The following are the subthemes which emerged during the textual analysis: Meaningful Use of Colors and “Common Join” Utilization (**Table 4**).

Table 4.

Editing Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Connect: Editing	Meaningful Use of Colors
	“Common Join” Utilization

Meaningful Use of Colors

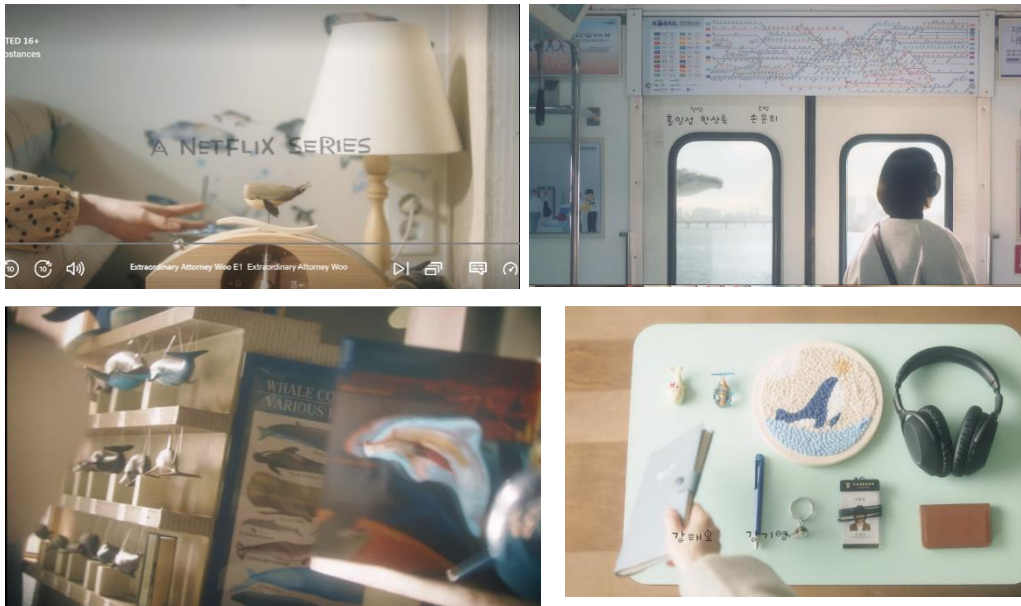
In order to achieve authentic colors and film style in the shots, the editor must use color correction first then color grading. “Making color adjustments is a critical part of the post-production process in filmmaking”(Adobe, 2023). Color correction and Color grading are two separate stages in the post-production process. In Color correction, the editor can “tweak things like exposure, contrast, and white balance and ensure that important hues like skin tones are accurately represented” (Ibid), while Color grading “infuses the film with a visual tone and could express emotions which the filmmaker wanted the audience to feel” (Ibid).

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the color grading in the introduction video was warm, bright, sunny and exuded a certain gloss (**Figure 30**), exuding an “instagrammable” atmosphere. The color grade was associated with the personality of Atty. Woo: bright, sunny, and warm, despite her being an autistic person. At times, she felt challenged by her situation and people often judged her but she did not waver. She continued to be a source of fun and help to everyone. The visual style of the introduction video gave a hint of the behaviour of the protagonist in the story. Korean drama is said to adopt hyperreal aesthetic which includes “heavy lighting, shallow depth of field, and pastel color grading. These elements make dramas seem dreamy...” To a technical person, it was just color

grading but for a decoder or a reader, color grading applied to a scene becomes a scene filled with meaning.

Figure 30.

Color grading of Introduction Video



Another use of color in the drama is the use of full color and black and white flashbacks. There were instances where the flashback was colored and there were times that it was in black and white. These instances were especially observable in Episode 2, where the use of color and black white flashbacks were used alternatively. In Episode 2, 55: 19, Hwa-jeong recalled how she was able to meet the grandfather of her groom (**Figure 31**). He was the choir conductor of a Christian church while she was the pianist. He introduced Hwa-jeong to her groom and the rest was history. The groom's grandfather was very disappointed to know that she had a Buddha tattoo on her back. He saw this during the wedding when her dress accidentally slipped off. This was a black in white flashback. In 28:33, the same episode, the witness was cross examined in the court and was asked to recall the circumstances during the gown fitting. This particular flashback was in black and white (**Figure 31**).

The colored flashback started at 11:02. This was the scene where Hwajeong withdrew the case so her father was dumbfounded. She explained that she never wanted to be in the position she was currently in. A flashback of her wedding in full color was inserted (**Figure 32**). During her wedding, she saw her lover among the crowd. There was also a flashback of her photos at home where her lover was part of the photo. She wanted to be free. When it returned to the current time, she held the hands of her lover and ran away with her.

Figure 31.

Black and white flashbacks

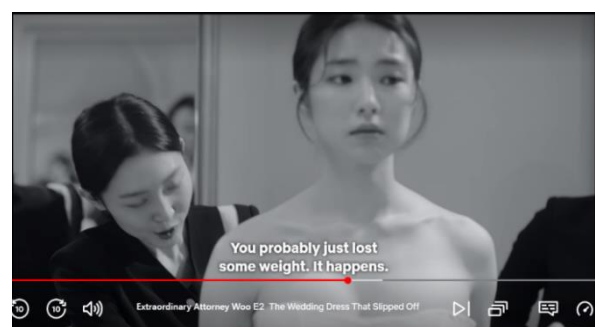
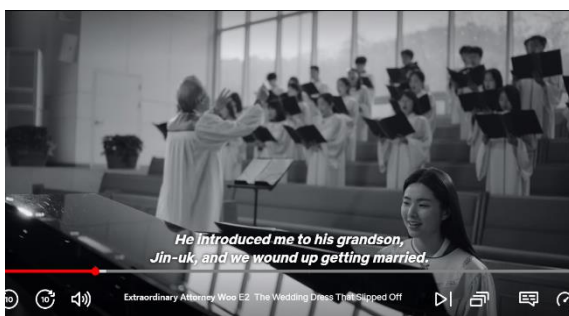
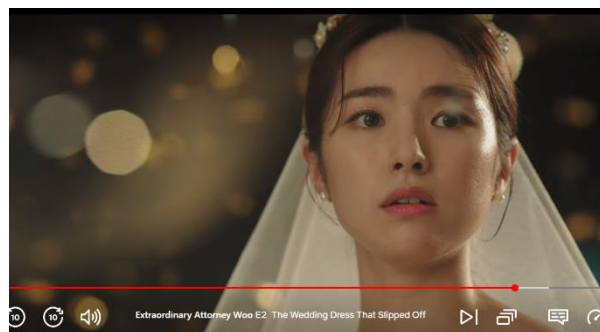
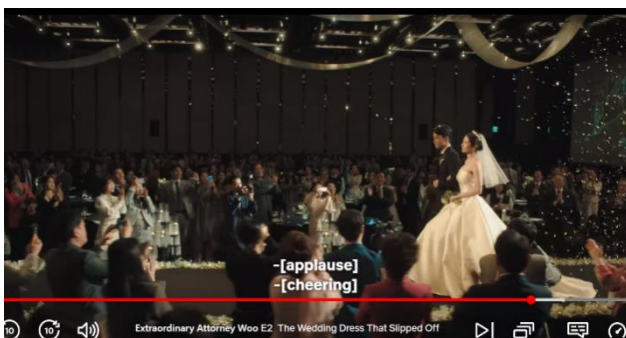
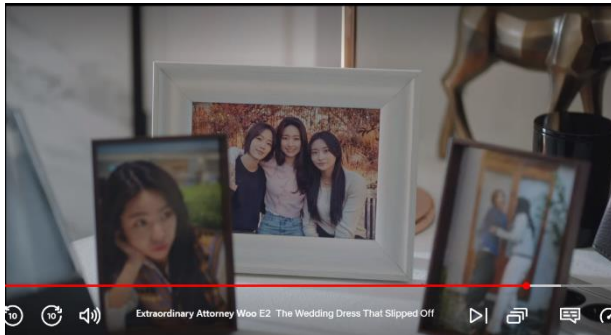


Figure 32.

Colored Flashback





In Episode 3, there was also a contrast in the color of the flashback. In 39:34, Kim Sang-hun hanged himself and this was in black and in white (**Figure.33**). Attorney Woo and Lee Junho visited the room of Sang-hun to check for evidence and found a torn rope. The flashback played while Kim Sang-hun was trying to commit suicide, which was witnessed by his brother, Kim Jeong- hun. While going through his belongings, Atty. Woo found his diary in which he described that the thought of taking his own life had already happened several times. Atty. Jung and Atty. Woo presented this to his parents. A colored flashback was inserted in 37:31 (**Figure 34**). Even if the scene was colored, the color grading was dull. It spoke really well of the depressing thoughts of Sang Hun.

Figure 33.

Black and white flashback

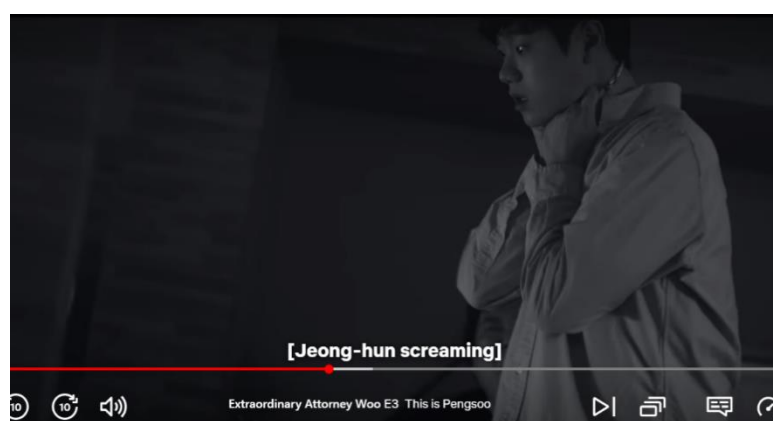
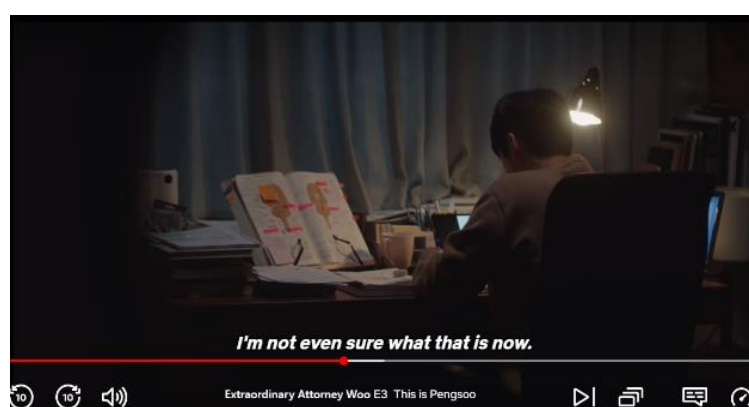


Figure. 34

Colored flashback



The choice of color to be used in a flashback is the prerogative of the director and the editor. In terms of meaning, a colored flashback may mean that either the event that happened was memorable or it lightened the mood of the character. This was true in the Episode 2 colored flashback. Remembering the happy memories together with the person one loves will lighten up one's mood. But in Episode 3, this was not the case. Although it was colored, the color grading is dull and somber.

The black and white flashback may mean that the event had caused stress, internal turmoil and negative consequences on the character's life. This was true for both samples. In Episode 2, it showed that Hwa-jeong did not want to remember any of these events because it cost her her freedom. In Episode 3, Kim Sang-hun ended his own life. To

explain these, a film operates using the principle of contrast since “our eyes are biased toward registering differences and changes” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). Hence, the editor used this principle to achieve contrast and to enhance the scene and the mood exuded by the character.

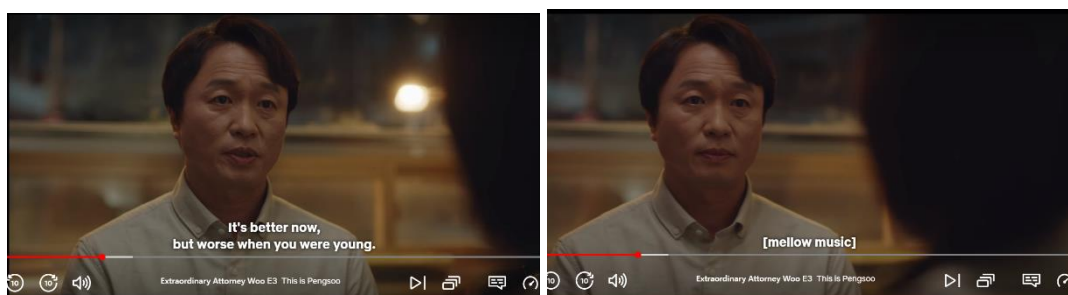
“Common Join” Utilization

The process of editing involves selecting and joining shots. According to Bordwell & Thompson (2013), the most common join is the cut, which “provides an instantaneous change from one shot to the other” (Ibid). In the drama, the common join was the cut which was true in almost all the episodes. There are, however, other methods of joining shots. These are fade out, fade in, dissolve, and wipe, which “produce more gradual changes” (Ibid).

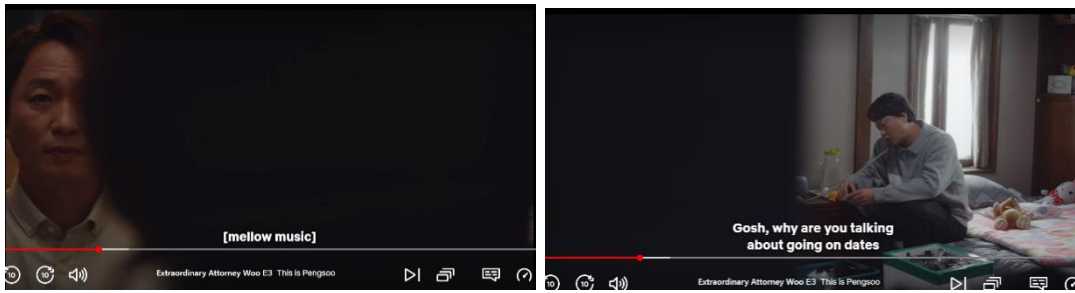
While the cut was the most common, there were instances in the drama that a new method was used. In Episode 3, 55:19, Atty. Woo was asking for advice from his father on how to make an autistic person cooperate. Her father shared his experiences of raising her. The push transition was used to move from the current scene to the flashback (**Figure. 35**). It did not look like a default push transition found in editing softwares. It was more of a panning but visually it functioned as a push transition. It meant that the current scene was pushed out of the frame to give way to the flashback.

Figure 35.

Push transition in Episode 3



This is the current scene.

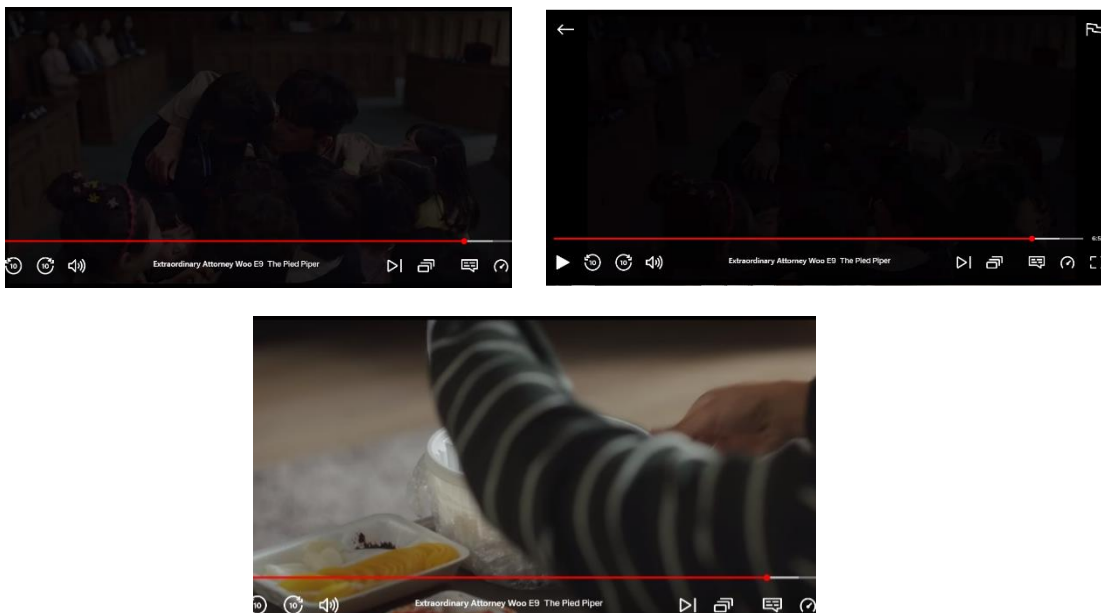


This is the flashback.

In Episode 9, the fade out was used to transition from an ending of a scene, to an entirely new scene (**Figure 36**). In 8:57, the ending shot was Bang Gupong hugging the children and then a fade out to black (“a shot gradually darkens the end of a shot to black” (Ibid)) was used. The new scene was Lee Junho and Atty. Kwon Minwoo eating in their apartment.

Figure 36.

Fade out



Fade out was also used in Episode 10 (**Figure 37**), in 46:47, when Lee Junho learned that it was difficult for an autistic person to hold hands so he told Atty. Woo, “holding hands can wait”.

Figure 37.

Fade out



All in all, the basic rule in editing is “there has to be a reason for a cut”. In technical parlance, there are reasons why a cut is used in a narrative. It could either be “a response has to be shown or an action must be emphasize...often the reasons are kinetic or to keep the shots from being too long or too static” (Mamer, 2014). Based on the gathered data, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*’s strove for simple cutting of shots. It used other transitions if the scene required of it. Over-all though, the type of editing was simple and it just followed the basic rule: “there has to be a reason for cut”. Koreans experiment on other elements but when it comes to joining frames they stick to the simple and classic way.

Production Design

Production Design was theorized as Authentic Visuality: Korean Look. Production design operates using the principle of naturalness. Whatever design that appears on screen must be realistic. Authentic visual concept is characterized by apparent color

scheme, alignment of character and design, and consistent use of the Over-all production design theme.

It is called Korean Look because the Kdrama released a certain kind of vibe that could be traced to its production design. This vibe comes from the sets, wardrobe, and props. Even in the combination of choice of colors and applying a theme that binds all elements together - the Korean Look stands out. Hence, the production design gives Kdrama its identity unique from others.

Production Design focuses on “visualizing the film’s setting, creates drawings and plans that determine the architecture and the color schemes of the set” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The films *Nosferatu* (1922) and *Metropolis* (1926) were the first films to “investigate how external settings suggest or reflect internal states of mind” (Mamer, 2014). In short, the house of a particular character reflects his or her personality. Even the clothes he/she wears helps define his/her traits. The sets give the viewer an idea of “the natural look for the era and place, for age and gender, as well as the economic or social status of the characters.” (O'Donnell, 2017).

Production design operates using the principle of “naturalness”. How the drama looks on TV must be realistic for the viewer to recognize. Viewers set certain expectations on how the sets look and this could be achieved if the production designer creates sets and props and choose costumes according to reality. It should be noted that, “The driving aesthetic for such choices is naturalism, with a strong emphasis on creating spaces that the viewer will take appropriate to, and believable for, the particular characters and episodes” (O'Donnell, 2017).

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the set location is the Dongbu Village in Changwon where the hackberry tree was located, Kajaguruma in Gyeonggi-do where the house of

Atty. Woo can be found, the Hanbada law firm at Gangnam Centerfield near Yeoksam station in Seoul, and a couple of areas in Jeju Island.

Below is **Table 5** of the main theme and subthemes of Production design.

Table 5.

Production Design Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Look: Production Design	Apparent Color Scheme
	Alignment of Character and Design
	Consistent Use of the Over-all Production Design Theme

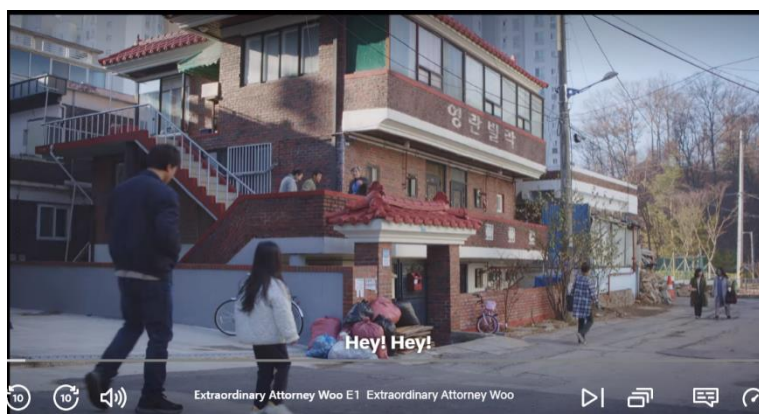
Apparent Color Scheme

The color scheme observed on *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* especially in Episode 1 was white, grey, wood, and subtle colors. The color scheme can be observed on the sets and wardrobe of the characters. O'Donnel (2017) explained that “for dramas, the look of the furnishing, the paint on the walls, and the costuming are more subdued”. Furthermore in drama, “brown, grays, blues, and other similar subdued colors are used” (Ibid).

In Episode 1, 1:15:17, Gwangho and Young Woo were walking towards their apartment after the checkup. Young Woo was eating Bungeo-ppang while walking. This scene showed neutral colors from the clothes of the characters, pavement, and trees; only the red brick building stood out (**Figure 38**). Later on, the landlord came out from the red building and cursed Gwangho because he was accusing him of seeing his wife. The red brick building symbolized fire, because of the angry person that emerged from it. The color red disturbed the peacefulness established earlier through the neutral colors displayed on screen.

Figure 38.

Neutral colors



The jacket of Gwangho is blue, while white for Young Woo. The pavement is grey, the trees are not so green. The red brick building stands out from the sea of neutrals.

In another example, in Episode 15, 52:47, Atty.Kwon joined Atty. Choi eating on her table. The setting was the office cafeteria. The observable colors were brown and black (**Figure. 39**) that give a notion of a placid atmosphere. Since the setting was the cafeteria, where generally people wanted to eat in peace, the choice of colors was appropriate. It could also be connected to the corporate atmosphere of a law firm that exudes professionalism and neutrality.

Figure 39

Neutral colors



The tables and chairs are light brown. Even the blazer of Atty. Choi.

While for Atty. Kwon, his blazer is colored black. Even the extra characters in the background are wearing either white or flesh.

All throughout the drama, the feel and the look of the sets were subdued and subtle. One aspect that was bright and called for attention was the wardrobe of Dong Guerami. The color of the drama was low key because the protagonist was unassuming, humble, and innocent. The choice of color reflected the over-all emotional appeal and the legal drama genre.

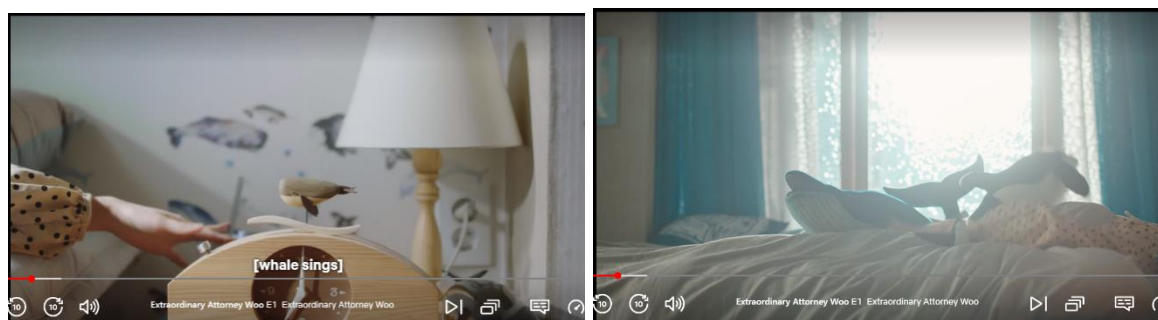
Alignment of Character and Design

“Visual environment helps define the character” (Mamer, 2014). In the drama, it was observable that the visual environment of Atty. Woo spoke volumes on who she was as a person. This was reflected in the detailed bedroom design of Atty. Woo in Episode 1 (**Figure 40**). The drama strove for an alignment of the character to environment she stayed in the most.

The room of Attorney Woo was predominantly wooden, with whale drawings on pillars and walls and even bed room slippers and small trinkets (which showed her interest); books about whales and other topics on book cases (which explained why she was a genius), law books (which indicated that she was a lawyer). The common theme which bound the over-all look of the bed room of Atty. Woo was the whale motif which could be interpreted as her favorite animal.

Figure 40.

Bed room design of Atty. Woo

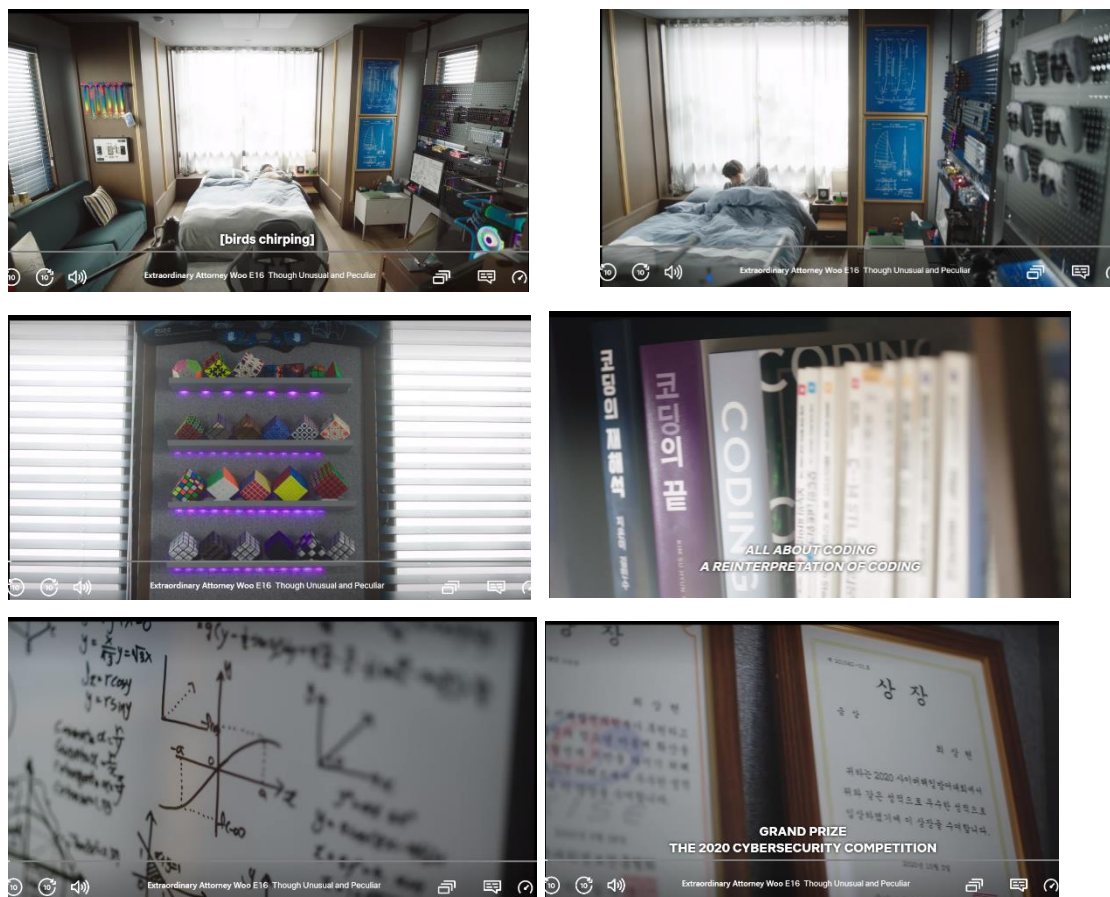




Another example was in Episode 16. Oh Sang-yeon, the half-brother of Atty. Woo was introduced. He was the person who hacked the server of Raon which resulted in the compromise of their cyber security. His bedroom showed that his interest was in coding and computers and that he was a computer expert at a young age (**Figure 41**). The designer's pegs included keyboards and joysticks that hung on the wall as decoration; computer science and coding books on his book shelf; medals and trophies won in computer-related competitions; different types of Rubik's cubes (his comfort toy); mathematical computations on a white board, and a plaque for winning the grand prize in a 2020 Cyber security competition (which explains his expertise).

Figure 41.

Bed room design of Oh Sang-yeon



Aside from the bedroom, the characters' office spaces were likewise designed to fit the office owner's characteristics. The design of the office of Han Seon-young, CEO of Hanbada, was predominantly wood, patterned ceiling, white and gray upholstered chairs, green plants, and wooden table (**Figure 42**). Just like the over-all look of the drama, it is subdued. While the office of Tae Soo Mi, CEO of Taesan, speaks of power (**Figure 42**). The look included black upholstered chairs, accent of dark brown walls, white ceilings, and a statue of Lady Justice. White and grays are neutral colors which spoke of Han Seon-young. She was calm in difficult situations and had a pleasing personality although she acted like an introvert. However, the plainness of her room was combined with a patterned ceiling. Patterns could be interpreted as complexities. Even as a simple and calm CEO, she also had her complexities. Her internal motivations of toppling down Tae

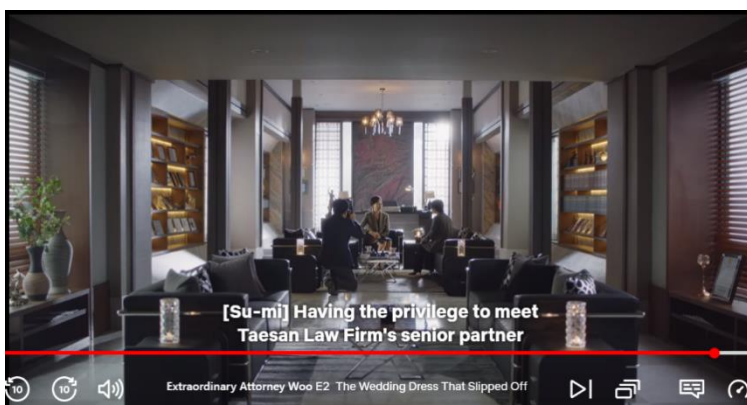
Soo Mi and her other hidden motives explained the presence of contrast in her space. Tae Soo Mi, on the other hand, opted for dark hues such as dark brown or black upholstered chairs. Black is the combination of all colors, hence power. She looked at herself as a powerful and successful lawyer. Her younger colleagues in the firm had high respect for her. She even applied as Minister of Justice because she believed in her competence. Despite all of these, there was a certain dark aspect to her soul. She buried her past: her daughter. Her skeletons in the closet eventually became one of the reasons for her failure to secure the Minister of Justice position.

Figure 42.

Office design of Hanbada CEO vs. Taesan CEO



Hanbada CEO's Office



Taesan CEO's Office

The alignment of design and characters do not end in spaces occupied by the characters. Their wardrobe also spoke volumes of their personalities, choices, internal

turmoils and motivations, among others. In fact, “Costumes can become motifs, enhancing characterization and tracing changes in attitude” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). Aside from this, “costumes can be used for their purely graphic qualities...costume is coordinated with setting.”

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the costumes were fitted to the kind of person the character was. It also reflected their mental and emotional states and also the scene’s setting.

Attorney Woo was always dressed in earth, neutral, and black colors. Atty. Woo’s costume showcased simplicity and an uncomplicated personality (**Figure 43**). She tried not to stand out because she was aware of people’s prejudices against persons with autism. By wearing such colors, she blended in the crowd easily. People will start to notice her presence only if they tried to talk to her. They will be aware that she avoided eye contact and she was fond of inserting topics such as whales in the middle of the conversation.

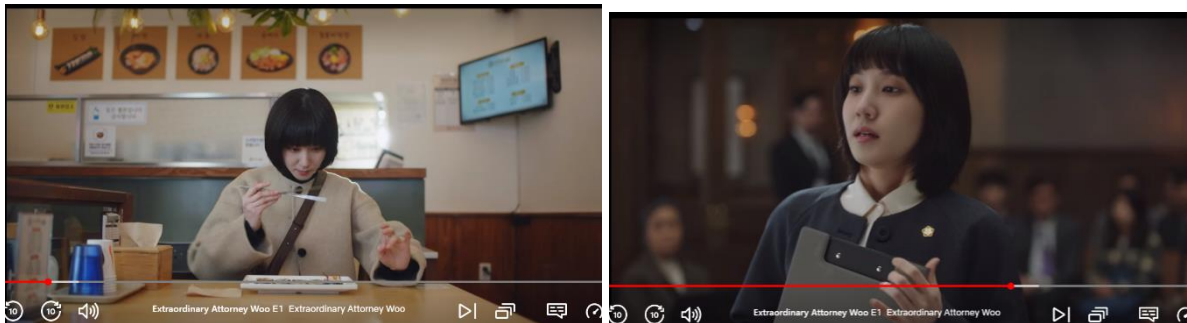
In Episode 9, 3:34, Junho confessed that he liked Atty. Woo. In the scene, Junho was wearing a yellow sweater and Atty. Woo was wearing a light green blazer. This was the first time that her wardrobe color changed. This was unlike her because in the office, she wore her so-called “uniform” in earth tones, neutrals, and blacks. The possible interpretation was she would be happy on that day as she was wearing green. The color stands for life, growth, and new beginnings.

There were several instances in Jeju Island that her wardrobe changed from neutrals to pastel. On the plane to Jeju, she was wearing a lavender blazer. In one of the scenes where the lawyers had a drinking session, she was wearing a yellow blouse. She even tried to wear stripes during her break-up scene with Junho. These color choices

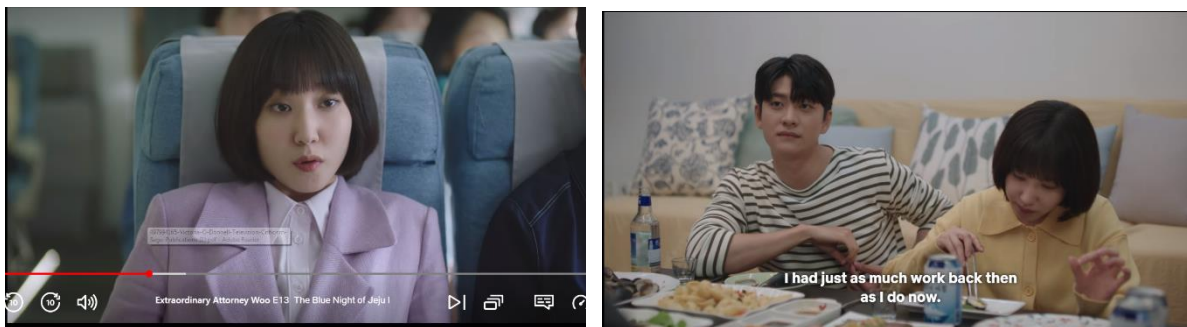
show that love could do wonders to a person: it makes a person change. Her decision to change from neutrals to pastel spoke of her state of mind at that moment. She was happy.

Figure 43.

Wardrobe of Atty. Woo

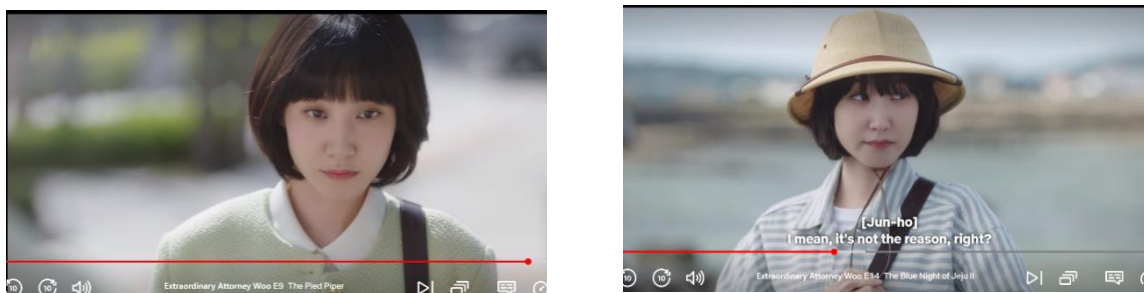


Earth and Black colors



Pastel

Stripes



Pastel

Stripes

Other characters who had consistent patterns in their wardrobe was Atty. Kwon Minwoo. His suits were always plaid or had vertical patterns. He sometimes used plain suit during court hearings but most of the time it was always plaid or with lines. This also spoke of his complexities as a character. He appeared to be a villain in the beginning as

he was driven by his internal conflict of providing for sick parents. He showed insecurities toward Atty. Woo. In the end, he underwent character transformation. He almost betrayed Atty. Woo to Tae Soo Mi. He tried to make the life of Atty. Woo difficult but in the end, he decided to let go and just be a better person.

It is observable that in Korean dramas, antagonists wear black caps and black jackets. This kind of costume or wardrobe would always differentiate the villains from the protagonist because it showed contrast. A viewer can easily pick out the black amidst the sea colors. Atty. Kwon wore this stereotyped outfit when he decided to write in an anonymous site regarding the “questionable” hiring of Atty. Woo. In another scene, a suspicious person who was following Atty. Jung in the office building was also wearing the same costume.

Consistent Use of the Over-all Production Design Theme

The over-all theme or motif in the drama is wood (**Figure.44**). It can be seen in various spaces occupied by the character such as office, house, or restaurant. The wood could be the walls, floors, furniture, or simply objects in the scene. It could be just an accent to a space or the entire set is really made of wood. Wood’s characteristics are “hard, grain, and color” (Richard, 2020). The strength of the wood lies in its hardness. The motif could have been chosen by the production designer because Atty. Woo as the protagonist could be compared to wood. Her character displayed strength despite her weaknesses. She never backed down in a challenge and would face the cases head on. The strength of a wood could be tested if left it under the sun and rain for a long time. Its over-all quality will be affected. For example, wooden furniture that is exposed to frequent rains will slowly deteriorate. However, in the case of Atty. Woo, no matter what difficulties and setbacks, she just refused to back down. She did not allow the “rain” (problems, challenges, judgement) to break her.

Wood could symbolize life and growth, too. Viewers could see the growth of Atty. Woo in the drama, in her legal profession, personal life, and relationships. She was scared in her first court hearing and found difficulty in communicating with a witness who always shouted. People in the spectrum cannot stand loud noises and would cover their ears. She withstood all of these and eventually succeeded in her legal profession. She experienced growth and transformation. Her legal opinions were valued and she would always be the first to find a solution to the cases that Hanbada was handling. In her personal life, she took a leap of faith when she fell in love with Lee Junho. She was again scared to venture in this type of relationship because of the fear of judgment. They say a person experiences growth pains in her lifetime. In Atty. Woo's case, growth pains happened when the family of Junho opposed their relationship. She questioned whether she deserved to be loved because she was autistic. She almost gave up on Junho but as they say "love wins". In terms of relationships, she formed a stronger bond with her friends in the office and with her best friend Dong Gurami. Atty. Choi, at first, was very skeptical of her but, in the end, she became her greatest ally. Even Atty. Kwon, who was always her nemesis, had a change of heart in the end.

Wood is also associated with warmth and nurturing. The spaces in the drama reflected a cozy vibe because of the wood interiors. It signified the "importance of providing emotional warmth and support to oneself and other" (The Reading Tub, 2023). An autistic person needs all the support they can get in order to survive a world that is judgmental. The interior wood design also complemented the support of all characters who were featured in the different stories tackled in the episodes of the drama. The characters represented the minorities in South Korea whose voices were not usually heard. The drama became a venue for them to put these issues out in the open – domestic violence, LGBTQ, suicide, copyright infringement, North Korea defectors,

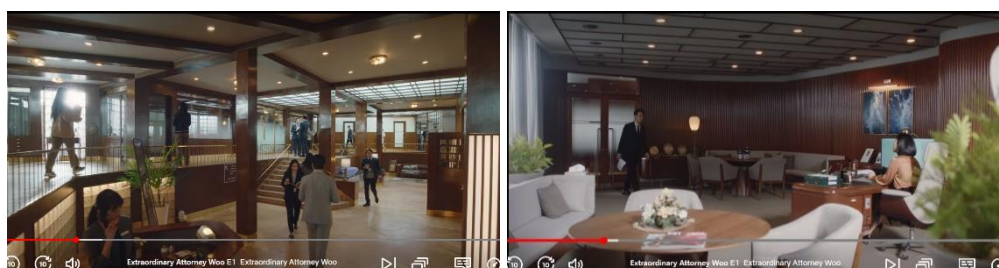
heritage preservation, children's academy experiences, the ill effects of gambling, adultery, intellectual property issues, and cyber security.

Finally, wood symbolizes healing and restoration. Healing comes in the form of physical and spiritual healing. Atty. Woo experienced healing from the grips of her past when she faced her estranged birth mother and requested her to take care of her brother. She said that even though she was not a good mother to her; she acknowledged that she was a good mother to her brother. This brave act freed her from the resentment she kept all these years because she has no mother. On the other hand, Atty. Jung attained physical recovery from his disease and experienced rejuvenation in terms of his relationship to his wife. He realized that life is not just about work but also about giving equal importance to one's personal life.

Wood became one of the anchors of the drama that held everyone together. The production designer may have chosen this theme in solidarity with the social voice that the drama was trying to convey.

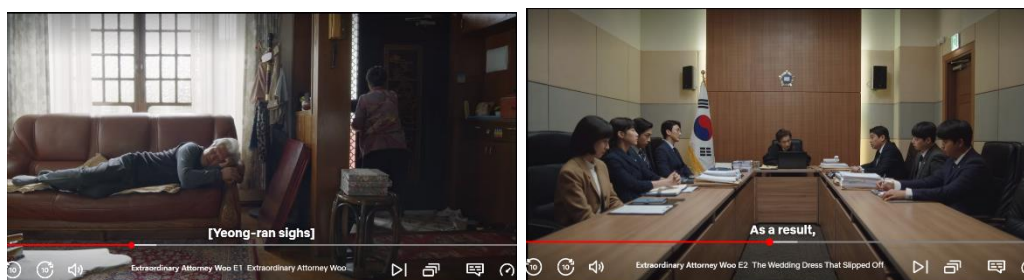
Figure 44.

Wood Interior as motif in the drama



Hanbada Law Office

Office of CEO of Hanbada



House of the couple in Episode 1

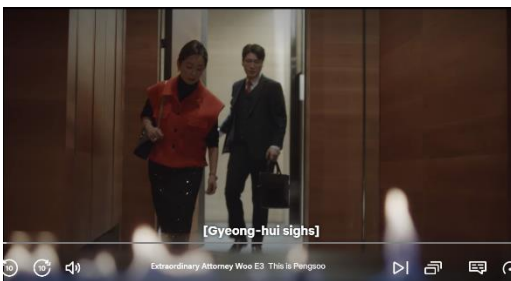
One of the court's conference room



Court



Restaurant where the Hanbada Team had dinner.



House of the couple in Episode 3



Restaurant of Mr. Hairy

Lighting

The job of the cinematographer will be incomplete and useless if there is no lighting on the set. “Lighting clearly is a key building block of the photographic image” (Mamer, 2014). Light suggests “the power of light, dark, and color to establish mood, suggest psychological states, and communicate the tactile qualities of observed objects” (Ibid). Hence, lighting in this dissertation is theorized as cinematic glow: Korean mood. It is evidenced by communicating the scene’s mood, use of variety of light sources, and mixture of range of colors. Cinematic glow refers to how each scene and frame shone brightly because of the lighting system

It is Korean Mood because setting the mood is one of the major characteristics of lighting in a drama or film. A reader may yield meanings in the text (drama) if lighting is done properly because the photographic image is clear and the purpose of the scene is visible.

There are different purposes in lighting: “lighter and darker areas within the frame help create the overall composition of each shot and guide the attention of the viewer to certain objects and actions; a shadow may conceal a detail or build up suspense about what may be present; it can articulate textures” (Bordwell & Thomopson, 2013). Finally, the “look of television production tends toward balanced lighting that avoids extremes of light and shadow and treats all figures in a scene equally” (O’Donnell, 2017).

Below is **Table 6** which depicts the main theme and sub themes of lighting in the drama:

Table 6.

Lighting Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Mood: Lighting	Communicates the scene's mood
	Variety Light Sources
	Mixture of Range of Colors

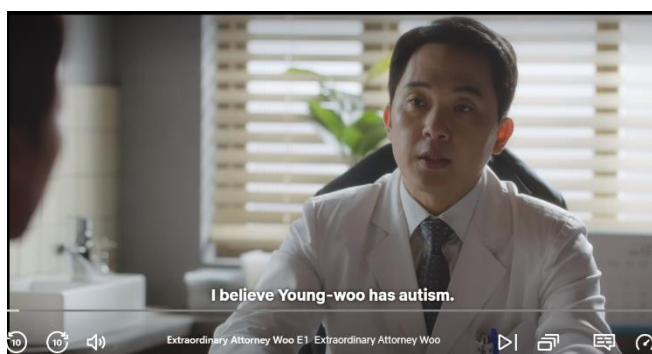
Communicates the scene’s mood

“Manipulation of the lighting strongly affects the tone of a scene and the emotional mood that is conveyed by that scene to viewers” (O’Donnell, 2017).

In Episode 1, 1:15:47, Gwangho and the kid Young Woo visited the doctor. Gwangho wanted to know what was wrong with his daughter because it seemed that her development was delayed. At around six years old, she could not yet speak or communicate. While the doctor was speaking, the light was quite dim because in that scene the doctor will reveal to Gwangho that his daughter was exhibiting the characteristics of autism (**Figure 45**). The dim light helped set the mood of that scene.

Figure 45.

Dimlight



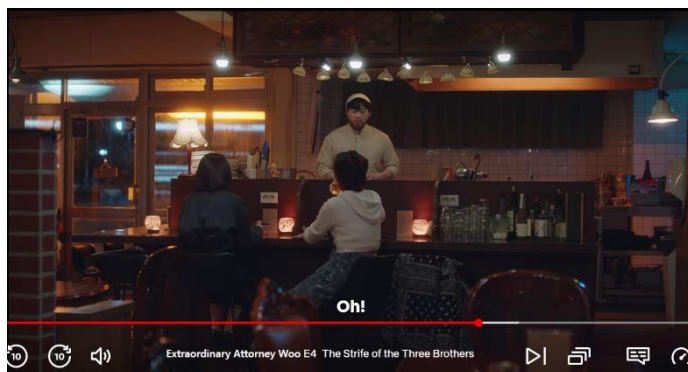
The right side of the face of the doctor is quite dim.

Sidelight was used in this particular scene. Sidelight was one of the types of light direction, which “refers to the path of light from its source or sources to the object lit” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). The sidelight or sometimes called crosslight “sculpt the character’s features”. In this case the left side of the face of doctor was highlighted. Although this was not a full sidelight wherein the right side of the face was totally dim.

Dong Geurami was the best friend of Atty. Woo and she worked for Mr. Hairy. Atty. Woo frequented the restaurant of Mr. Hairy to air out her concerns, to sought advice, and to simply chill. The backlight in the restaurant was orange. Backlight can be positioned in several angles: "High above the figure, at various angle off to the side, pointing straight at the camera, or from below" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The orange light exuded warmth, which the friendship of Dong Geurami, Mr. Hairy, and Atty. Woo shared (**Figure 46**). The restaurant was a safe space for Atty. Woo. She could express herself in the way she wanted to with no pretensions. Mr. Hairy and Dong Geurami served as pillars of Atty. Woo to protect her walls from breaking. They gave her funny advice that made sense. The orange light communicated the warm mood among the three friends.

Figure 46.

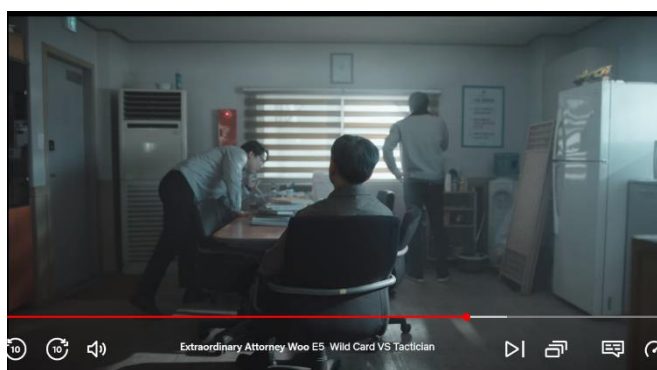
Orange backlight



In the backstory, in Episode 5, the color grading was a combination of blue and black. However, the black color was adjusted to make it a bit lighter. A small white light was coming from the window (Figure.47), which exuded a somber mood. The scene was a backstory regarding how Ihwa ATM submitted a sales injunction to stop Geumgang from selling their own ATM cassettes. The employee informed the CEO that their investors were going to barge in their office because of the latest development. The scene gave the viewer a feeling of hopelessness but the small white light from the window somehow was speaking of hope. The CEO of Geumgang was aware that their business was nearing bankruptcy but by the demeanor that he showed, he did not falter.

Figure 47.

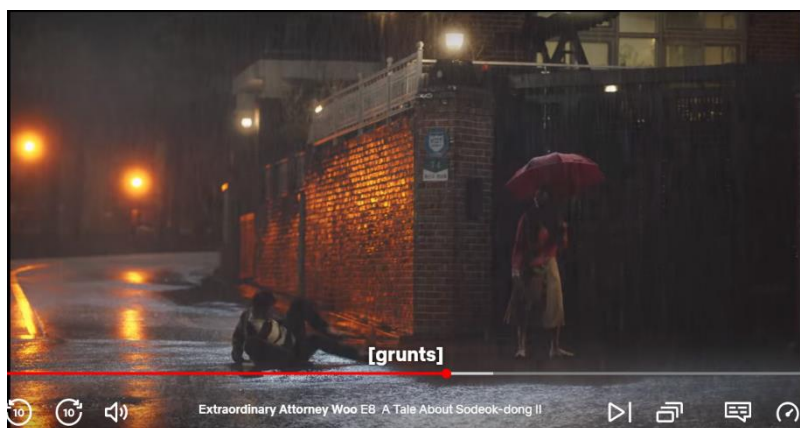
White light



In Episode 8, a flashback was played where Gwangho was seen following Taesumi and begging her to keep their baby. In the power dynamics, Taesumi had the upperhand. She made decisions for herself and Gwangho kneeling in front of her was a powerful scene. The back light in this particular scene was orange (**Figure 48**). The lights were camouflaged with the scene, making it seem as if the lights were not part of the film production and were simply ordinary street lights. In this case, “The pattern of illumination is motivated by the visible sources” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). Orange represented youthfulness and elicited feelings of hopelessness (Adobe, 2003). Both Gwangho and Sumi were in their youth and in law school. The future was bright for both of them but when Sumi got pregnant, everything crumbled. Gwangho was determined to keep the baby while Sumi had second thoughts. The scene exuded hopelessness but the humility of Gwangho changed everything.

Figure 48.

Orange light



Variety of Light Sources

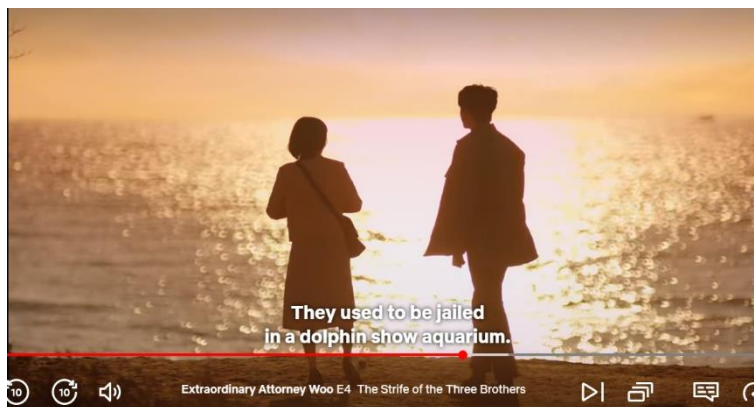
There are two primary sources of light: the key light and fill light. These are subject to the Director's and Cinematographer's manipulation and control. The key light, “is the primary source providing the brightest illumination and casting the strongest shadow” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). The fill light, “soften or eliminates shadows cast by the key light”. (Ibid). These can be classified as artificial lights. A natural light can also be

considered a source and can be combined with artificial light. Cinematographers wait for the “golden hour” when they shoot using natural light. Golden hour is usually “the last hour before sunset and the first hour after sunrise” (Adobe, 2023). The light during this times is “soft, directional, and warm.” (Ibid). Hence, this is the perfect time to shoot a photographic image using natural light.

In Episode 4, 28:33, Guerami suggested to Junho to bring Young Woo to see the sunset. During their walk on the beach, Young Woo again talked about whales. The sun was about to set, a time known as the Golden hour (**Figure 49**). The orange streaks reflected on the faces of Junho and Young Woo.

Figure 49.

Golden Hour



In almost all of the episodes, the lighting used was a combination of artificial and natural lights. Scenes which were shot in exterior locations maximized the use of natural light and artificial light was added to enhance the shot. After all, “television productions have almost always been “better” lit than movies because production for television uses more standardized and brighter lighting as a rule” (O’Donnell, 2017).

Mixture of colors in lighting

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the lighting used a mixture of different colors to convey different emotions. In this sense, “The color palette of a film is a subtle way to visually enhance the emotional aspects of a film and guide the viewer to respond to it on

a visceral level” (Frost, 2023). In film, “filmmakers, who choose to control lighting typically work with as purely white...and use filters in front of the light source.”

(Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

The drama used a combination of cool and warm colors when lighting a scene. The most obvious was orange. Orange, in *Extraordinary Woo*, was normally used as a backlight especially during night scenes (**Figure. 51**). It was the light used in the restaurant of Mr. Hairy (**Figure. 52**). It was also used in the decorative light bulb in the Gimbap restaurant of Atty. Woo or as a desk lamp in the PA System room of the school. Blue was also used if the scene was a bit somber or tense (**Figure. 50**). It was used in some daylight scenes or some flashbacks. Generally, most of the scenes were brightly lit and more saturated.

Figure 50.

Blue light



Figure 51.

Orange light

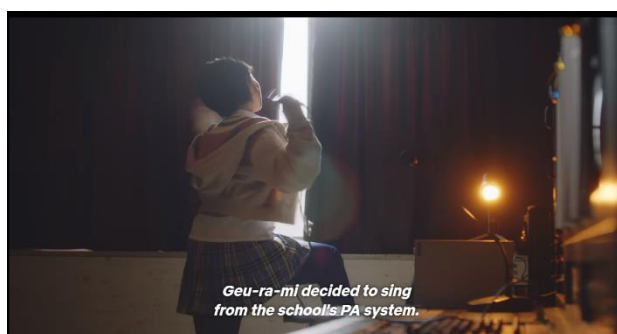
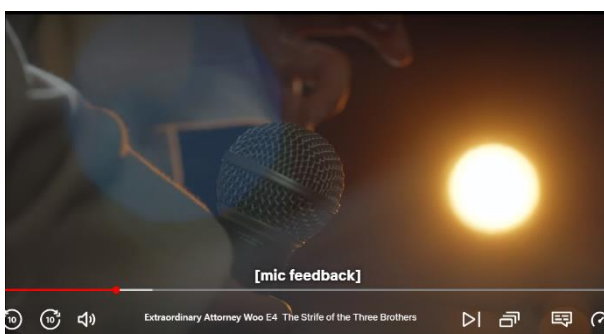
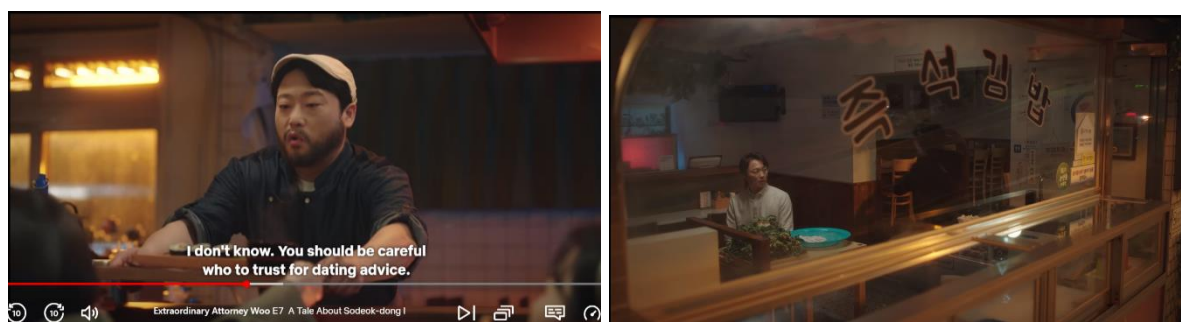


Figure 52.

Orange light



The use of orange in various scenes could be interpreted as a way for the *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* to convey warmth: warmth of home, friendship, workplace, love, and a lot more. The different episodes in the drama had stories which could touch hearts, open minds, and convey warmth. These were all aligned to the use of technical elements such as the lighting.

On the other hand, Yoo In Sik, the director of the drama also directed other popular Kdramas like *Dr. Romantic* and *Vagabond*. In *Dr. Romantic*, the different scenes were also lit using the color orange (**Figure. 53**), much like *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*.

In Episode 1 of *Dr. Romantic 2*, there were various scenes which used orange light to add drama to a scene. Removing the orange light would make the scene look flat and stoic.

Figure 53.

Orange light in Dr. Romantic 2



Just like in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the orange light was used

in bulbs to light a space. In this scene, the orange bulb was used to light the chandelier. It also used white light to further illuminate the scene.



Operating Room in Dr. Romantic



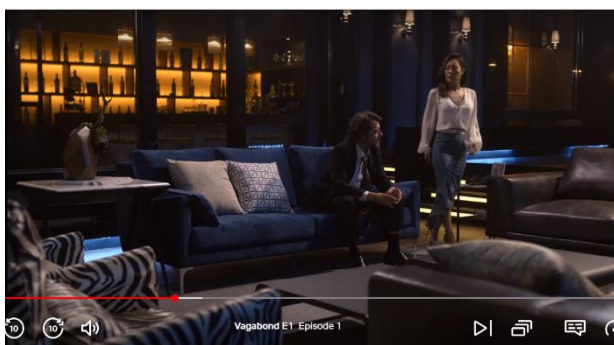
Dr. Seo Woo Jin just lost his job in this scene

In *Vagabond*, which Yoo In Sik also directed, the orange light was also conspicuous in the scenes (**Figure. 54**). One of the most prominent is in Episode 1, 38:15, in which the whole street was lighted with orange. Even the buildings were glowing with orange light.

Whether it is a social drama, comedy, medical series or action drama, Yoo In Sik wanted to convey warmth in different aspects by using orange light extensively

Figure 54.

Orange light in Vagabond



Graphics Design

Graphics Design in Extraordinary Attorney Woo is theorized as Impactful Graphics Design because of the high level of sophistication in the animated graphics and visual effects showcased. Impactful Graphics design is evidenced by strong visual support, animated graphics, functional graphic design, and visual effects integration.

It is Korean Imagination because of the creativity shown by the graphics designer in the drama. He was able to visualize the images in a way that delighted viewers since it was informative, colourful, funny at times and very on point. The graphics played a key role in the drama because it showed how Atty. Woo's brain worked. She had photographic memory and can recall the exact position of the word, concepts, or ideas in a document. The appearance of graphics were also realistic - documents complete with highlights. The director wanted to show this side of Atty. Woo to the viewers. The visual effects were also integral to the story because it showed how close the relationship of Atty. Woo was to whales. The whales swimming inside the court room or passing by the window were a visual pleasure to watch. The prominence of whales in the story could be interpreted as way to show how Atty. Woo, as a person on the spectrum, diligently studied and researched her favorite topic to be able to explain it comprehensively.

Graphics was separated from the editing section because in all episodes graphics were present, contributing immensely to the over-all appeal of the drama.

Below is **Table 7** which depicted the main theme and subthemes which emerged in the close reading of the drama:

Table 7.

Graphics Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Imagination: Graphics Design	Strong Visual Support
	Animated Graphics
	Functional Graphic Design
	Visual Effects Integration

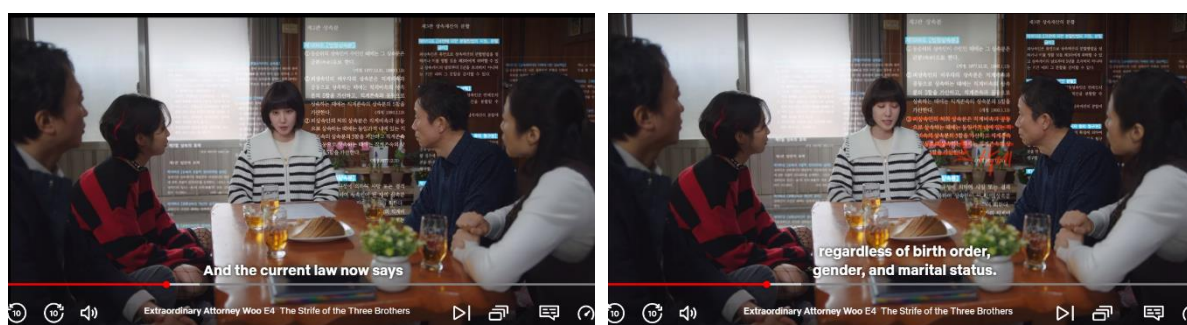
Strong Visual Support

Television is a visual medium. Sometimes there is jargon in the dialogues which an ordinary viewer cannot understand. In highly specialized dramas, such as medical drama or legal drama, there are terms and concepts which need to be explained in the simplest way possible. Hence, graphics are utilized to give a strong visual support and to aid in the easy understanding of viewers.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, there were several scenes which used graphics that function as visual support. In Episode 4, 47:47, Atty. Woo was explaining about the inheritance law which the two elder brothers used to convince the father of Geurami to sign the gift contract. While explaining this important information, GPX of notes complete with visual aids, marks, and highlights and doodles were shown at her back (**Figure. 55**).

Figure 55.

GPX in Episode 4



In Episode 4, 41:59, Atty. Woo was explaining about gimbap and crabmeat. She said the customer ordered gimbap and not crabmeat. “Crabmeat gimbap are made of

crab flavoured meat and then the main ingredient in crab flavoured meat is Pollack and not crab”. In this particular scene, an information graphic was flashed on the left side of the screen (**Figure.56**).

Figure 56.

GPX in Episode 4



In Episode 5, 47:47, Atty. Woo sought Dong Geurami for advice on how to spot a person lying. Atty. Woo mentioned in the conversation that she brought books about body language and lies. Geurami was curious about the content and asked. Atty. Woo said that if a person was lying, their body releases a chemical called *catecholamine* which causes the membranes to swell. She also shared that Pinocchio was based on this fact. While she was saying this, a GPX of the information appeared on screen. There were chemical symbols and laboratory instruments and apparatuses which appeared on screen (**Figure.57**) .

Figure 57.

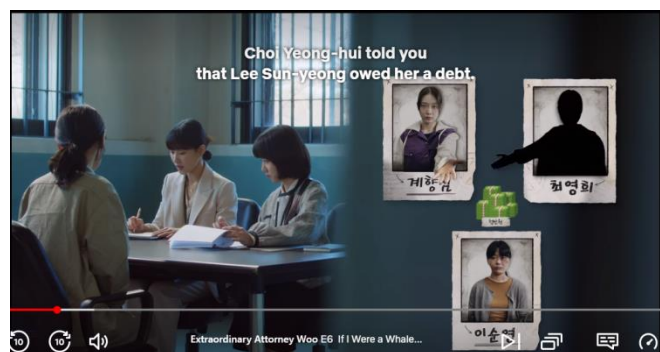
GPX in Episode 5



In Episode 6, 1:01:34, graphics were inserted when Gye Hyang Sim explained how she was involved in the case, her relationship with the complainant, and the circumstances on the night of the supposed crime. The GPX appeared with animated pictures - like the old "Wanted" posters in Wild West shows (**Figure. 58**).

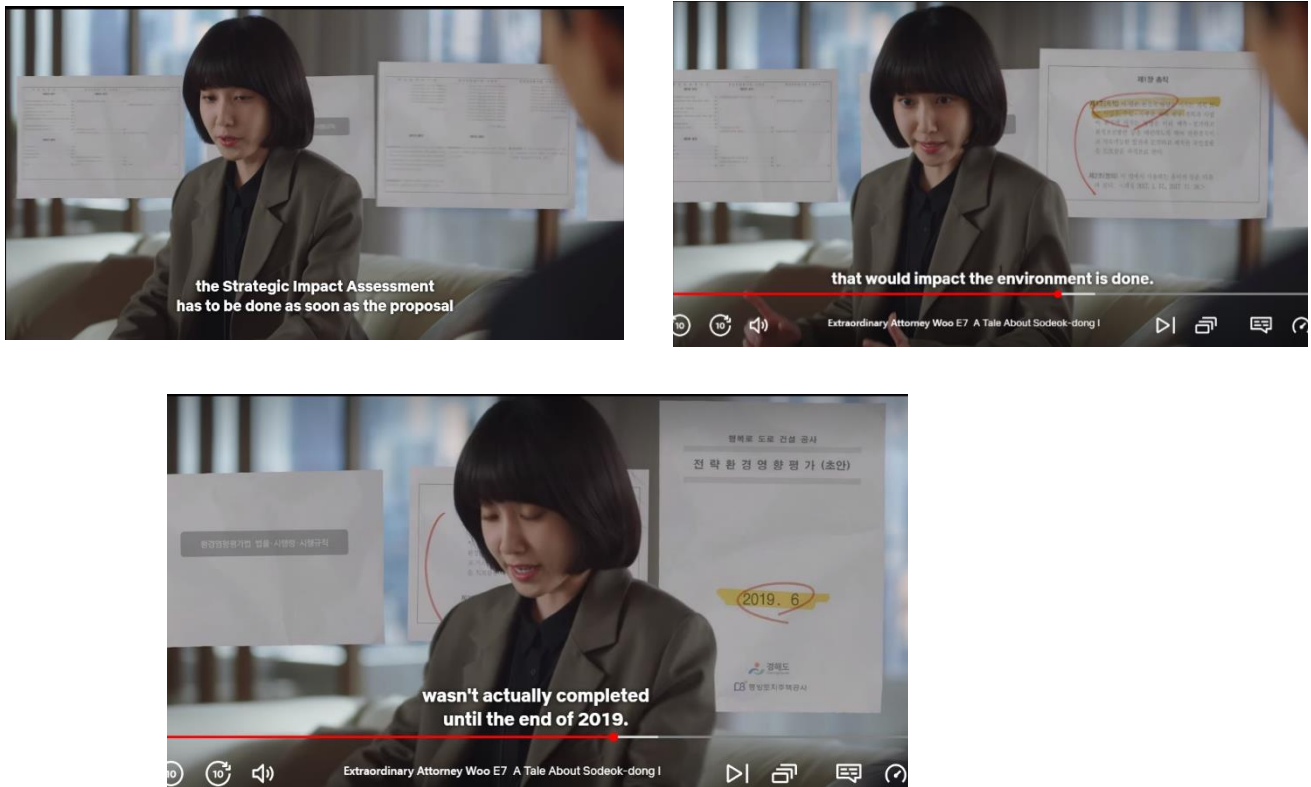
Figure 58.

GPX in Episode 6



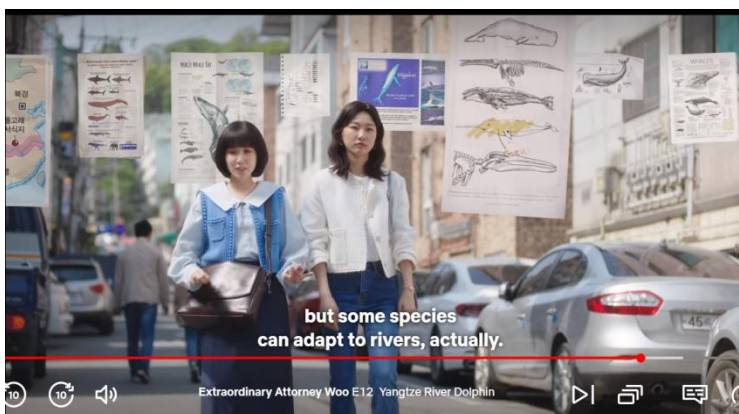
In Episode 7, 26:10 papers and documents regarding environmental impact assessment flashed behind Atty. Woo (**Figure.59**). She presented this argument to Atty. Jung. According to Atty. Woo the Strategic Impact Assessment must be completed as soon as the proposal that would impact the environment was done. The proposal for Happiness road was in 2017 but it was only in 2019 that the impact assessment was done. For emphasis, the most important part was highlighted in yellow and in red.

Figure 59.
GPX in Episode 7



In Episode 12, 11:09 Attorney Woo explained to Atty. Choi about the Yangtze River Dolphin, with the learning materials which can be seen flashing at her back (**Figure.60**).

Figure 60.
GPX in Episode 12



There are other episodes which used graphics as visual support such as in Episodes 13, 14, 15, and 16. All of the graphics in the mentioned episodes aimed to guide

viewers to understand specialized topics further and also to serve as mental pictures of Atty. Woo. This showed how creative she was and how well she could remember and retain important information.

The use of graphics mimicked video features in TV magazine programs. When teaching viewers about a topic, informational graphics must be produced as a visual guide, as well as voice overs. For example, proper hand washing videos must combine videos and graphics with text for visualization purposes.

The graphics in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* were conceptualized creatively. Watch scenes in the drama gave viewers the feeling of scanning a computer tablet or writing on a board. While ordinary graphics would just be composed of text combined with colors or an image, *Extraordinary Woo's* graphics creation levelled up in the sense that they are more interactive, colourful, dynamic, and functional. They resembled reality.

Animated Graphics

Animated graphics or motion graphics characterized the type of graphical art one can see in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. They were not static but moved in sync with the dialogues, especially in the educational aspect of the script. In other words, they serve as “supplemental animated graphics” (Kandra, 2021). The graphics appear realistic, especially the highlighted documents usually shown whenever Atty. Woo wanted to cite an important provision in Korean law or when she wanted to explain about a topic. The other graphics were 2D animation like “cartoon-ish” whales or a unicorn horn that grew on the head of Atty. Woo.

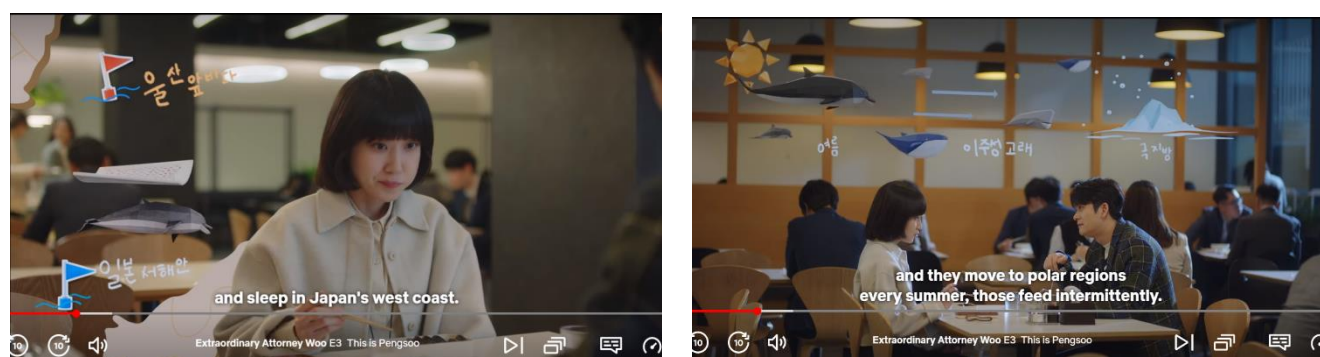
In Episode 3, for example, the use of floating visuals was used. In this episode, Atty. Woo was explaining an important topic to Atty. Jung then the whole graphics that looked like pages of a book lined up on top of the frame to make the audience imagine what Atty. Woo was explaining. When her train of thought was cut off, the pages fell from the top screen (**Figure 61**).

Figure 61.
Animated Graphics



In the same episode, during lunch, Atty. Woo was talking to Junho about whales feeding themselves in the coastal waters of Ulsan and sleeping in Japan's west coast. The context of this statement was Junho and she came from the 17th Floor of the building and they went down to the cafeteria to eat. She compared their situation to that of the whales. While she was talking about whales, the motion graphics appeared on the left side then moved on top of them as the camera angle changed (**Figure. 62**).

Figure 62.
Animated Graphics

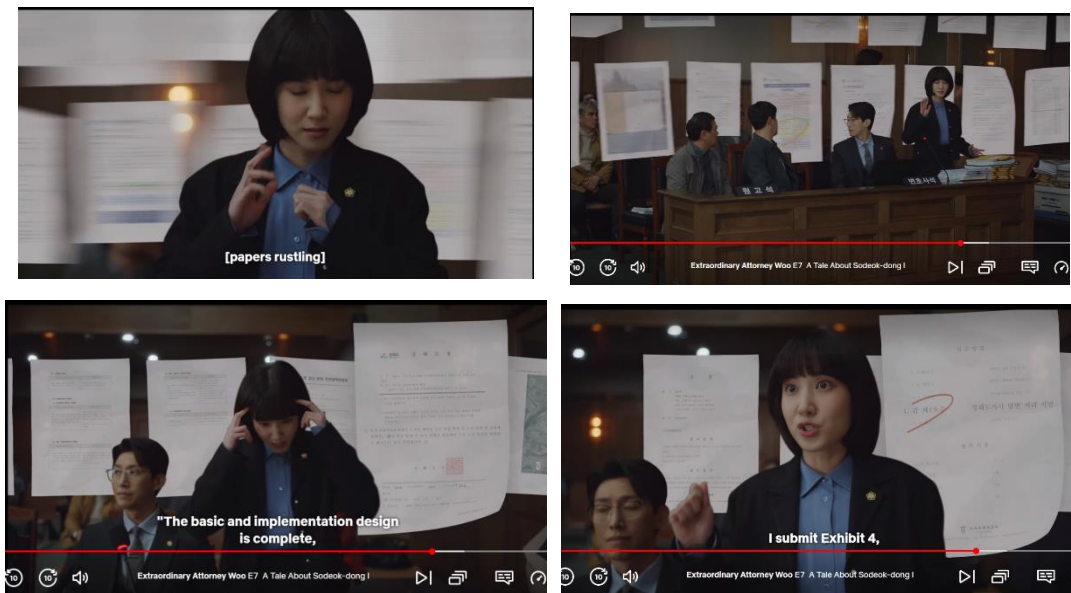


In Episode 7, during the *Eureka* moment of Atty. Woo in the court, there were graphics of paper rustling at the back of Atty. Woo (**Figure. 63**). These were important

documents that would help her in solving the case. Atty. Woo moved the documents like a computer tablet. The documents appeared at her back, moving like a carousel.

Figure 63.

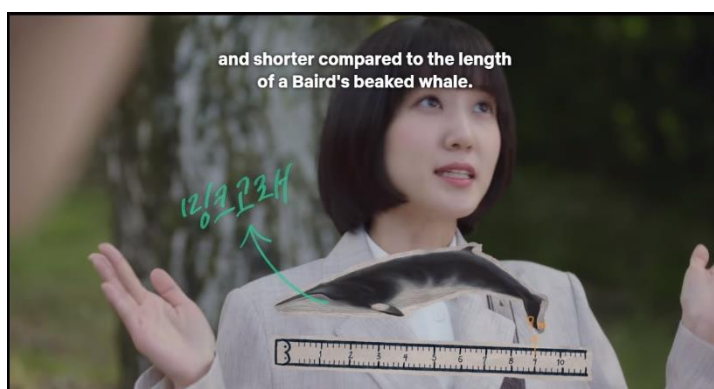
Animated Graphics



In Episode 13, Atty. Woo compared the *Gwaebultaeng* painting to a Baird's Beaked Whale. She described that the painting is shorter compared to the whale. Graphics of the whale and a ruler appeared on the screen to show the measurements (**Figure. 64**).

Figure 64.

Animated Graphics



Functional Graphic Design

One of the noticeable aspects in the narrative structure of *Extraordinary Atty. Woo* was the use of functional graphic designs. In every episode, there was a graphic design which served as the title card to introduce the episode (**Figure.65**). It contained the title of the episode and images, which were creatively done using CGI. The images used gave the viewers a sneak preview of what to expect in the drama. The title card itself had a story of its own. In this dissertation, this was no longer tackled because of time constraints.

The graphic designs used pastel colors as its background; it used a consistent font in which colors were predominantly white except for Episodes 1,7,11,and 12 which were in black; and the images clearly reflected what the episode wished to convey. The whale or dolphin image was consistent in all title cards. Some were also animated and there were embedded sound effects to give life to the design.

At the end of every episode another graphic design was featured (**Figure.66**), which showcased the episode's highlights. It was once again created using CGI and resembled a webtoon. It looked surreal and had a dream like effect. Looking closely at the image, it seemed drawn using water color. These highlights also had stories to tell which were conveyed in the different items and elements included in the design.

In the *Doctor Romantic* (2016 &2020) series, there was also a graphic design which introduced each episode. It also used a meaningful image relevant to the story. It was similar to this drama because Yoo In Sik is the director for both dramas - *Dr. Romantic* and *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. He perhaps applied the same creative idea. In other medical drama such as *Hospital Playlist* (2020), although it is episodic in nature, there is no title card. After the introductory video, it goes directly to the story.

On the other hand, in *W Two Worlds* (2016), before the start of each episode, a flashback of the previous events in the form of narration was used. In other words, for every Korean drama, even if the format was episodic, it did not follow a default template

when it comes to graphic designs. It depends on the approach of the director, such as in the case of Yoo In Sik, where capitalized on graphics to add drama and flavour to his dramas.

Figure 65.

Graphic Design to introduce an episode



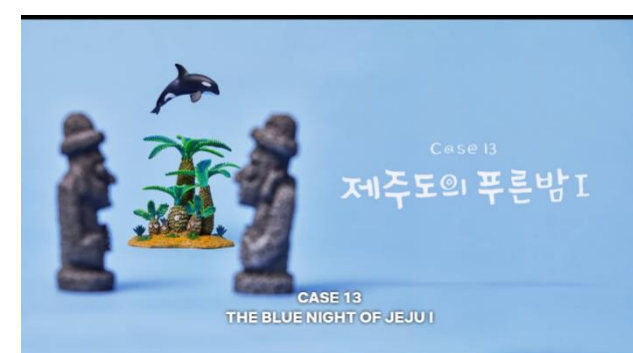


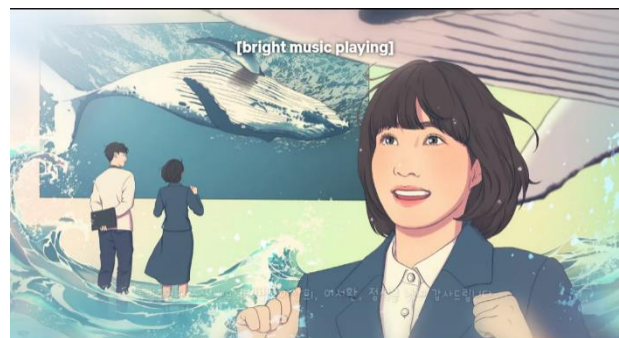
Figure 66.

Graphic Design to show highlights of an episode

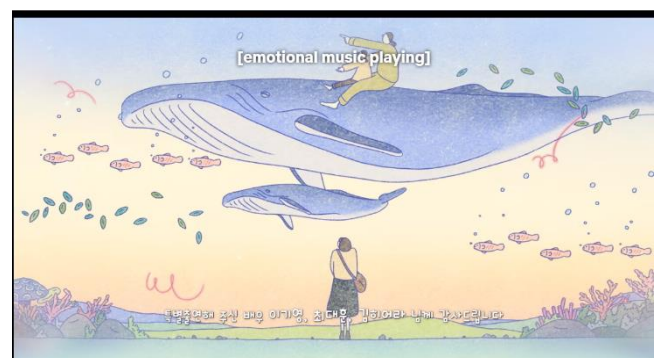
Episodes 1 and 2



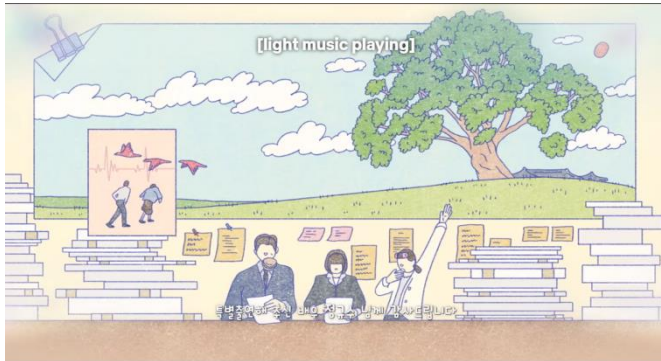
Episodes 3 and 4



Episodes 5 and 6



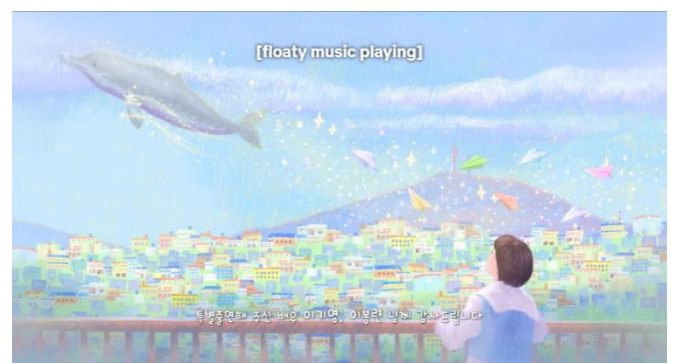
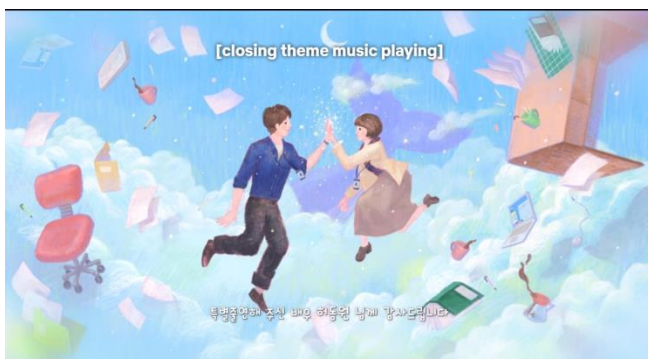
Episodes 7 and 8



Episodes 9 and 10



Episodes 11 and 12



Episodes 13 and 14



Episodes 15 and 16



Visual Effects Integration

Aside from the use of graphic design in the drama, visual effects were also very prominent. Visual effects “is a term used to describe imagery created, manipulated, or enhanced for any film, or other moving media that doesn’t take place during live-action shooting” (Studiobinder, 2023). In short, there was an actual footage of a scene and then the effect was integrated into it thereby creating an environment which is impossible to shoot or is non-existent in reality. In *Extraordinary Atty. Woo*, a whale swimming in the court room (**Figure. 68**) or a whale swimming above the Han River (**Figure. 69**) were just a few VFX outputs present in the drama. In fact, the sperm whale which Atty. Woo really liked was based on “a model of an actual paper artist (**Figure. 67**)” (Naver, 2022). Approaches, such as these, are commonly used in Hollywood movies. Studiobinder (2023) gave examples of how VFX was used in movies: dragons flying in the sky in *Game of Thrones* (2011), spaceships flying through space in *Star Wars* (2015), or marching

armies of Orcs, Trolls and Olog-hai in *Lord of the Rings* (2001). Korean dramas are not strangers to VFX use either. *The Host* (2006), *Goblin* (2016), *Parasite* (2019), and *Hospital Playlist* (2020) were just a few of the Kdramas which used VFX to either “convey spectacular events or depict details from everyday life” (Frejas, 2021). *Vincenzo* (2021), which starred *Song Joongki*, was another drama which used VFX. They had to recreate scenery in Italy using VFX due to COVID-19 restrictions. During the shoot, the pandemic prevented the production crew from travelling to Italy to film. They thus used green screens and VFX to achieve several visual requirements for the plotline.

Similarly, *Extraordinary Atty. Woo* was like a movie on the small screen. The high production value clearly reflected the effort and the money spent to produce the drama.

According to Enriquez (2022), 20 billion won or 850 million pesos was spent to produce this drama. She further revealed that a huge chunk of the budget was allocated to visual effects. Filming in different locations also contributed hugely to the budget allocation.

Figure 67 .

Paper Model of the Sperm Whale in Extraordinary Atty. Woo



Figure 68.

Orca whale in Episode 9



📷 The orca Woo Young-woo saw in Episode 9: "The Pied Piper" PHOTO BY EXTRAORDINARY ATTORNEY WOO/ENA

Figure 69.

Sperm Whale swimming above the city scape



📷 PHOTO BY EXTRAORDINARY ATTORNEY WOO/ENA

Audio Design

A drama's visuals will be unappreciated without the accompanying audio. Audio System is composed of music, sound effects, and spoken dialogues. During the silent movie era, "all music heard in cinema was played on the spot, provided by piano, organ, or an orchestra...but there would be no spoken dialogues" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). In the 1920s, synchronized sound was born. "Warner Brothers invested in a sound system

using records in synchronization with film images” (Ibid). Today, dramas and other TV programs enjoy cutting edge technology to record and edit sounds.

The audio design of Extraordinary Atty. Woo is theorized as Proficient Aural Form: Korean Sound. The audio sets the Mood, Intensifies Action, Stimulates Reality, Superior Sound Quality and use of Original Sound Track.

It is Korean Sound because the sound waves which travel on the air from the source allow viewers to hear music or voice. The sound makes the visuals come alive and add color to the storytelling. Sound is critical in ensuring that the dialogues are understood and heard. There are scenes “that are highly dependent on music to achieve their effects” (Mamer, 2014). Hence, special attention must be given to audio production and editing.

“The production style for all genres and types of programming requires a sound design that is dense and unrelenting. The industry calls [this] “wall-to-wall” (O’Donnell, 2017). Sound plays an important role in programs. In fact, “Music and songs help advance or support the story in many shows” (Ibid) and “musical scores are also used to heighten the impact of the action on the screen” (Ibid).

Below is Table.8 which shows the main and sub themes of audio design.

Table 8.

Audio Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Sound: Audio Design	Sets the Mood
	Intensifies Action
	Stimulates Reality
	Superior Sound Quality
	Use of Original Sound Track

Sets the mood

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the kind of background music playing on a specific scene depended on the message that it wanted to convey. Most of the music used in order to set the mood were instrumental. During character dialogues, background music was played to achieve the planned mood of the scene. This is because “just as you can pick the best image from several shots, you can choose what exact bit of sound will best serve the purpose” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

In Episode 1, melancholic music was used to highlight the emotions of Woo Gwangho when he learned that his daughter had autism.

In the same episode, dangerous background music was used when during the commotion between Woo Gwangho and his landlord to urge the viewer to focus on the scene.

Similarly, when Atty. Woo had several “eureka moments” in the drama, music was used also. Dreamy music was usually utilized when Atty. Woo was in a trance during her eureka moments.

In Episode 7, tense music was used when Atty. Choi showed Atty. Woo an anonymous post on the employee’s discussion board about the anomalous hiring of the latter. Then it shifted to emotional music when Atty. Woo admitted to Atty. Choi that what she had read was the truth.

In addition, dramatic mood was created for major revelations in the drama. In Episode 8, for example, this was used when Gwang ho revealed that Tae Soo Mi is the birth mother of Atty. Woo. Hence, the dramatic music emphasized the emotions felt by Gwang ho and Attorney Woo.

There were also times in which funny music was used for humorous scenes in the drama.

In Episode 9, the romantic atmosphere which was shared by Lee Junho and Woo Young Woo was emphasized by the romantic music in the background. Sweet and romantic music was also played in Episode 10 when the couple (Lee Junho and Woo Young Woo) attempted to hold hands.

In all kinds of moods, there were also specific music tracks inserted to make the viewer feel the emotions conveyed in the scene. The music tracks ranged from serious, tense, pensive, cheeky, emotional, hopeless, sorrowful, frantic, to mysterious music. Understanding of these were further enhanced by the subtitles on Netflix, which were very helpful in identifying the music. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the subtitles included the type of tracks playing in a particular scene. It was placed in brackets and the kind of music used was identified. In a research entitled, *Simply-then-Translate: Automatic Preprocessing for Black-Box Translation*, Mehta, et. al. (2020), reported that Netflix uses AI in its subtitles through the approach Automatic Pre-Processing or APP. The research claimed that “APP will give translations that are close to those of the native language” (Ibid). However, there are also claims that the translation for Netflix shows was done manually by translators. In a Quora (2016) forum, a subtitle translator, explained that Netflix uses CC or closed caption which is “a form of enhanced subtitling for the deaf and hearing impaired that adds information they need to understand a video, such as an ID for who is speaking or one for sound effects”.

In order to identify the most common or recurring music used in the drama, a free online word cloud which helps identify recurring music was used as a tool. The word cloud showed results in this order: somber music, playful music, emotional music, tense music, funny music, and light music. These results showed the appropriate mixture and balance of music for drama, comedy, suspense, and for normal situations. The generator also

indicated that somber music was on top of the list which is due to the number of serious scenes in the drama which required such music.

Intensifies action

Actions of characters can be further amplified using sound effects or music. In Episode 3, a heavy character was walking towards the Hanbada conference room. His heavy footsteps were emphasized using sound effects because producing a natural sound out of the footsteps of a normal or heavy person would be impossible. Hence, SFX or sound effects were used. SFX are normally digitally produced and could mostly be found in the collections of audio experts. They are also digitally enhanced in order that it may sound realistic. However, in big budget films or TV shows, “many sound effects are generated by Foley process” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). In the Foley process, “experts record people, pouring drinks, splashing in mud, rubbing sandpaper, etc..” (Ibid)

Music could also be used to intensify scenes. In Episode 4, Dong Geurami and her dad engaged in an altercation with her dad’s two brothers. As they fought in slow motion, the music followed their movements which resulted in giving the scene a funny mood. Their fight was thus intensified using music.

In Episode 6, during the flashback, Kim Jeong Hui and Gye Hyang Sim went to the house of Lee Sunyeong to collect the money she owed “mom”. To intensify this scene, the sound of getting the weapons such as wood and hollow blocks, as well as the loud footsteps going up to the house of Sunyeong, could be heard clearly. These serve to grab the attention of viewers and helped them focus on the scene because a violent scene will happen next.

Sound effects make a scene flavorful. The drama will look bland and plain if sound effects were not utilized. SFX guide viewers about what was happening and it could help emphasize the severity or magnanimity of the scene.

Stimulates reality

There are two types of sound as far as space is concerned: diegetic sound and non-diegetic sound. Diegetic sound is a sound which emanates from the universe created in the story, for example, “words spoken by characters, sounds made by objects in the story, and music represented as coming from instruments in the story space” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). Non-diegetic sound, on the other hand, are sounds which come from outside the story, for example, music added to either set the mood or intensify the action in the drama. Most of the sound effects in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* were diegetic sounds such as whale calls, jingle of keys, wind blowing, leaves rustling, footsteps, opening and closing of doors, car collision, waves in the ocean, conversation on a mobile phone, and the revving of a car engine. These sound effects make the scenes realistic. Some are produced in its natural environment especially if the location was near the ocean, in the mountains or in the middle of the city. A majority though were digitally produced and enhanced so that it could be controlled and manipulated according to the requirements of the story.

There were also SFX used to make a scene more humorous. In Episode 10, Mr. Hairy made a somewhat corny joke about bread and so the SFX used was blowing wind to emphasize that the joke was passé.

Bordwell & Thompson (2023) revealed that non-diegetic sound effects could also be explored. For example, in Episode 11, a glitter SFX was used when the word gambling was mentioned. In the same episode, a combination of scary and funny SFX were used to enhance the scene of Atty. Woo peeping through the blinds and looking at Lee Junho, creating horror and suspense which could only be made through SFX.

Superior Sound Quality

The sound quality in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was superior. The sounds were clear, crisp, and natural. The sound quality reflected a competent audio engineer and cutting edge technology such as equipment and editing software.

The layering of sounds was seamless and believable. An example of this is the car collision scene in Episode 11. In this episode, the brand new car of Shin Insu collided with a truck while he was hurriedly crossing the road to get to his wife. Different sounds such as the sound of the collision, tires screeching, smoke coming out from the car, footsteps, sobbing, the dialogues and reactions of characters, and the background music were featured in the scene. The effective layering of these sounds during editing enabled the drama to produce natural sound and realism. Some of the sounds were taken from the environment itself but a majority of the sounds needed enhancement using editing.

In another episode, Episode 6, a scene with a character walking away from another character had sounds that were still clear. In this episode, Gye Hyang Sim was walking away from her daughter. She left her in the orphanage because she needed to face the charges against her. Even if her daughter was far from her, the sound was still clear even though the distance was established because the voice was barely audible but the word “Eomma” was clear.

Moreover, in several episodes shot on the streets, the sound was still clear and free from unwanted noise. Conversations between characters could still be heard clearly.

Seamless transition also contributed to the quality of the sound of the drama. In Episode 7, Eugene Park was playing his violin under the Hackberry Tree and then the diegetic sound produced by the violin transitioned into canned or recorded violin music. As Eugene Park continued to play the violin while the recorded violin music was playing

in the background, there was a seamless transition from a diegetic sound to non-diegetic sound.

The sudden shift of scenes from flashback to the current scene needed seamless transition from one music to the other to execute the scene effectively. In Episode 8, romantic music played in the background as Lee Junho and Atty. Woo were left in the office waiting for Eugene Park. The scene then shifted to a flashback of the night when they were alone in Atty. Jung's office. After the flashback, the music transitioned to investigative music because they had to chase Eugene Park who had run away.

Aside from competent audio engineers and available state-of-the-art equipment, the audio sweetening must also be done meticulously in order to achieve excellent audio quality. The audio sweetening has different levels: "adding extra material to the finished edited program, improving the sound within a scene, modifying sound quality to improve realism or to achieve a dramatic effect, ensuring that the sound levels are balance(d), adding bridging effects or music that will run between shots, and replacing unsatisfactory sections of the soundtrack that were spoiled" (Owens, 2016).

Use of Original Sound Track

"The role of popular music in television drama and comedy has increased substantially" O'Donnell (2017) has noted. The lyrics of the song were chosen to fit the story and these helped heighten the impact of the scene. Koreans are known for creating original soundtracks for every drama production that are usually sang by Kpop artists or Korean singers. These could be downloaded through Spotify or iTunes to enable the listener to remember his or her favorite scenes in the Kdrama. Popular Korean drama OST are *Goblin*, *Descendants of the Sun*, *Scarlet Heart Ryeo*, *Nevertheless*, *Crash Landing on You*, *Healer*, *Hospital Playlist*, among others.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, *Inevitable* by Suzy was the romantic background music in Episode 7 when Lee Junho and Atty. Woo almost kissed in Atty. Jung's office. This song, whose lyrics are in Hangeul, was also featured in the OST of the drama.

In addition, music was also used to set the scene in Episode 7. *Tuning in to You* by Wonstein played as the three lawyers (Atty. Woo, Atty. Choi, and Atty. Kwon) in this episode read and prepared the evidence needed for their case. The scene treatment resembled a music video. The music was upbeat and a perfect soundtrack for the hardworking lawyers.

Similarly, *Blue Night in Jeju Island* by Park Eun Bin, who played Atty. Woo in the drama, reflected the emotions felt by the characters at that moment when they flew from Jeju to Seoul. The melody sounded melancholic and emotional.

The theme music of the drama which played during the introductory video was also included in the OST. The instrumental song was entitled *Woo Young-Woo, the Same Backwards and Forwards* by Roh Young Sim. This song had an addictive rhythm that made viewers feel light and glad and excited, resembling small footsteps or beats.

Concluding Analysis

The message form of a text is usually constructed by the communicator or the encoders. In the case of Kdrama, the form was constructed using the different technical elements which were put together by the production crew.

The different technical elements that made Korean drama could be theorized as *creative domination*. It is defined as superior knowledge and skills in communicating the technical elements in a drama. Creative domination could be traced to the competence of the production crew in transforming the screenplay into a visual masterpiece. Cinematography, directing, editing, lighting, production design, graphics design, and audio design are constructed in a production language which conveys meaning when

combined and synergized with the narrative elements. The communication process is free from noise. The flow of the message is smooth.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo's technical execution communicated basic and innovative elements and strategies which contributed to the over-all appeal of the drama. The drama communicated a high level of production value and showcased creative domination resulting in positive feedback from the audience. The decoders appreciated and understood the production language conveyed which meant that communication was achieved.

Narrative Elements

This section will discuss the plot, narrative structure, characters, and genre, after which the results of the thematic analysis will be presented.

Plot

Brilliant Attorney Woo Young-woo tackles challenges in the courtroom and beyond as a newbie at a top law firm and a woman on the autism spectrum (Netflix, 2022).

Narrative Structure

Each episode began with the logo of Netflix. It was followed by an OBB (Opening Billboard) which introduced the main character of the drama, Atty. Woo. The OBB began with a light piano sound, which jived with the movement of the frame. The sperm whale was prominently shown on screen. The color grade of the OBB was bright and sunny. From the opening billboard, the viewer was already introduced to different interesting items which were: headphones, eye cover, books on whales, keychain, Gimbap, ID, wallet, pen, notebook/organizers, whale trinkets. The OBB ended with the Seoul cityscape and the title of the series. The clouds, shaped like a whale, were shown on the last frame.

The actual episode followed the OBB. The order of presentation, however, was flexible. In the case of Episode 1, the episode began with a flashback, which will not be evident at first until the episode is finished. In Episode 2, the episode began with a

wedding scene, the take-off point of the story. It looked like a backstory or a flashback at first glance but eventually, it will be revealed that it happened in real time and the next scenes were consequences of what happened in the wedding scene.

Unique to the structure was the insertion of a title card of the episode in the middle of the first scene. The title card was usually colorful or animated or both. For Episode 1, for example, the title card served as a background of the young Woo jumping on a trampoline. It was an animated title card. Whales and fishes swam on a light grey background and the case title can be found in the middle. The title card then transitioned into a wall paper of the room of an adult Woo Young Woo. However, this was true only for Episode 1. For Episode 2, the title card was pink. Then there were scattered confetti on the ground. The dolphin popped up in a white wedding invitation on the left side of the screen. The sound of the dolphin was embedded in the title card. After this, it transitioned into the continuation of the storyline for that particular episode. The same went for other episodes.

Every episode had a new case to tackle. The story of the lives of the main characters were integrated into the plot of the new cases seamlessly. There were various legal issues tackled in the drama: assault, claim for damages, suicide, deception over a gift contract, copyright infringement, heritage preservation, kidnapping, rape, gambling, wrongful termination, and breach of cyber security.

Different types of whales and dolphins were likewise featured in majority of the episodes.

The “eureka” moment of Atty. Woo was common in all episodes. There were variations to this “eureka moment”. The first variation was the when the wind blew, the camera zoomed in on the face of Atty. Woo and then cut through a swimming whale in the ocean. The second variation was when Atty. Woo’s eyes lit up and a whale swam in

the frame of the court room or of her office. Often, the whale could be seen swimming in the clouds. The eureka moment signals a solution to the case being tackled for a particular episode.

Episode 1 ended with a cliff hanger. The face of the visitor of the Woos was not revealed yet. The scene just showed that it was raining and a woman was coming to Atty. Woo's house.

Each episode ended with two GPXs. The first GPX was a CGI which appeared drawn with colored pencils or pens. It was usually colorful and depicted a highlighted scene from the episode. For Episode 1, for example, the ending GPX was a scene of Atty. Woo inside the subway train and the whale could be seen swimming alongside her.

The second GPX was a blue colored title card which contained different shapes and items such as stars, tomato, libra scale, kimbap, plus sign, and cuckoo bird. In the center of the title card was a statement written in Hangul. Netflix did not provide a translation for it.

After the title cards, the preview of the next episode followed. While the preview was playing, the end credits played synchronously as well and then the Netflix logo appeared.

Characters

The main characters are found below:

- a) Atty. Woo Young Woo
- b) Woo Gwang Ho
- c) Atty. Jung Myungseok
- d) Atty. Kwon Minwoo
- e) Atty. Choi Su-yeon
- f.) Dong Guerami

g.) Tae Soo-mi

h.) Han Seon-yeong

There are different characters involved in the specific case tackled per episode.

The protagonist in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* is Atty. Woo Young Woo, a female lawyer in the autism spectrum. She grew up without a mother and was solely raised by a father who ran a small Gimbap restaurant for a living. Young Woo is a genius. She graduated from Seoul National University School of Law and almost got a perfect score in the Bar exam. As an adult, she struggled to fit in because people discriminated against her due to her condition. When she was hired by Hanbada Law Office, she unexpectedly met the love of her life, Lee Junho, who became a staunch supporter of her endeavors. Atty. Woo was vital in solving various cases in their law firm due to her excellent knowledge of the law and “out of the box” case-solving methods. She found comfort in whales and dolphins. Her “eureka” moments always occurred when dolphins or whales appeared in her mind. She was a loving daughter yet firm in her choices. As a friend, she was loyal and thoughtful. Unknowingly, she was the life of every conversation because of her innocent comments. The character core of Atty. Woo was anchored on these two: externally - she wanted to continue being a lawyer despite the biases against her; internally - she wanted to show her mother that despite being abandoned by her, she can succeed in life and love others even without the experience of a mother’s love.

Genre

Netflix categorizes *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* as a courtroom and social issue drama. In websites, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* is considered a legal drama. The genre dictates the tropes and the presentation of the plot/story. Since it is a legal drama, it is expected that the episodes will tackle legal cases. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* maintained the standards of the legal drama genre. In its 16 episodes, it presented a total of 14 cases.

The cases were controversial and significant in Korean society. It told of such stories as those of persons with autism, plight of LGBTQ++ group, academies in Korea, heritage conservation, proliferation of gambling, adultery as a consequence of earning gambling money, mental disability and sex. Unique to this legal drama was the autistic attorney as the protagonist.

Narrative Elements

The narrative of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* is theorized as *Korean Fusion* because it merged the familiar Korean Drama Elements with other narrative features which emerged during the data analysis. The drama retained its tested-and-proven formula in storytelling and added other components to increase audience appeal.

Below is **Table.9** which shows the main theme and sub themes of the narrative.

Table 9.

Narrative Main Theme and Sub Themes

MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Fusion: Narrative	Metamorphosis of the text
	Classic Kdrama Narrative Elements
	Knowledge Sharing Vehicle
	Popular Culture Integration
	Multi-faceted Characters
	Strong Plot

Metamorphosis of the Text

When something undergoes transformation it means it has morphed into something new. In close reading, metamorphosis or transformation of a text means “turning of a word or image” (Brummett, 2019). In relation to this is the trope. Trope is defined “a category of textual devices in which the literal, ordinary meaning of a sign or

image must be turned or altered to arrive at what the sign or image means in a text” (Ibid). Kenneth Burke introduced the four master tropes of turning and transformation. These are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony (Ibid). During the course of analysis, foreshadowing, parallelism, stereotype and symbolism were added to the list. From among the master tropes of Burke, only the metaphor is applicable in this research.

Metaphor

Metaphor “is a device for seeing something in terms of something else” (Ibid). A whale as a metaphor for a human mother was one metaphor identified in the drama. In Episode 6, Gye Hwang Sim left her daughter in the orphanage in order to protect her because she was about to be put on trial for assault. She did not want her child to be put to shame and so she wanted to face this challenge first. Atty. Woo who was fascinated with whales, shared her realization in this dialogue: “Like a mother whale, maternal instincts of whales are notorious for their dedication because the ocean is hazardous for raising babies. The same is through with human mother, the maternal instincts are strong because the world is a dangerous place for their children. There are crimes happening and other social ills.”

In the scene above, a whale was thus compared to a human mother. A mother whale exhibited maternal instincts in the ocean because she wanted to protect her offspring from predators. Gray whales, for example, are known to be devilish because “it had a reputation for ramming vessels that attacked the whale itself or its calves” (Sciencing, 2023). The mother whale turned rabid if her young was at risk. A human mother had a different challenge: crimes and social ills in society. Hence, they must protect their children at all cost and even give up their lives for their children.

In Episode 9, the dark side of academies in Korea were tackled. Children were dolphins - a perspective Atty. Woo had in the context of children in abusive academies.

“Children who are only 10 and 11 years old are stuck inside schools and academies studying 12 hours everyday, not being able to properly eat or sleep. They’re like dolphins who are stuck in small tanks and doing shows everyday, eating only frozen fish,” Atty. Woo commented in the episode.

The implication was children are boxed in a closed space where they keep on studying even to the point of missing meals and rest. Academies are supposedly a space for happy and healthy learning. In the drama, it seemed that the academies were too stringent with implementing the curriculum that they overlooked the well-being of the students. The dolphins shared the same plight as the children. They were confined in pools, like prisoners facing a life sentence, and were expected to perform for the spectators all day, which was different if they were in the ocean where they could swim freely and eat abundant food. Their dream of freedom was hopeless unless they found ways to run away. The children deserved to have a balanced life. They can go to the academies to learn but they also needed to experience living like children - able to play with friends and enjoy life.

“Married couples are mandarin ducks”. In Episode 11, Shin Insu and his wife were compared to mandarin ducks. The context of this comparison was Shin Insu he filing for divorce after winning a case. His wife had been there for him during his lowest of lows but he threw that away in exchange for a rich life with a new woman. Atty. Jung in his dialogue said, “Mandarin duck couples aren’t that loving to each other. During the mating period, the male duck stays with the female as they build their nest. After the mating period, the male abandon(s) the female and she raises their babies”.

Mandarin ducks live in Eastern Siberia, Northeastern China, South Korea, and Japan. The male ducks “stay around for the incubation period, once the eggs have

hatched, he leaves the female to rear the chicks” (Whitehouse, 2020). The tenor in this scenario were the married couples. The vehicle was the mandarin duck.

This implied that in marriage, the husband and wife must be partners in everything. Challenges and problems will be survived as long as no one leaves the marriage or acts selfish. The children must be prioritized and the life built together must be considered in all choices and decisions. Shin Insu only thought of himself and the benefits that he will gain after receiving the money he won in the case. He forgot about his wife and his responsibilities in raising their children. He broke the vows of couples during marriage which says “for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part”. Death claimed him in the end while crossing the road hurriedly. His death saved the wife.

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing “is a literary device that is utilized to give a hint or indication of future events in the story” (De Guzman, 2022). There are two types of foreshadowing, according to Studio Binder, these are Direct Foreshadowing and Indirect Foreshadowing. Direct foreshadowing “states that an element of a story explicitly suggests an impending event” (Ibid). While indirect foreshadowing states “that a story element hints at upcoming event by leaving subtle clues of what’s to come throughout the story” (Ibid).

In Episode 2, direct foreshadowing was used to foretell an unfortunate event. The napkin which covered the wine bottle burst and then the next frame showed that the bride’s wedding dress malfunctioned which exposed her. Direct foreshadowing could be showed through “dialogues, narrator or a stated prophecy within the story” (Ibid). But in this case, it was through a visual image.

Foreshadowing contributes in enhancing storytelling. It is used to create suspense, to build drama, and develop anticipation.

Parallelism

Parallelism refers to the story or narrative structure in which the same structure is repeated in various ways. Parallelism has three forms: visual parallelism, narrative parallelism, and thematic parallelism. Visual parallelism refers to use of “similar or repeated visual motifs” (Rogers, 2023). Narrative parallelism, on the other hand, refers to “similar or repeated plot structures to create connections between characters or events in a film” (Ibid) and lastly, thematic parallelism “refers to the use of similar or repeated themes or ideas” (Ibid). The purpose of using parallelism is “to help create a more cohesive and meaningful viewing experience for the audience” (Ibid).

During the analysis of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, narrative parallelism emerged. In Episode 5, Ihwa and Geumgang were close competitors in the ATM industry. They were like Hanbada and Taesan - leaders in their respective fields. In order to outsmart the other, deception and lying were used by one over the other. Geumgang stood firm that there was no copyright infringement in the ATM cassette design. This narrative was also similar to the relationship Atty. Woo and Atty. Kwon. Both were lawyers of Hanbada. They were competitive and competent. However, it seemed that Atty. Kwon could not accept that Atty. Woo was better than him and so he kept important information from Atty. Woo. In the later part of the series, Atty. Kwon's highly competitive spirit is explained: he just wanted to be the best in his field so he could provide for his ailing parents. Atty. Kwon felt that Atty. Jung favored Atty. Woo because of her disability but he did not realize that Atty. Woo was simply a genius. In this episode, the situation of Ihwa and Geumgang created a connection to two characters – Atty. Kwon and Atty. Woo.

In Episode 14, Lee Junho and Atty. Woo's relationship as a couple was paralleled to the married life of Atty. Jung and his wife Jisu. Jisu was lonely when she was with Atty. Jung because he was a workaholic. He did not have time for her. Even in their honeymoon

as a young married couple, Atty. Jung was still working. Jisu did not experience being the center of attention of Atty. Jung and so their marriage ended in divorce. This paralleled Atty. Woo's case: she was worried that she will cause Lee Junho's loneliness. She was aware of her disability and of the possibility that Junho will end up taking care of her in the end. She was afraid that Junho will eventually realize he was not happy being with her and break up with her.

The use of parallelism in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* enhanced the impact of the story to the viewers. It gave cohesion and unity to the narrative because through parallel connections between the characters, both character and plot were established.

Stereotype

Stanford University (2023) defined stereotype as “widely held, simplified, and essentialist belief about a specific group...Stereotypes are deeply embedded within social institutions and wider culture”. An example of a stereotype is that “all blonde women are dumb” or “lack Americans are excellent in sports.”

Another kind of stereotype is trope. A trope in the context of media and literature refers to “plot devices, themes, visual cues, and other storytelling elements that are repeatedly used within the genre, so much that they become recognizable” (Masterclass, 2021).

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the stereotypical portrayal of a suspicious person in the Kdrama world is described as someone who is always wearing black cap, black bomber jacket, black shirt, black pants, black shoes. This stereotype cuts across many modern Korean dramas. Some examples are Lee Minho in *Legend of the Blue Sea*, Ji Chang Wook in *Healer*, Song Jongki in *Descendants of the Sun*, Lee Joon Suk in *W*, among others. In *Extraordinary Atty. Woo*, Atty. Kwon shows this stereotype, when he posted on the bulletin board anonymously. Handaba's CEO was accused of hiring fraud

and through the post Atty. Kwon expressed his disappointment. Atty. Kwon wore the staple black outfit of a suspicious person in Kdrama. He hoped that he could blend in the crowd and he will remain unrecognizable.

“BFF turned to Lover” is a trope mostly observed in Romantic dramas, where the character’s closest friend becomes their boyfriend or girlfriend. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, Lee Junho became the first person to assist Atty. Woo to enter the rotating door. He was also the only one who patiently listened to all of Atty. Woo’s whale stories. He was the type who would join Atty. Woo in all her whale related adventures (protest, whale/dolphin watching, etc.). In the end, they fell in love with each other amidst the some of Junho’s friends and his sister’s negative reactions. The same trope was used in Korean dramas such as *Weighlifting Fairy Kim Bok Joo* (2016), *My ID is Gangnam Beauty* (2019), and *Fight for my Way* (2018).

“BFF and Sidekick” all rolled into one is the character Dong Geurami in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. Atty. Woo and Geurami started as just classmates in high school. Young Woo was the most bullied girl in class and Geurami was the typical apathetic classmate who did not care. However, when Geurami observed that Young Woo was the frequent target of a group of girls to bully, one day she stepped up and defended Young Woo. Eventually, they became the best of friends. They even created a greeting when they saw each other: “Woo to the Young to the Woo. Dong to the Geu to the rami”. Young Woo would always hang out with Geurami and would always see her advice in almost everything. Young Woo became Geurami’s lawyer when her Dad was involved in a case. “BFF and Sidekick” trope was also present in Kdramas such as *The King Eternal Monarch*, *Descendants of the Sun*, *Crash Landing On You*, *Empress Ki*, *Legend of the Blue Sea*, among others.

“Flawed Protagonist”. Protagonists in Kdramas were usually flawed characters. They were motivated not just by the pain but by their goal. In the case of Atty. Woo, she had many painful experiences in her life. She grew up not knowing her mother. She was made to believe that her mother died giving birth to her. She did not expect that one day she will meet her “powerful mother” in the legal profession. Gwangho compensated by giving her the love that Tae Soo Mi was supposed to give to Young Woo. She seemed expressionless or unbothered externally but she longed for her mother in some ways. In the end, she made a firm decision to stay in Hanbada despite her mother constantly wanting to bring her to another Taesan branch in America. Another facet of Young Woo was her autism which often made people discriminate against her and judge her. She was bullied when she was young. People believed that she was an incapable adult and there was something wrong with her. She felt that she did not belong anywhere. Young Woo used all these to excel at being a lawyer and make a mark. Even her own mother noticed that she was brilliant and was the only one who could face her head-on at court. All these pains were just part of who she was but these did not define her at all.

“Rich girl fell in love with a Poor boy”: the love story of Gwangho and Tae Soo Mi ended tragically because of their differences in social and economic standing. Gwangho was the son of a farmer while Tae Soo Mi was the daughter of the CEO of a law firm. There was a huge social disparity between them. Tae Soo Mi agreed to keep the baby but that she had to leave without a trace. Gwangho had to raise the child on his own. From the perspective of mothers, what Tae Soo Mi did was irresponsible, reckless and selfish, but when one examines her motivation and internal struggle, one will understand that she did not want to disappoint her family. She would rather give up her daughter than live a poor life and lose her dream of becoming a lawyer. Gwangho and Tae Soo Mi were victims of their socio-economic realities. This kind of trope was present in Kdramas such

as *Encounter* (2018), *High Society* (20015), *Yong Pal* (2015), *Secret Love Affair* (2014), and *Innocent Man* (2012) ,among others.

Piggyback ride is another staple in Korean dramas and a regular occurrence in real life. This romantic gesture happens when a boyfriend carries his girlfriend on his back. It was dubbed as the mother of drama tropes according to Dramabeans (2022). In the context of the drama, piggyback ride “is an intentional association to make the hero appear safe, trustworthy, secure...like a father” (2022).

In Episode 11, the husband seemed like a safe, trustworthy and secure when he carried his wife on his back because her shoe was damaged. As the story progressed, however, the wife was left out after the husband got his share of the prize money which he won in the gambling house. His true nature was revealed. He appeared to be sweet to his wife offering her a piggyback ride, but in the end it was all pretense to make him look good to other people. In other Kdramas, piggyback rides were used in scenes that depicted romance and chivalry.

Symbolism

Symbolism is a literary device “that uses symbols, be they words, people, marks, locations, or abstract ideas to represent something beyond the literal meaning” (MasterClass,2021)

There were symbols which were embedded in the narrative of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. They enriched the narrative and contributed to meaning making.

In Episode 5, Atty. Woo received a gift from Ihwa ATM, a sunflower painting. A sunflower, according to Hwang Du Yong, symbolized wealth: “the painting of a sunflower will guarantee your wealth. An endless showers of money will come the way a sunflower keep on growing.”

After he said this, he removed the Attorney's Code of Ethics hanging on the wall of Attorney Woo's office and replaced it with the sunflower painting. The act of removing the Attorney's Code of Ethics on the wall highlighted key issues such as legal ethics versus wealth. Ihwa ATM knew that they were fabricating lies regarding the development of the ATM cassette, maintaining that they did not copy the design from an exhibit. They applied for Model Utility Rights on October 2020 but Leaders ATM, the original source of the design, manufactured the machine October 23, 2019. According to Article 29 of the Patent Act, Ihwa ATM was not qualified to acquire rights for this technology. Atty, Woo was aware that they are lying. She was in the middle of an ethical dilemma: whether to help Ihwa win the case or side with the truth. In the end, she defended Ihwa ATM and denied the truth which made her feel guilty: "I was assisting Ihwa in taking advantage of the law. Applying for the rights, and filing for the injunction were all out of lies to monopolize the contracts and instead of stopping them, I helped them."

The unfortunate part of being a lawyer is that a lawyer cannot choose clients. In the end, there is only the choice of whether to defend the client or not. Atty. Woo was remorseful because she failed to choose the right thing, saying "I think I was already aware of this. In the end, I denied it. Acting as if I wasn't aware when I knew the truth all along. Just so I could win. I am ashamed. "

At the end of the episode, Attorney Woo removed the sunflower painting and returned the Attorney's Code of Ethics back to its place. She had learned her lesson the hard way.

In Episode 8, Taesan and Hanbada lawyers went to Sodeok-dong for an onsite investigation. The Taesan lawyers had uniform red umbrellas with Taesan's logo while Hanbada's umbrellas differed in size and color: there were umbrellas with patterns and pink, blue, and black umbrellas. In the end, Hanbada lawyers realized that they do not

look professional, and started to use blue umbrellas, the official color of the law firm. Umbrellas technically function as objects that protect humans from the elements – sun and rain. The lawyers were making sure that their clients and their cases will win in the court hearings. They were protecting their clients from getting attacked during trials, just like the umbrella.

Taesun had a uniform strategy in winning the case. They used manpower (Taesun interns) to help them achieve their objectives. Hanbada, meanwhile, had a patchy approach, just like their umbrellas, which were in different patterns and colors. They relied on each other so much and failed to create a plan. They thought they were prepared but Taesun outsmarted them.

Another symbol in Episode 8 was the rain. During the onsite investigation, the rain continued to flow like the concerns of Sodeok-dong. It kept on pouring until it hampered their operations and threatened their health. The community's fervent wish was to stop the construction of the Happiness Road because it will destroy their surroundings. This was, however, not as easy as they thought it was. The socio-economic and political realities caused them to experience so much difficulty. They were up against the government and a business giant: "Happiness road that Gyeonghae-do and Dongbang Land and Housing have jointly pledged to bring forward as a response to future transportation demands."

The struggle for power against the business giant and the government is depicted as real. The people of Sodeok-dong needed someone who will help them in their struggles. They found an umbrella in Hanbada, a firm they know will protect them from getting wet.

Power relationships were established with the use of symbols. The rain as a symbol of problems and challenges was once again used in the flashback scene of Tae

Soomi and Gwangho. The rain was the backdrop when Gwangho was chasing Tae Soomi and he was begging her to keep the baby. Gwangho was at a disadvantage. Taesumi was holding an umbrella and was standing up while Gwangho, soaked from the rain, was kneeling on the ground, looking at Taesumi. Taesumi did not share her umbrella with Gwangho. She used it to protect herself only. She refused to get wet or be involved in their problems so she covered herself from the rain. As Gwangho said, "I want to keep it", Tae Soomi replied, "You and I can't be parents and you know it."

Themes were thus further shown as in with the shift from the past to the present. In the story, justice was served in the end. While the poor have to fend for themselves and beg, and the rich can pull strings and get away with everything, justice still wins at the end. In the case of Tae Soomi, her dream of becoming Minister of Justice failed. Her son became her downfall. The story shows that one's fears will eventually catch up with them if they keep running away from them.

In Episode 8, Tae Soomi and Woo Young met under the Hackberry tree while the other lawyers were busy in Sodeok-gong. Woo Young came looking for her bag and unexpectedly met Tae Soomi under the Hackberry Tree. The wind was blowing lightly and shaking the leaves and branches of the tree. The succeeding dialogues focused on Tae Soomi "shaking" Young Woo and offering her options to leave Hanbada. She introduced Taesan to her, saying, "Hanabada is a great firm but Taesan is much better for you. Let us win the trials as one team."

While the residents of Sodeokgong were beginning to be divided, Tae Sumi was using her strategy to divide Hanbada lawyers as well. She saw the brilliance in Atty. Woo and she wanted to include her in her fold. However, her internal motivation was also to "shake" Han Seon Young, the CEO of Hanbada. Taesan and Hanbada were the closest rivals in the legal profession. If she removed Woo Young Woo in Hanbada, the law firm

will be shaken because they would have lost one of their most brilliant attorneys. Although it was not revealed in the story, it seemed that Tae Soomi and Han Seon Young had a bitter past that made them hostile to each other.

On the other hand, like the Hackberry tree, no matter how the wind shook its leaves and branches, it stood still. Woo Young stood still despite doubts in her mind.

While symbols were in the form of objects in Episode 8, in Episode 9 the symbol was the character of Bang Gu-pong. He was a symbol of system change in Korea when it came to children's enrolment in *Hagwon* or academies. Although academies train children and equip them to be competitive in disciplines such as Math and Science, Bang Gu-pong believed schools, academies and parents are the enemy, since they stopped children from being children because of the amount of time involved in studying. He had pointed out that, "They are scared of happy children. They do not want happy children. They want anxious children, stuttering children, obedient children." Bang Gu-pong's belief is summarized with his quote: "What interests me most is children liberation." Thus, introducing himself as the Commander-In- Chief of the Children Liberation Army, Bang Gu-pong "kidnapped" the children to make them experience "the magic of the world before they've grown".

Academies proliferate because there is "a collective feeling of insecurity and the fear of falling behind drive parents to send their kids to multiple private academies and study years ahead of the school curriculum to get ahead" (Kim, 2023).

He thus stood for those who want to overhaul the system which keeps children from having balanced lives. He raised an issue that is all too common in Korea. The Korean government is aware of this predicament and programs are already in the pipeline to solve this issue. In fact, it can be noted that "...the education minister announced that it will increase support for sports clubs and activities in schools" (Kim, 2023)

In Episode 9, on the other hand, power play was still a major feature. Choi Sung Sook, the Director of Mujin Academy, knelt before the parents to apologize for her son Bang Gu-ppong during a meeting with them, telling them “my son is mentally ill and lacking child. Please just this once, forgive my son with a heart of a mother”. The act of kneeling down was a symbol with a socio-cultural implication. It was an act of stooping down to the lowest level to the people who provided money for the business, an act of swallowing one’s pride for one’s son. This act shows how “Korean culture does place a high value on preserving your honor and saving face” (MacDonald, 2013). In this scenario, the parents were on the top tier of power while Choi Sung Sook was positioned at the bottom of the tier. This was shown clearly in the clip where she knelt down while the parents sat. Kneeling down meant that the person, in this case Choi Sung Sook, had reached rock bottom and that she was willing to do everything for her son even if it costs her their business and her reputation.

In Episode 12, the sun was seen as a symbol of hope. Atty. Ryu Jae Sook, Kim Hyeon Jeong, and Lee Ji Young lost their legal battle against MIR Life Insurance. They were illegally terminated from their jobs. They felt that their company was discriminating against women workers so they filed a case. After the court hearing, journalists interviewed them outside the court. The interview’s background was the sun setting which meant that the hearing had ended in the late afternoon. The universal truth states that if the sun sets, it will rise again the next day and thus it was a symbol of hope. With this scene, it conveyed that there may be dark times after a challenging experience but this will not last because there is always a tomorrow. From the perspective of these women, they may have lost their fight for their rights today but tomorrow they will continue to stand up against gender discrimination and gender inequality. Hence, the natural order of the universe would always be, if the sun will set, for sure it will rise again tomorrow.

In Episode 12, there were several frames in this specific episode wherein Atty. Jung seemed to be evading a man who was a runaway suspect in their previous case. This study interpreted that the man following her was a symbol of cancer which penetrated his system and created fear. He was evading a disease, not a man. Perhaps, he already knew that he had a serious condition but ignored it. This showed how people oftentimes were ran away, afraid to face their fears. In the later part of the episode, Atty. Jung coughed blood. There was a scene that he laughed like crazy. Perhaps, he realized that the man was just a part of his imagination and the real source of his fear was his disease.

Classic Korean Drama Elements

Classic Korean drama Elements are the hallmarks of a Kdrama texts. They cut across many genres and stories. Viewers appreciate the storytelling of Kdrama because the text is rich and meaningful. It sheds light on many issues, try out new concepts, introduced culture, inculcated values, injected laughter and romance, and featured tourism. Kdramas have “high production value, intense and often engrossing storylines, quality acting and bold and skilful storytelling which tackles societal issues, personal struggles, and universal theme such as family, friendship and love” (Kim, 2021)

The business side of Kdrama was also present in the text through product placements. Although there was only one product featured in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, which was a welcome change because most Kdramas feature many sponsors and thus include product placements in the narrative. Oh (2013) reported that Kdrama was “speculative” because these were created in order to accommodate “commercial sponsors” through product placements embedded in the narrative.

Societal Issues

Extraordinary Attorney Woo is categorized as a social drama. The genre is legal drama and so it featured different cases which tackled different social issues.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo is not entirely about autism. The drama served as the voice of the minorities who are victims of Korea's socio-political realities. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* is brave enough to tackle LGBTQ++ issues, domestic violence, women discrimination, suicide, dark side of academies, animal welfare, heritage preservation, and even poverty among others.

Reality of Autism

Episode 1 tackled the reality of a person with autism. An autistic child needs extra care and attention because she cannot clearly express herself. Gwangho had a hard time taking care of Young Woo because of her special needs. The drama portrayed Gwangho as a compassionate father to his daughter. He was proud of Young Woo's achievement of memorizing the criminal code at six years old, becoming Seoul National University's top law student and passing the bar with an almost perfect score.

The reality however is not the case in South Korea. In fact, "South Koreans associate autism and disabilities with shame" (Jin, 2022). They even conceal the diagnosis to friends, relatives and family members because of this. In an interview conducted by New York Times with Shin Yee-jin, a professor at the College of Medicine in Yonsei University in Seoul, it was revealed that "South Koreans with disabilities of all kinds face considerable discrimination because of a low cultural tolerance for differences" (Ibid). It is illegal to discriminate disabled person in South Korea but it continues to persist.

In the drama, Young Woo was bullied in school because of her condition. When she first arrived in Hanbada, even Atty. Jung judged her capability as a lawyer because of the odd way she introduced herself. The friends of Lee Junho thought that something was wrong with her. Even the sister of Lee Junho disapproved of their relationship because she did not want her brother to take care of Woo Young forever and forget himself. The life of a person with autism was challenging and difficult but *Extraordinary*

Attorney Woo showed that it was possible for them to have a bright future. Some Korean viewers of the drama say that Atty. Woo was just a fantasy. However, several professionals in the spectrum are successful professionals. New York Times (2022) named Professor Yoon as the first South Korean diagnosed with autism to have gotten a Ph.D. Haley Moss, Florida's first practicing lawyer with autism (Choi, 2022), debunked the earlier comments that Atty. Woo was a fantasy. It was possible to be a lawyer even if one were in the spectrum. Moss struggled to get respect from her colleagues just like Atty. Woo because they doubted her capabilities. She also revealed that she shared many characteristics with Atty. Woo such as eating the same food everyday and sensitivity to noise. If Atty. Woo was passionate about whales, she was into drawing. She also had a photographic memory and could effectively connect scenarios and situations in legal cases when needed.

Plight of Lgbtq++

According to Human Rights Watch, "Discrimination against women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and racial and ethnic minorities is pervasive in South Korea" (Yim, 2022). The Human Rights Watch Annual 32nd World Report 2022 revealed that "sexual minorities continue to face hostility and severe discrimination, especially in the armed forces". Even LGBT children experienced "severe isolation, mistreatment, bullying and harassment" (Ibid).

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, this sensitive topic was bravely told in the story of Kim Hwa Young and Unni, who were a lesbian couple. Hwa Young was married to a man she did not like because that was what her parents wanted her to do. A wardrobe malfunction during the wedding brought chaotic circumstances into their lives. The family of Hwa young filed a case against the hotel and sought damages. This paved the way for other issues to be put out in the open: She and her husband were no longer on speaking

terms, she was seeing a therapist and she admitted to being lonely. Finally, the episode closed with a powerful gesture and an impactful statement: She raised her hand and proudly said, “I am withdrawing the case”. When her father confronted her, she told him, “I’ll be in control now of who I marry and how I live my life...I will marry for love”.

The drama was a vehicle to show that LGBTQ minorities have the right to love and to choose the person they want to be with. After all, they are also entitled to human rights. They may break social norms and raise eyebrows but they have the right to live the life they want to live. In a conservative country like Korea where Confucius’ philosophies are still widely observed and where there is a low cultural tolerance for differences, LGBTQ minorities are still at a disadvantage and as such it will take a long time before they are accepted. There is “little meaningful progress in terms of lobbying to push anti-discrimination law to protect the LGBT, women, people with disabilities and foreigners” (Yim, 2022).

Suicide Among Youth

South Korea “has the highest suicide rate among the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The country topped the list with 25.4 suicides per 100,000 people in 2019.” (Nam, 2023). There are variety of reasons why people commit suicide. Factors are different for each demographics. For example, “women planned to end their life because of struggles with mental health which is similar for men younger than 30. For older men, financial hardship and health deterioration were the main cause of suicide” (Kim, 2022).

In Episode 3, Kim Sang Hun committed suicide but his brother who belonged to the autism spectrum was accused of killing him. For his parents, Sang Hun was a smart and studious student and a loving son. Behind the façade, he was a broken young man.

In the course of the investigation, Lee Junho and Atty. Woo found his journal at the back of his cabinets. The journal revealed his innermost thoughts and pains.

“The only thing I’ve ever been good at is studying. I’m not even sure what that is now. Is memorizing until I throw up really studying? I continue to fail at this thing, I’m supposed to be so good at. The truth is, I’m just a loser.”

“The exams never seem to stop, and I continue to fail. I can’t see why a life like this is better than death. I could die.”

(Episode 3, Kim Sang Hun)

In this journal entry, his exasperation and exhaustion were evident. He saw himself as a failure and this perception of himself gnawed at him every day. He came to a point in which he thought that being dead was better than to experience all of these pains. He lost his ability to care because at the brink of death he was thinking how to relieve himself of so much pain and suffering.

“At this point, it’s become a routine. I don’t care if my brother sees me. He said he had trouble sleeping ever since he saw me try to hang myself. I wonder if he has nightmares. He checks on me every night. The idiot who doesn’t even know what dying is, shakes in fear about what will happen. For some reason, that is comforting for me.” (Episode 3, Kim Sang Hun)

Despite these revelations, the parents were still in denial. The Korean government is very much aware of the severity of suicide rates in the country. In order to remedy this, they prepared a five year plan for suicide prevention. *EAT*, which represents the media,

is a vital tool in spreading awareness regarding this issue. Its purpose is not just to entertain but to teach valuable insights on suicide and suicide prevention.

Bullying

Bullying is a serious issue across the globe. The bully is someone who is stronger, smarter, and cunning while the victim is weak and gullible. In the power structure, the bully will insist on taking advantage of the unempowered victim who will just succumb to the attacks. Such was the case between the three brothers, Dong Dong II, Dong Dong I and Dong Dong Sam in Episode 4. Dong Dong Sam was the father of Dong Geurami, the best friend of Attorney Woo. The two elder brothers deceived their younger brother to get the biggest share in the inheritance money. The two were schooled in Seoul while the younger one was a farmer. Dong Dong Sam thought that the other two were more knowledgeable so Dong Dong II and Dong Dong I bullied their brother to stamp his seal on the gift contract so that they can have the money.

“[Dong sam] Let’s talk about it all, once I’ve had time to think about it.”

“[Dong II] “Think about what? What is there to talk about?
You wanna find a backwoods attorney and get their opinion?
Or you wanna talk to Jin-hyeok, the head of the village?”

[Dong I] “I see you have no clue about this.”

(Episode 4)

They used the law to make Dong Dong Sam believe that he had an obligation to them. Dong Dong Sam agreed without really studying the stipulations of the said contract. Geurami, upon learning about what happened, sought the help of Atty. Woo, herself a survivor of bullying in high school. She was always a victim of the “Oh So Sorry” prank,

discriminated and bullied because she had autism, she was different and for the bullies, she did not belong.

“My classmates there called me a loser. They came up with a prank to pull on me. The “Oh, I ‘m sorry” prank was the most popular. I needed a safe space within a school. So during recess, I would go to the teacher’s room. But no matter how much I kept hiding, I had no way to avoid what they were doing to me in class.” (Episode 4, Atty.Woo)

The case of Young Woo reflected the present scenario of school violence in Korea. School violence, according to the Korean law, refers to “actions committed against students inside or outside of school premises resulting in a physical or mental injury or damage to property through various measures, including defamation, sexual violence, bullying and cyber-bullying.” (Park, 2023). In 2017 alone, about 31, 000 cases of school violence were reported. The figures alone showed that the weak were susceptible to the abuses of the powerful and this may result to the victim developing mental health issues. In the drama, Atty. Woo became the hero that saved Dong sam from his scheming brothers, in the same way that Dong Geurami became Atty. Woo’s savior from her bullies. In, real life, victims of bullying need a hero that will save them from their misery: their family, or the government who can legislate laws to them.

Truth and Model Utility Rights

“The Truth is still the truth, even if no one believes it. A lie is still a lie, even if everyone believes it”.

This is a famous quote about the value of truth. In Episode 5, the truth is intertwined with the issue of Model Utility Rights. In the drama, there was an ongoing battle between two leaders in the ATM industry- Geumgang and Ihwa. Ihwa applied for the Model Utility Rights for the ATM cassette. Although they know from the start that the main technology was developed by an American company and was made public in an exhibition, they hid the truth even though they stole the design. Oh Jin Jong, the CEO of Geumgang, stood his ground, insisting that Ihwa was disqualified from applying for the model utility rights. Ihwa did not only deceive their clients but the lawyers who defended them as well. Atty. Woo felt guilty because she denied the truth and allowed Ihwa to continue with their lies. However, in the end, the truth came out. Ihwa lost their legal battle, creating a huge impact on Atty. Woo's ethics. The Korean government acknowledged the importance of awareness of Intellectual Property Rights in this digital era. According to KIPO Commissioner Kim Yong-rae, "as the digital transformation accelerates, the value of intellectual property data is growing" (Kim, 2021). "The government is also keen on ensuring the protection of intellectual property. The tech police's job scope is expanded to include all crimes related to technological leaks aside from their usual tasks of protecting trade secrets, patents and designs" (Ibid).

North Korean Defectors

"More than 33,000 North Koreans have defected to the South over the last three decades" (Lee, 2022). Life in South Korea is difficult for the defectors because to most South Koreans they "merely exist as statistics". A mere communication with them oftentimes leads to suspicion and discrimination. Such was the case of Kye Hyang Sim, a North Korean defector in Episode 6 who was charged with aggravated robbery. Kye Hyang Sim met Lee Sun Yeong through the North Korean defector broker Choi Yang Hui.

Lee Sun Yeong, the victim, owed Choi some money which she was not able to pay. Kye Hyang Sim and Kim Jeong-hui resorted to intimidating and extorting money from Sun Yeong. The landlord complained of the noise they created upstairs and so the police went over and arrested Hyang Sim and Jeong-hui. Hyang Sim stood firm that they did not harm Sun Yeong. Both women did not know that Sun yeong was a domestic violence survivor, that was why she sustained injuries. Hyang Sim was put in jail and separated from her daughter because of these circumstances, causing her anguish. During the trial, it seemed that Hyang Sim was trapped despite claiming innocence, especially after a doctor at the witness stand told Atty. Woo during the cross examination that he was certain Hyang Sim injured Sun Yeong. Atty. Jung, however, knew the witness was biased against defectors through an article he wrote, so instructed Atty. Woo to be tough so that the witness will show his true colors. This could reflect the way South Koreans perceive defectors:

“In Korean Society, these North Korean defectors are already a huge problem and that the government giving North Korean defectors money to settle is like providing criminals with an incentive for criminal acts.” (Episode 6, Doctor Witness)

The witness painted the defectors as violent people. However, Judge Ryu, sensing bias in the statements, said that everyone was entitled to their own opinions but in the court of law defectors' rights are respected.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo, through its narrative, emphasized the importance of respect towards others regardless of race, geographical locations, and political affiliations as they are entitled to the same human rights as other people. In the case of defectors or

refugees, the show indicated that it was not their fault that were born in that situation. This sensitive topic was tackled by Atty. Woo, courageously putting this discourse out in the open by asking, “Should the laws are sympathetic to refugees, immigrants, or foreigners?”

Environmental Degradation

For every development and progress in a community, there is always a price to pay. In the case of Sodeok-dong in Episode 7, the construction of Happiness road will not really bring happiness to the community, but will in fact split the small town in to two with Happiness road traversing the middle. The townsfolk were mad because there were two previous development projects in the area - a garbage incineration plant and a subway which subjected them to air and noise pollution and the developer never compensated them for the impact the projects caused them. So, Choi Han Su, the town’s leader, sought Hanbada’s help to bring this matter to the court of law.

Development projects such as road constructions benefit people because it will make it commuting easier for them. However, if it will have an impact on the environment then the decision must be reconsidered. As one of the residents had said, “Our lovely community will be assaulted by all noise, exhaust, and dust.”

In the Development Communication perspective, introducing development to a community is good, but the townsfolk must understand first the purpose of the project. The communicate to be affected must accept it first before the implementation. As shown in Atty. Woo, “The hardworking people of this town have had enough.”

Korea acknowledges the effect of development to the environment which will also affect the community. “Korea has increased spending on green infrastructure and R&D. However, power generation and industrial production continue to emit significant GHG

despite decoupling emissions of many pollutants from economic growth. Air pollution remains a major health concern, and rapid urbanization and infrastructure development put considerable pressure on ecosystems” (OECD, 2021).

Gender Discrimination and Gender Equality

Women and children are the most vulnerable in a patriarchal society. In Episode 12, Kim Hyeon Jeong and her colleagues were illegally terminated because MIR Life Insurance company was downsizing its personnel. Married couples were given the option to resign because according to their HR manager, they were more financially stable. This showed gender discrimination especially when the HR Manager told Hyeong-jeong this:

“This is more important for the husband”

“Your husband’s job is more important right?”

“Don’t make this awkward for his parents”

“Making your in-laws feel terrible...having a son at home while their daughter in law is working...It’s your duty to take care of your husband (Episode 12, HR Manager)

As can be seen from the above, the social economic fabric of Korea shows “women in their late 30s and early 40s - the prime age for childbirth and childcare- are being pushed out of the labor market” (Bae, 2019). Choo Kwang-ho, head of the job strategy department at KERI laments, “The chronic social stereotype on gender roles which requires women to take primary charge of housework and child care, policies which extra burden on employers and the lack of quality jobs constantly hinder the employment of women” (Ibid).

While it is already the 21st century, the reality depicted in the episode described above it that there are still unequal opportunities for both sexes. This was thus the battle cry of Hyeon Jeong and her colleagues, fighting this issue in court. Though they lost the

case, their optimism did not waver, knowing they had already raised the awareness of their fellow citizens on the significance of women, and their rights and power in the society.

Animal Welfare and Protection

Atty. Woo was not only passionate about reading and knowing about whales and dolphins, but also active in her advocacy on animal welfare and protection. In Episode 13, over lunch, Atty. Woo told Junho that “business owners are endangering and abusing dolphins all under the guise of tourism”. Dolphins were used to entertain tourists in amusement parks, earning business owners money. However, the business owners were disturbing the marine ecosystem by removing the dolphins from their natural habitat. In the drama, Attorney Woo and Lee Junho joined a protest rally in a South Korean ocean park to stop dolphin shows.

Animal experts have said that “animals’ lives are still undervalued in Korea, partly because of their low status under the law” (Shin, 2021) and this is shown in the episode above. The reality is that in Korea, animals “are regarded as objects and the subject of animal rights are humans” (Ibid). However, the show illustrated that there are still advocates lobbying for animal rights protection, through the character of Atty. Woo. In fact, “there are lawmakers, civic groups, academics and members of the general public who are constantly raising the issue and pushing for changes” (Ibid).

Heritage Preservation

Koreans put a high premium on their heritage so that the younger generation may appreciate the value of history, as evidenced by the various edifices and old structures preserved in the country. *Gyeongbokgung Palace* and *Hanok Village* were just a few of tourism spots which showed their rich culture and heritage.

In Episode 14, for example, the abbot and monks were against road construction in Hwangjisa. However, the government pushed the idea and told the monks to collect the

cultural admission fee. Their logic was, “fewer people will come if they are required to give us money”. The abbot agreed that it was the best way to slow down damage to the cultural heritage site and reduce the numbers of lives lost. The money collected was used for repair and maintenance. This particular issue raised the need for the government to review policies regarding cultural heritage and ensure that it is preserved for the next generation, as Atty. Jung pointed out in the episode: “the government should step up and lay the foundations for Hwangjisa”. The episode also provided suggestions through the lawyers, on how to help Hwangjisa: bring together relevant organizations like the local government, Korea National Park Service, Korean Rural Community Corporation and Cultural Heritage Administration and sign a MOU creating a foundation for Hwangjisa. The series thus pointed out that there should be a public and private partnership to strengthen the preservation efforts.

The Cultural Heritage Administration of Korea is firm in its goal to improve the repair and maintenance system for cultural heritage to ensure the longevity of cultural artifacts for the next generation.

Unique and Diverse Stories

A story about persons in the autism spectrum was not something new in Kdrama. In 2013, a story about an autistic doctor, *Good Doctor*, was already produced. This was the story of a Pediatric surgery resident who possessed a photographic memory and spatial skills but was still judged because of his disability. This Korean drama was such a hit that a US remake, *Good Doctor* (2017), was aired on ABC in the US.

Even though there had already been a series about a person in the autism spectrum, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* is still a unique story. An autistic lawyer was a unique experience for the audience since it showed how the character navigated her world. A heroine who was differently-abled but brilliant, was a fresh concept as far as legal

dramas were concerned. Moreover, diversity can be seen in the different issues tackled in the stories every episode, the series serving as the voice of the minorities. These stories reflected the prevailing issues and their impact in Korean society. The drama thus educated the audience by giving them a glimpse of the experiences of the people affected.

Another is the fact that Korean society is very conservative and featuring LGBTQ++ and premarital sex in the drama would invite criticism. However, the drama still went ahead and challenged the status quo, giving the audience an alternative viewpoint regarding these issues.

In the case of the LGBTQ++ story, the drama depicted how constricted a gay person feels because they cannot express their true feelings and because they lived in a society where these feelings are judged and discriminated. In the drama, the character's own family could not accept her sexual orientation but she chose love no matter what. Portraying LGBTQ++ positively was a bold move on the part of the series.

Another controversial issue is that of premarital sex. In the series, Yang Jeong was accused of raping his girlfriend, Shin Hye Hyeong, who had an intellectual disability. Jeong claimed that what they shared was love, but Shin Hye Hyeong's mother thought he had taken advantage of her daughter because of her condition. Meanwhile, Hye Hyeong loved Yang Jeong, but she could not express it properly. The succeeding court trial raised the issue of premarital sex, a taboo in South Korea. This can be seen in how the audience at court reacted when Atty. Woo made her opening statement on how Yang and Shin's sexual relations were consensual. The reaction could stem from either sex before marriage or the individual with intellectual disability engaging in sex with a person perceived to be normal. This showed how "Korean society has traditionally been based on Confucian norms, according to which premarital sexual intercourse and early initiation of sexual intercourse are regarded as taboo" (Lee & Lee, 2020).

Another portrayal that added to the uniqueness of the storyline because it challenged the status quo was in Episode 3, when a character disrespected traditions. A drunk Geurami went to the memorial of the dead, showing disrespect of traditions. For Koreans this is a grave mistake since it not only disrespected the family but also the memorial of the dead. Despite societal rules and expectations, she did what she needed to do to get justice for her bullied father, not caring if she is judged as a bad person.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo showcased the hallmarks of a Kdrama. It featured unique, diverse and interesting stories that captured the minds and hearts of the viewer. The drama was not just focused on the plight of persons in the autism spectrum but it also told stories of minorities whose voices were muted. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* brought these issues out in the open, earning a high rating for it, implying that it made its mark in the minds of the viewers.

Culture Integration

Korean dramas are popular for integrating culture in their narratives. Perhaps this was one of the reasons why many people are interested in visiting Korea and experiencing their culture. There were several instances in the drama where their culture was shown and portrayed, such as their food, beliefs, practices and others.

Food is constant in every Korean drama. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* the following food were featured: Gimbap, Suyuk, Bungeopang, Bibimbap, and Fish Cake Soup.

Food

One of the staples of Korean food culture is Gimbap. Koreans normally associated this food to picnics. As can be seen in the drama, Gimbap's ingredients were featured: weed wrapper, Kimchi, egg, and rice placed on an orange chopping board beside a white knife. In the story, Geurami prepared the meal for Woo Young who left home because

she felt bad towards her father. Aside from this, the father of Woo Young owned a Gimbap shop and so she ate Gimbap everyday.

Another type of food showcased is *suyuk*. In Episode 10, Dong Geurami called Mr. Hairy, in the middle of his blind date with Atty. Choi, and asked how to cook *Suyuk*. In general, boiled pork is called *suyuk* in Korean.

Still in another episode, Episode 12, the snack called *Bungeoppang* was introduced. According to snack fever (2023), *bungeoppang* is “ a fish-shaped street food. Bungeo means crucian carp, and Ppang is bread. This particular local Korean snack was mentioned during the court hearing. This was also the snack Young Woo ate when her father figured in an altercation.

Moreover, *bibimbap* was featured in Episode 12. In the drama, the female plaintiffs, together with Atty. Ryu, Atty. Woo and Atty. Choi, had a small gathering to celebrate small wins. Although Atty. Ryu lost the case, they still celebrated. The food that they ate was *bibimbap*. According to All Recipes (2023), bibim means mixed and bap meaning rice. The dish “incorporates steamed white rice with assorted fresh, marinated, and sautéed vegetables along with raw or seared meat, if desired. It was always served with sunny side-up egg. The dish also contains kimchi and gochujang or Korea’s iconic fermented red chili pepper taste” (Ibid).

In Episode 15, there was also mention of fish cake soup and in Episode 2 *Saejuk* was also mentioned. *Saejuk* is like porridge. Atty. Choi did not eat a full course meal during their dinner because she said she has an upset stomach. She ate *saejuk* instead.

In all of these instances, Korean food is featured extensively.

Cultural Practices

“Hoesik” or company dinner, is an important part of Korean corporate culture that was included in the narrative. Han Seon Young treated his legal team to dinner because their victory in their latest case. The lawyers were treated to a sumptuous Korean cuisine, sitting on the floor and eating. As can be seen here, “In the past, most Korean households had people sit on the floor to eat their meals. This custom was prevalent under the pretext that sitting on the floor leads to a calm and peaceful state of mind and encourages a sense of belonging” (Kwak, 2018). Furthermore, according to Kwak, this “age –old tradition is dying out as more people opt for chairs”, as such this tradition being featured here is significant.

Drinking *Soju* is another cultural practice that was always featured in Korean dramas. Characters would drink either in their houses, restaurants, sometimes in a small makeshift restaurant on the sidewalk. For example, in the drama, Lee Junho and his friends drank soju while having a small reunion party at a restaurant. In another instance, while Minwoo and Junho were drinking casually in their apartment, Junho told Minwoo about liking a girl (Atty. Woo) but being unable to tell her. In this instance, soju is a way for Minwoo himself to talk casually about his feelings for a girl.

Another cultural tradition shown in Episode 3 is the *Jesa*, a ceremony that is a memorial to the ancestors of the attendees. *Jesa* is usually held on the anniversary of the ancestor’s death. In the drama, *Jesa* was featured during the time Dong Geurami and her family resorted to violence to make the uncles confess about lying in court. There was disrespect during the occasion, which in Korean culture is prohibited, but for Dong Geurami, it was the only way to punish her bully and liar uncles. Dong Dong had said to his younger brother Dong Dong Sam “...Just stamp the paper, this is what dad wanted” to convince him to sign the gift contract. This is another part of Korean culture, in which

Koreans use their stamps whenever they sign important documents. In *sageuk* dramas, the stamps were very powerful objects because the moment the King used this to stamp a document, it means that whatever was written in document will be implemented. This is similar to Dong Dong Sam's situation in the drama, when he stamped the gift contract.

Another aspect of Korean culture integrated in one of the scenes is the military service among young men in South Korea. While the visiting representative of Ihwa ATM was at Hanbada, he and the male lawyers casually talked the units in which they served during their military service, able to remember the taglines of their units.

“Guns and Knives may rest but the shovel still shine!”

– Yangu Baekdusan Unit

“United we can!”- Chilseong unit

Military service, which was made mandatory in South Korea in 1957, has been a constant and integral aspect of Korean society. It was partly borne out of the need to defend against North Korean aggression as the war between the two countries is technically still going on” (Kshitij, 2023)

In Episode 6, the family origin of Koreans was included in the narrative. In the scene, the characters bragged about their family, family members, origin and their influence. There were only “288 family names in South Korea and it can be link(ed) to 36,744 different family clans” (Embassy of the Republic of Korea to Norway, 2021). Each family keeps a *jokbo* or family tree book wherein the starting point of the family origin is kept. Most Koreans know their roots and to document this the government likewise keep their own records.

Woo family of Danyang. Danyang is in Chungcheongbukdo

Ryu family of Pungsan.

The Ryu family has a rich and very long history in Andong
Hahoe Village. Choi family of Wonj

Heritage and Generational Syllable was also featured. In Episode 12, Judge Ryu Myeong-ha asked Atty. Ryu about her father's generational syllable. According to Atty. Ryu, the Father's generational syllable is not usually given to daughters.

“Jae as in Ryu Jae-Sook is the Pungsan Region's Syllable
for my family 26th generation.”

“While you have a ‘Ha in your name Ryu Myeong-Ha. I
guess you're part of the 27th generation, am I correct?” (
Episode 12)

As this illustrates, “each family name name can generally be traced back to a clan. For example, most people with the surname Lee in Korea belong to either the Jeonju or Gyeongju clans. There are usually multiple different clans related to a family name (Cultural Atlas, 2023).

Another cultural practice of the Koreans is the use of *pojagi*. In Episode 15, Mr. Hairy and Geurami visited Atty. Jung in the hospital. They brought with them side dishes wrapped in a cloth. In Korea, gifts and food dishes might come wrapped in decorative cloths called *pojagi*. This tradition shows respect for the receiver of the gift as well as for the gift itself. In *sageuk* dramas, *pojagi* was also featured. Characters would usually bring this when they have a gift to give or food to share.

Bowing is one cultural practice of Koreans which is also observable in Kdramas. Bowing shows respect. In Episode 6, Gye Hyang Sim bowed down to Atty. Jung after the

trial. She was very happy and grateful for the hard work of the lawyers. Finally, she can see her daughter.

The religious affiliations of Koreans were also tackled in the drama. In Korea, Buddhists account for some 46 percent, followed by Protestants at 39 percent and Catholics at 13 percent of the religious population. In Episode 14, Buddhism was featured through the introduction of *Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva* to the viewers. He was a Buddhist almighty with a thousand eyes that equipped him to know all the sufferings of the people. The abbot told Atty. Jung to pray to him for his healing. While he was inside the OR, Atty. Jung likewise mentioned *Namu Gwanseeumbosal* - a song and chant by Korean Buddhist Zen monk Hyeongsunim used for calming.

Aside from the Buddhism rites and rituals which were shown in Episode 13, the viewers were also introduced to the Gwaebultaeng painting. This is “a type of large Buddhist painting hung up for outdoors rites such as the Buddha’s birthday, the ritual for souls still lingering on earth, and the ritual for rain” (National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage of Korea, 2017). In the drama, this painting was shown to Atty. Woo and her colleagues during their visit to Hwangjisa temple.

Aside from religion and other cultural practices, the lawyers also introduced the game of *dedenjji*. In the drama, it is explained that every region refers to this game differently. There are also different versions to this game: heaven and earth, light and dark, true and false, sky or land, high or low. This game has also a version in the Philippines, a tag game. In this game, the IT person is chosen through a selection process involving putting everyone’s hands together, moving their hands and revealing whether they chose palms in or palms out. The person who is different from the rest will be the IT

of the tag game. In case there are three persons who are different, the game will be played again until there is only one left and will serve as the IT.

Cultural Beliefs

Chaemyoun or Face is highly influential in the way Koreans conduct themselves. Koreans are very conscious and protective of their reputation. This belief is espoused by *Confucianism* which puts high premium on reputation. This was demonstrated in Episode 2 when the family of Kim Hwa Young filed a case against the hotel where her wedding took place. The family members' reputation was put to shame when Hwa Young's bridal gown slipped and showed her bosom. The family associated the wardrobe malfunction to the negligence of the staff assigned to dress the bride. Hwa Young's dad wanted to ask for damages for this event. Some Koreans would resort to suicide if their reputation was put at risk. Such was the case of Bae In Cheol in Episode 15. He was the CEO of Raon. The company was under fire after a breach in cyberscurity occurred that compromised sensitive data. He thought that he was being treated unfairly. This reflects clearly the kind of situation that is happening in Korea. "In 2019, according to World Population Review, South Korea had the fourth-highest suicide rate in the world....for high profile suicides, shame appears to be the key motivating element. 59. 3 percent of suicide can be attributed to economic problems such as liabilities, income reductions and poverty" (Salmon, 2020).

Koreans thrive in a competitive environment. South Korea is "a highly competitive society in nearly every aspect. From kindergarteners to housewives, people of all ages, genders, and social status center their lives around strengthening their competitiveness" (Ipsos Almanac, 2012). In Episode 7, Taesan and Hanbada lawyers were competing with each other. In the court, Atty. Jung of Hanbada presented alternatives for the Happiness Road construction. After this, Atty. Taesumi, also presented their own options using

animation, instead of a typical PowerPoint, to explain her counter argument. Competition sometimes breeds insecurities, such as in the case of Atty. Kwon Minwoo.

“How does your father know the Hanbada’s boss?”

“Did you use connections to get here?”

Atty. Kwon feels that Atty. Woo did not need any help. For him, “Woo Young Woo’s weakness was an illusion”. He did not stop here, he even insinuated that the CEO was involved in hiring fraud. In short, Atty. Kwon cannot accept that he was losing to a lawyer who was in the autism spectrum.

Such competitiveness was also evident in the academic setting, where parents set high expectations for their children when it comes to academic excellence. The drama depicted how the parents of Kim Sang Hun expected so much from their son to finish medicine, thinking everything was good and that their child was enjoying things. The truth though was that he was already depressed and having a hard time coping with his lessons. Competitiveness was also one of the main reasons why parents enrolled their children in academies. This was featured in Episode 9. The children attended academies after their class. They went home from 9 or 10 PM everyday, unable to eat meals properly and resorting to fast food or convenience store food instead.

Meanwhile, the patriarchal society of Korea has taken a toll on women. Patriarchal ideology refers to “the idea that men have more power, dominance, and privilege than women” (Mcleod, 2023). This ideology brought gender discrimination and bias. In Episode 12, Hyeong-jeong faced unlawful termination because MIR Life was restructuring the organization. However, their husbands were allowed to stay in MIR even though the women were also performing well. The women found this unfair and thought that the best way was to bring these matters to court. They hired Atty. Ryu Jae Sook to represent them, a labor lawyer who often led protests rally. In this sense, the drama showed how Korea

has a vibrant culture of protest. The battle cry of Atty. Ryu and the women who were illegally terminated from work was: “No more pushing women to resign!” “No more lay-off tactics!” This also goes back to how during South Korea’s long period of authoritarian rule (1948-1987), protests were seen as the only channel citizens had to express their grievances to the state” (Rohimone & Wyeth, 2019).

Meanwhile, Hanbada took the side of MIR life in the trial. In Korea, men still ruled the household and women were still expected to be submissive. In the process, men became the “exploiting class” and the women “the subordinate producer”. According to Boo (2023), “inequality status produced inequality in the everyday activities within the family, which traditionally has been continuously reproduced through the male/patriarch oriented ideology in Korean society”.

“This is more important for the husband. Your husband’s job is more important right? Don’t make this awkward for his parents. Making your in-laws feel terrible...having a son at home while their daughter in law is working...It’s your duty to take care of your husband

Cultural Values

The Korean culture was anchored to the tenets of *Confucianism*. The values of obedience to family, hard work, protection of the family, and proper decorum and most of all utmost respect to parents were the major canons. Children were expected to exhibit filial piety. Filial piety included respect to parents and others, protecting the family from embarrassment, and doing one’s job well. However, in the drama, these values were challenged in Episode 2. Hwa Young disobeyed his family by choosing to love a woman. This was a very bold and controversial social voice expressed by *Yoo In Sik* in his drama. For Korean elders, this showed disrespect to the values that they had inculcated to the

young generation. For Hwa Young, choosing to love was not wrong but it was also painful for her to go against the cultural values inculcated in her. However, she thought she was old enough to decide for herself. On the other hand, for her Father, what she did was an embarrassment for the family and showed disrespect to him. The challenges posed to children by Episode 2 are whether to forget the values taught by parents and elders and be happy or to follow parents and find happiness in another way. On the side of the parents, it raises the question of whether cultural values get in the way of showing understanding to one's child's choices or not.

Values Inculcation

The values learned in the drama represented the social voice of the director in different issues. In a film or TV drama there are three aspects that are very vital. Dramatic refers to the physical story or what one wants to tell. This includes the character, objective, problem, inciting incident, plot points, crisis, conflict and resolution. Narrative is the storytelling or how one wants to tell a story. This may include the technical elements which are used to bring life to the concept and the dramatic features. Lastly, social aspect is the purpose or why one is telling it. This is where values come in.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* there were several values which the director wanted to impart. These were love of family, compassion and patience, filial piety (love and care to parents), motherly love, respect, truth, friendship, principles, bravery, communication, love, unity, ethics.

Love of family

The love of the family was constant in the drama. Woo Young had a father who never gave up on her ever from childhood. He sacrificed his own dreams of becoming a lawyer to support his daughter's dreams of becoming one and provided for her and it made but Woo Young knew that her father loved her. Gwangho represents, for Korean

culture, an admirable father, who, despite, all the challenges and difficulties of raising a child in the autism spectrum never chose himself.

Mother's Love

A mother's love, as shown in the drama, is pure and secure. A mother is willing to do everything for her child, willing to take a bullet for her offspring. Gye Hyang Sim showed that kind of love to her daughter. Gye Hyang Sim was asked during the trial why she run away and she answered, "Jeong Hui is not a mother (her accomplice). I have a daughter to raise."

The drama illustrated how a Korean mother is through this character: she protected her daughter from the effects of the crime she did. It broke her heart to leave her in an orphanage while she faced the trial but she made this sacrifice for her daughter.

The drama showed also how important having a complete family is in Korea. In the above, the case reminded Woo Young that while growing up, her school family day activity was incomplete because she did not have a mother, compared to her classmates and schoolmates who had complete families. Tae Soomi, who had abandoned her, and Gye Hyang Sim, who sacrificed herself for her daughter, are on the opposite sides of the concept of motherhood in Korea. Tae Soomi loved herself more than her daughter, is willing to sacrifice her daughter for her career, while Gye Hyang Sim loved her daughter more, willing to face trial so that one day she and her daughter will reunite. Both mothers come from different contexts. But, as the drama illustrates, Korean culture emphasizes that a mother's love for a child must not waver.

The drama, finally, showed Korean culture in that 'family will always be family'. Though Young Woo grew up not knowing her real mother or that she had a half- brother, for example, when she learned that her half-brother hacked Raon's server, she extended her help. Even with Young Woo's circumstances she showed that family was important.

Compassion and Patience

Compassion and patience for others are the hallmarks of a good person, according to the Korean drama. Lee Junho exhibited these values when he helped Young Woo enter the rotating doors. When he first met Young Woo, he did not judge her. He saw her having a hard time entering the rotating doors and assisted Young Woo. Later on, he found out that they were colleagues and she was in the autism spectrum. In life, judging a person by looking at the physical aspects alone and simply ignoring them is an easy thing to do, especially if the person looks different. However, Lee Junho, ever the gentleman, was different. It was innate in him to be caring and as such, he had compassion and patience for Young Woo at the time she needed it the most. This act of kindness encouraged Young Woo to enter the doors by herself and thus Lee Junho taught Young Woo how to be independent and to trust fully herself.

Respect

People give respect to people in high positions in companies, to those who are educated and rich. However, a person who may not be the above may be given judgement instead. Such was the case of Gye Hyang Sim's trial. A witness, who was a doctor was biased towards North Korean defectors, failing to see them as human beings. Geographical location and cultural beliefs are not reasons to disrespect others. Defectors are humans and so they deserve respect.

Doctor: "This is crazy. This trial is paid for with taxpayer's money. So then, should we protect South Korean citizens or North Korean defectors?"

Judge Ryu: "While you are entitled to your own opinion. In this court room the defector's rights are respected. They are South Korean citizens"

Truth

“The truth will set you free” is a very popular quote and it is applicable in various contexts. In the drama, the value of truth was emphasized in some episodes. The drama taught that admitting one’s mistakes will lead to a good result. When Gye Hyang Sim admitted to the court what she had done and what really happened during the night of the crime, Judge Ryu’s penalty was lighter than expected: probation and 80 hours of community service. She told the truth and so the truth sided with her. She was given a favorable decision. However, lies were told and the truth hidden, the opposite will happen as was the case of Ihwa ATM: they were able to secure the clients but their reputation of plagiarizing a utility design was irreparable. Telling lies is easy but when truth emerges, one will suffer the consequences.

Preservation of Cultural History

Korean culture emphasizes love of cultural history as the drama illustrates. The people of Sodeok-dong showed their love for their cultural history. The Hackberry tree which stood for 500 years in their village was in danger. It was subjected to demolition in order to pave the way for the construction of the Happiness road. The people wanted to preserve what was left of their history. The tree was a center of leisure, worship, and camaraderie in the community. It witnessed the turn of century, the death and birth of people, plagues, political upheavals, victories in wars, and a lot more. So, the community of Sodeok-dong place high premium of their rich colorful past because they understood the universal truth that without the past there will be no present.

Friendship

Young Woo thrived in the cruel world because of good friends like Dong Geurami and Atty. Choi. Only Dong Guerami stood up for Young Woo when she was bullied in High School, using her toughness to save a frail girl from bullies. Geurami was also a kind of

friend advised her and made her laugh, being there for Young Woo even during her down moments. On the other hand, Atty. Choi was the kind of friend who remained with Young Woo through thick and thin, her trust and friendship not wavering. She was determined to encourage Young Woo and make her tough.

“Students got the best scores in law school like you worked as interns for the top law firms and were recruited before graduating. You are the best! When you applied and then didn’t get a job anywhere everyone knew then that it was discrimination. Yet everyone stayed quiet because of their own selfish interest.”

Use Money for the Right Reasons

Principles are sometimes compromised by issues regarding money. In Episode 7, Hyungmin accepted the Land Acquisition and Compensation Plan that Gyeongha-edo offered him, despite the fact that he was one resident’s board members. His action prompted the other residents to accept the compensation without first evaluating the consequences of their actions.

Money also showed the real character of people. In the beginning, the residents of Sodeok-dong were united in their cause but when Taesan intervened using their tactics of consent forms and compensation the residents were divided. They forgot the very reason why they opposed the construction of Happiness road. Taesan showed their power through strength in money, numbers, and words. The weak were easily swayed because Taesan’s tactics.

Particular men became fools in the face of money, including Shin IISu. The moment he received his share of the 1.1 billion cash prize, he filed for divorce. His initial purpose

of appealing for this money in court was to provide a better life for his family. But he became a fool of money, and planned to abandon his wife and live a life of luxury.

The drama showed that money is not bad. It depends on the person who would use it. A person should not allow money to bend their principles and values. Money will disappear, but principles and values of a person will stay forever.

Aside from the values discussed above, there were nuggets of wisdom which the drama likewise imparted to the viewers.

Good things happen to good people. Shin Eunji inherited the lottery prize of 1.1 billion which her husband won in the lottery because according to her lawyer at the time of the death of her husband, they were still legally married. She also received another 300 million won from his life insurance policy. Shin Eunji remained strong even if her husband abused her, her strength rewarding her and her children.

You reap what you sow. This was observed when Mr. Moon, the HR Manager of MIR Life, said that the board is also removing him. He said that he was not MIR Life. He was just a representative of MIR Life, an instrument to illegally terminate the women employees, what he did to them just a fulfillment of his job scope. However, the drama illustrates choice, as when he had a choice whether to implement the orders of the management or speak up and take a stand. He had chosen the easier route leading to his doom.

Seeing is not everything. The abbot reminded the lawyers not to be blinded by what is in front of them and they should keep in mind the essence of what lies beyond. In the context of cultural preservation, paying for the admission entrance was just the icing on the cake. The essence of this action was invisible to the eye. The money was used for the preservation of Hwangjisa Temple. This wisdom was also true when the lawyers were looking for the owner of Haengbok Noodles.

We only regret the chances we do not take. This wisdom is not only applicable to Atty. Jung who had cancer. Atty. Woo thought that in situations like these, one must grab every opportunity for no one knows when life will end. Atty. Woo found ways for Atty. Jung to taste his favorite noodles because she realized life was short. For the other characters, this wisdom also had significance: Atty. Kwon will regret not taking the change to be a better person, Lee Junho took a leap of faith for his love to Attorney Woo.

You have someone you like, hold on to them and if something happens and you let go, just run back to them. This is true for Atty. Jung and his wife Jisu who opted to divorce because of the circumstances they faced in past. In the end however, they both decided to give each other a chance. The same wisdom was also applicable to Lee Junho and Atty. Woo who broke up because of Atty. Woo's insecurities. They gave each other space to think, and, in the end, still chose each other.

Justice will prevail in the end. Kim Chang Hong was dismissed by the Raon Board of Directorrs as CEO because of the testimony of Sang Hyeon that he was the mastermind in the hacking of the server of Raon. Kim Chang Hong betrayed his best friend Bae In Cheol because of what he did. He sowed injustice and so he got what deserved for his betrayal and deceit.

Bravery in facing adversities. In the final stretch of the episode, Atty. Woo was brave enough to step up and persuade Tae Soomi to allow his son to testify against Chang Hong. This was difficult for her knowing that she had no relationship with her mother but but she took the chance anyway. "If she can't do it for her, do it for her brother," was Atty. Woo's battle cry. Aside from this, she was also brave in taking a risk to love Junho despite her inadequacies. She was courageous enough to put her happiness first over her doubts and worries and judgment of other people.

Do what is right, no matter what. Sang Hyeon, was asked while on the stand, what made him decide to testify against Chang Hong of Raon. He replied, “Because it was wrong”. It needs bravery to choose what is right, even if doing so will hurt a number of people.

Integration of Romantic and Comic Relief Scenes

A Korean drama’s major ingredients in its narrative are the integration of romantic and comic relief scenes whether the genre is a serious medical drama, legal drama, or action. In this dramas, romance and comic scenes were always present to keep the narrative appealing. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the romance aspect focused on Lee Junho and Atty. Woo. Atty. Kwon and Atty. Choi have also a contribution to this aspect although it was subtle.

The drama included romantic gestures in the episodes:

[Atty. Woo] “You keep showing on my head like whales. It’s the first time I’m constantly thinking about someone”.

[Lee Junho] “I do like you. I like you very much. It feels like my stomach is in knots.”

There were instances which showed romantic scenes in the drama:

Lee Junho was dumbstruck to see Young Woo so beautiful wearing a wedding dress. This was when they worked undercover to find out the real reason of the wardrobe malfunction of their client’s daughter.

Junho saw an eyelash on Atty. Woo’s face and attempted to take it out. He could not get it so he moved closer and closer. This scene showcased Kdramas’ distinct romantic style where the scene looked simple but powerful for the viewers, as there were

emotions deeply felt in the scenes. The realistic acting of the actors and the way the scene was executed helped provide a romantic vibe to the scene.

Lee Junho declared his love for Atty. Woo in front of the revolving door in the office where they first met. It is a special place for the two because Lee Junho taught Atty. Woo a dance step that will enable her to enter the revolving door easily. The action was symbolic because the door symbolized the gateway to Atty. Woo's professional and personal life. The moment she entered the door, she was ushered into a world where she can help others and she can be true to herself. Entering that door was a risk but she took it and it opened up more doors for her.

The very first kiss of the couple was shot like a movie, the ambiance romantic. The bulb was flickering, the apartment hallway was dark, the background defocused. This showed that they seemed alone in their own universe. Atty. Woo initiated the kiss which was a bold move for her. It showed how much she liked Lee Junho, and how much he meant to her. It also depicted that Atty. Woo was an empowered woman. She just knew what she wanted, and she was willing to fight for it.

Lee Junho was a charming and sweet oppa in the drama. One of their co-workers caught Atty. Woo staring at Lee Junho through the blinds in her office window. The co-worker found it creepy, but Lee Junho found it sweet and cute. He was supposed to enter the office of Atty. Woo, but a co-worker interrupted so he placed his palms on the glass window instead so Atty. Woo also placed her palm against the palm of Junho on the glass, so that it looked like they were holding hands.

Aside from Atty. Woo and Lee Junho, an unexpected romance also blossomed between Atty. Kwon and Atty. Choi. This was unexpected because of Atty. Kwon's displeasing personality and attitude, however, he also revealed a different person to her. She may perhaps be the reason why Atty. Kwon decided to transform for the better.

[Atty. Choi]: "Tell me what's going on.

[Atty. Kwon]: "What?"

[Atty. Choi]: "It's just you're different overnight. Who is Kwon Min-woo? A jerk and an asshole. You get on my nerves every time you open your mouth. I wanna smack you! You should be scheming in the dark. That's Kwon Min-Woo.

[Atty. Kwon]: Am I really horrible?

[Atty. Choi]: You didn't know? Where's that jerk, the dark tactician Kwon Min-woo and where the hell did this nice Kwon Min-woo come from? I almost called the police to report an imposter.

[Atty. Kwon]: "An imposter?"

[Atty. Choi]: "Ah! Why do you care if I eat a bug? Or if I can't stow my luggage overhead? Or I can't carry all those bottles by myself? Why Kwon Min-Woo is going out of his way to be nice. Runs every morning even on a business trip? And buying flowers from some old lady? What are you trying to be? Being cool like that is unnatural. Why are you like this?"

[Atty. Kwon]: "Because we're in Jeju."

[Atty. Choi]: "Ah! What are you saying? You're romantic too?"

[Atty. Kwon]: "Hang on Atty. Choi, do you like me?"

[Atty. Choi]: "No are you crazy?"

[Atty. Kwon]: "Why are you like this? Listing all those things about me that I don't even know. Now be honest with me.

You like me huh? I think you do. Why aren't you saying anything now? You do like me?"

The drama was balanced because aside from serious dramatic scenes and romantic scenes, there were also several comic relief scenes. Even in a serious conversation of the characters, there were instances of funny dialogue or action. A majority of these funny moments can be attributed to Atty. Woo's characteristics – innocent, unpretentious, natural, and true. The following are the instances in the drama where this is shown.

Atty. Choi Suhyeon had diarrhea so requested Young Woo to bring her the most comfortable pants and she needed to change. Atty. Woo brought her a pair of pajamas because it was literally comfortable.

Atty. Woo's name plate was newly installed on her door. She requested Atty. Choi to take a picture of her and her name plate. At first she smiled awkwardly then turned serious, then smiled again at Atty. Choi's request. Atty. Choi then realized that Atty. Woo's smile was scary and creepy so she urged her be serious instead.

It was always a habit of Atty. Woo to insert her whale stories in the middle of a serious conversation. This annoyed colleagues, but she was passionate about her favorite topic, inserting whale take even in the middle of a case meeting or while arguing in the court.

Atty. Woo was innocent and pure. Her response to other people were natural. In Episode 7, Junho offered his jacket to Atty. Woo because it was raining hard. Atty. Woo, on the other hand, offered her jacket to the judge. On the surface, it was not funny, but her actions were laughable and cute. In another scene, she had a eureka moment while she was admitted in the hospital and she called Atty. Jung at an ungodly hour to inform

him of what she found out. This was funny because the previous scene was serious, that of her father telling her how he and her mother separated.

Junho tried to confess his love for Atty. Woo, but she ran away. Since she was wearing a green blazer at that time, she hid behind plants in the front yard of the building which camouflaged her, making the scene hilarious. Every time Junho approached her, she ran away. In another instance, when she and Junho were kissing, she would stop and ask Junho if a couple's teeth also touched while kissing, which made the scene amusing, too.

Atty. Woo's being unintentionally tactless also made the scenes funny, especially in instances where she was just saying what was on her mind. Atty. Woo, Atty. Choi and Junho visited Atty. Jung in the hospital. Atty. Jung was diagnosed with Stage 3 Stomach Cancer. Atty. Woo was talking nonstop and even shared information regarding the types of cancer. Atty. Choi and Junho were quite uncomfortable and tried to warn her to stop. In another scene, Atty. Jung's ex-wife visited him, Atty. Woo said this to her, "Ah, she was the one who endured Atty. Jung for years while he only worked, neglecting his wife before divorcing him."

She had meant well when she was saying something, but this made the scenes more interesting, like when Atty. Jung was wheeled into the OR. Atty. Woo came to visit because she thought he might not make it and she will not see him again. Atty. Woo kept on babbling about stomach cancer in front of Atty. Jung and his mother. Atty. Jung cut her off and she stopped and moved on as if nothing happened.

There were also funny moments when Atty. Woo was not the focus. Like in Episode 9, where Bang Gu-pong was featured. Bang Gu-pong was a funny character. He acted like a child and was over the top honest. He really said what was on his mind even if his lawyers told him not to say anything. When he was saying a funny line, his face was serious and that made it more amusing.

Dong Geurami was also a funny character. She wore colourful and loud outfits. She said things matter-of-factly and advised everyone like a pro. In one scene while they were in the temple, Dong Geurami seemed to suffer from painful joints because of too much bowing and praying then dancing unexpectedly afterwards. Mr. Hairy was caught off guard by her actions. In a flashback scene, Geurami as a high school girl was prohibited by her teachers to sing in videoke because of her tendency to cut classes. She wanted to rebel and so she entered the PA system room of the school and sang and danced there. Her “mini concert” was heard in the entire school.

It was also interesting how the writer was able to insert a karaoke session in the middle of an interview to a suspect. Atty. Choi, Atty. Jung and Atty. Woo sang karaoke to help Kim Jeong hun reveal the real cause of his brother’s death. He was a witness and a suspect at the same time. He was in the autism spectrum and the lawyers found it difficult to make him speak and say what really happened so, they resorted to singing in front of him. On screen, viewers could see the lyrics of the song and they could sing along too while watching the scene.

Kdramas aspired to create balance in their narratives. This style cuts across many genres and stories and through its repetitive use could become a trope but a Kdrama will never be complete without a dose of romance and humor in the narrative.

Tourism Integration and Promotion

It was also a Kdrama trademark to include tourism spots in their narratives. This was one of the many reasons why many people wanted to visit South Korea because they wanted a glimpse of the locations where their favorite Korean dramas were shot.

“Among some 80 tourist attractions visited by 1.6 million foreigners last year (2021), 57.6 percent were filming locations of Netflix-aired Korean dramas” (Byun, 2022). The popular tourism spots frequented by tourists are: Milal Fine Art Museum which was

featured in *Guardian: The Lonely and Great God*; C156 Underground where *Hotel Del Luna* and *My ID is Gangnam Beauty* were filmed; Baekbin railroad crossing where Netflix dramas *My Mister* and *My First, First Love* was shot.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, several places in South Korea were introduced. The success of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* might be one of the reasons why tourists will also flock to these places in the future.

Janghwari Nakjo Village

In Episode 4, Lee Junho invited Woo Young to see the sunset. Junho and Young Woo went to Ganghwa Incheon. It is called the Janghwari Nakjo Village. Visit Korea noted that “it is well known among photographers as a great spot to view the sunset form and it has one of the most beautiful tidal flats and views of the sunrise in the western sea. “In the drama, the sunset shot in this location was breathtaking. It was a perfect background for romance to flourish.

Hackeberry Tree

500-year-old Hackeberry Tree located on a hill in Dongbu Village in the Southern city of Changwo was the focal point in Episode 7. As can be noted, “since it appeared in the legal drama, the Cultural Heritage Administration said that it gained a great public interest...residents in the village see a surge in daily visitors seeking out the spot”. In the story, the tree needed to be cut down to give way to the construction of Happiness Road. For the residents, however, the tree was central to their daily lives. Kids climbed the tree, celebrations were done beneath its leaves, prayers were heard in times of hardships.

Deoksugung Stonewall Walkway

Deoksugung Stonewall Walkway was also featured in the drama. The walkway was approximately 900 meters in length. “It was Korea’s first successful attempt at creating a comprehensive urban space where people and nature coexist in perfect

harmony...It is also an ideal dating spot for couples to stroll along the romantic stone-wall road” (KoreaTodo.Com, 2023). In the drama, it was shared that lovers who walked the stonewall walkway will break up. The Seoul Family court and the Supreme Court was said to be located at the Northend of the walkway. It was believed that when you walkdown the Deoksugung Stonewall you were heading to the divorce court.

Gwaneumsa Temple

Hwangjisa temple was mentioned in the drama which was described as a famous heritage site but is actually Gwaneumsa Temple. According to Klook (2023), the temple is home to the 23rd Parish Jongye Order of Korean Buddhism. In the drama, the lawyers prayed in the temple with the monks. They also found the owner of Haengbok noodles residing in the temple as a cook.

Cheolli Restaurant

In Episode 14, Atty. Jung invited everyone to try Haengbok Noodles because he had tasted them during his honeymoon at Jeju Island and they were delicious. In reality, however, Haengbok noodles was non-existent. Instead, the place is called Cheolli Restaurant in Jeju Island. The restaurant served braised cutlassfish, and they also had temporary lodging for guests who wanted to visit Jeju.

Saeyeongyo Bridge

Still in Episode 14, Atty. Choi and Atty. Kwon bought drinks for everyone. The Saeyeongyo Bridge was featured. The bridge was famous for making new connections. It was this bridge that connected Seogwipo Port and Saesseon. It was considered a landmark of Seogwipo tourism. The bridge had the longest pedestrian that was why vehicles were not allowed to enter. Saeyeongyo bridge was also symbolic to Atty. Choi and Atty. Kwon. It was well- known as a bridge for making new connections. Atty. Choi

and Atty. Kwon were already colleagues, but while crossing the bridge they had a new sense of connection.

Jeju Island

Jeju Island was the site for Episodes 13 and 14. In Episode 13, the team was travelling through the roads of Jeju. Atty. Jung joined the group of Dong Geurami and Kim Minsik or Mr. Hairy. Since they rented a top-down car, Atty. Jung was able to see the beauty of Jeju Island. The drama featured the 5.16 Road Forest Tunnel. In the drama it was known as local highway no. 3008. Atty. Jung seemed to be enjoying the slow drive. At that time, he was the only one who knew that he had cancer. During that car ride, he was enjoying every moment.

Changkom Rock Formation

Still in Episode 13, during one of the talks, Atty. Jung revealed that he and his wife were divorced. A backstory of their honeymoon was then shown when their fights that led to the divorce started. In the flashback, Changkom Rock was featured as one of honeymoon destinations. Atty. Jung and his wife were supposed to take photos in this area but failed to do so because Atty. Jung brought work while on vacation.

Seonjeong Haenyeo

Another tourism site featured during the honeymoon backstory is the Seonjeong Haenyeo. It was a sushi restaurant in Jeju where Atty. Jung and his wife ate during their honeymoon. While eating, tourists could take a glimpse of the ocean through the glass windows.

Sindo Port

Lastly, Atty. Woo is overly excited to go to Jeju because she wanted to see a bottlenose dolphin. She went to Sindo Port together with Junho. Sindo port, which was on the far west coast of Jeju Island, used natural volcanic formations as part of its

infrastructure. Its ocean currents make it a particularly rich place for marine life including an abundance of fish and octopuses. In the drama, Atty. Woo and Lee Junho broke up at Sindo Port. They were supposed to wait for the dolphins to come out. It was only when they left the area that a dolphin peeked out from the sea.

Product Placement

Oh (2013) theorized “speculative storytelling” in Korean dramas. This means that “narrative, dialogues, and visual illustrations in Korean television dramas are thoroughly tailored to cater to sponsors and major importers”. Hence, product placement was one feature of the narrative style of Kdrama. There are three types of product placement: visual placement in which the “the brand is placed in the background set of a show”; auditory or verbal placement, “in which the brand was mentioned in the dialogue”; and plot placement, “in which the product becomes part of the plot. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, it used plot placement to advertise *Kahi Multi Balm* in Episode 11. Atty. Choi was to meet her date downstairs. Before meeting him, she applied *Kahi Multi Balm* to her face. In Episode 13, Dong Geurami again used *Kahi Multi Balm* before she locked eyes with Atty. Kwon Min-Woo. There were no other products that were featured in the drama aside from *Kahi Multi Balm*.

In terms of sponsors, only three prominent logos were seen at the end of each episode: *A story*, *Studio Genie*, and *ENA*. There were no other logos aside from the three.

Knowledge Sharing Vehicle

Instructive function was also one of the major functions of media. This means that media exist in order to “cultivate knowledge by teaching instead of just relaying information” (University of Minnesota, 2023). Korean dramas did not only exist to entertain but it was also used as a vehicle to propagate knowledge sharing. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was a legal drama, and the genre dictates that it needed to include legal jargon in

the dialogues to inform viewers. However, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* went beyond genre conventions, including other vital information to enrich the viewer's knowledge.

The knowledge shared by the drama range from legal, medical, tips, science, computer science and many more.

Legal

Injunction Hearing

In an injunction hearing, the drama taught that the term to be used was obligor instead of defendant, reference witness instead of witness. Reference witness does not swear an oath, meaning even if the witness committed perjury, she or he will not be punished for it. No juries are present during the injunction hearing.

Patent Act

One of the features of Article 29 of the Patent act stipulated that "Novelty is the key factor in application of model utility rights. Meaning it cannot be the same as prior technology." This was what Ihwa ATM violated. They applied for utility rights when they knew that they just copied the design of a prior technology. In other words, the novelty requirement in the Patent act was not satisfied. Aside from this provision of the Intellectual Property Rights, Unfair Competition Prevention and Trade Secret Protection Act was also mentioned in the series. Copying the brand name of a famous restaurant was called an act of unfair competition. The context of this was a noodle shop in Jeju Island which copied the recipe of Haengbok Noodles, Atty. Jung's favorite noodle shop.

North Korea Law

Even North Korean laws were part of the informative dialogues. North Korea law Article 288 or the North Korean Criminal Law on Robbery of personal property stated that the penalty for the guilty was four years in the labor camp whereas Article 284 of the North Korea Law or a Crime of Stealing Property, sentenced someone to a maximum of one

year of labor discipline. The context of this information was the defendant Gye Hyang Sim was from North Korea and so the North Korean Laws were discussed in court.

Miranda Rights

The police officers apprehended a suspect on board a train. Atty. Woo was in the train, and she heard that the detectives did not recite the Miranda Rights or Miranda Doctrine (the right of the suspects) before cuffing them. She told the detectives that they should recite the Miranda doctrine and inform the suspect of his charges. Detectives cannot arrest the suspects without doing this procedure.

Legal Strategies

Even the strategies of lawyers to win a case was part of the drama. Arguing using technicality was weak and so was emotional approach. A business driven approach was more ideal. The case that Hanbada lawyers were handling was a David versus Goliath situation and so the best strategy was to pressure the judges. The context of this was Hanbada representing the community of Sodeok-dong while Taesan was representing the contractors who will spearhead the construction of Happiness Road.

Quasi Rape

In the court hearing of the case of Yang Jeong and Shin Hye Hyeong wherein Jeong was accused of abusing a mentally impaired woman (Hye Hyeong). The plaintiff's lawyer revealed in the court that Jeong raped Hye Hyeong. A part of his argument was rape is possible without force. This is called quasi-rape.

Medical

Asperger Syndrome

In Episode 3, Atty. Woo introduced Hans Asperger. By introducing him, she wanted to impart to viewers that people with a disability like her and Kim Jeong-hun were worthy of living.

[Atty. Woo]: “Hans Asperger, the first person to do research on autism. He thought there was an upside to it. He said, not everything that steps out of the line, and is abnormal must necessarily be inferior. That because of their divergent ways of thinking and experiencing, autistic people can accomplish great things. Hans Asperger was a Nazi collaborator. His job was to separate children who were worth of life from those who were not. To the Nazis, the people deemed unworthy of being alive where the physically disabled, the terminally ill, and the mentally ill. A category that includes autistic people.”

Megalomania

In Episode 9, the term *Megalomania* was mentioned. *Megalomania* means that persons with this disorder believe they hold an important position in an institution or organization. “Megalomaniac is someone who displays a manic behaviour, often paired with delusions of grandeur and an enhanced sense of self” (Practical Psychology, 2023). Megalomaniacs in history include Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan and Napoleon Bonaparte (Vocabulary.com, 2023)

Catecholamine

A chemical called catecholamine was introduced in Episode 5. According to the National Cancer Institute of United States of America (2023), catecholamine is a “type of neuro-hormone and was important in stress responses. High levels of this chemical cause high blood pressure which can lead to headaches, sweating, pounding of the heart, pain in the chest, and anxiety”. “

[Atty. Woo]: If a person is lying, their body release(s) a chemical called catecholamine which causes the membrane and the nose to swell. Pinocchio was actually a story that was based on facts. When a person lies, their blood pressure rises and stimulates the nose, right at the tip, making it feel itchy.

Mental State of the Differently Abled

A medical professional testified in court during the case of Yang Jeong and Shin Hye Hyeong. They were alleged to be in a relationship and had consensual sex. Shin Hye Hyeong was diagnosed with an intellectual disability. According to the medical professional, someone who had a disability was sensitive and vulnerable when someone took advantage of them or feigned affection. A disabled person would not know how to refuse. People with disabilities find it difficult to find love because they mistake lust for affection. Shin Hye Heyong, who had a disability did not have a sound mind to decide on matters like sex. This testimony helped the plaintiff to present their case: that what happened between Jeong and Hye Hyeong was not consensual sex, but rape.

Stress for people in the spectrum

It likewise included information regarding people in the autism spectrum, such as inability to hold hands for long periods of time or inability to maintain eye contact. This

was the reason why Lee Junho and Woo Young Woo cannot do what other couples would usually do like holding hands while walking. People in the spectrum would also shake uncontrollably in times of stress. In Episode 11, Atty. Woo witnessed the Shin Il Su's car accident and she could not manage the stress. Hence she wailed, and her body shook uncontrollably. Fortunately, Junho was there to hug her so she may relieve her stress. In the case of Shin Hye Hyeong, when she experienced stress, she scratched her hands uncontrollably that her nails dug into her skin. In relation to stress, Lee Junho shared about *Hugging chairs* for autistic people in France.

[Lee Junho:] "The hug chair has inner walls that can apply deep pressure on the chest or on the legs. This allows (you) to feel the limits of your body and focus on sensory information and reduce tension to help people with autism feel better in their environment."

Science

Since the fascination of Attorney Woo was on whales and dolphins. She would usually share valuable information regarding them.

In Episode 1, she discussed passionately about sperm whale or cachalot whale.

[Atty. Woo]: A sperm whale is also called a cachalot because it has a big, square head with a spermaceti organ inside. The spermaceti organ contains a wax-like liquid, which is used to make sounds. In Herman Melville's novel, *Moby-Dick*, the whale in that novel is a sperm whale. In the novel, it is described to be white, but actually, its body color is dark gray or purplish brown. If a female sperm whale that weighs 22 tons ate a giant squid that weighs 500 kilograms,

then laid an egg that weighs 1.3 tons 6 hours later, how much does the sperm whale weigh? The answer is, "Whales cannot lay eggs." Whales are mammals so they give birth instead of laying eggs.

In Episode 2 she discussed about killer whales, blue whales, and right whales. Atty. Woo was well versed in this topic. She was knowledgeable even of the minor details such as the color of feces or the weight of high fat milk produced by whales.

[Atty. Woo]: Killer whales stay with their mothers their whole life. According to human standards, they are all mama's boys and mama's girls. The feces of a blue whale is red. It's because krill, their staple food, are red. The whale's feces acts as a kind of pump that pulls nutrients from the deep parts of the ocean up to the surface of the sea. Whales feed in the deep ocean and come up to excrete on the surface of the sea. And the feces become nutrients for phytoplankton. The right whale is a migratory animal. But the 400 right whales that live in California stay in one place all year long. They're fast enough to go through California in six days, but they don't move at all. Whipped cream contains about 30 percent fat. The milk of right whales and other whales is much thicker than whipped cream since it contains 30 to 50 percent fat. A blue whale mother produces 200 kilograms of this high-fat milk every day. So then how much weight would the whale calf gain after drinking that for six months? Seventeen tons.

She likewise mentioned other vital information regarding Indo-Pacific finless porpoise, Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins, Humpback whales, Narwhals, Yangtze River dolphins, Orcas, Minke whale and Baird's beaked whales. Whales and dolphins were common in the dialogues of Atty. Woo. When people in the spectrum are interested in a topic, they study it fervently and when asks them about this, they can give one lengthy descriptions.

Computer Science

In Episode 15, since the episode was about cyber security, phishing, malware, and idle were discussed. For example, Spear Phishing was defined in the drama as advanced persistent threat which meant to attach the target in a continuous, sophisticated manner. Key logger was likewise defined and explained. Key logger is a software which allows the hacker to watch and see what the target is typing.

Tips

The knowledge shared by *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* ranged from the sophisticated to the mundane. The characters imparted tips which the viewers can do and follow.

According to Lee Junho, you will know that the person was lying if he had the following symptoms: sweaty palms, shaky legs, arms across the chest, and hands rubbing on the legs.

There were also tips about how to show someone that you like them. Mr. Hairy enumerated four ways: pull up a chair, open the door, let the person walk on the inside when on the sidewalk, and carry their things.

Another tip shared by Mr. Hairy was on dates. Mr. Hairy said couples grab food, drink tea, watch movies or go to Karaoke. He added that couples usually do fun activities

together. Finally, another character, Lee Junho, added that couple should hold hands when they walk home.

Popular Culture Integration

Extraordinary Attorney Woo was an Asian text married to Western concepts. There were several instances in the drama in which popular figures, games, or drama were mentioned. Western Culture references included Tom Cruise, Top Gun, Bill Gates, Brad Pitt, Grey's Anatomy, and Dine and Dash mobile game. These were woven into the dialogues of the characters.

It also introduced expressions such as *Cham Cham Cham* and *Whoa Whoa Way*. *Cham Cham Cham* was used in the game in which Atty. Woo and Dong Geurami played. On the other hand, *Whoa Whoa Way* was introduced by Atty. Jung to Atty. Woo, which was a technique used to calm an agitated person and to remove emotional attachment to the case.

The drama also created abbreviations which functioned as a form of secret code between the characters of Yang Jeong and Shin Hye Yeong. These are *FFY* (*Fool for Yang Jeongil*), *HN* (*Hot night*), and *FFH* (*Fool for Hyeong*).

It also introduced funny nicknames. *Lee the Butthead Junho*, *Woo Woo Woo Woodpecker*, *Mr. Diarrhea Kwon*, and *Jung Poop guy* were created to make the children happy in Episode 9. According to Bang Gupong, creating funny nicknames will capture the children's attention. In the context of the gambling house, there were two code names used which were only known to gamblers. *Coffee Shop* stood for the girl who sold coffee in the gambling house and *Ashtray* – the errand guy of the gambling house.

Contemporary terms such as ghosting were likewise included. *Ghosting* is defined as “rejection without closure” (Wooldridge & Engle, 2021). In Episode 11, Mr. Hairy, who had tried to date Atty. Choi, asked Dong Geurami how the attorney was. Geurami answered, “She ghosted you. Where is your pride?” In the middle of their date, Atty. Choi left because she could not stand Mr. Hairy’s weirdness and awkwardness because of his food jokes. He had shared the jokes to start a conversation, but Atty. Choi found it weird.

Multi-faceted Characters

One of the strengths of Korean drama was the ability of the screen writers to create relatable characters. This was one of the reasons why the audience are hooked because they see themselves in the characters. Rose (1985) noted that “characters, rather than the events, are the show’s main vehicle for influencing audiences” (Ibid). Furthermore, Cohen (1999) added that “the responses to characters, then, are determined not only by character attributes but also by how their role in the plot is perceived”.

Relatable Characters

The character of Atty. Woo was relatable to persons in the autism spectrum. She represented all the Atty. Woos who suffered from discrimination and judgment because of their condition. However, her tenacity, perseverance, brilliance, determination and good heart made people love her. Many people in the spectrum had lost hope in reaching their dreams because they were discouraged and doubtful. Atty. Woo stood as a constant reminder for them to never give up and never lose hope because despite their disability, they can still accomplish significant things.

In any workplace, there will always be an Atty. Kwon Minwoo who discriminates persons like Attorney Woo who has disabilities. In life, if someone was doing well, there will always be one person who will try to put a good man down. Even though he was an abled person, he was insecure of Atty. Woo because she showed brilliance and hard work. He wanted to be competitive, but he cannot accept the fact that a person with disability was better than he was. He was also struck by what Atty. Jung said: "Atty. Woo really does a great job...she is tenacious and thinking out of the box". Thus, Atty. Kwon tried his best to ruin Atty. Woo through his anonymous post regarding her "fraudulent" hiring, collaborating with Atty. Tae Soomi to make her resign, and countless scheming to put her down. In the end, however, he was never victorious. Eventually Atty. Choi influenced him and told him to be a brave fool.

[Atty. Choi]: "Can you please for one second just make a fool of yourself. Do it for your colleague for something you think is right. Can't you put down your political maneuvers just for a moment to be a brave fool."

Best friends make life a little bearable. Atty. Choi and Dong Geurami were perfect female friends. They represented friends who were always when needed and when times were tough. They tell the truth that one needed to hear and did not care that their friend might get angry. What was more important for them was making their friend aware of their actions and the consequences that came with it.

Another relatable character was Atty. Jung Myung-seok. He worked hard, even to the point of being a workaholic because his purpose was to provide for the family and career improvement. This could lead, however, to taking the family and loved ones for granted. In end, there will be regrets for chances that were not taken. In the end, Atty. Jung took a leap of faith and chose his wife, instead of a career.

If there are Atty. Kwons in workplaces, there are also Atty. Jangs who thought they were better than other people and looked down on others, even though the truth is, they were lacking. They would blame others for their inadequacies. In several scenes of the episode, it was shown how much Atty. Jang was so annoyed and upset with Atty. Woo because he could accept that an autistic person was better than he was. The final straw happened when Atty. Woo kept on talking and explaining in his office about what she found out earlier regarding the cyber security incident. That Atty. Jang shouted at her:

“You know the law too well.”

“You come here so arrogant to teach us.”

“If you know so much, do it by yourself.”

Finally, Atty. Woo was removed from the case because she was way better than him.

Characters attract viewers because their stories mirror their own. Viewers learn how the characters cope with their own setbacks and difficulties and perhaps in the end they attempt to apply their learnings in their own lives.

Clear Internal and External Conflicts

The internal and external conflicts of the characters sharpen them and make them stronger to face the crisis that await them. “Internal conflict is when a character struggles with their own opposing desires or beliefs” (Masterclass, 2021). On the other hand, “external conflict sets a character against something or someone beyond their control” (Ibid). In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the internal and external conflicts of the characters were clear.

Atty. Woo Young Woo as the main protagonist had clear internal and external conflicts. Her external conflict was her autism, which was beyond her control. Her being

in the autism spectrum subjected her to discrimination and judgement. Oftentimes, her capabilities were questioned, and she always needed to prove herself because of this. However, her disability was her asset as she used this to help others through her brilliant legal strategies and appreciation of the various cases. Her photographic memory and vast knowledge contributed to the success of the cases she managed. She refused to make this external conflict define her. On the hand, her internal conflict stems from her belief that she did not deserve to love because of her condition which was even strengthened when Lee Junho's family made her hear and feel that she did not deserve Junho. However, love won in the end. Junho assured her that these did not matter to him as long as they had each other. Another internal conflict she had was her belief that she did not need her mother because she was absent in her younger life. Until the very end, this belief did not waver. She stood her ground. When her half-brother needed her help, she told her mother, "You were not a good mother, not with me. It could be still possible to be a good mother to Cho Sang-hyeon."

Evident Character Transformation

In this drama, the most evident character transformation was Atty. Kwon MinWoo. In the beginning, he was Atty. Woo Young Woo's nemesis, willing to do everything to make Atty. Woo's life difficult. His constant exposure to Attorney Woo though made him realize that she was competent and brilliant and he would be unable to equal Atty. Woo's talent and skill.

"Atty. Woo is a genius. She can behave however she wants and get kicked off like that and people will still support her as a genius standing her ground. But you and I (referring to him and Atty. Choi) we're different. If you and I were to act

the same way, we will be labelled as difficult; as hotshot rookies who have big egos.”

Another factor for his transformation was perhaps his blossoming relationship with Attorney Choi, which started when they spent time together in Jeju. In Jeju, he mentioned in a telephone conversation that Atty. Choi overheard that he needed to work hard to provide for his parents’ needs. It gave her the idea why Attorney Kwon acted tough - it was due to his responsibilities to his parents. While in Jeju, Atty. Kwon started to show his soft side, beginning his transformation. Atty. Choi at one point confessed what type of guy she liked.

[Atty. Choi]: “Can you please for one second just make a fool of yourself. Do it for your colleague for something you think is right. Can’t you put down your political maneuvers just for a moment to be a brave fool.

[Atty. Kwon]: “Why should I do that?”

[Atty. Choi]: “You should because...because I like men who acted that way.”

The bravest decision he had ever made was to meet Atty. Tae Soomi and tell her to her face that he was not willing to participate in her plans anymore.

[Atty. Tae Soomi]: “Oh Please Atty. Kwon. You promised you were in a position to make Atty. Woo resign. Whether she quit on her volition or got fired. That’s what we agreed on, wasn’t it?”

[Atty. Kwon]: “Yes Mam and I was not able to deliver.”

[Atty. Tae Soomi]: You are throwing in the towel?”

[Atty. Kwon]: “Yes. I am going to stop trying.”

[Atty. Tae Soomi]: “Why?”

[Atty. Kwon]: “From now on, I ‘m going to try living like a fool.”

In the last court hearing, he showed his support to Atty. Woo and Atty. Choi and his transformation came full circle. He presented to the court Atty. Woo’s argument even if his senior partner opposed it. He acted like a brave fool in the end.

On the other hand, Attorney Woo’s transformation began when she attempted to enter the office’s rotating door with the help of Junho. In the beginning, she was scared to face the world because of her fears about her disability. When Lee Junho helped her to get through the door, she realized there will be people who will help her face her fears. The moment she entered the door, she was transformed. In the law firm, the cases helped shaped her to become better at her practice. Though she was tested several times and she thought of giving up, her love for the law prevailed. She continued to sharpen her skills and always tried to find solutions to all her clients’ legal problems. As such, her fear transformed into bravery and becoming a better person.

She also courageously faced her own mother, Tae Soomi, to tell her she was not a good mother to her. She firmly refused to allow her birth mother to dictate what she was supposed to do, even though it was painful to see Tae Soomi loving her half-brother and be more willing to sacrifice her dreams more for him, and not for her. She did not waver however. She was motivated by this pain to become the bigger person.

In the last part of the episode, she once again faced the rotating door. This time, she managed to enter the door on her own. As such, she was freed from her fears, ready to fly and be the person she wanted to be, not the person others expected her to become.

Strong Plot

Plot refers “to the main events in the story composed as a connected sequence of events (Lannom, 2019). A good plot “explains the chain events in a story; shows causal relationship between each event; and connects the actions and events in a logical manner” (Ibid)

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the plot was quite simple. It was about a rookie lawyer in the autism spectrum and how she navigated her career and relationships. The plot points in the various episodes showcased how Atty. Woo managed to survive every new case. Several flashbacks were also included, in order to make sense of the character actions. The narrative structure was flexible. The story began from the past and went across into the present and into the future. Even if there were several episodes, the original plot was still integrated into it. Koreans doing a seamless integration of the plot to the ongoing plot points.

For every episode, there is a theme which binds the story and unifies it. For example, in Episode 10, the theme was about different kinds of love: a forbidden love between Yang and Shin; blossoming love between Lee Junho and Atty. Woo; and looking for love as in the case of Atty. Choi. Different kinds of love existed in different situations and scenarios. These three love stories were weaved seamlessly in the narrative without disturbing the flow of the episode.

One of the strengths of the plot was the major conflicts were already resolved as early as Episode 8. The truth about Atty. Woo’s mother was revealed. Gwang ho told Woo Young about this in a scene where she wanted to go away for some time. As she was leaving, Gwangho revealed to her that “TaeSumi is your mother”. The shock made Woo Young fall down the stairs. Woo Young was brought to the hospital. There, Gwangho revealed to Young Woo the truth about her birth mother.

“Young Woo, I’m sorry. I didn’t tell you anything for so long.

Your mom passing away as she was giving birth to you, that was actually a lie.”

“I supposed she preferred to live a more luxurious life than a man like me could offer.”

Dialogue was one of the primary ingredients of the story. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, characters’ lines showed power and freed them from whatever bondage their circumstances kept them in.

“I will withdraw my case” (14:04), for example, was a powerful statement that freed Hwa-yeong from the grips of societal expectations and from the control of her own family. This statement is the very essence of independence. Hwa-yeong was already an adult and had the capacity to decide on her own. She may suffer the consequences of her actions in the future, but it seemed that it did not matter to her anymore. She wanted to be free.

“Can you please for one second just make a fool of yourself. Do it for your colleague for something you think is right. Can’t you put down your political maneuvers just for a moment to be a brave fool”. This powerful dialogue of Atty. Choi struck a chord in Atty. Kwon. This made him realize that he was self-serving and self-centered. These lines freed Atty. Kwon from his selfishness and aided him in his complete character transformation.

“You were not a good mother, not with me. It could be still possible to be a good mother to Cho Sang-hyeon”, was Atty. Woo’s honest lines to Tae Soomi’s face. These lines liberated Atty. Woo from the pain she kept so long in her heart. These lines also allowed Tae Soomi to make a decision that changed her life: she let go of her dreams to be the Minister of Justice to save her son. It may be too late to do things for Woo Young,

but she could do it for her son. Atty. Woo was aware that by saying those lines, she knew that she had conveyed her message well.

However, even if the plot is strong, a little plot hole was observed. Han Seon Young, Tae Soomi, and Woo Gwangho's backstories were not featured, making one ask questions on the motivation of Seon Young for plotting revenge against Tae Soomi. What was their relationship with each other? Why did Seon Young help Gwangho to hire Young Woo in Hanbada? Does Gwangho owe her in the past? There were subtle hints in the story but if their backstories were featured there will be more clarity as to why they opted to act in a particular way.

Concluding Analysis

The Korean drama narrative is theorized in three ways. It is a *complete text*, a *conduit* and a *social voice*.

It is theorized as a *complete text* because it was able to successfully combine different elements to produce a unified, coherent, and meaningful discourse. The Kdrama text is appealing because it is a complete text. There is romance, humor, and integration of issues, values, knowledge and even tourism. Even if there are too many "ingredients" that make up the text, it never gets in the way of the plot. The plot and plot points continue to unfold until it reached a resolution. The message was constructed clearly and completely.

The Kdrama text is theorized as a *social voice* because it echoed the sentiments of the marginalized. The marginalized lack platforms to share their stories. The Korean drama narrative served as a channel in the communication process so that the *social voice* of the marginalized could be heard by persons in authority so they could act and

make meaningful changes. The Kdrama text is a powerful text because it has the capability to make a difference.

The narrative is a *conduit* of the government and the business sector, able to weave tourism-related and product placement information seamlessly into the story. The story is intact despite these inclusions. The narrative became a useful channel or conduit for the government to earn income through tourism and for the business sector to showcase their products as well. The narrative of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* did not only function as a form of message in the communication process, but it was also a channel in which the message for the intended market was sent.

Mythmaking in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*

Mythmaking in the Korean drama *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was conceptualized using the lens of Roland Barthes' concept of mythmaking wherein he established the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The two concepts mentioned earlier are core tenets of the study of semiotics. Barthes' defined semiotics as, "a method of inquiry into the implicit signs present in the mental element of interaction with nature, or within a community" (Hammouri, 2020). In the study of ,Chua (2019), he elucidated clearly how Barthes theorized the signified and signifier. He gave an example of a rose in which he explained that aside from the "linguistic meaning" of the rose, it can also bear the meaning of passion. Chua (2019) explained, "in this situation, there now exists two pairs of signified and signifier. The first pair is the aforementioned system where the rose functions as its own independent sign system while the second pair is the initial semiotic system of rose now acting as a signifier for passion. For Barthes, this second pair of signifier and signified is the semiotic myth which for him is second order semiological system".

In this study, the following myths were uncovered:

1. Heroes and heroines in Korean drama are scarred.

In the drama, Atty. Woo was depicted as someone who has a painful past. In short, she was a scarred heroine, unable to know her mother. Moreover, she could not get a good job because of discrimination due to her autism. However, she used this pain to conquer the challenges and ended up as victorious. This is very common in Korean dramas. In dramas like *Scarlet Heart Ryeo* (2016), Prince Wang So was abandoned by his mother and taken hostage and abused by a noble family. His mother never appreciated him. He used this traumatic experience to climb to the throne and became the Emperor of Goryeo. In another drama, *Ghost Doctor* (2021), Dr. Cha Young Min had also a troubled past wherein his hospital seniors never truly trusted his capability because he was young. When the ghost possessed him, everyone was surprised that he was an expert surgeon after all. However, this phenomenon did not stop him from learning surgery and he tried not to depend on the ghost who gave him powers. He wanted to be authentic. In *W Two Worlds* (2016), Kang Chul was accused of murdering his own family. He was imprisoned for something that he did not do. In the end, his bad experience made him brave enough to fight villains in society. He even became a billionaire in his fictional world.

All of this may be directed to South Korea's past as a scarred nation. They were under Japan's rule for 35 years. Then North Korea attacked the country in the 1950's, leading to the Korean War. All of these pain transformed South Korea into one of the most progressive nations in Asia. Just like the narrative of Atty. Woo, her pain and disability, did not hinder her from transcending. As a hero, she conquered her troubles and ended up becoming the best version of herself.

2. Heroes and heroines strive for perfection.

South Korea is known for plastic surgery. Imperfections in the physical appearance are corrected using this medical procedure, resulting in “Gangnam beauty”. Gangnam beauty is the term used because most of the plastic surgery clinics are in Gangnam, Seoul. There was even a Korean drama entitled *ID Gangnam Beauty* (Choi Sung Bum, South Korea, 2018) which talks about a young woman named Kang Mirae who underwent plastic surgery to improve her face because she thought that being beautiful is advantageous. Societal norms dictate that a pretty face is tantamount to acceptance. In the case of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* (2022), Atty. Woo strove to be the best in law so that she will be accepted. She may have ASD but she wanted to prove that she has a brilliant mind. She tried to solve the different cases given to her. She was sometimes judged that she cannot perform her responsibilities well. In the end, she proved her worth and earned the respect of others because she strove to be the best. Another example in the drama was the sister of Lee Junho, perceived to be the perfect and ideal partner. She looked at Atty. Woo as someone who was disabled and someone who will be a burden to her brother. If Atty. Woo did not have ASD, she would have been treated differently.

The drama embodies the myth of the nation which is valuing perfection. Being perfect means acceptance in the society. Koreans put great emphasis on reputation and so everyone are expected to behave accordingly and avoid committing mistakes.

Imperfections are frowned upon which sometimes drive others to suicide because they can no longer meet societal expectations.

Filipino Drama

One of the aims of this dissertation is to be able to provide inputs for the development of Filipino drama through benchmarking on the good practices of Korean drama production. The Filipino drama text analysed was *House Arrest of Us* which starred

popular Filipino celebrities *Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla*. The drama was aired on Netflix and KTX.ph. It was dubbed as ABS-CBN's first digi-movie in an episodic format and also holds the number one spot in most viewed series on Netflix during its airing.

Star Cinema produce *House Arrest of Us*. It was released through KTX.ph and Netflix. The episodes ran from October 24, 2020 until January 16, 2021. Star Cinema was proud of this series because it was their first digital movie series. In addition, the stars of this digital movie series were proud of their work because they believed it was a good comedy that could introduce Filipino culture. A default movie runs from one and a half hours to two hours. However, this first digital movie series adopted the episodic format and ran up to 13 episodes. Since this was available on Netflix, global audiences could repeatedly watch the episodes.

Kathryn Bernardo and Daniel Padilla, a love team popularly known as KathNiel, topbilled the series. The Philippines showbiz industry culture relied heavily on love teams to star in teleseryes or movies. KathNiel has immense following not just in the Philippines but across Southeast Asia. Their awards included Favorite Foreign TV Actress and Actor in the Blue Star Award and Face of the Year Awards in Vietnam in 2016 and 2018.

On the other hand, Richard Arellano directed the series. He directed dramas such as *The Iron Heart* (2022), *Flower of Evil* (2022), *Ate ng Ate Ko* (2020), *The House Arrest of Us* (2020), *Make it with You* (2020), *Bagani* (2018) and *La Luna Sangre* (2017). Arellano does not have a nomination or award for his creative works.

A group of writers headed by Carmi Raymundo wrote the script for the series. Raymundo was well known for her works such as *Hello, Love, Goodbye* (2019), *Starting Over Again* (2014), and *One More Chance* (2007). She won a Star Award as a Movie Screenwriter of the Year for her movie *Hello, Love, Goodbye* (2019). She has also been

nominated for a total of 20 times by various award giving bodies such as *Star Awards for Movies*, *Asian Academy Creative Awards*, *FAP Award*, *FAMAS Awards*.

At one point, *The House Arrest of Us* held the number one spot on Netflix PH because it was in the top ten most-watched content in the country while it was airing (Manila Standard, 2021).

Below is **Table 10** which showed the drama information

Table 10.

Filipino Drama Information

Drama Information	
Title	House Arrest of Us
Plot Summary	A couple decides to make their engagement official by honoring tradition when a pandemic forces them and their families to quarantine under one roof (Neflitr, 2020).
Main Characters	Daniel Padilla Kathryn Bernardo
Director	Richard Arellano
Screenwriters	Carmi Raymundo Crystal San Miguel Carmel Josine Jacomille John Leo Garcia
Genre	Filipino, Family, Comedies, Romantic TV
Number of Episodes	13

Technical Elements

Cinematography

It was theorized as Filipino View because it described how Filipinos look at the scene and how Filipinos decided on how to compose their scenes using the camera as a tool. If Koreans have the Korean Eye, the Filipinos have Filipino View.

House Arrest of Us shared similarities with *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. Both dramas combined shots, angles, and principles of composition, they used dynamic shots, experimented on creative shots and place meanings on their shots. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* however used speed of motion and displayed various innovative styles in their cinematography.

The similarities stemmed from the fact that the *House Arrest of Us* was pegged as a digital movie series. Hence, the technicalities in producing a movie were applied by the production team, as explained in this quote: “Kasi it is the first time nating gagawa ng scenes na ang pagka mount niya is isang pelikula. (It is the first time that we shoot our scenes using film style)” (WazzUp.ph, 2020).

Mixture of shots, angles, principles of composition

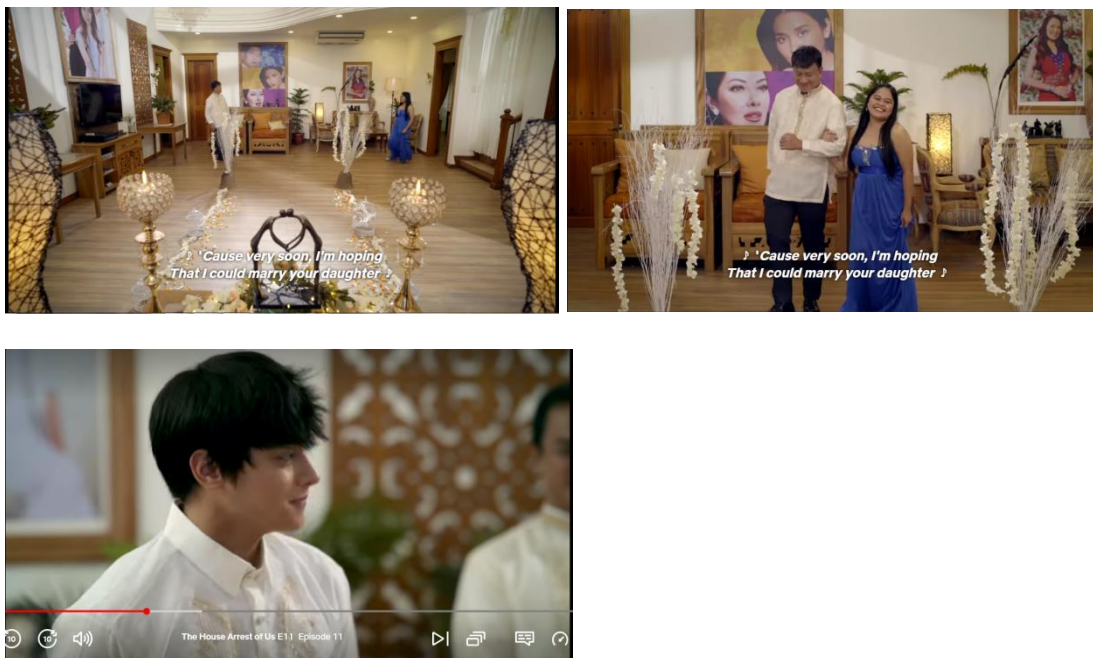
House Arrest of Us used a mixture of shots, angles, and observed principles of composition to visualize their scenes. The production team used a maximum of two to three angles in one scene and these were used alternatively whereas the Koreans used several angles and shots in one scene only. For example, in Episode 9 of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, at 1:09:50; the episode started with an aerial view of a school. Cars and a school bus were lining up. The camera slowly zoomed in to the area. The next shot was a full shot of kids running, and parents fetching them. In that particular scene alone, there were a total of at least six different shots showing the different situations: children running towards the school bus, a child climbing a bus, children running here and there and the interior of the bus. This is different from a typical scene in *House Arrest of Us* where there

is just an establishing shot, individual medium shot of the subjects, and full shot of the subject. The shots were repeated until the scene was finished.

For example, in Episode 11, 17:56, the family members made a makeshift altar and pretended that it was Korics and Q's wedding day. The family members marched to the altar. The director used the ES-FS-MS combination to shoot this scene (**Figure.70**). The space had a huge contribution in the choices of the directors of their shots. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the space of the setting was vast and so they had the freedom to experiment on their shots whereas for *House Arrest of Us* the living room was too small for sophisticated shots. In Korean dramas, even if the setting was just an office, they strategized in order to combine their shots with a moving camera.

Figure 70.

ES-FS-MS Combination



In Conversations between two characters, the shot was normally an MCU shot, and the shoulder of the other person was defocused. Another alternative was the person speaking was shown on screen with only three-fourths of the body shown and defocused. In *House Arrest of Us*, the director also followed the same pattern.

In Episode 12, 4:35, Korics was about to leave Q's house because they both canceled the wedding due to differing opinions regarding their relationship. The shot used was MCU, when Q faced the camera, the Korics' shoulder was blurred (**Figure. 71**) whereas if Korics was in front of the camera, his background was defocused and only a portion of Q's hair was shown and similarly defocused (**Figure. 71**). This style was used alternatively until the conversation was over. If there were three people in a frame, the camera was positioned in an angle that would show the face of the one talking (**Figure. 72**). The pattern of this was alternating full shots and MCUs of each character in the frame.

Figure 71.

Cinematography for conversations



Figure 72.



Three Shot in a Conversation





When shooting the establishing shot of the house, the director maximized the use of background, middle ground, and foreground (**Figure. 73**). The ES, which was a steady shot, was mixed with tracking in order to include a movement in the frame (**Figure. 74**).

Figure 73.

Establishing shot

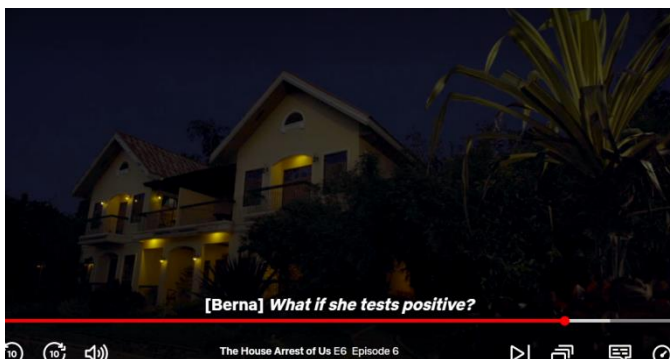
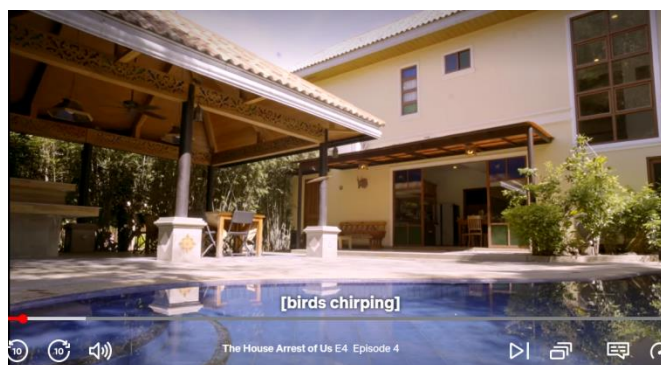


Figure 74.

Establishing shot with tracking



The Filipino View knew its craft when it came to camera work. It strove to integrate shallow depth of field and religiously observed principles of composition. It shared similarities with the Korean View in terms of visualizing the scene. However, Filipino view was different because it was limited. It exhibited limitations in terms of shots used, space, and style. It was very evident that they made use of what was available at that moment. The Filipino ingenuity was very apparent in that they could still produce an output despite the constraints.

Moving to Steady Camera

Korean drama shots were always in constant movement. The camera was steady for a couple of seconds and then moving in the next frame. The Filipino version of a moving camera happened only in one scene and then when it shifted to the next scene it was steady again, whereas for Koreans, the camera was always moving even if the character was sitting down or standing up.

House Arrest of Us used tracking shot, tilt up and tilt down, slow zoom, pan, and Zoom in their shots. In Episode 2, 14:43, Korics was assigned to go out and buy the needs of the family. In that episode, each family was given only one quarantine pass. After wearing his PPE, Korics went down the stairs to meet the rest of the family members. The shot began tracing the foot of Korics and tilt up to show Korics wearing his “battle gear”

(Figure. 75). The camera followed him as he went down the stairs. Then in the next angle, the camera was already facing Korics tilting up from his shoes to his head. In the same scene, the next frame focused on the reactions of the family members **(Figure.76)**. The director used slow pan to show their faces and body movements. In the next scene, Q showed her gown design to her mom Zena, Abigail (sister of Korics) and Berna (mother of Korics). In this scene, the camera was steady. There were no more movements.

Figure. 75

Camera movement

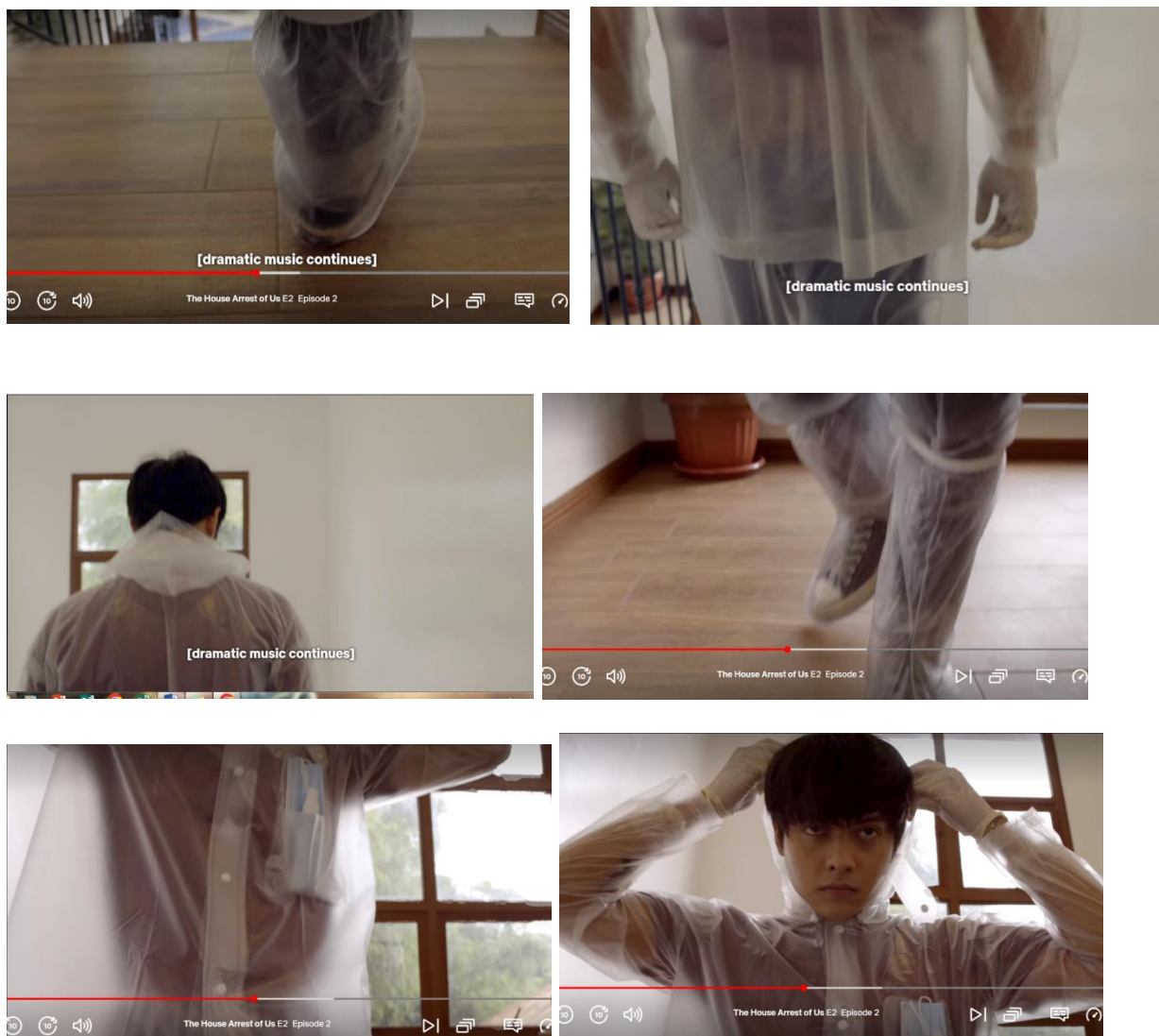


Figure 76.

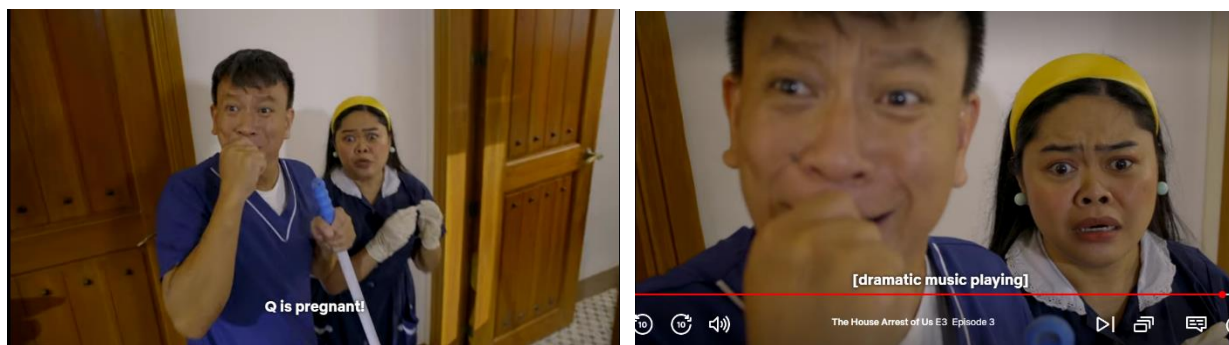
Reactions of the family members captured in panning



In Episode 3, 1:58, Yaya Marie and Mang Roger were cleaning the comfort room. While unloading the trash bin, Yaya Marie found a positive pregnancy kit. When Yaya Marie said, “Oh my God! Buntis si Q [Q is pregnant]” the camera zooms to a shot of their faces to magnify their reactions (Figure. 77).

Figure 77.

Zoom in to the faces of Yaya Marie and Roger



In Episode 11 20:51, Q, Korics, and the family members were trying on the gowns and “barongs” to be used for the wedding. A tracking shot using a dolly was used as the women were fitting their gowns and preparing, with the movement from the right showing Berna and Zena, then past the flower vase in the middle, then to the left showing Yaya Marie fixing Abigail’s gown (**Figure. 78**).

Figure 78.

Tracking shot



All in all, the Filipinos’ view preferred to use more steady shots compared to moving shots. They have moving shots which were used from time to time and confined to one scene only. The function of the moving camera, such as the pan, was used only to show a new subject on screen. It bore no meaning compared to the Korean dramas, as for example zooming not only as a magnifying tool, but as an aid to transition to a new scene or a flashback.

Few Creative Shots

Creative shots for the Koreans mean director of photography's ability to include shots which look special. It was not the usual MS, CU, or FS but it gave a fresh approach to the scene. One example which was mentioned in the previous section was Episode 1, 15:57 wherein while Atty. Woo was giving her argument, they receive the news that the plaintiff had died on the way to the hospital. With the use of dolly, a close up of Atty. Woo was mixed with a circular motion, which could be interpreted as her world spinning because of what she heard. This added movement shows the director innovating the shot, even if he could have just opted to use CU.

In *House Arrest of Us*, only three creative shots were observed. This shot shared a similarity with the Koreans' ASMR wherein the camera was placed inside an enclosed space showing the the character's CU.

In Episode 1 of *House Arrest of Us*, the camera was placed inside the trash bin. It was a low angle shot and the frame showed that Q was rummaging around the garbage can. She was looking for the can ring that she lost. The can ring served as her and Korics' engagement ring which was special to her (**Figure. 79**).

In the same episode, the camera was placed inside the refrigerator to show Q choosing what to drink and eat (**Figure. 80**).

In Episode 9, Korics and Q decided to elope because of their constantly chaotic family. The camera was placed inside Q's duffel bag, a low angle shot (**Figure. 81**). When Q closed the zipper of the bag, the frame went black and that signaled the end of that episode.

Figure 79.

Creative shot



Figure 80.

Creative shot



Figure 81.

Creative shot



The rest of the camera shots followed the default FS-MS-CU or ES-FS-MS-CU type. The camera movements were also limited. The director preferred steady shots probably because of space limitations, which, though only containing few creative shots is fine as long as the message of the scene was conveyed. However, the director could have explored more creative shots so as to good, well thought of visualization and execution of the scenes.

Creativity is relative, what is creative for the Koreans may not be for Filipinos and vice versa. However, when reading both texts, it can be revealed that there was a huge difference in terms of creative visualization of scenes. Where the Koreans went beyond what was the norm and experimented, the Filipinos opted to use what worked best with little experimentation, hesitant to try fresh approaches and strategies.

The disparity could perhaps be traced to budget requirements. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was produced using approximately P800 million pesos. *House Arrest of Us's* budget was unknown but it would be lesser than that. This budget gave Koreans the liberty to execute the scenes in whatever they liked because they had money whereas Filipinos had to stick with a limited budget and make use of what was at hand. As such, even if Filipinos wanted to produce globally competitive productions, they are unable to.

Minimal textual meaning

In a drama, a meaningful visual is shown into different ways - the position of the actors and objects and the kind of shots used in a scene. In HAOU, attaching meaning to the actions was not fully maximized, unlike Korean dramas where the mise-en-scene was rich with meaning. The Filipinos' approach to mise-en-scene still requires more practice and exposure. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the positions of the characters had meanings. It signified power dynamics and it could also be related to various socio-economic and political factors. In Korean dramas, even the atmosphere and objects in the

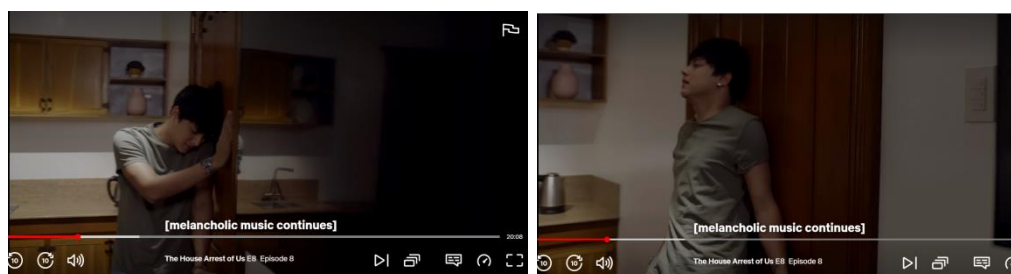
scene all bore meanings. In the case of *House Arrest of Us*, a closer look of the text is needed in order to extract hidden meanings. The meanings in this drama were obvious because it lacked images to trigger critical thinking. The meanings were extracted through dialogues and not on the position of the characters, objects or in the form of mise-en-scene.

For example, the Q's family was upper class while Korics' family was middle class. The Q's family, especially her mother Zena, belittled Korics' family because they could not afford expensive materials like Q's family. The approach to convey meaning was through dialogues unlike *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. According to Condez (2023), directors should "use objects to tell the story...." and not just rely on the dialogues. There were few instances in which a scene communicated meaning in *House Arrest of Us*.

In Episode 8 20:27, both Q and Korics were stressed because their families separated them out of fear that they both have the COVID virus. In order to visualize this, the shot was unstable (**Figure. 82**) showing Korics' tension, anxiety and perhaps fear that he may spread the disease. It also perhaps showed his loneliness because he was separated from Q. Other than this scene and based on the interpretation, embedded meanings were scarce in *House Arrest of Us*.

Figure 82.

Unstable shot



Below is Table.11 which depicts the comparison of Korean drama cinematography with the Filipino drama style.

Table 11.*Korean Drama Cinematography versus Filipino Drama*

KOREAN DRAMA	SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA	SUBTHEMES
MAIN THEME		MAIN THEME	
KoreanEye: Cinematography	Dynamic Shots	FilipinoView: Cinematography	Mixture of Shots, Angles, Principles of Composition
	Innovative Style		Moving to Steady Camera
	Creative Combination of shots, angles, and principles of composition		Few Creative Shots
	Meaningful Visuals		Minimal Textual Meaning
	Use of Speed of Motion		

Directing

Mishaps mean difficulty or setback. If there is a mishap, there is a high chance that it can still be fixed if the root of the problem is identified. The solutions are available as long as the difficulty is assessed. Directing in Filipino dramas was full of setbacks. There were visible problems on the visual execution of the story. Hence, it is theorized as Filipino Mishap: Directing.

The director of a drama has various functions. He is in charge of the over-all creative execution of the story. He is also in charge of ensuring that the actors' portrayal are aligned with the required story. The sub themes which emerged during the textual analysis include hysterical acting, unrealistic portrayal, dragging scenes, and scene continuity inconsistencies.

The style of directing of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was entirely different from *House Arrest of Us*. The Korean director seemed focused in executing his vision well. Hence, his visual storytelling, style and approaches were very apparent for the textual reader. In contrast, the Filipino director seemed to have missed important aspects of his functions. Despite the inadequacies though the Filipino director was still able to mount *House Arrest of Us* in an acceptable way that was loved by the audience.

Hysterical Acting

“An actor’s performance consists of visual elements (appearance, gestures, facial expressions) and sound (voice, effects)” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013). The acting style depends on what was being asked by the drama. In comedy acting, “it seldom strives for surface realism” (Ibid).

The actors’ hysterical acting in *House Arrest of Us* were very observable. Berna and Zena, the two mothers of the main characters, were locked in a power play, and right from the very beginning, showed animosity to each other. Both were too loud and boisterous, raising their voices all the time, even during a normal conversation, though perhaps it how their characters need to be. In the case of Berna, she was hysterical because she felt belittled by Zena. Zena, on the other hand, was hysterical because she needed to exert her power. Later on in the story they realized the significance of each other and became best of friends.

Hysterical acting is a trademark of Filipino dramas. Compared to Filipino dramas, Korean actors in dramas were more reserved when acting. Even when angry, they may shout but it does not border on hysteria. Filipino actors are more expressive and explosive, as can be seen from global survey, where it states that “Filipinos are the second most emotional people in the world and as well as the second most stressed” (Tan, 2019). Furthermore, Tan believes this is because of the “range of emotions expressed in...songs,

love songs, movies and television productions.” Thus, the Filipino style of hysterical acting depicted the emotional culture of the Filipinos, which may have been also influenced by Latin America’s telenovelas, which feature over-the top acting and fiery actors. While this hysterical acting is a trademark of Filipino dramas and can be justified, depending on the role, it may be unpleasant for the viewer when it looks unnatural and exaggerated.

Unrealistic Portrayal

If *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* showed realistic portrayal, *House Arrest of Us* demonstrated the opposite. There were three points which pointed to unrealistic portrayal in *House Arrest of Us*. First, in episode 1, Korics’ family went to Q’s to fulfil the Filipino pre-marriage cultural tradition of *Pamamanhikan*. The De Guzman family was introduced one and by one. The last to be introduced Korics’ baby brother or sister, which apparently was a doll (**Figure. 83**). The interpretation was that the writer wanted it to be comedic as the genre requires that was why a doll was instead of a real baby, or it could be because it was shot during the pandemic, it was dangerous to get an actual child actor. Whatever the reason for this creative decision, this unrealistic portrayal affected how the scene was executed.

Reality “is encoded by certain social codes that relate to appearance, speech, sound, and setting” (O’Donnell, 2017). Social codes must be represented realistically. In other words, social codes must align to the culture known to the viewers.

Two, still in Episode 1, someone was calling Korics through his mobile phone but what was appearing on screen was the phone dashboard not the cellphone's interface (**Figure. 84**) which indicated that he was talking to someone. It was not even revealed who he was talking too. In this situation, the director had a creative choice to use a split screen to make the scene more realistic, but he did not. It could also be that the director

considered this scene insignificant. If this was the case, it violated the principle of “everything you place on the frame must have a purpose”.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, when Atty Woo video called Lee Junho, the scene execution was realistic. The shots shown on screen were in sync with those shown on the phone, giving the viewers the impression that the call was real. In another scene, Atty. Woo called Lee Junho again and a split screen was used to show them talking to each other. Deciding on how to show these kinds of scenarios depends entirely on the creative choices of the director.

Three, in Episode 13, Q and Korics’ future older selves were shown talking in a restaurant (**Figure. 85**) They were facing the ocean and it was raining. The shot was LS, their faces were hidden but it was still them (their younger selves), with white hair fake voices, showing the effort that the production team did to make Q and Korics look old are insufficient. This scene was not even comedic. The scene wanted to convey the long and lasting love of Q and Korics. However, it was poorly executed.

Figure 83.

Unrealistic portrayal



Figure 84.

Unrealistic portrayals



Figure 85.

Unrealistic Portrayal



Dragging Scenes

Extraordinary Attorney Woo's pacing was fast, the shifting of the shots quick and the flow of the scenes exciting. However, in *House Arrest of Us*, there were some scenes that dragged on too long and were redundant.

In Episode 8, 20: 27, the scene was like a music video. A majority of the characters performed different kinds of "walling" to show their frustrations about their situations. Zena

walling in the shower was over-the-top: she was wearing her silk nightgown, crying non-stop and wailing and walling at the same time (**Figure. 86**). Individual characters performed their own manner of *walling*. The director wanted to show the emotions felt by people during the pandemic. His approach was to make it funny and hilarious by using *walling*. This action was normally used by actors and actresses in dramatic scenes when everything seemed so hopeless. They slid their backs on the wall or doors and slump on the floor and wail. The purpose of the scene was to show a parody. However, if these scenes were removed, there would be no effect to the plot or the character's journeys. The director's primary goal was to make the audience laugh but the scene was too long and redundant, the execution poor. There could have been better ways to visualize the exasperation of the characters.

In Episode 5, 12:13, there was a dance battle between the men and women in the house (**Figure. 87**). This showdown was meant to determine who was sexier and yummier: Q and Korics. Earlier, the couple had jealousy issues with each other that led them to dance. The dance battle consumed a lot of time in the episode (Figure. 86). In Filipino films, there were parts of the scenes where a song and dance number were inserted, similar to Bollywood movies in which a huge portion of the film was dedicated to singing and dancing.

Figure 86.

Dragging scene

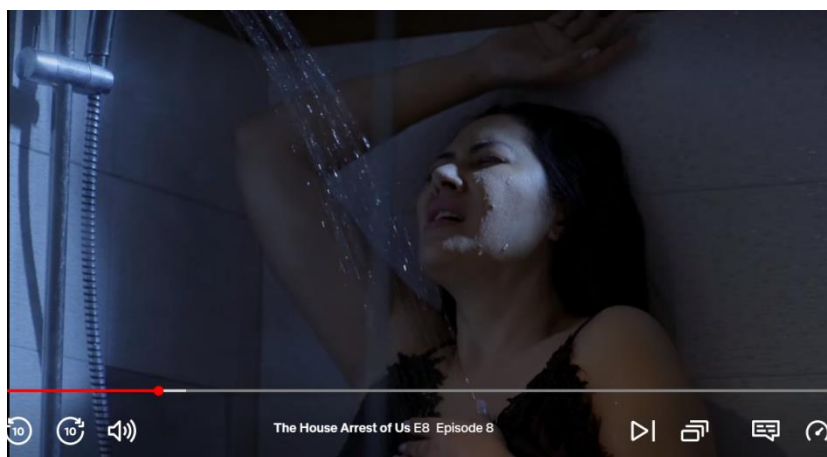


Figure 87.

Dragging scene.



In the movie *Walang Matigas na Tinapay sa Mainit na Kape* (1994) which starred *Fernando Poe Jr. and Judy Ann Santos*, there was a scene where FPJ sang together with Juday, with back up dancers behind them. This style could be traced all the way back to old movies produced by Sampaguita Pictures in the early days of cinema. For serial dramas, this approach was new. While the characters dancing was entertaining, the purpose of the scene was shallow and did not contribute to the goal of the plot points. Again, this scene could be removed without ruining the entire story and improve the story visually. While the director has the prerogative to do what he prefers in his drama, a

conscious effort must be made in determining which scene works and which scenes do not. Scenes that may look funny may not contribute to plot development.

Overall, Filipinos have their own directing style compared to the Koreans. Koreans are fast and quick while Filipinos prefer slow and irrelevant scenes for entertainment purposes.

Inconsistency in the Scene Continuity

“Shooting out of a scene requires careful attention to detail to ensure that all elements of a scene remain consistent from shot to shot” (Mamer, 2014). One of the types of continuity is comprised of the props, costumes, hair, and make up. The director, in collaboration with the script supervisor, should ensure the consistency of these elements all throughout the shoot.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, continuity issues were not observed while in *House Arrest of Us*, there were some issues detected.

In Episodes 8 and 9 there were continuity issues in Papawan, Berna, and Papatu's wardrobe. In Episode 8, when Berna and Papawan were talking in the room about their children, Berna was wearing a red dress while Papawa was wearing a striped yellow *sando* or undershirt (**Figure. 88**). These events were assumed to have happened in one night because of the progression of the scene. In the next frame, when Papawan went down the kitchen, he was no longer wearing striped, yellow *sando* but a grey one(**Figure.89**). Berna, on the other hand, was wearing a blue dress in the same scene (**Figure.90**). Meanwhile, Papatu, who was also in the scene, was wearing a citrus-colored shirt.

(**Figure. 90**).

In Episode 9, a continuation of the events in Episode 8, when Berna was back in her room from the kitchen, she was wearing red again while Papatu was wearing a blue

shirt instead of the citrus-colored shirt **(Figure. 91)**. There was a clear continuity and consistency problem in continuous scenes.

In Episode 11, the women were changing into their gowns. There was a wedding portrait on the right side of the frame. The picture was not Zena and Sylver, the fictional owners of the house **(Figure.92)**. It looked like a picture of another couple, perhaps the real owners of the house. The director and the script supervisor failed to remove the wedding photo in this room.

Mistakes in the continuity have an effect to the viewer. There will be assumptions regarding the authenticity of the drama they were viewing, raising questions of whether it was produced hurriedly. There will also be confusion as to the flow of the events. While not all viewers could spot the differences quickly, this is not a reason for the production team to take these matters for granted.

Figure 88.

Continuity Issues

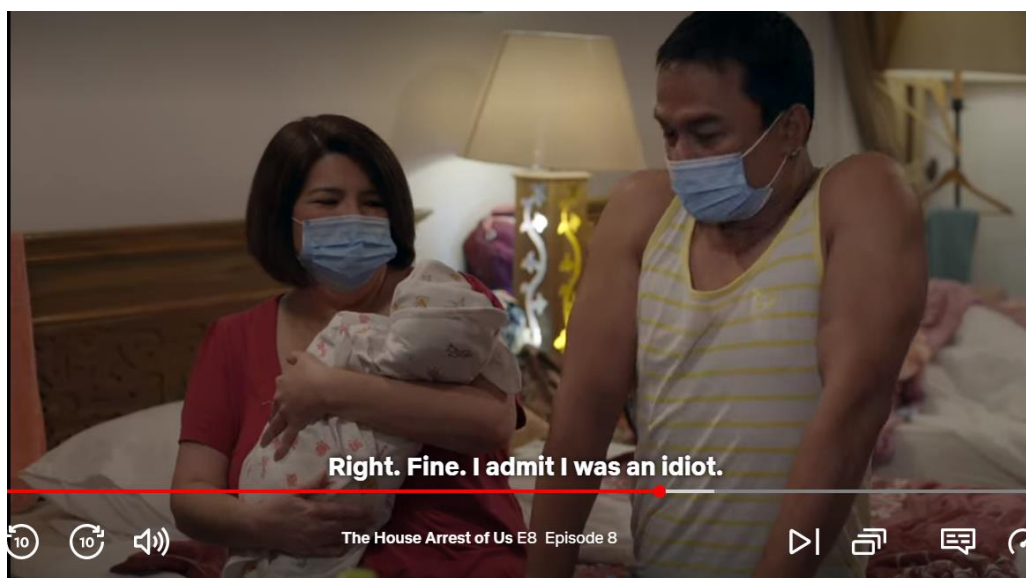


Figure 89.

Continuity Issues

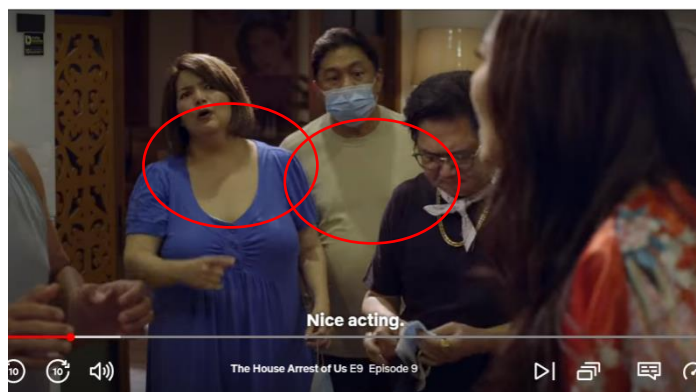


Figure 90.

Continuity Issues



Figure 91.

Continuity Issues



Below is **Table 12** which shows the comparison between the directing of Korean drama versus Filipino drama.

Table 12.

Korean Drama Directing Compared to Filipino Drama

KOREAN DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Vision: John Directing	Visual Storytelling	Filipino Mishap: Directing	Hysterical Acting
	Realistic Style		Unrealistic Portrayal
	Explore Creative Approaches		Dragging Scenes
			Inconsistency in the Scene Continuity

Editing

Combine means to put together two or more elements. The Filipino Combine means the manner in which Filipinos put together the frames in order to yield meaning. When the elements are combined together, they achieve their purpose aesthetically. A

drama will not be able to convey its meaning if it is raw and unedited, it will just be series of shots without any meaning at all.

The Koreans and Filipinos share similarities in terms of using *Cut* when they join the frames together. However, they differ in terms of achieving meaning through color correction and color grading. The Filipinos have an editing style which manipulates the tempo - either fast forward or rewind.

Basic Editing

In *House Arrest of Us*, the editing was simple yet a little stylish. Similar to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, where frames were joined using cut, *House Arrest of Us* also did the same. Cut was the most common and simplest form of joining. A majority of the episodes used this transition to move from one scene to the other. However, there were cases where the editor also utilized other transitions from his toolbox.

In Episode 1, 29:32, the transition used was a flicker. Ideally, a flicker is used if there is environmental instability. The editor used the technique *flicker between camera shot*. In Episode 1, the starting point was the sit-down Q and Korics' interview in a Pre-cana seminar then a flicker transition was used to move to a flashback scene where Korics proposed to Q using a can ring (**Figure. 92**). The use of flicker may bring a "visually engaging viewing experience" for the viewer.

Cross fade was used in Episode 11 when the characters were changing into their gowns and barongs for the make-believe wedding (**Figure. 93**). Cross fade or popularly known as cross dissolve happens when "one scene fades into the next, and the two images briefly overlap (Adobe, 2023). It is said that it is the earliest special form of special effect. The purpose of cross fades during the early days was to "show the passage of time, create a montage-like-effect, or provide a gentle transition from one scene to the

next” (Ibid). In *House Arrest of Us*, it satisfied two purposes of using the cross-fade: passage of time and creating a montage-like-effect.

In Episode 11, Korics’ family suffered a tragedy with Korics’ grandfather’s Covid-19 related death. During the *e-lamay* (online funeral), each family member gave their eulogy. After each eulogy, the fade out to black transition (**Figure.94**) was used. Fade out means “a shot gradually darkens the end of a shot to black”.

The Filipino editor was also experimental and tried to use other approaches in transitions and visualizations of scenes. In Episode 8, the camera zooms in to Korics’ face then pans to the right in a blank space to transition to Q (**Figure. 95**), a familiar approach that can also be seen in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. The face of the character was used as the starting point of the transition. A camera movement such as pan was combined with the shot of the character lead’s face to achieve this effect.

In the same episode, the editor used video mosaic (**Figure. 96**) to show everyone’s *walling* approaches. It was a form of summary of all their reactions, and these were shown in one frame using the video mosaics. A video mosaic “uses small videos to create its image” (Adobe, 2023). This video effect is “similar to making a video collage; it’s just larger and more intricate” (Ibid). This was commonly used in music videos, not dramas.

The Filipino combined a mixture of basic editing with a little twist. Unlike the Koreans who used the common transitions of cut and fade out, the Filipinos were more adventurous because they used cross dissolves and flicker. Koreans do not rely on their transitions, they use blank spaces, faces, and back of the heads of the characters to transition. They used innovative techniques to produce a visually engaging output. The Filipinos, on the other hand, were also experimental, but inconsistent in this aspect. They used it in one or two scenes, while Atty. Woo and other dramas used this technique in several of their scenes.

Figure 92.

Flicker Transition

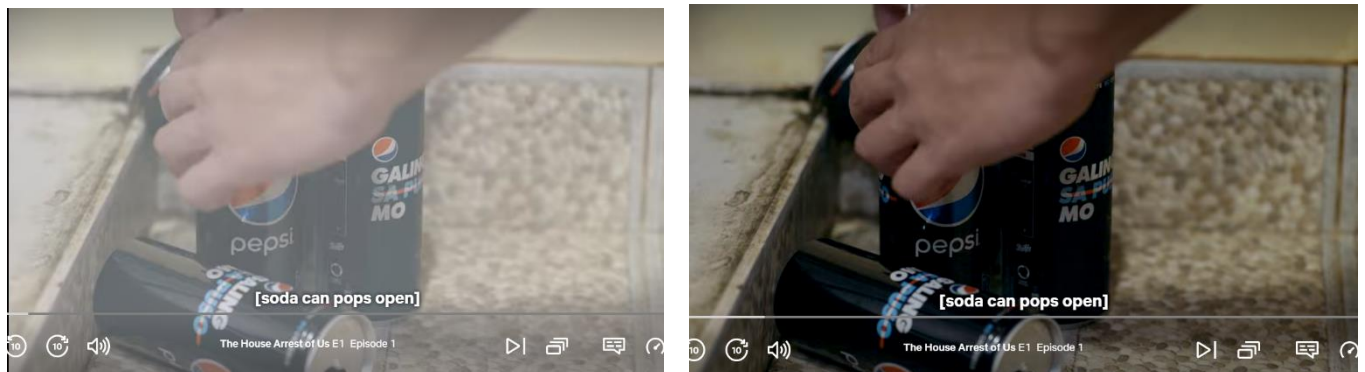


Figure 93.

Cross fade



Figure 94.

Fade out to black

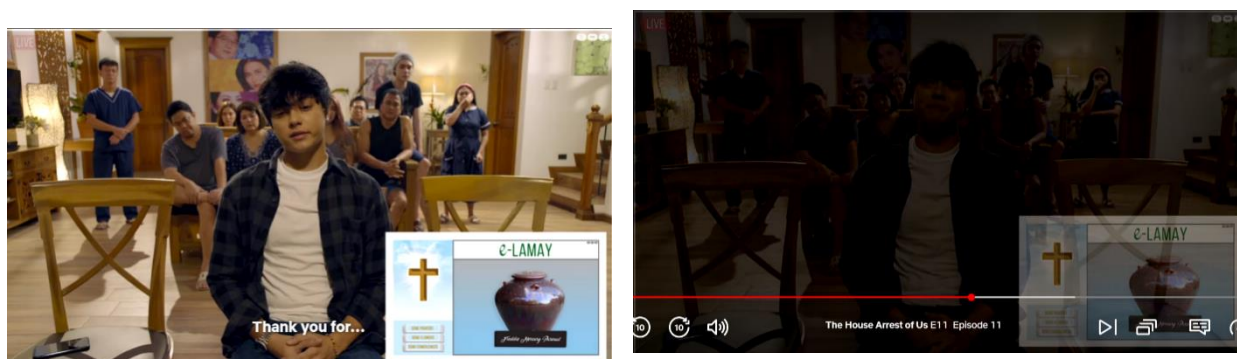




Figure 95.

Zoom in transition



Figure 96.

Video Mosaic



Editing Tempo

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the editing tempo was normal for almost all of the scenes. However, in *House Arrest of Us*, the editor used varying editing tempos such as fast forward or rewind or simply a fast movement.

In Episode 1 3:18, the editor used a fast shifting of the shot and showed the characters' close-up reactions in response to the *Barangay Tanod's* "*Bawal Lumabas*" announcement.

In Episode 2, 1:23, Zena was angry at Korics because Sylver passed out. He was overstressed because Korics bought a land in the province, and he assumed that he would take away Q after they got married. The editor used slomo or slow motion, instead of a simple close up shot, to highlight Zena's wailing which helped the viewer feel the emotions during the scene. The slomo gave an effect not normally seen in a simple shot. The speed of the motion presented onscreen depends on the relation between the rate at which the film was shot and the rate of projection. In the previous section, slomo, in the

context of Koreans, was included in the cinematography. However, for Filipinos, this was included in the editing section, because the purpose of the slomo can be attributed to the job of the editor.

In Episode 6, 13:23, Zena was seen running away from Sylver. The context was Zena was angry because Sylver wanted to close some of Sylvester Salon's branches. Zena's character was a *matapobre* or greedy and so she told Sylver that she did not want to live in poverty. The editor used fast forward technique to show the speed of Zena trying to get away, combined with a funny sound effect, achieving the purpose of making it humorous.

In Episode 10, 5:41, Yaya Marie made a recap of what happened earlier when Q and Korics were not around. The context was the two families assisted Zena and Sylver with a new business approach in their salon chains. They tried vlogging, online selling, and video production, which helped them get 100,000 subscribers on their *Yotube Channel*. Since Q and Korics were upstairs and selling online, they were not able to witness what was happening. When Yaya Marie made a recap, the editor used the fast forward technique in the flashback, showing what was happening when Q and Korics were away.

House Arrest of Us was classified as romantic comedy. Changing the editing tempo enhanced the comedic effect which the narrative wanted to achieve, a technique that will not work if applied to a more serious genre. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was also a hybrid of comedy, romance, and legal drama. However, the production team opted not to use this approach. The Filipinos were more playful while the Koreans were the more serious type. Their production behaviors were reflected in their own respective creative outputs.

Below is **Table. 13** which shows Korean drama's Editing versus Filipino drama.

Table 13.

Korean Drama Editing Compared with Filipino Drama

KOREAN DRAMA		SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA		SUBTHEMES
MAIN THEME			MAIN THEME		
Korean Directing	Connect:	Meaningful Use of Colors	Filipino Editing	Combine:	Basic Editing
		“Common Join” Utilization			Editing Tempo Changes

Production Design

Aesthetic means “the appreciation of beauty”. The Filipino aesthetic refers to the appreciation of Filipinos of beauty in all forms and incorporating it into their design. Beauty could refer to style, wardrobe, objects and even spaces. Filipinos have different ways of valuing beauty, reflected in the production design. The resourcefulness of Filipino designers was an added value to the aesthetics.

In terms of production design, Filipinos and Koreans were similar in achieving alignment of character’s personality to their wardrobe. However, they differ in terms of extending the alignment into the spaces occupied by the characters. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the bedrooms of the characters were aligned to their personalities, while in *House Arrest of Us*, the rooms did not. There were just some additional items in the rooms such as bags, and picture frames, with no sense of identity in the spaces. The Koreans were also very particular with the alignment of color schemes from the clothes to the sets. There was always a unifying color that bound everything together. Filipinos, on the other hand, were observed to be fond of “*halo halo*” in terms of design choice.

Trendy Style

Filipinos love trendy styles and design. *Team Kahoy*, *Team Puti*, or *Team Gubat* are contemporary terms used to describe the design of a house. *House Arrest of Us* adopted the *Team Kahoy* design in choosing the setting of the story (**Figure. 97**). *Team Kahoy* refers to “rustic aesthetic through lovely wooden pieces and details” (Layug, 2021). The plot unfolded around Q, Sylver and Zena’s house. The wood was chocolate brown, with gold trimmings on some furniture, green plants and flowers adorning the place. The house was generally wood style from the walls, floors, doors, and furniture. Wood’s characteristics are “hard, grain, and color” (Richard, 2020). *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* also used wood as its unifying motif, and it was interpreted that the design was attributed to Atty.Woo because she had a strong personality despite her disability. For *House Arrest of Us*, the wood design could also be attributed to the strength of the family members while facing the challenges of a pandemic and of their personal issues. Everyone remained steadfast in facing their difficult circumstances.

Wood also symbolized growth. Growth was evident in Q and Korics. Growth for Q meant thinking ahead and laying out plans for the future, although she failed to include her partner and his own dreams. Korics’ growth came in later in the episode when he decided to be open minded and accept the things he cannot control. He also tried to understand the choices Q made.

Wood likewise symbolized warmth and nurturing. Filipinos are very family oriented, with warmth and nurturing occurring within the family. When everything seems blurry and cold, the family will find a way to show warmth. In the drama, Q and Korics’ families served as their source of love and inspiration. Their family’s welfare were always on top of their priorities. Q was concerned about keeping their family business afloat while Korics was

always looking out for his younger siblings. Despite the unconventional family set up of Korics, his parents nurtured him with values and good attitude. He grew into a fine but imperfect young man.

The symbolisms may not align with the real purpose of the production designer for the choice of setting. Perhaps the house was chosen because of its aesthetics, and it was trendy. However, a closer look of the design will reveal a connection to the lives of the characters.

Figure 97.

Wood Style



Symbolic Objects and Spaces

The aim of the production designer was to create the film's settings. There were several elements which comprise production design, "they are categorized under the general heading of décor which includes props, makeup, and any other element that is part of the physical content of the frame" (Mamer, 2014).

In *House Arrest of Us*, a symbolic object and space were identified. The Korics De Guzman's family rides an outdated van (**Figure. 98**) that sometimes had mechanical trouble but which enabled them to travel together. It became a symbol of their economic standing in society: Korics' family was not well off. When they went to Q's house for the *pamamanhikan* they wore their societal status on their sleeves. Zena, who had a *matapobre* or greedy attitude, looked down on Korics' family. When they arrived in the house, the van was parked prominently in front of the Capili's big house. The van seemed as out of place as the De Guzman family, showing how the poor will always look like they do not belong with the rich.

The interior of the Capilis' house had gold accents in furniture and decorations (**Figure. 97**). Everything inside the house seemed expensive. Zena even emphasized this abundance of money .

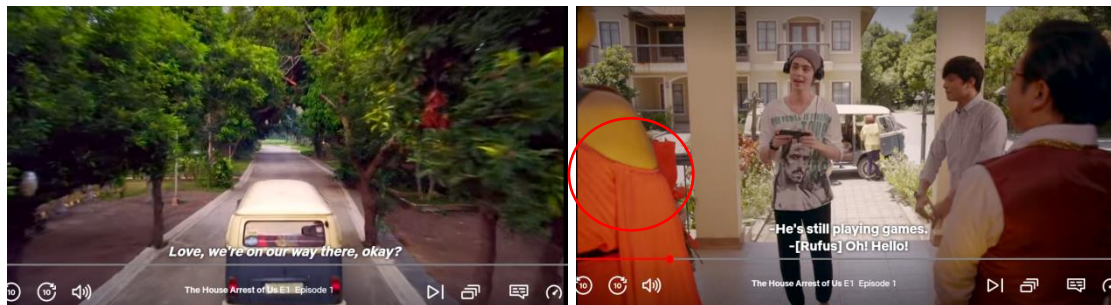
“The couch that you are sitting is from Italy. The throw pillows are from Dubai. Vases and flowers from Czechoslovakia. Should I get the vase from ancient china?”

The van and the house spoke of the positionality of the characters. Positionality refers to “how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society” (The University of British Columbia, 2023). Those in the dominant group have the privilege and access like in the case of the Capilis. They have the purchasing power to buy whatever they like. The subservient group, the De Guzmans, does not have a choice but to make do with what is available. There was thus a clash between the dominant and the subservient group in the drama. This was depicted clearly during the *Pamamanhikan* in which the Capilis emphasized their high position in the society and deliberately relegated the De Guzmans in the lowest tier. The pandemic was the key instrument in creating balance between the two groups, with everyone on equal footing because of

COVID. The pandemic did not play favorites. The dominant group swallowed their pride and was left with no choice but to collaborate with the subservient group. In the end, it was possible for the two groups to unite and achieve equality.

Figure 98.

Symbolic Object



Costume Alignment to Character's Personality

Costumes can become motifs, enhancing characterization and tracing changes in attitude.” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013). Similar to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, *House Arrest of Us* also aligned the costume of the characters to their personality and circumstances.

Korics wore plaid polos, white inside shirt, and pants consistently (**Figure. 99**). A plaid design showed patterns, giving him an impression of beautiful chaos, a certain level of complexity. Koric's complexities stemmed from unresolved insecurities. A film director's income was dependent on the movie's performance and sponsors, which meant he lacked a steady stream of income, contributing to his insecurity when compared to Q's privilege. In the case of Q, she could go to London and live a good life. Should Q leave for London, he will be left behind in the Philippines continuing his dreams, which did not sit well with him. He thought Q did not trust him enough to succeed. This, againm can be traced to his positionality in society. As the eldest in the family, he was the bread winner, expected to provide his parents and his siblings. He may fail to deliver on his obligations sometimes, but to his parents and siblings, he was the best son and brother.

[Papawan]: “In all the struggles we’ve been through, you’re always there to support our family. So now, let us be there for you.”

In the end, Korics was able to resolve these internal and external conflicts and so his marriage with Q continued as planned.

On the other hand, Q’s choice of colors were light and pastels (**Figure. 100**). She was also fond of crop tops and linen pants or slacks, which spoke of her bubbly and cheerful personality and stylish and trendy disposition. Q was privileged to live a good life because she had economic freedom, and so she had no reason to be sad and blue.

In Episodes 12 and 13, Q was wearing yellow crop top and white linen pants, a look that was both “citrusy” and light. Her optimism and positivity showed despite the fact that her relationship with Korics was tested in that episode. Up to the last minute, she continued to hold on to what was left of her and Korics, even if Korics was too focused on his own feelings and emotions that he was not able to feel Q’s heavy burden. She gave Korics one last chance and tried to stop him. Her optimism never waned until the last minute, as she says, “If you take one more step away from me. I’ll take that as a yes.”

Papawan or Rudy was Korics’ birth father. But *Papawan* and Berna separated leaving Berna with Korics, Abigail, and Rufus. *Papatu* or Yam was Berna’s second husband and he stood by her and the kids while *Papawan* was away. The default wardrobe of *Papawan* was sando and shorts (**Figure. 101**), which spoke of his happy-go-lucky, carefree and independent attitude. However, he had a shocking secret he had kept from his family: he was a bold star who appeared in bold (pornographic or erotic) films which explained his wardrobe.

Sylver was the owner of Sylvester Salon and Q’s father. His basic attire was polo shirt, thick gold necklace, and scarf tied like a ribbon on his neck (**Figure. 102**). While the

rest of the male characters dressed simply, he was the only one who wore thick gold necklace and scarf, dressed in a classy and special way. The production designer perhaps wanted him to stand out from the other men in the house, distinguished enough to stand out as the owner of the house. His thick gold necklace showed that he held the power and the money.

Rufus was Korics' younger brother, a *Mobile Legends* addict. He dressed in simple shorts, beanie, and headphones (**Figure. 103**), a typical gamer's attire. His headphones not only helped him connect to his teammates and hear the game sounds, but also served as his refuge from the chaos surrounding him. He was not used to talking so much, expressing his feelings face-to-face instead by using Mobile Legends jargon as statements, relating it to the situations in front of him.

All in all, *House Arrest of Us* ensured that the costume design aligned with the personality and situations of the characters. Just like *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, costumes spoke volumes about the characters. The alignment of their costumes to their personalities gave their actions and decisions more meaning.

Figure 99.

Wardrobe of Korics





Figure 100.

Wardrobe of Q



Figure 101.

Wardrobe of Papawan



Figure 102.

Wardrobe of Sylver

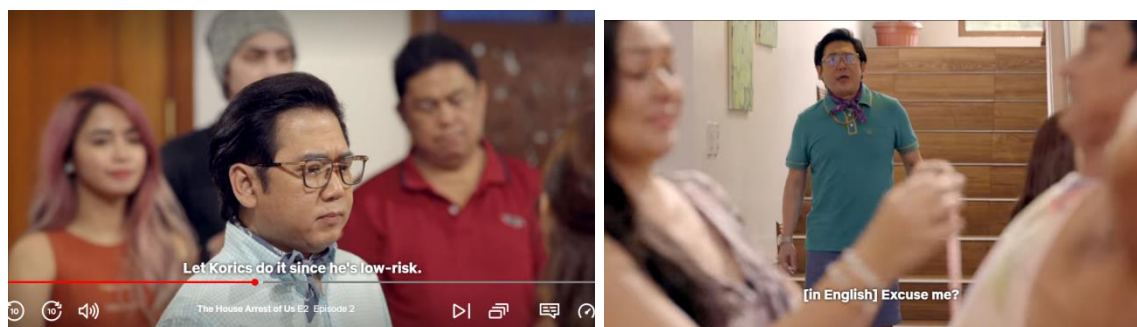
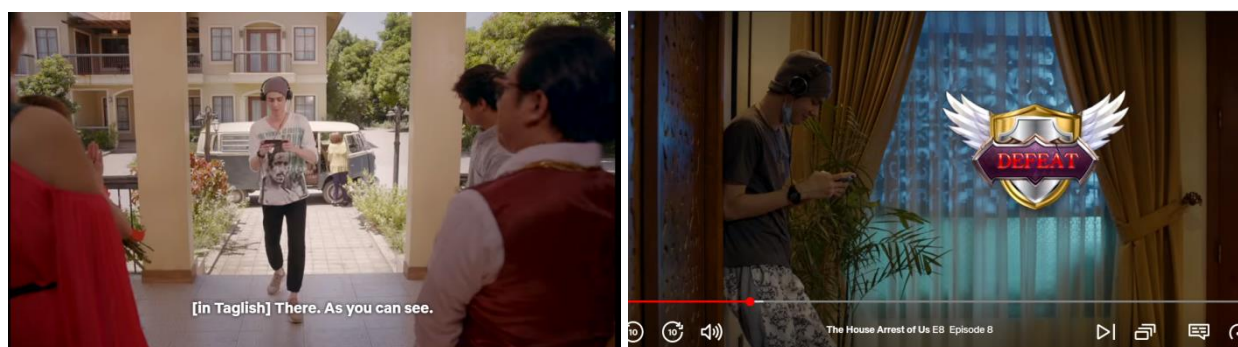


Figure 103.

Wardrobe of Rufus



Limited Creative Space

The setting of *House Arrest of Us* was limited to Q's house. The production team maximized the different parts of the house as the setting for various scenes. The story was situated during the COVID-19 lockdown, justifying the choice of setting. This is broken only in Episode 13 when there was an outside location, a restaurant overlooking the sea. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* there were several locations in all 16 episodes whereas *House Arrest of Us* only had two locations in all the 13 episodes. The huge disparity was observable. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*'s design team had the liberty to experiment and put together several designs while *House Arrest of Us* once again made use of what was available. The root of this problem could again be traced to budgetary allocations. *House Arrest of Us* wrote its script to match the setting. If *House Arrest of Us*

had more money to spend, they would have been able to invest in VFX or visual effects for new locations, even if there was pandemic, similar to what *Vincenzo* did. *Vincenzo* (2020) was unable to shoot its scenes in Italy due to pandemic restrictions. As such, the production team resorted to VFX and recreated Italy for the shoots. VFX use would have made *House Arrest of Us* expand on the character backstories and exhaust plot lines and shoot outside the house because there would have been liberty to adjust. The wedding could have been shot in a scenic location using VFX, for example. However, budget constraints and pandemic protocols and restrictions limited what the *House Arrest of Us* production team could do. Hence, there was limited space for creativity, resulting in a slight setback for the production team.

Below is **Table. 14** which depicts Korean drama production design versus Filipino drama.

Table 14.

Korean Drama Production Design Compared with Filipino Drama

KOREAN DRAMA	SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA	SUBTHEMES
MAIN THEME		MAIN THEME	
Korea	Apparent Color	Filipino	Aesthetic: Trendy Style
Look:	Scheme	Production Design	
Production Design			
	Alignment of Character and Design		Symbolic Objects and Spaces
	Consistent Use of the Over-all Production Design Theme		Costume Alignment to Character's Personality
			Limited Creative Space

Lighting

Flicker means “shine unsteadily”. There is light that shines but is unsteady and unstable, fitting the description of the Filipino flicker. It is the Filipino’s brand of illuminating the drama sets, using a mixture of light sources. However, this style, as Filipinos use them, needs further polishing so that the shine will be steady and stable.

The Koreans in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* utilized a variety of light sources such as the key light and fill light combined with natural light. They also used backlight extensively to illuminate the scenes. Cool and warm colors were frequently used, especially orange. Yoo In Sik, the director, has a penchant for orange. He normally used this in his other dramas, such as in *Dr. Romantic Series and Vagabond*. He wanted to exude warmth in his creative pieces. In *House Arrest of Us*, it was mostly artificial lights because a majority of the scenes were shot inside the house. The final look of the photographic image was glossy and lit in yellow, a result of the production team utilizing the yellow lights already present in the setting and perhaps combining it with white light. However, *House Arrest of Us* had some lighting system mistakes that could be corrected and improved if detected earlier. Before discussing the mishaps, the sub themes will be discussed first.

Mixtures of sources and colors

House Arrest of Us used a combination of artificial and natural light. They used fill and key lights to illuminate the setting. However, in a majority of the scenes, the production team maximized the use of the available yellow light installed in the house (**Figure. 104**). In some scenes, which required them to shoot outside of the interior setting, natural light was used and combined with artificial light.

The color palette observable in the drama was yellow, yellow orange and blue and white. One flashback scene used red lighting. Like the Koreans, they also used a mixture of warm and cool colors.

The yellow lights may symbolize sunshine, happiness, and warmth. The story was about Q and Korics' engagement during the pandemic, with events unfolding inside the house. The young couple's happiness was exuded through yellow light because their engagement brought sunshine in their lives. The yellow and yellow orange lighting bounced on the wood interiors of the house (**Figure. 105**). It made the setting bright and full of life.

The yellow light may also symbolize courage. For the Japanese, yellow represented courage. In the drama, it could be translated as courage in the face of problems, and uncertainties brought about by the pandemic.

To show nighttime, the blue light combined with white light was used. In Episode 7,4:45, Korics approached Q in the kitchen and explained to her that nothing happened when he checked-in in the hotel. The lighting was blue and a mixture of white (**Figure. 106**). However, the blue also signified the characters' emotions because of the lock down. They were restricted from going out and doing things which made them happy. There were many challenges that tested their faith and strength. Abigail got pregnant out of wedlock. Some of the branches of Sylvester Salon were in danger of being closed. Korics lost his job because film productions were halted due to the pandemic. Their family members were in constant chaos and Korics and Q's relationship were on the rocks. The many conflicts were shown through the blue lighting.

In Episode 13, 10:34, the blue lighting (**Figure. 107**) was also used in showing Q and Korics' future. Blue, in this scene, did not indicate loneliness or sadness, but the characters in the twilight of their years. The scene was also symbolic because of the rain. Korics was holding an umbrella for Q. The rain represented the obstacles and setbacks they encountered in their married life, with Korics serving as Q's umbrella, shielding her from the effects and pain. The over-all color palette of this scene was blue and grayish

and emitted a somber atmosphere. Furthermore, the scene could be interpreted as the importance of having someone so that one can survive it all.

“Red has connotations of danger because of people’s inherited instinctual fear of blood and behavioural characteristics learnt in everyday life” (The Young Journalists Academy, 2023). It was likewise associated to evil and fire.

In Episode 7, 24:16, Korics was drunk and ended up in a motel room with another woman. He and Q had broken up that day and he could not manage the stress. He barely remembered how he ended up in the motel. He assured Q that nothing happened between him and the woman. The lighting of the hotel room was red (**Figure. 108**). The situation spelled danger as Korics’ one night in that hotel cause a rift between him and Q.

Figure 104.

Yellow light and white light

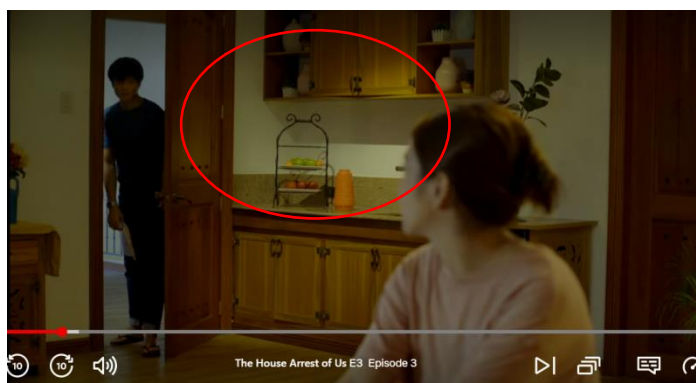
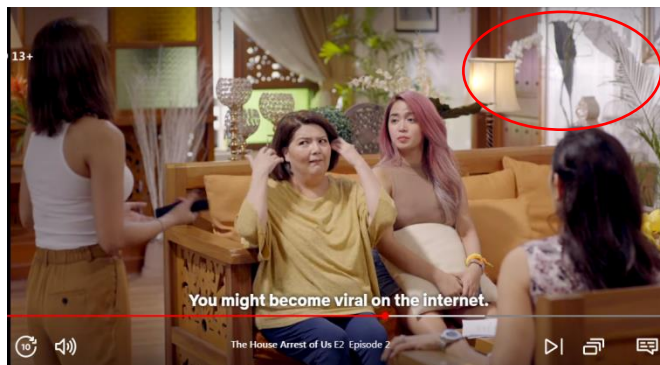




Figure 105.

Blue and White light

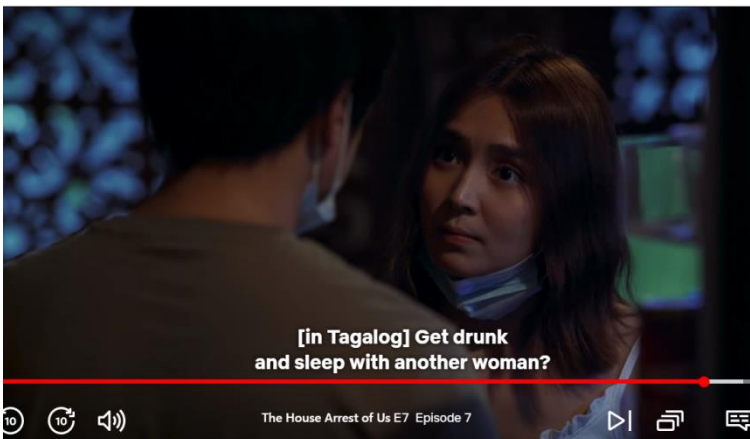


Figure 106.

Blue and White light

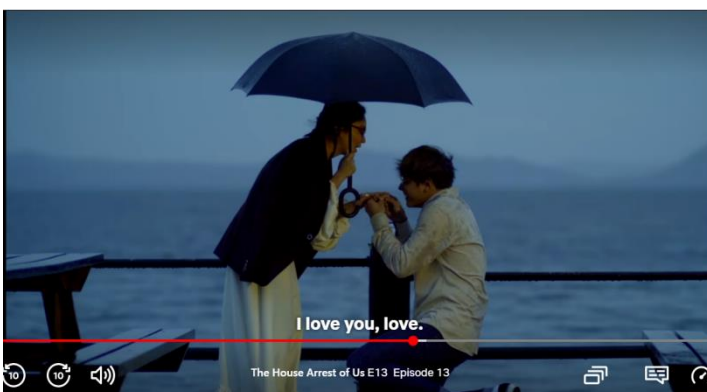
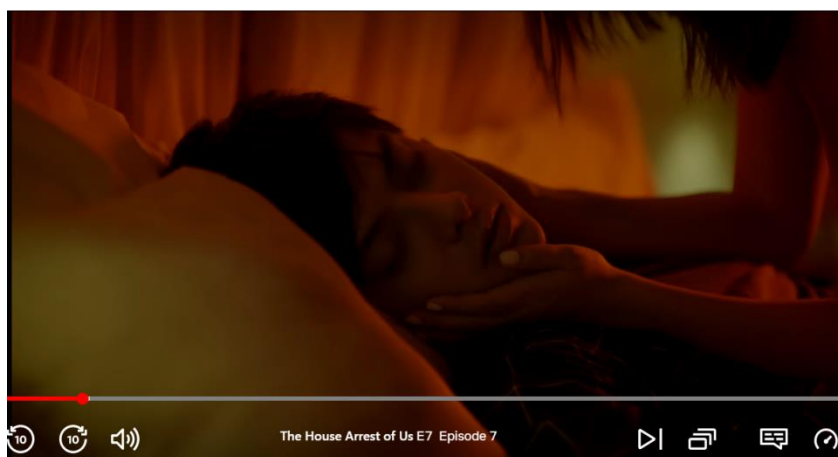


Figure 107

Red light



Lighting Mishaps

A flicker of light is unsteady. In relation to *House Arrest of Us*, the instability is due to mishaps in the lighting system. The primary principle in lighting was to kill the shadows unless the scripts ask for it like in *Film Noir*. The logic behind the three-point lighting technique – fill light, key light, and back light was illuminating the scene as much as possible and to eliminate the shadows of objects and characters. By doing so, the photographic image is assured to have the best quality. “Proper film lighting techniques are essential in creating stylized and natural-looking film scenes” Depew (2022) pointed out.

In Episode 1, Korics introduced his siblings to Zena and Sylver. While it is the going on, the key or fill light set up of the production team reflected on Zena’s face (**Figure. 108**). In short, the light did not blend well, reflecting on the character’s face.

Shadows were also visible on the wall when Q and Korics were about to kiss and Sylver and Zena almost caught them in Episode 2 (**Figure. 109**). The time in that scene was nighttime. The fill light is supposed to “remove the dark, shadowy areas that the key light creates” (Ibid). It is less intense and usually positioned opposite the direction of the key light. Depew (2022) suggested that “it is advisable to place it a little further and/or

diffuse it with a reflector to create softer light that spreads out evenly”. It is particularly important in lighting to emphasize the depth and dimensions of the objects on screen so that it may not look flat. There was a similar problem in Episode 3, where Sylver’s shadow was reflected on the wall while he and Korics were talking (**Figure 110**).

The mishaps were minor but since the series was produced by a well-known production company these should have been addressed and corrected.

Figure 108.

Reflection of light



Figure 109.

Shadow

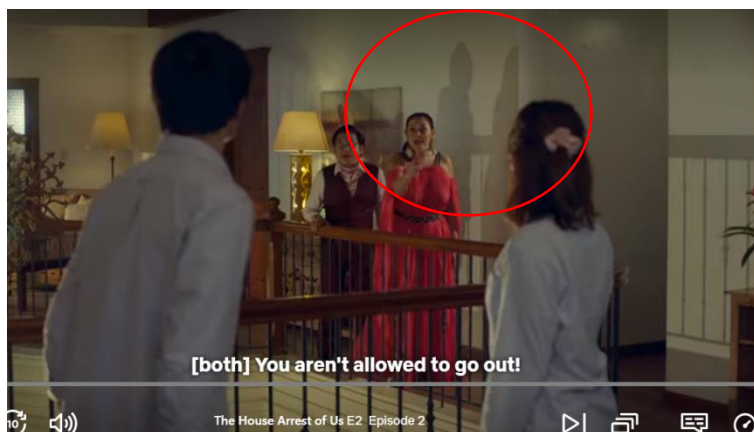
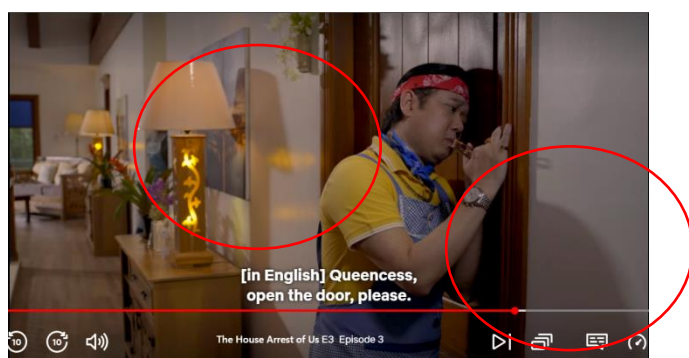


Figure 110.

Shadow



Below is **Table. 15** which depicts the Korean drama lighting versus Filipino drama.

Table 15.

Korean Drama Lighting Compared with Filipino Drama

KOREAN DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Mood: Lighting	Communicates the scene's mood.	Filipino Flicker: Lighting	Mixtures of sources and colors
	Variety Light Sources		Lighting Mishaps
	Mixture of Range of Colors		

Graphics Design

In terms of Graphics design, the Koreans and Filipinos shared similarities in using animated graphics for visual support. Although Filipinos used animated graphics, the quality of the Koreans' output was better. As for visual support, Koreans and Filipinos have different purposes. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* maximized the use of graphic design to support the various information in the drama such as legal explanations and facts about whales. For *House Arrest of Us*, graphics were used as bumpers, series titles, and

episode titles. The huge difference was on the use of VFX or visual effects. It was reported and mentioned in this dissertation that the huge portion of the budget of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was spent on visual effects. This explained the superior quality of the VFX used.

Graphics design in the context of the Filipinos is theorized as Filipino Artistry. It refers to the “creative skill or ability” of the Filipinos in the area of Graphics Design. The Filipinos transform their imagination into graphics in a unique way. It was simple but it was able to satisfy its purpose. They also have the ability to craft graphics and even create interfaces which mirror the actual design.

Creative Fonts

“Fonts are not just letters, they are visual elements that convey meaning and emotion” (Linkedin, 2023).

The font used to introduce the characters in the introduction video exudes a playful aura (**Figure. 111**). It used sans serif typeface, the style bold. The color was pink for the actors’ real names and blue for their character names. Perhaps, it used pink to represent Q and blue for Korics, since the series was focused on these two main leads.

The series title’s text was colored pink (**Figure 112**). A heart design was inserted in the letter O of the word house. The style was bold. The episode number and title were simple, white, in capital letters, using sans serif typeface (**Figure 113**). The episode title appeared neutral, with no alignment to the episode theme.

The font colors were consistent with the over-all color theme of the series which were pink and blue.

“Different genres have different expectations and conventions for fonts” (Ibid). *House Arrest Of Us*’s genre was comedy and so the font was bright, playful, colourful and

quirky. When choosing fonts, the theme and message of the text should be considered so that alignment will be achieved.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the font was not as colourful even if the genre was hybrid of comedy, romance, and legal unlike that of *House Arrest of Us*. It used a grey, sans serif typeface, bold, written in Hangeul. This move balanced the over-all look of the graphics. The genre was a mix of light and serious and so there was also a need to adjust the appearance of the font. The font of the episode titles varied, depending on the episode theme. For example, in Episode 2, the story was about a wardrobe malfunction in a wedding, so the title card font was a combination of pink written in script with words written like a wedding invitation; the case number and episode title were white, bold, and playful.

Figure 111.

Fonts exude playful Aura



Figure 112.

Series Title



Figure 113.

Episode number and title



Animated Graphics

Both Korean and Filipino drama adopted animated graphics. However, there were differences on how it was presented.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the words in a text of a title card which bore the episode title were animated. There were 16 title cards and a majority of the texts were animated. Whereas, in *House Arrest of Us*, the text for the episode title was not animated. It was steady and just functioned as a tool for information. However, for the text in bumpers/title cards in Episode 3, the text were animated (**Figure 114**).

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the visual support were also animated. When Atty. Woo explained a scientific term for example, animated laboratory equipment appeared on screen. When she wanted to explain the measurement of the whale versus a painting, an animated whale graphic was shown. A ruler helped visualize the measurement. In *House Arrest of Us*, the only animated graphic was the end credits which was played in the end of Episode 1 (**Figure 115**). The background was blue, with white clouds and different shapes such as heart and circle. The background seemed like a shadow picture of houses and windows that looked like shapes such as clouds, heart, and stars in motion.

There were several possible reasons why *House Arrest of Us* did not use animated graphics extensively. One reason could be the script did not demand animated graphics. Two, this would have required a huge amount in the budget for the animator fees. Three, it was not part of concept of the drama.

Figure 114.

Animated text in bumpers

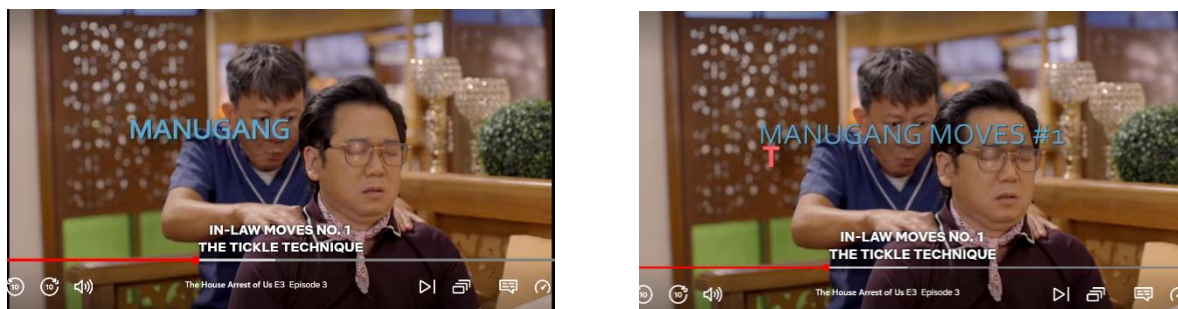
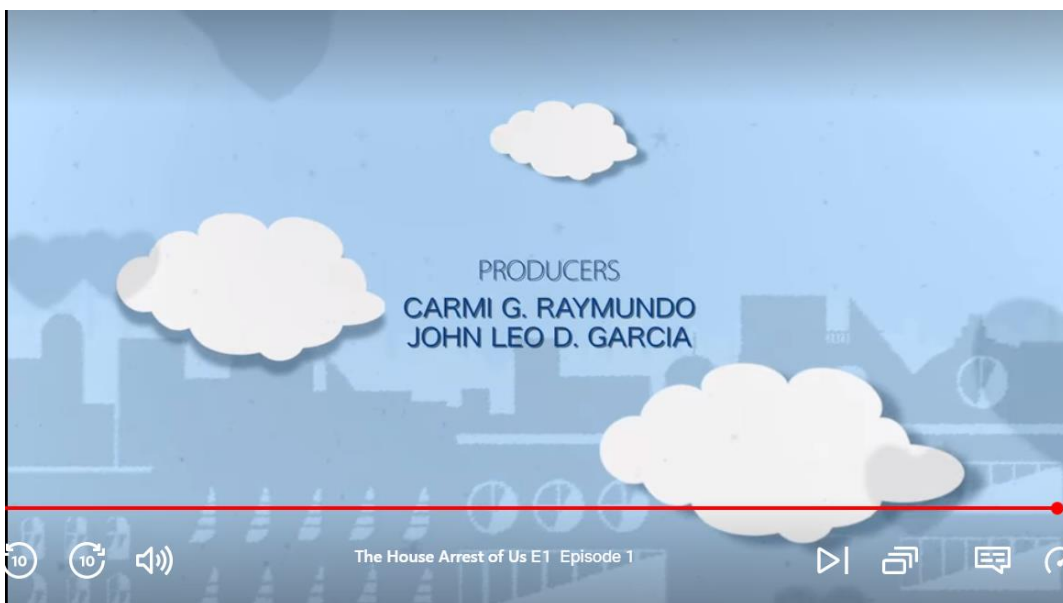




Figure 115.
Animated Graphics



The clouds are in motion when in the video.

Interface Prototypes

One of the innovations in *House Arrest of Us* was the creation of interface prototypes to mirror various contemporary mobile applications such as *Kumu Live* and *Mobile Legends*. It also recreated a virtual meeting interface ala *Zoom* and a text message notification. By creating these interfaces, the drama showcased the different cultures which emerged during the pandemic. It also served as a tool for clear visualization. In the interface creation aspect, the Filipinos were ahead of the Koreans. In *Extraordinary*

Attorney Woo, the creative team focused more on animated graphics and visual effects more than the creation of interfaces.

In Episode 2, 10:27, an interface appeared on screen similar to that of Kumu style **(Figure 116)** wherein the video of Zena and Berna fighting played in real time, with reaction buttons and comments on the right side. Abi was vlogging the confrontation between Zenaida and Berna for fun, calling it “Mom versus Mom”. The app that she was using was called Mumu, inspired by Kumu. Kumu is “the largest social entertainment app in the Philippines, proudly made by Pinoys. Its mission is to be the platform that champions Filipino voices from across the world, creating a vibrant online culture filled with positivity and possibilities” (Kumu.ph, 2023).

In Episode 5, a message notification interface was featured **(Figure 117)**. It was shown when Korics sent Q a text message informing her of his surprise for her. It was also used when Zena and Sylver exchanged text messages because they missed each other. This interface was used when the characters received a text message. The font was white and the box which enclosed the text was blue, a speech bubble appearing on the left was white. Its background was a blue dark circle and light blue square. Aside from a message notification interface, a text message interface was also created **(Figure 118)**. It was a blank space, with a white font, blue border, with an elongated shape and a speech bubble icon on the far right enclosed in a blue circle. When the message was sent, the text was enclosed in a blue elongated box. The font was white. The only form of communication during the pandemic aside from the *FB Messenger* was the traditional text messaging.

In Episode 7, a virtual meeting room interface was also shown **(Figure 119)**. The inspiration was the popular Zoom meeting room. It also had the icons which were present in Zoom such as the microphone, video, share a screen button, and reaction buttons.

Zena and Sylver used his interface when they met their employees virtually and updated them about the status of their business. Q also used this when talking with her friends, and sharing photos using the share screen button. The virtual meeting was a culture created during the pandemic so people can still meet each other online despite the restrictions. In the drama, this culture was highlighted, emphasizing its significant role in the lives of the characters.

Mobile Legends is a “multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) for iOS and Android devices developed by Shanghai Moonton Technology, a game development company based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia” (Chua, 2019). This particular game was featured in *House Arrest of Us* because it was the game which Rufus played all the time. This was another culture created during the pandemic - online games. Children who were bored during the lockdowns entertained themselves through online games such as these.

Watching dramas through online streaming also increased during the Pandemic. In Episode 8, 18:45, a cellphone prototype (**Figure 120**) appeared on screen. A scene in a *teleserye* was playing. Yaya Marie was so engrossed in her *teleserye* that she really felt all the emotions of the character. Since television stations could not produce their own content due to restrictions, online streaming platforms such as *Netflix* were extremely popular during the lockdown.

The cellphone prototype and cellphone interface also appeared in Episode 9 when Rudy revealed that he was a sexy star to Korics. A search engine interface (**Figure 121**) was also shown. The color of the text resembled *Google*. Instead of using the brand name of *Google*, the search engine was called *Galeng*, which came from the Filipino word “*magaling*” which means great or good in something.

Figure 116.

Kumu Style



Figure. 117

Message Notification Interface

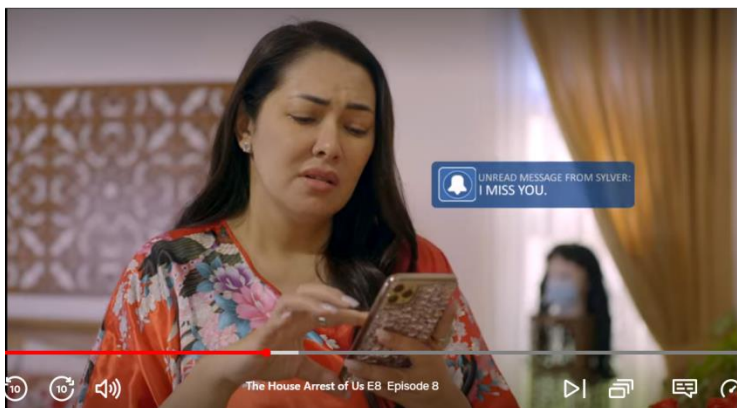
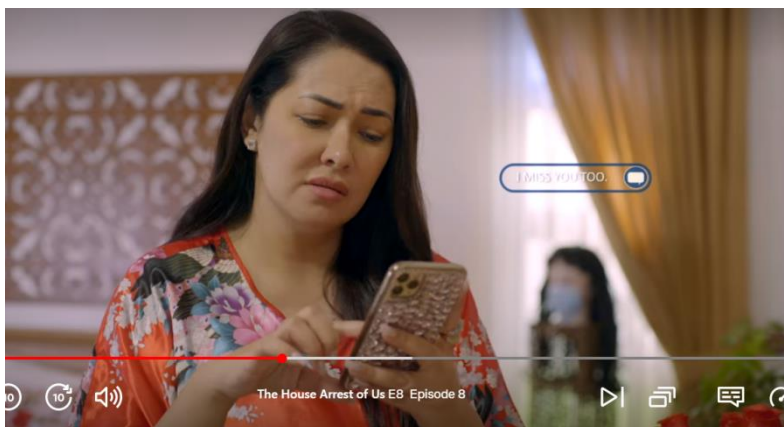


Figure 118.

Text message interface



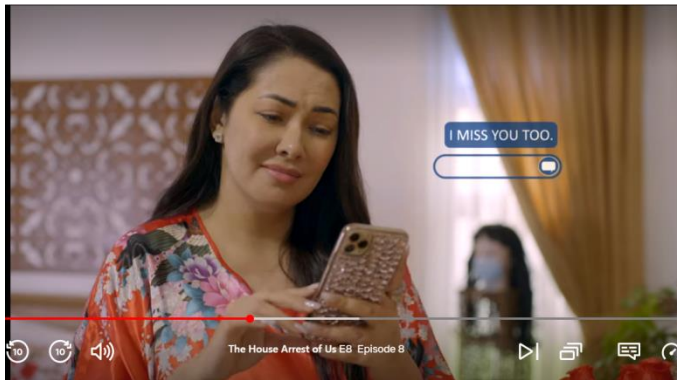


Figure 119.

Virtual meeting room interface



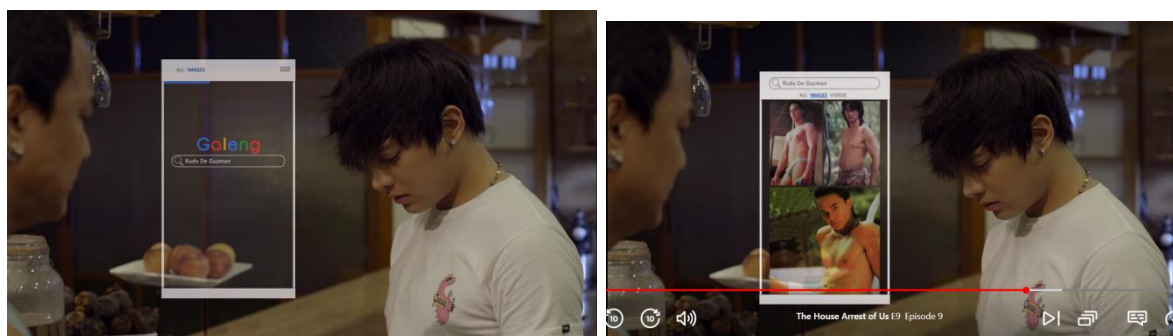
Figure 120.

Cellphone Prototype



Figure 121.

Search Engine Interface



Visual Support

In the opening statement of this section, the different purposes for the use of visual support for both Koreans and Filipinos were explained. In *House Arrest Of Us*, visual support was in the form of graphics bumper, photographs, episode title, and series title.

The graphics bumper also functioned as a title card to inform the viewers of actions playing on the screen. This type of visual support was used heavily in Episodes 3 and 4.

In the drama, Sylver disapproved of Korics as a husband for Q. He was scared that Korics cannot support Q's lifestyle and that he will take Q away from him. Q was Zena and Sylver's only daughter. The male figures in the household, namely Papawan, Papatu, and Mang Roger, taught Korics different strategies so Sylver will approve of him. They shared four strategies called "*Manugang Moves*": "*The Kilitechnique*", "*Sakyan ang Hobby Para Happy*", "*Susuyo Pero Hindi Susuko*", and "*Ang Respesto Indi iniempose, Iniearn Yan*" (The moves of in-laws - The tickle technique, join the hobby in order to happy, never give up in courting and respect is not imposed, it is earned).

In *Manugang Moves # 1*, the text was thin and in blue, *The Kilitechnique* is thick, bold, and pink (**Figure. 122**). The text was positioned in the center. The background was a frozen video of Sylver being massaged by Mang Roger. The text was animated. After

the text exited from the frame, the frozen video resumed playing. The same pattern is observed in *Manugang Moves # 4*.

The appearance and motion of the text in all title cards are similar. They just differ in terms of the timing in playing the video. For *Manugang Moves # 2 and 3*, the video played first and then froze when the text appeared. After the text exited the frame, the video resumed playing.

Another title card which used text, was when Mang Roger and Yaya Marie found out that someone was pregnant in the household. They had three suspects: Berna, Zena, and Q. The title card bore the faces of their suspects and as they investigated each one and each one revealed that they were not pregnant, a big red X mark was placed on the title card.

The big red X mark was red, bold, and the border was red (**Figure.123**) It was positioned in the center. The background was the faces of their suspects. Yaya Marie and Mang Roger also labelled their suspects. The texts *SUSPECT # 1*, *# 2*, and *#3* were red and bold. It can be found in the center of the frame. The background was a frozen video in black and white. When the text exited the frame, the video resumed playing. This pattern was followed in all three graphics.

Photographs were also used as visual support in the drama (**Figure. 121**). Rudy had a dirty little secret. He was a bold (or erotic/sexy) star and Zena was the president of his fans' club at the height of his fame. He lied about being an OFW working in Japan. He was forced to star in sexy movies to be able to send money to Berna and support the children. When he revealed this secret to Korics, he asked Korics to open the *Galeng* search engine (instead of *Google*) and type the name "Rudy De Guzman", which revealed Rudy's sexy photos on the cellphone screen.

The graphics also functioned as series title and episode title. In the earlier part of this section, the appearance of the text and graphics were already described and elaborated.

Filipinos had their own way of creating and using graphics for the drama. It may have a different purpose as compared to the Koreans' but the concept of providing support to dialogues and visuals remained similar. The audiences in *House Arrest Of Us* were able to relate to the various interfaces created because the highlighted culture was familiar and popular. Graphics Design can be a tool to inform, introduce and emphasize a popular culture in the context of the Filipino drama.

Figure 122.

Manugang Moves

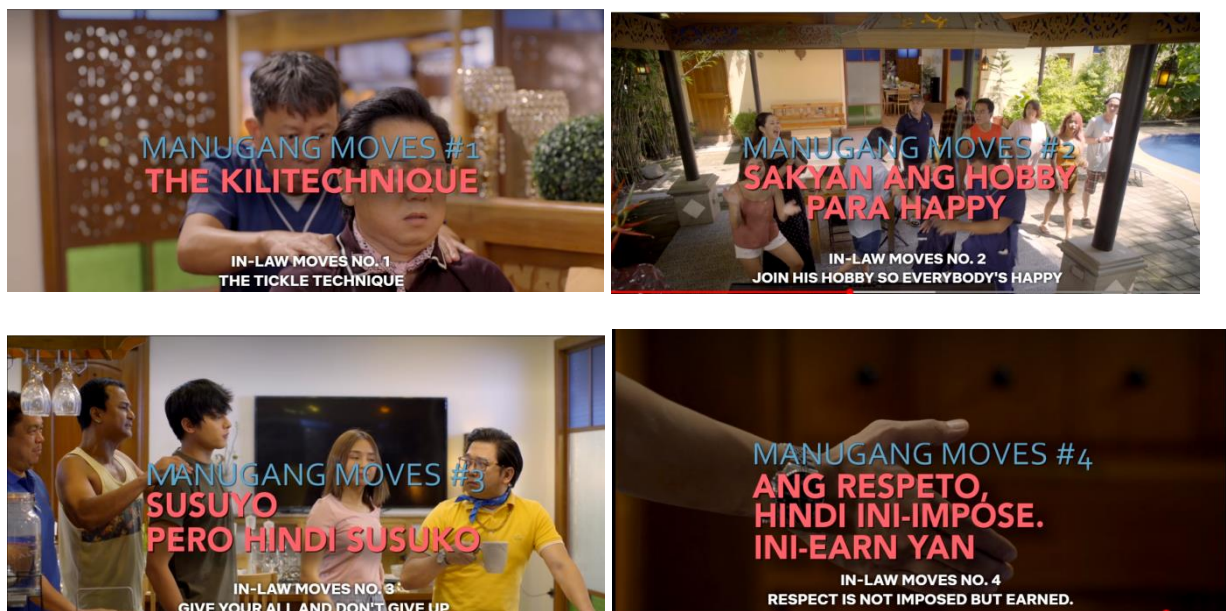


Figure 123.
Big Red X Mark



Below is **Table. 16** which shows the Korean drama graphics design versus the Filipino drama:

Table 16.
Korean Drama Graphics Design Compared with Filipino Drama

KOREAN DRAMA		SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA		SUBTHEMES
MAIN THEME			MAIN THEME		
Korean Graphics Design	Imagination:	Strong Visual Support	Filipino Artistry: Graphics Design		Creative Fonts
		Animated Graphics			Animated Graphics
		Functional Graphic Design			Interface Prototypes
		Visual Effects Integration			Visual Support

Audio Design

A film or a TV drama will not serve its purpose without audio design. The audio gives life to the video, and it serves as the voice of the drama. The Koreans and Filipinos share similarities in terms of using audio to set the scene's mood, creating a realistic atmosphere, and intensifying action. However, they differ in the music aspect. The Koreans particularly in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* produced an OST or original soundtrack customized for the drama. The songs were produced and rendered by Korean artists, while in *House Arrest of Us*, the drama promoted OPM (Original Pinoy Music). The songs served as background for some of the scenes or used as a diegetic device. They also differ in terms of using sound to feature the mental voice of the character. These were unsaid lines that only the character thinking them can hear them. The Koreans used voice over as a form of narration and not for saying what was on the character's mind. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the sound of thoughts was not used. However, in Kdramas such as *Scarlet Heart Ryeo* (2016), the sound of thoughts was frequently used by Hae Su. She debated herself with about whether to do a certain act or not. Her thoughts were always loud, her anger, confusions, and questions always on her thoughts.

On the other hand, if there was Korean sound, there is also a Filipino wave. The wave comes from the sound wave which referred to the way "a sound is propagated in an elastic medium such as air". It can also mean "a sudden occurrence of or increase in a specified phenomenon, feeling or emotion." In relation to the nomenclature of the main theme, the music and voice in the drama heightened the feelings and emotions of those viewing it. Hence, contributing to the enhancement and the appreciation of meaning was conveyed in the drama.

Sets the Scene's Mood

Like *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, music played a vital role in the drama, ensuring that the mood or the emotions conveyed by the specific scene will be absorbed and felt

by the viewers. To reiterate Bordwell & Thomspson (2013), “Just as you can pick the best image from several shots, you can choose what exact bit of sound will best serve the purpose”. Similar to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the subtitles of *House Arrest of Us* likewise included the type of tracks playing in a particular scene. It was placed in brackets and the kind of music used was identified.

Exciting Instrumental Music

In Episode 1, exciting instrumental music was played as Q and Yaya Marie searched for the lost can ring/ engagement ring. The music enabled the audience to feel the tension as the characters searched for the lost ring and it created the feeling of being part of the search.

Alarming Music

Alarming music was played as well to set the mood for some scenes. Korics, for example, had an unconventional family. The arrival of his biological dad on the day of his *Pamamanhikan* was alarming because Q’s parents were unaware of their family set up. Hence, alarming music was played to signal the arrival of Korics’ biological dad - Papawan.

Diegetic

There were times when the source of music is diegetic, originating from the drama itself. As when upbeat music was played when Berna, Papawan, and Papatu were dancing Zumba. The music booming loudly was taken from popular songs on *Tiktok*.

Funny Music

Funny music was played to set the mood for scenes which were humorous. In Episode 2, only one quarantine pass was granted per family. The quarantine pass permitted the assigned person to go out and buy the family’s needs. In the drama, when Mang Roger announced this, they were put in a dilemma trying to decide who will be

assigned the quarantine pass. Funny music played in the background in scenes where they were busy deciding, invoking fun and excitement.

Dramatic Rock

Dramatic rock was played in scenes where characters were supposed to be shown as heroes. Still in Episode 2, Korics was portrayed as a sort of superhero because, as the one with the pass, he would be the one to go out and buy the needs of the family despite the danger of Covid, his protective gear his costume. As he was leaving the house, dramatic rock music played, making the audience feel that Korics was a real superhero for agreeing to be the family representative and go out.

Playful and Quirky Music

Playful music would play in scenes that were meant to be funny. When someone unintentionally farted in a scene, playful music can be heard. When Sylver was playing the part of an “investigator”, entering Korics’ and Q’s room and check their belongings à la Sherlock Holmes and found funny items instead, quirky music was used.

Theme Music

The drama’s theme music was Bryan McKnight song “*Marry your Daughter*”. This had an instrumental and lyrical version and usually played during the Q and Korics’ romantic moments. Another theme music was Daniel Padilla’s “*Na’Sayo na ang Lahat*” which also had two versions: the instrumental and lyrical version.

In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, the drama’s theme music was instrumental and original. In other Kdramas, the theme music was usually customized to fit the story.

In *House Arrest Of Us*, the music varied and ranged from bright, exciting, alarming, dramatic, soft, cheerful, slow, funny, unsettling, suspenseful, somber, to whimsical.

Similar to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, a word cloud was also used to determine which music was used frequently in the drama. The results revealed the following (in this specific order): slow tempo, upbeat, *Marry Your Daughter*, *Nasa 'Yo na ang Lahat*, somber, and tense. The choice of music was balanced with the use of popular music, which was also maximized. Unlike *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, which did not normally use popular music because the drama relied on its OST.

Sound Support for Emphasis

House Arrest of Us' genre was romantic comedy. Hence, the scenes exuded humor and romance. During funny scenes, sound effects or SFX were used to add color and emphasis to the characters' punch lines.

In Episode 1, Korics introduced her family members to Q's family. When he introduced Papatu, a SFX which sounded like "*toink*" was heard while Papatu's name was called. The SFX was combined with the funny reaction of Papatu.

Still Episode 1, a silly SFX was inserted when Berna could not finish her sentences. Berna had the funny characteristic of being unable to finish her statement especially when speaking in English.

[Berna]: "I can eat..."

[Zena]" "Bakit ganyan ang English niya parang kulang. Baka
Installment."

A funny SFX was also inserted to make the animosity between Rudy and Zena appear funny.

[Rudy]: "She is so lovely."

[Zena]: "Do not mention it. Bye"

Another funny SFX was used when Berna once again could not finish her lines. By adding the SFX, it made the scene funnier compared instead of just being plain.

[Berna]: “Do not judge a book by its...”

[Korics]: “Cover ma...”

Funny noises were also inserted in the scene where Sylver was pouring salt in the noodles during a cooking challenge. A gaming sound followed the movement of the pouring of the salt.

The SFX was also combined with a funny or quirky music in some scenes. By doing this, the scene was enhanced and achieved its purpose.

House Arrest of Us acknowledged the power of SFX and music in achieving a comical scene. SFX emphasized the dialogues and actions of the characters. Removing the sound effects will make the scene plain and boring. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* used SFX to intensify actions like the sound of heavy footsteps or music to follow the character’s motion on the screen, while in *House Arrest of Us*, SFX and music were vital in making hilarious scenes work.

Creates Realistic Atmosphere

Diegetic sounds such as sirens, birds chirping, and video games sounds made the drama authentic. It gave the impression that what appeared on the small screen was real. These sounds also connoted meanings significant to the storyline.

The sound of the sirens signified an ambulance coming, signaling to the viewers that someone was hurt or sick. As the setting of *House Arrest of Us* was during the pandemic lockdown, the siren connoted a different meaning. It meant that a COVID positive case was in the area and the ambulance was fetching that person.

The birds chirping exuded a feeling of peace and oneness with nature. In the story, only the sound of the birds chirping could be heard in the midst of stillness brought about by the pandemic. It signified that life continued despite the pandemic, even though everything seemed unsure.

The video games sounds which came from the online game Rufus was playing signified that he was playing *Mobile Legends*. It gave the impression that what he was doing was not make believe but a real game.

Like *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, *House Arrest of Us* also ensured that the drama would look natural and real and fit the audience's expectations. Through the use a variety of SFX and music, a realistic atmosphere was created and made drama viewing more engaging and exciting.

Promotion of OPM Songs

OPM songs were promoted in the drama. This was not something new for Filipino dramas, particularly *teleseryes*. OPM songs served as theme song of *teleseryes* over the years. If Koreans have their OSTs, Filipinos bank on the OPM songs to give life to pivotal scenes in the drama. Such action helped launch OPM singers' careers, especially if the *teleserye* was successful in the ratings game.

For example, *Makita Kang Muli* by Sugarfree served as the theme of *Ang Panday* (2005). It served as the romantic theme of the love story between Tristan, played by Jericho Rosales and Eden, played by Heart Evangelista. The popular *teleserye Pangako Sa 'Yo*'s piano-driven rendition theme song, sung by Vina Morales made the song unforgettable and fans nostalgic (Spot.ph, 2015). April Boy Regino sang the title song for *Esperanza* (1997), which starred Wowie De Guzman and Judy Ann Santos. The iconic *Mula Sa Puso* *teleserye*, which catapulted Claudine Barreto, Diether Ocampo, and the late Rico Yan's careers to stardom, used Roselle Nava's version of the song *Mula Sa Puso*, for its theme song, which was originally sung by *Jude Michael*.

House Arrest of Us adopted this *teleserye* culture through the use of OPM songs as theme song and background music for the digimovie.

No Touch, for example, by *Juan De la Cruz* band is a classic OPM used in Episode 3 during videoke showdown between Sylver and Korics. Yaya Marie and Mang Roger sang *Alon's Pusong Bato* in Episode 6. Q and Korics had quarreled and Q had grabbed the microphone from Yaya Marie to sing some of the lyrics of the song. The instrumental version of this song became the music in Berna and Papatu's interpretative dance and served as background music for several scenes. In Episode 8, *Rey Valera's* classic OPM hit *Kung Tayo ay Magkakalayo* was used as background music for the video montage of the characters. The character action was interpreted as the *walling scene* because most of them did this while crying and pouring their hearts out. Finally, *Nasa 'Yo Na ang Lahat*, the drama's male lead, *Daniel Padilla's* song was the background song for the introduction video as well as the whole drama.

Including OPM songs in a drama with an international audience is a good strategy for promotion. This will introduce OPM to the rest of the world while reaching out to Filipinos in the diaspora – OFWs. The younger generation needs to be aware of these songs because these are part of the Filipino culture and the Filipino identity.

Sound of Thoughts

The *sound of thoughts*, or the thoughts of the characters, appear in the form of voice overs in the HAOU drama. Compared to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, where voice over was a form of narration, as in reading a letter, or telling a story during flashback, Filipinos used voice overs to show the thoughts of the characters.

In Episode 4, Yaya Marie and Mang Roger wanted to know who was pregnant among the women in the household. They had found a positive pregnancy kit in the toilet and needed to find out who it was. They had potential “suspects” which were discussed by the character, Yaya Marie, in a voice over.

In Episode 5, Korics was jealous over Harry, the Capilis' business partner because he overheard the virtual meeting where Q was friendly with Harry. The voice over revealed his thought: "Aren't I yummy. Harry's got nothing on me."

Still in Episode 5, Q was surprised to see Korics wearing boxing gloves and hitting the punching bag. The voice over revealed what he was thinking:

"Hoy! Korics ayaw mo ng work out, diet pwede mong patulan, pero work out? Never! Unless gusto ng Stella nay un ang yummy. Kaya pala pilipit ang dila mo. Akala mo ikaw lang may kaya na mag pa yummy?" (Hey Korics, you do not want to work-out. Diet maybe? But work out? I do not think so unless Stella wants you to look yummy for her. So that is why you cannot speak clearly. By the way, did you think you were the only one who could look yummy?)

Korics replied to Q in his thoughts also through voice over, too: *"Yummy? E di hulog ka ngayon. Wala ang Harry na Yan!"* (Yummy? Oh, so you feel in my trap. Harry cannot be compared to me)".

The Q and Korics' jealousy ended in a dance battle between the boys and girls. Korics was amazed to see Q in her sexy exercise outfit. Before the showdown, Q's voice over revealed his thoughts in the following:

[Q]: *"Ito yung gusto mo di ba?"* (This is what you like, isn't it?)

[Korics]: *(In his mind also) Oh! With that slo-mo effect!*

[Q]: *Tulala ka ngayon? Tingnan natin kung sino ang yummier.* (So, speechless? Let us see who is yummier)"

The director creatively devised sound of thoughts to give characters the privacy and freedom to share their thoughts without the others knowing. In

communication, this is called intrapersonal communication, having a dialogue with oneself, a healthy form of exercise that could help release pent up emotions and thus take care of mental health. This is a form of outlet, as when one talks to a friend or writes in a journal, to help one cope. In the drama, this was the character's outlet: his sound of thoughts only be heard by him and the audience.

Below is **Table. 17** which shows the Korean drama audio design versus the Filipino drama.

Table 17.

Korean Audio Design Compared with Filipino drama

KOREAN DRAMA		SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA		SUBTHEMES
MAIN THEME			MAIN THEME		
Korean Sound: Audio Design		Sets the Mood	Filipino Wave: Audio Design		Set the Scene's Mood
		Intensifies Action			Sound Support for Emphasis
		Stimulates Reality			Creates realistic. Atmosphere
		Superior Sound Quality			Promotion of OPM Song
		Use of Original Soundtrack			Sound of thoughts

Concluding Analysis

After examining the text *House Arrest of Us* for its technical elements, a theory was formulated to encapsulate the way Filipinos construct the technical elements of the drama series. It is theorized as *competent but not quite*. One of the primary considerations when creating a message is to ensure that the encoding is done properly so that the decoding

of the message will lead to comprehension. “Properly” encoding means every element executed flawlessly, free from mishaps or setbacks. In *House Arrest of Us*, the encoders were competent, highly skilled people in their field because of their ability and skills to mount a drama like this. They were able to use cinematography, editing, production design, and audio competently. However, the message which was encoded had “noise” on it such as continuity issues and lighting system mishaps. These may affect the understanding of the message. In order for the flow of communication to be smooth, “noise” must be removed from the communication process. The “noise”, in this case, emanated from various factors such as perhaps budget constraints, pandemic restrictions, and stress brought about by the pandemic. The production team cannot solely be blamed for the flaws of the technical elements in *House Arrest of Us* because there were external factors that influenced its production.

Competent but not quite is the appropriate theory that can describe this kind of communication scenario. While the Filipino drama demonstrated competence, there is still room for improvement and change. This can be achieved by removing the noise from the communication situation. The drama series *House Arrest Of Us* can compete globally but its production elements must be smoothed, its execution refined.

Narrative Elements

The plot, narrative structure, characters, and genre will be discussed first and then the results of the thematic analysis will be presented. The results of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* in terms of its narrative will be compared to the results of *House Arrest of Us*.

Plot

A couple decides to make their engagement official by honoring tradition when a pandemic force them and their families to quarantine under one roof (Neflitr, 2020).

Narrative Structure

Each episode begins with the logo of Netflix, Unlike other dramas where the OBB follows after the Netflix logo. The House Arrest of Us's OBB was introduced at the end of Episode 1, beginning with a low angle shot of the dog running of the OBB, edited to be quick. It proceeded to the main character, Korics, who, when he opened the door, danced his way to another room, which was owned by Q - the female lead character. Both of them danced their way to the exterior of the house. The fast editing made the movements funny. All succeeding characters danced as they were introduced one by one. The shots were MCU (Medium Close UP) as the camera moved from one character to the other. They were dancing on the street while they were introduced. Then a *barangay tanod* alighted from their vehicle and said "*bawal lumabas*". All the characters scampered back to the house, the camera following them as they entered the house. The supposed-to-be introduction is followed by the title of the series in red creative font and the episode title, the logo of Star Cinema and ABS-CBN Films , then the end credits. The background was blue, with white clouds and different shapes, hearts, and circles. The background seemed like a shadow of the picture of houses. What was unique in the houses featured were the different shapes of the windows. The shapes embedded in the background are in motion. The logos of the different subsidiaries of ABS-CBN which participated in the filming were shown in the last frame.

From Episode 2 until the last episode, the drama begins with the logo of Netflix, followed by the GPX of the Star Cinema and ABS-CBN Films and then introduction video plays. The series title and the episode title followed after the introduction video. The end credits were ordered in the same manner. The end credits' last frame were the logos of the ABS-CBN subsidiaries.

For every episode there were problems and challenges which the characters needed to solve, which was typical of a serial drama. The scene with the counsellor was the anchor of the story because this scene tied each episode together, establishing either common ground or to tie the loose ends of the episode. The pre-cana seminar scene also dictated what will happen next to the episode.

The story in episode 1 ended with all of them faced with the greatest challenge of their lives. They had to live together due to the lockdown. In the first few scenes, it was established that the two families (De Guzman and Capili) were in conflict and could not live together. This gave the audience an idea about the families' relationship with each other while living in the same house and how the engaged couple, Korics and Q, will cope with the stress and problems of this unexpected event.

A preview of the next episode was not included in the structure of this drama except for episode 5 where the end credits show a video inset of snippets of the next episode.

In Episode 13, the last episode, after the end credits roll, a supposed social media post of Q appeared, wherein she changed her relationship status. The other characters commented on her post. The timeline of was in chaos.

Characters

The main characters of the drama *House of Arrest of Us* are:

- a. Kathryn Bernardo as Queences "Q" Capili
- b. Daniel Padilla as Enrico "Korics" De Guzman

The supporting cast are:

- a) Herbert Bautista as Sylvester “Sylver” Capili
- b) Ruffa Gutierrez as Zenaida “Zena” Capili
- c. Gardo Versoza as Rudy “Papawan” de Guzman
- d. Arlene Muhlach as Bernadette “Berna” de Guzman
- e. Dennis Padiila as Papatu
- f. Anthony Jennings as Rufus De Guzman
- g. Riva Quenery as Abigail “Abi” de Guzman-
- h. Alora Sasam as Yaya Marie
- i. Hyubs Azarcon as Mang Roger
- j. Marc Logan as the interviewer
- K. Ria Atayda as Q’s best friend
- l. Juan Miguel Severo as Q’s best friend
- m. Summer Ford as herself.

The protagonists in the series were Korics and Q. The story followed their journey as an engaged couple challenged by the effects of the Corona Virus Pandemic.

Q was the only daughter of a couple who owns a chain of beauty salons called Sylvester Salon. This was named after the family’s patriarch. Q was the kind of person whose moves were always calculated and well-planned. She always had a back up plan in case the previous plans failed. She was a loving and responsible daughter to her parents and a devoted girlfriend to Korics.

Korics worked as a TV director. His parents separated so he had two fathers, his biological father and his stepfather. He had two young adult siblings, Rufus and Abi, and a baby sibling. Korics believed so much in his craft that he believes he will succeed as a director. He was a responsible son and brother, the strength of the family. He was also a

loving and devoted boyfriend to Q. However, Korics had unresolved insecurities and did not want to admit that he needed help and needed to share his burdens with Q.

Q's external conflict was that she wanted her marriage to Korics to push through despite the odds, and wanted her parents to accept Korics as their future son-in-law. Her internal conflict was her doubts about Korics and his ability to support his family financially since Korics lost his work during the pandemic.

On the other hand, Korics external conflicts stemmed from his family and a myriad of other problems: the death of his grandfather due to COVID, his younger sister getting pregnant out of wedlock, and losing his job because of the pandemic. Moreover, his future-father-in law did not like him and his family. His internal conflict was that he had a lot of unresolved insecurities. He suspected Q doubted his skills to provide for their family. He believed he can do everything without anyone's help. He had forgotten his real reason for wanting to marry Q, which was love.

Genre

Netflix categorized *The House Arrest of Us* as Family, Comedy and Romantic TV. Since this was a comedic text, the scenes were filled with humor. The dialogues were also tailored to make the audience laugh. It was romantic TV, too, because it focused on the journey of an engaged couple.

House Arrest of Us

The Narrative of *HOAU* mirrors that of a Korean drama text. They are both similar in terms of popular culture integration, literary device use that transform the text, an information education vehicle, and a showcase of Koreanized narrative ingredients such as unique and diverse stories, culture and values integration, and inclusion of different issues. On the other hand, the identity of the Filipino text amidst the Koreanized text was the inclusion of song and dance in the drama and the integration of different Filipino

comedy styles. Both texts may be similar in many ways, but the degree of execution and presentation differs.

Fil-K Narrative

The narrative of *House Arrest of Us* is theorized as Fil-K Narrative because it is a combination of the different Korean drama elements and unique Filipino drama elements such as the song and dance in a serial drama and different comedy styles. In the study of Sanchez (2014), he theorized *Korean Turn*, which he described as how the local soap opera productions adopt or integrate Korean Drama aesthetics in their own content. It is not necessarily just the elements but also the plot events or familiar themes that can be associated with Korean drama. Hence, it is possible that Filipino texts such as *House Arrest of Us* were influenced by Kdrama texts.

A Kdrama narrative is a global product and glocalization is possible. ABS-CBN and Star Cinema export Filipino Drama Series such as *House Arrest of Us* to other countries through Netflix. Glocalization, in this context, would mean localizing Kdrama narrative elements and exporting the finished product to a world wide audience through Netflix.

Integration of Popular Culture

Popular Culture was evident in the narrative through trendy expressions in the dialogue, *Mobile Legends* reference, use of gay lingo, use of witty lines, intertextuality, and reference to other cultures.

Whoa Expression

House Arrest Of Us used trendy expressions to emphasize a point made by another character or as a form of disagreement to the statements. In Episode 1 (9:19) the expression *Whoa!* was introduced. The characters say this line energetically with matching arm movements.

[Sylver]: It's going to be a grand wedding or no wedding at all!

[Zena]: Plus, I want a prenup.

[Abigail]: Whoa!

[Berna]: Whoa! What do you think of (us)? Gold diggers?

In this particular scene, the *whoa* expression was said as a disagreement to the statements of Sylver and Zena.

In Episode 2, the De Guzman family was dancing Zumba and the stereo was blaring. Korics went outside to turn the stereo off.

[Berna]: Son, why did you switch it off? Can't you see we're dancing? What's up?

[Korics]: Mom, it's embarrassing. Your music is too loud. Q's family might still be sleeping.

[Abigail]: Whoa!

[Berna]: Why? Is Zena acting up again? What did she say this time?

[Korics]: Oh! Sorry! Is this our house now?

[All]: Whoa!

In this scene, the *whoa* expression was again a reaction of disagreement to the statement. In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, they also have their own version of *whoa* but the manner of saying this was different and the purpose was to calm the person who was overly emotional. Repeating this expression made the people remember the scenes easily. There is a potential for it to become a trend once the viewer uses it.

Mobile Legends Expressions

Mobile Legends in the drama was associated with Rufus because he was glued to his phone playing this game 70 percent of the time in the drama. In this way, the screen writer was able to integrate the terms used in *Mobile Legends* and used it as comic relief when the tension was high in the scenes.

In Episode 1, while eating lunch, the two families were in chaos. Family De Guzman felt that they were being insulted by Family Capili because they were flaunting their money at them.

[Sylver]: We're just making sure that you're not after our money!

[Papawan]: Not a Chance! You can keep your money!

[Berna]: And keep your daughter as well!

[Papatu]: What is a prenup?

[Rufus]: Wow! Do Something! Come on! Kill them! (Wow!

Desisyon ka! Quit ka naman? Patayin mo).

Rufus used the term "Kill them", an expression players use in the middle of a battle in *Mobile Legends*. His statement was used not only in solidarity with the other players in the online game, but as a way to prod his parents to do something about the situation they were in.

In Episode 5, Rufus overheard Berna and Korics' conversation. Korics suspected that something was happening to Q, but he did not know anything about it. Berna tried to tell Korics the truth. However, she was eating, and her mouth was full. Korics cannot understand her. Out of nowhere, Rufus said these words: "[Rufus] Huli! Magtatago ka pa ha!" (17:35)

He also made an indirect comment regarding the situation of Abigail through this “[Rufus] *Binuntis yan ni Alucard*” (17:28) “*Boom! Huli!*” (17:06). In this case, *Alucard* is one of the characters in *Mobile Legends* and he used the character to subtly hints about Abigail’s situation.

On the other hand, in Episode 8, Berna was telling Papawan that Papatu is angry with her, and she did not know the reason. Again, Rufus, who was playing in the corner, made another indirect comment during Berna and Papawan’s conversation. When he said *victory*, he referred to Berna’s statement and he agreed with it. *Victory* is another jargon found in *Mobile Legends*.

[Berna]: Yam’s mad at me.

[Papawan]: Hmmm. Maybe you didn’t give him what he wanted last night.

[Berna]: Stop that!

[Papawan]: Ouch!

[Berna]: I actually don’t know why he’s mad. And you’re being insensitive.

[Rufus]: Yo! Victory! Nice one Bash!

Bekispeak

Even the use of *gay lingo* was present in *House Arrest of Us*, the a melting pot of different cultures. *Gaylingo* or *Bekispeak* is said to be evolving. It now includes a new set of words which can be heard in daily conversations. These are terms such as *achoo*, *awra*, *booking*, *cheka*, *ganda ka*, *jubis*, *shelemet*, *shuta*, and *warla*. However, *House Arrest off Us* chose to stick to the “classic pop culture puns” (Capacillio, 2018) such as *haggardo versoza*, *gutom jones*, *jinit Jackson*.

In Episode 5, Zena and Sylver were discussing about the status of their salon chains. The pandemic had a huge effect on their business and they might have to let some of their employees go because the company could no longer pay them. This situation stressed Zena out because she did not want to be poor as illustrated by this line: “[Zena]: Ano ba naman ito nakaka stress drilon. Tingnan mo ang nangyayari sa Sylvester Salon”. She used the *bekispeak stress drilon*, which means she was in so much stress.

Witty Lines

Another interesting aspect of the drama was the use of witty lines in the dialogues. Yaya Marie and Mang Roger, who represented those people who were privy to household affairs, but were unrelated to the De Guzmans or the Capilis, were the sources of these witty lines. They often commented on the situations they observed, making the scenes funny. They were also the source of comic acts in the story through their dialogues, actions, quirks, schemes, and their presence.

In Episode 1, the De Guzman family was coming over to the Capili’s for the *pamamanhikan*. Q was getting agitated because she could not find the can ring which served as her engagement ring.

[Yaya Marie]: They’re almost here!

[Q]: Yaya, I am the one who’s getting married. Stop being overdramatic. Find my ring! Find my engagement ring! Now!

[Yaya marie:] I already looked everywhere. But I couldn’t find it! I’m exhausted. I deserve a drink!

The line *I deserve a drink*, was Yaya Marie’s witty line which was referred to her exhaustion. This line *I deserve a drink* was usually used when a person was in great stress. This was a popular meme in *TikTok*.

In the same episode, Zena facilitated the house tour of the De Guzmans. When they entered one room, Zena said it was going to be Q and Korics' room. Papatu was puzzled because in Filipino culture, the moment a man gets married, he and his wife should find their own home.

[Papatu]: "As a man, I'm sure you understand that when a man gets married, he needs his own place to start his family.

Right Korics?"

[Silence]

[Korics]: It's up to Q. Right here.

[Silence]

[Rufus]: Oh! You have slain an enemy. What's up boy?

[Papatu]: You're addicted to that game!

Mang Roger: My God! I hate drugs! Come on!

Mang Roger's line was taken from former President Rodrigo Duterte's famous line during his anti-drug campaign. Mang Roger said that when Rufus made the out of nowhere comment, and a dead silence enveloped them.

Still in Episode 1, while the two families were having lunch, Korics informed everyone that Papawan was arriving. Their unconventional family set-up was discussed. Berna said the three (Yam, Papawan, and Berna) of them are good friend and practice co-parenting. Then the doorbell rang. Papawan was already outside. This was the part when Yaya Marie said: "The plot thickens!"

The plot thickens originated from a satirical play called *The Rehearsals* written by statements and poet George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham. Yaya Marie was referring to Korics' family's set up, the inclusion of Papawan in the picture, which made the expression appropriate.

In another episode, Episode 6, everyone was inside the cramped comfort room so they could get an internet signal. There was a power outage and the WiFi was down. While they were inside the CR, Korics found out that Abigail was pregnant. He was angry because Q did not tell him sooner. He was mad because he felt they did not trust him enough to tell him the truth and that they did not understand him.

[Abigail]: Of course, you will never understand. You're perfect right? You can never be wrong. You are really getting on my nerves! Fuck these hormones!

[Yaya Marie:] Language please!

Language, please refer to choosing words that come out of a person's mouth, especially if there are kids around. This was also a popular phrase used in memes and Tiktok.

There were other witty lines in Episode 9 which added humor to the plot:

a) [Yaya Marie]: "Baka my lulutuin. Madam what are you trying to do?" (23:02-23:00)

b) [Yaya Marie]: Maghahanap tayo ng ebidensiya ma magkapatid si Korics at Q. "(12:31-12:15)

[Mang Roger]: "Ano?"

[Yaya Marie]: "Huwag ka maingay. Oo kasi di ba? Bakit tutol na tutol ang pamilya nila magpakasal silang dalawa. Kasi magkapatid sila. "

[Mang Roger]: "Incest?"

[Yaya Marie]: "Oo Incest-ral house"

c) [Yaya Marie]: "Oh my God! Kumapit ka! Kumapit ka. RDG" (9:28-9:15)

[Mang Roger [: “RDG? Ruffa De Gutierrez”

[Yaya Marie]: “Rudy De Guzman.”

Using witty lines taken from popular culture add color to a plain script. If combined with good acting, a funny scene will be produced. Filipinos have the ability to turn something ordinary into something special - like integrating witty lines into a scene. Comedic acts such as these are unique to the Philippine drama culture. This is what makes Philippine drama different from other dramas because screen writers weave popular terms and witty lines in the scenes. The Koreans are serious in their drama productions while Filipinos are the funny and adventurous ones.

Intertextuality

Intertextuality is a” fact about literary texts that all are intimately interconnected”. (Literary Terms, 2023). Furthermore, “every text is affected by all the texts that came before it” (Ibid). There are two types of intertextualities: deliberate and latent. Deliberate happens when “intertextuality is the result of an author’s choice”, while latent means “the author isn’t deliberately employing intertextuality, though intertextuality is still there” (Ibid).

In the drama, Yaya Marie made an intertextual reference to an exact line uttered by *Carlo Aquino* in a Filipino Movie entitled *Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa* (1998). The context of the scene was that Rudy and Zena’s secret was revealed. Zena admitted that she knew Rudy before because she the *Rudy’s Cakes Fans’ Club* president. At one point in their idol and fan relationship, they had liked each other enough to have a one-night stand. Rudy denied this and out of nowhere, Yaya Marie shouted the line to Rudy: “Akala mo lang wala, pero meron, meron, meron! (You think nothing happened, but something did!)”

In Episode 9 ,18:30- 18:03, Yaya Marie already suspected that Q was the daughter of Zena and Rudy. She made another intertextual reference to the teleserye *Pangako 'Sayo (2015)*, in relation to Q and Korics' current situation and another reference to celebrities *Daniel Padilla and Kathryn Bernardo, House Arrest of Us*' main lead.

[Yaya Marie]: "Magkapatid kayo ni Korics. Kaya ayaw ni Madam na magkatuluyan kayo. Nung dating nagtanan sila ng Daddy mo, buntis na siya noon, Daddy mo niya pina-ako" (You and Korics are siblings. Madam was just against the idea of you getting married to him. When she and your dad eloped, she was already pregnant. She just forced your dad to admit that you were his daughter)

[Q]: "No. That's impossible Yaya Marie."

[Yaya Marie]: "Baby girl, wala nang impossible ngayon. Ano ka ba? Sa Pangako 'Sayo si Yna at Angelo magkapatid" (Nothing is impossible now Baby Girl. In the teleserye *The Promise*, Yna and Angelo are siblings)

[Q]: "Sino yun?" (Who are they?)

[Yaya Marie]: "Kathniel niyon. Hindi mo kilala si Kathryn Bernardo? Jowa yun ni Daniel Padiila" (You do not know them? It is Kathryn Bernardo, the girlfriend of Daniel Padiila)

[Q] "Hmmm. Maarte daw yun?" (Was she dramatic?)

[Yaya Marie]: "Balita ko nga eh!" (I also overheard that she is)

Intertextuality was very evident in the integration of popular culture in the narrative. The dialogues that were used referred to popular figures, gay and meme culture,

teleseryes, movies, and social media platforms such as *Tiktok*. Indeed, every text is affected by a text that comes before it and intertextuality, as used in this drama, added color and texture to ordinary dialogue, making it richer in meaning.

Song and Dance Act in a Drama

In Philippine movies, dance and song numbers are common. In fact, “we're light years ahead of the French when it comes to spontaneous dance numbers” (Spotph, 2014). Dancing and singing in movies can be traced back to the Golden Age of Philippine Cinema when 90s movies such as the *Walang Matigas Na Tinapay*, *Sa Mainit Na Kape*, among others, incorporated dance and song numbers in the plot, which seemed to be influenced by Bollywood cinema. “Standard features of Bollywood films continue to be formulaic story lines, expertly choreographed fight scenes, spectacular song-and-dance routines, emotion-charged melodrama, and larger-than-life heroes” (Britannica, 2023). However, in Philippine drama, this element of integrating a dance number in a 25 to 30 minutes drama is new, something that is not possible for *teleseryes* airing on Free TV because of commercials. Online streaming sites such as Netflix, where subscribers pay to watch content, paved the way for the inclusion of dance numbers in Filipino dramas.

When characters say their lines in *House Arrest Of Us*, they say it like they are singing, it is very melodic. In Episode 1, Abigail asked to use the rest room, accompanying her question with a *Tiktok* dance move.

In another situation, Korics was trying to prove himself to his future father-in-law. Papatu and Papawan advised Korics to join Sylver when he was doing his hobbies so they can bond. As such, in Episode 3, 16:15-12:49, one scene was dedicated to the singing of *No Touch by Juan De la Cruz Band*. Sylver and Korics took turns singing, while the others in the background danced. It became a singing drama. The Filipinos did not just rely on dialogues and normal scenes to move the plot forward, they innovated by

including a song number. However, singing that takes a huge portion of the running time in an episode will give the impression that the plot points were not well planned so the director resorted to including the song number to kill time.

Aside from a song number, a dance number with all the cast dancing was also included in Episode 5, 10:28- 6:32, like a scene from a Bollywood movie where the leads dressed in their *Ghagra*, and sang and danced and the scene was shot like a music video. In *The House Arrest of Us*, the girls' team, composed of Q and the other girls in the family, while the boys' team, led by Korics, engaged in a dance battle. This game was intended to identify who was yummiier between Q and Korics. The dance showdown stemmed from Q and Korics' jealousy. Q thought that something was going on between Korics and Stella during their video call, when in fact they were discussing a film project. Korics, on the other hand, was annoyed with Harry and his British accent. Q was communicating with Harry because he was one of their business partners. The running time of the dance fest was more than four minutes. Again, the inclusion of a dance number in a drama was to probably make the scene hilarious or kill time.

On the other hand, Yaya Marie and Mang Roger were singing in the videoke in Episode 6. The song is the Filipino Jukebox classic "*Pusong Bato*", which fit Q and Korics' current circumstances. Q took the microphone from Yaya Marie and Mang Roger and sang the song herself. Instead of communicating to Korics through speaking lines, she opted to sing a line from the song.

One song and dance number that turned into a comic scene was when Berna and Papatu danced to the tune of *Pusong Bato* instrumental in Episode 6. In this scene, the dance of the two appeared to be an interpretative dance, inserted between dramatic scenes and seeming like a filler.

Song and dance number are unique elements in a Filipino drama which adds color and vibrancy to the text. These elements are effective in a comedy genre because it adds fun to a boring text. However, the use of this in a melodrama seemed out of place. In *House Arrest Of Us*, the director's use of these strategies to visualize the story, instead of making a scene where the characters would dialogue with each other, seemed inappropriate, though perhaps the song and dance numbers were intended to make the plot more exciting for the viewers.

Transformation in the Text

Literary devices such as metaphor, symbolism, and stereotype helped transform the text in *House Arrest of Us*. The genre that *House Arrest of Us* belonged to did not hinder it from including these devices in its story to make the text richer. However, including these devices, may or may not be a deliberate act by the writer and can only be validated upon interview with the writer.

Extraordinary Attorney Woo also used literary devices to enrich their text. The devices were similar with *House Arrest of Us*, the difference was the inclusion of foreshadowing and parallelism in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*.

Metaphor

In Episode 2, 14:44-14:08, Korics was likened to a superhero when he agreed to be the one to buy supplies and the other needs of the family since, compared to the other people in the household, he was the one who had lowest risk to be infected. In the drama, he was seen coming down the stairs wearing his PPE outfit. The PPE outfit appeared to be his battle gear. The camera took shots of him dressing up like a *Marvel* superhero change into his official costume. The music perfectly fit the scene since it made him look like a real superhero preparing for a battle, in this case the COVID virus, and Korics was going out to conquer the challenges brought about by this nemesis.

The episode title in Episode 2 was: Please Pass The Quarantine Pass. This refers to the early days of the pandemic when only those with a quarantine pass were allowed to leave the house and buy the needs of the family. The current situation of the De Guzmans and Capilis were likened into a quarantine pass wherein any of the characters had to have permission before they made a move.

In the drama, Q and Korics needed their parents' permission in all that they did because violating these meant complications. They needed a "quarantine pass" to seek the approval of their parents for their marriage. The socio-economic factors played a huge role in the relationship and marriage of Q and Korics, so much so that even though they are already adults, their parents still play a central role in their lives. Q, being the *unica hija*, will always be the baby girl of the family. Furthermore, their economic standing in the society was higher than that of Korics' family. Although they were *nouveau riche*, they still had the money. Korics, on the other hand, was one of the providers of his family, his parents and siblings depending on him. There was nothing he could boast of except his job as a TV director. He also had an unconventional family set-up. So securing a *quarantine pass* for their marriage was quite a difficult thing to do. He needed to prove that he was financially stable and could support Q in all her needs.

In Episode 4, Korics, Papatu, and Papawan bathed Summer the dog. Upon learning this, Q was mad because Summer may get sick as the dog had just taken a bath and they are giving her another one. Q was irritated and shouted at the three and they obeyed like dogs. Zena followed and she said "stay" and they sat and obeyed like dogs. Although this is a comedic style, power dynamics are at play: Zena standing up looking down at them, as she told the men to stay and they all sat down. In the beginning of the episode, it was established that Zena was *allergic* to the poor. She was a symbol of anti-poor. Korics, Papatu, and Papawan represented the poor who were victims of society's

cruelty and all the Zenas that existed. They were given no choice. They just followed the orders of the powerful. They “stayed” and “obeyed” without asking questions. After all, they did not hold power, society had stripped them of their right to insist.

Symbolism

Symbolism is a literary device “that uses symbols, be they words, people, marks, locations, or abstract ideas to represent something beyond the literal meaning” (Master Class,2021)

A symbolic act refers to an act which represent something beyond the literal meaning.

In Episode 13, the last episode of *House Arrest of Us*, Q returned her engagement ring to Korics. Korics kept it. However, when Q gave him the can ring, their first engagement ring, Korics threw it in the trash. This symbolic act showed that Korics was throwing everything away. He did not have any attachments anymore to anyone or anything. There was no turning back. However, by keeping the engagement ring, it meant that there was hope for them still. There was something that held him back. If he wanted to end everything, he could have just given it away, as a final act, but by keeping the engagement ring, it meant he still had doubts. A part of him was not willing to let go. It was a turning point for him and Q to examine their relationship and ask themselves if they were still willing to pursue their marriage. There were so many unfortunate events that happened, and they have survived it all. In the end, they were able to resolve their issues and decided to love each other still despite of everything.

Stereotype

An example of a stereotype is trope. A trope in the context of media and literature refers to “plot devices, themes, visual cues, and other storytelling elements that are

repeatedly used within the genre, so much that they become recognizable” (Masterclass, 2021).

There were some tropes identified in the drama *House Arrest Of Us*. They have been repeatedly used in Filipino dramas time and time again. These are the gay best friend, the rich , the ugly & hot wife, the rich girl falls in love with a poor boy, against all odds kind of love, whereas the tropes identified in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* are *men in black*, BFF(Best friend Forever) turned lover, BFF (Best Friend Forever) and Sidekick, Flawed protagonist, rich girl falling in love with poor boy, and piggy back rides. The similarities of the two was the trope of rich girl falls in love with a poor boy.

The Gay Best friend. Q had two best friends in the drama, a girl and a gay best friend. They communicated virtually using a virtual meeting room. Q ran to her best friends when the going got tough. True to the definition of the trope of the gay best friend, Q’s gay friend put a hydrating mask on his face and gave sensible advice in a “boisterous way”. He addressed Q as *girl*.

The Rich People. “There's the rich and evil mom or aunt, the wealthy executive dad, and the spoiled (step-)sister, to name a few” (Esquire Philippines, 2019). In the case of *House Arrest Of Us*, Zena was the rich and evil mom who loved everything expensive, looked down the poor, wore designer clothes, and spewed insults. In the end though, her character transformed: she was able to accept Korics’ family.

The Ugly and The Hot Wife. “The duo trope of an ugly guy, hot wife is extremely common in sitcom type shows” (Ibid). In this case, this refers to Sylver and Zena. They were polar opposites when it came to looks. Zena stood at 5 foot 8 inches tall and Sylver was approximately 5 foot 1 inch. She looked like a supermodel, and he appeared like an average guy. This trope was adopted because it added value to the humor espoused by the drama.

Rich Girl Falls In love with a Poor boy. Korics was technically not poor but when it came to economic standing, Q was ahead of him. His economic standing was an obstacle in getting the approval of Q's parents. If he was in the same social strata with them, then there would be no problem. The consequences of this love set up was portrayed in the drama. The members of their respective families were in constant chaos because the rich insulted the poor and the poor retaliated because they could not take it.

Against All Odds Love Story. This, a *Romeo and Juliet* inspired trope, is quite common in Filipino dramas. In the HAOFU drama, Q and Koric fought for their love. Korics tried his best to be accepted by the parents of Q. However, challenges came pouring like rain. There was a point that Korics grew tired of fighting for his love. He was about to give up and cancel the wedding but in the end, he did not give up.

These tropes have been criticized as worn out in articles published by *Esquire* entitled *10 Filipino Character Tropes That Deserve to Die a Fiery Death (in a Warehouse)* and PEP entitled *Cliques that Plague Filipino Teleseryes*. In order to address this criticism, there is a need to improve the conceptualization of dramas. Writers should experiment on out of the box characters and do away with clichés.

Dramas are tailored fit to viewers. However, dramas should challenge the status quo, introduce viewers to new concepts and brand-new characters that will trigger their critical thinking skills. While it is true that watching dramas for Filipinos is a form of diversion from the problems of the day, something Filipinos watch to laugh and enjoy, however, drama in the Philippines will improve if creators would go beyond the tried and tested formulas and clichés. The change in Filipino drama will not also be possible though if there is no government support in terms of financial and policy reforms.

Integration of Various Comedic Styles

Both texts *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* and *House Arrest of Us* were categorized under the comedy genre. Therefore, it was expected that there are comedic styles in the narrative. Koreans have a different way of attacking their humorous scenes. The punch lines were serious, but it held some sort of power to make viewers laugh still. Sometimes the laughter emanated from the character's traits like Atty. Woo: her being innocent and unpretentious was a source of fun because she said lines that she was not supposed to say. Filipinos have their own style that also makes a scene funny. The style is composed of different elements. It ranges from silly lines and scenes, unison style delivery, funny traits of the characters, repetitive lines and scenes, double entendres, game approaches, unrealistic characters, exaggerated acting, and corny antics.

The most frequent approach in the drama were the repetitive lines and scenes and the unison style delivery.

Silly Lines and Scenes

A romantic comedy genre will not be called a comedy without the silly lines and scenes. Filipinos are generally happy people and so they have the ability to introduce lines that make the audience laugh.

In Episode 1, 26:05-26:01, Zena was busy preparing for the arrival of the De Guzman family. She gave instructions to Yaya Marie to use their expensive plates and cutlery and make sure that the De Guzmans cannot pay for it if they break it accidentally.

[Yaya Marie]: Madam paano kung ako ang makabasag?

(Madam how about if I was the one who broke it?)

[Zena]: E di bayaran mo. (Then pay for it)

[Yaya Marie]: Ikaw mag hugas (pinggan) madam ha?

(Please wash the dishes madam)

Still in Episode 1, Korics introduced his family to Sylver and Zena. When it was the time of Berna to be in the limelight, Korics introduced her this way.

[Korics]: At siyempre, huwag natin kalimutan ang nagbigay sa akin ng buhay. Weighing 250 pounds plus plus plus plus 12 percent VAT.... Mama Berna! (And of course, let us not forget the person who gave me life. Weighing 250 pounds plus plus plus plus 12 percent Vat.... Mama Berna!)

Papatu was also introduced in a silly way.

[Korics]: Papatu (hesitates) with a green shirt.

[Papatu]: Naka green!

In Episode 2, 12:30-12:15, Sylver was trying his best to pin something on Korics so that the wedding will not push through. He was still at the point of his life where he could not accept that his daughter will get married.

[Sylver]: “Malalaman ko rin ang baho mo boy (Soon I will know your secrets boy!)

Then Papatu farted

[Papatu]: “Il’m sorry balae, kamote?” (I am sorry, sweet potato? Anyone?)

The *baho* which means smell in English in Sylver’s line was even more emphasized when Papatu farted. The *kamote* or sweet potato in Papatu’s lines refer to the smell perhaps of his fart.

Sylver did a little investigative work in order to find something that will paint Korics badly in Episode 2, 11:02. He went into the room occupied by the family of Korics and began to open and check their bags and belongings. While doing this, he found funny

items in their bags, such as a lampshade, a fish figurine, a plant, a fire extinguisher, an Armalite rifle, and a man inside the bag. In real life, this is beyond ordinary and so this scene was funny.

The continuing competition between Sylver and Korics was also. This time they indulged themselves in the noodle cookfest in Episode 3, 9:11. They had funny expressions while kneading the dough. In one instance, Sylver threw the dough on air à la chef, and it went straight to Mang Roger's face.

In Episode 4, 17:53 – 17:47, Korics gifted Q a cute little dog as a monthsary present. Everyone was so excited to give her a name. Berna gave it a nickname as Sum-sum and Zena called it Mer-Mer. The real name of the dog is Summer. Papatu also volunteered a list of names.

[Papatu]: Mas maganda siguro na sweetiepoo, loonypoo or Fernandopoo. (Fernando Poe is a popular veteran actor in the Philippines. He is considered to be one of the legends of the Philippine cinema).

Korics ended up in a motel because he was drunk in a flashback in Episode 7, 4:03-3:54. He and Q had broken up. He was trying to explain to Q that nothing happened between him and the person he was with in the motel. In the backstory, Korics thought that it was Q on top of him but then when he opened his eyes, he found out that it was a cross dresser and when asked about his identity, the cross dresser just stuck his tongue out as if he was about to eat him alive, making the scene hilarious.

Moreover, the scene would also be funny if the punch line came out of nowhere. Papatu kept on asking in Episode 1 about the meaning of pre-nup because it was brought out during the discussion. All the while the term was forgotten, until in Episode 13, 2:06 – 12:03, on board a van. He asked this question out of nowhere when Korics was having a

dramatic mode. It was funny because no one expected it to be asked and the scene was serious: “[Papatu]: “Anak, what is prenup?”

Adding Funny Traits to the Characters

Berna is a type of loving mother to Korics, Rufus, Abigail and to the new baby. She was fiery when insulted and did not back down without a fight. However, her weakness was that she could not finish her sentences. Because of this, the other characters are forced to supply the missing words, like a game. Most of the sentences that she uttered were famous quotes.

“Sige Let’s eat, I am so hungry. I can eat a...”

“Don’t’ judge a book by its...”

“Because Blood is thicker than...”

“Mother knows...”

“Parental...”

“The hardest job in the world is being...”

“Because I believe the truth shall set you...”

“Forgive and....

The screenwriter was able to weave quotes seamlessly to the plot of the story. Since it was patterned like a game, it was fun.

Papatu or Yam was the new husband of Berna. He provided the needs of the family when Papawan could not send money to them. He treated Papawan’s children like his own. However, he was the type of a character who loved repetition. He repeated the statements of others.

[Sylver]- “So, can we talk about the wedding while eating?”

Ep. 1 (12:52)

[Papatu]- “Better yet, while eating, we can talk about the wedding” Ep. 1 (12:48)

He had also adopted the funny trait of Berna in which he could not finish his sentences.

“[Papatu]: Bernadette. Uuwi na tayo as soon as....”

Yaya Marie and Mang Rogers were the reliable house helpers of the Capili. They were always up-to-date regarding the latest happenings inside the house. The way they butted in and inserted their points on different issues that surround them, made them comic characters. Their crazy antics, speculations, scheming, and punch lines contributed to the humor of the story.

If there were no characters such as Berna, Papatu, Mang Roger, and Yaya Marie in the story, then the source of humor will be limited and the purpose of making viewers laugh will not be realized.

Unison Style in Delivering Lines

The characters in *House Arrest Of Us* spoke some of their lines in unison. When they wanted to emphasize a point, prod another to make an action or a reaction to what is being said, they said it all together like a cheering squad or a group of students reciting a poem together, as follows:

- a.) “Pero pag sinabi na huwag” (3:24) Ep. 1
- b.) “Sabihin mo na” (3:55) Ep. 4
- c.) “Isolate!” Isolate! Isolate! Isolate!” Ep. 7 (1:13-1:11)
- d.) “Wala nga akong virus eh. Silence!” “Silence” Ep. 8
(16:02-16:00)
- e.) “Kaya mo ba ako ina-aya mag tanan?”
“Magtatanan kayo?” (all)

“Paano tayo mag tanan eh magkapatid tayo?”

“Ano?” (all) Episode 9 (6:08-6:01)

f.) “Rudy nakabuntis ka?”

“Nanaman?” (All)

“At alam mo ito Korics?”

“Hindi”

“Ano?” (All) Episode 9 (5:32-5:36)

It is in Episode 11, where they took their unison delivery to the next level. They portrayed the role of the priest or minister in the wedding and the lines of the priest or minister was spoken by the characters, as follows:

Ep. 11 (15:30-15:28)

(All) “Korics tinatanggap mo ba si Q bilang asawa?”

(15:23-15:17)

(All) “Q tinatanggap mo ba si Korics bilang asawa?”

(15:10-15:05)

(All) “We now pronounce you husband and wife. You may now kiss the bride.”

When lines are said together, the message becomes stronger. In comedy, every action or line needs to be exaggerated in order to capture attention. Filipinos are indeed very innovative in showing their humorous side in a drama.

Repetitive Lines and Scenes

This is a drama of repetitions. When something is being repeated, it means that it is important, or it needs to be emphasized. “Repetition in comedic writing can be referred to as a call back. It occurs when a statement of a theme is recalled as the punchline to a

joke or at the close of a scene” (Comedic Device, 2023). In *House Arrest of Us* repetition was portrayed in different style.

In Episode 2, repetition was a ping pong. Sylver and Korics were trying get Q’s attention. They called her several times and they would take turns, like a ping-pong.

[Sylver]: Q

[Korics]: Mahal (vice versa)

Sylver found a land title in Korics’ belongings in Episode 3. He used this to make Q angry at Korics because he did not trust him enough. There was an altercation between Korics and Sylver. The final straw was when Sylver told Korics that he was going to take Q away from them. Then Sylver faked his heart attack, making everyone think it was real enough that they all panicked, then, all of sudden, all of the characters felt like that they were also having a heart attack. So, everyone held their chest and acted like they were having a hard time breathing, repeating Sylver’s initial action.

In Episode 6, Korics excused himself from the dining table because he was still mad at Q. After Korics excused himself from the dining table, the rest of the characters also followed, excusing themselves from the table.

Q and Korics were isolated in Episode 8. To ensure the safety of everyone, they were not allowed to leave their rooms. Because of exasperation, Korics slid his back on the door. In slang, it is called, “walling”. All the other characters followed suit. They did this to show their frustrations in their current situation because the pandemic had taken a toll on all of them. They repeated the action of Korics, which was to slide down from the wall.

As can be seen here, “The general principle is if you repeat something often enough—a word or a phrase—eventually it will become funny “(Edley, 2018).

Double Meaning Jokes

In the jargon of comedy, it is called *double entendre*. It means that “the word or phrase has initially relatively innocent meaning, but its ambiguity lends itself to a more risqué interpretation” (Edley, 2018). This kind of style originated from sexual innuendos. In *House Arrest Of Us*, double entendre was used by Zena in Episode 9. Sylver discovered that something happened between Rudy and Zena. He talked to Zena, and she admitted that something happened between her and Rudy years ago.

[Zena]: But that was a long, super long, exceptionally long.

[Sylver]: Anong long ito?

[Zena]: Long time ago...

The context was about “something that happened years ago”. The way Zena is saying this, she seemed like referring to the male sex organ but she clarified that, she was referring to time and not about anything else.

Game Like Approach in Scenes

When someone was playing a game, it meant there was going to be a lot of fun and laughter. This was the primary expectation of a player. In *House Arrest Of Us*, they integrated a game like technique in their humor: the “Name-A-Person” game. In Episode 9, during the confrontation between Rudy, Zena, Sylver and the rest, Sylver called Zena’s name. Just like a game, Zena did not want to answer, she just mentioned another name and the person she mentioned, mentioned another name, so on and so forth.

In the same episode, Mang Roger revealed to everyone the sexy VHS tape which belonged to Rudy. Rudy was worried and anxious, and he tried to grab the VHS tape. It was like a game of pass the ball. They passed Rudy’s VHS tape of from one person to another.

Corny Antics

Corny, in the context of Filipino culture, means *cringy* or a feeling of cringe. There are some lines and dialogues which aim to humor or make the viewers fall in love, but it ended up being corny and trying hard.

In Episode 6, Q wanted to say sorry to Korics for keeping Abigail's secret from him. Q carried the dog in her arms. She made the dog face Korics and said sorry using a cute voice. She pretended that Summer was the one apologizing on her behalf.

When it was Q's turn not to talk to Korics in Episode 7, when she learned that Korics checked in a motel with someone else, Korics borrowed Berna's phone so that Q would answer it and the following corny conversation ensued:

[Korics]: "Please press one kung mahal mo si Korics. Please press two kung mahal na mahal mo si Korics."

[Q]: "Press end call kung hindi mo na siya matatangap ulit."

In Episode 8, Q and Korics were isolated from the rest of the family because Sylver thought they had COVID. He heard them cough while they were in the kitchen. Q was begging his father to let her out. Her actions were not corny, her dialogue was.

"[Q]: "So please Pa, please let me out. I want to be with my future husband, too, Pa!"

Still in Episode 8, the pandemic took a toll on everyone, and they were all disappointed and frustrated. Zena was in the shower, wearing her nighties, and was bawling and *walling*. Then the rest, also slid their backs on the walls, the doors and even chairs. The purpose of the *walling* was not cringy, it was the act of walling itself.

Q and Korics were isolated from the rest to ensure the safety of everyone in Episode 8. In one of the scenes, the couple realized that their rooms were only separated by a wall, and they can actually see and touch each other without entering. They just

needed to stand a little bit higher, and they could already see each from the other side. The purpose of the scene was to make the audience *kilig*, but it turned out to be corny.

[Both]: “Miss na kita Mahal” (they say it together while standing in both ends of the veranda) (11:16)

[Both]: “Mahal!” (11:08) (they say it together when they get near the wall and hug each other in the small space)

Over the years, “Filipinos adore a good laugh” (Manalo, 2022). Comedy films and series are reflections of the cheerfulness and joyfulness of Filipinos. Culturally, Filipinos still manage to smile even if they are victims of calamities. A *Pinoy* has an innate happy disposition. The comedy style of Filipinos is still *makamasa* (Ibid). This was evidenced by the various styles and punch lines portrayed in *House Arrest of Us*, for example. The audience, which the series targeted, were the OFWs and perhaps the Class C and D demographic (lower classes). Where the Koreans’ style of comedy was high style, in which there needed to be processing involved, the Filipino style was only to entertain.

Koreanization in the text

It is called *Koreanization* because it bore similar narrative elements to Korean dramas such as unique story, culture integration, values inculcation, issue-based narrative and product placement. They only vary in terms of depth and manner of execution.

A romantic comedy which sought to entertain viewers and tackled issues relevant to the community is remarkable. It is possible that the writers of *House Arrest of Us* were influenced by Korean drama, because it is a popular text worldwide.

The Korean text was consistent in integrating these elements in their dramas. Several studies and articles tackled in this dissertation proved the global appeal of Korean dramas because of its diverse stories, production quality, bold and skilful storytelling, and

intense and engrossing storylines. The Filipino text was usually criticized for its old, predictable formulaic plots. However, this dissertation proved that Filipino creatives are capable of producing high calibre outputs as long as they are given ample support (funding, training, policy).

Through the years, Filipino *teleseryes* had featured stories which showed Filipino values and culture such as *Honesto*, *May Bukas Pa*, *100 days to Heaven* and tackled issues of identity and heroism via *Katipunan*, *Ilustrado*, *Amaya* and the latest, GMA's *Maria Clara at Ibarra*. However, production of these kinds of drama lacked consistency. The production value and engrossing storylines were just limited to a few drama productions.

Unique Story

The concept of *House Arrest of Us* is the journey of an engaged couple during the pandemic. It is unique since the story's backdrop was the pandemic. The story showed how interesting it was to unravel how the couple survived the constant chaos between their families, the social-economic effects of the pandemic, and changing personal relationships. The story was simple but relatable to those who underwent challenges during the pandemic.

Embedding Culture in the Narratives

House Arrest Of Us was a cultural text because it showcased the Filipino culture in terms of food, cultural beliefs, cultural values, and cultural traditions. The Koreans were well known to integrate their culture to their dramas every chance they can get.

Food

Although, it was not shown in the drama, it was mentioned in Sylver's dialogue with Harry, their business partner. He promised to cook chicken *adobo* for Harry, a foreigner, when he arrives in Manila: "And when you get here, I'm gonna cook your favorite dish.

Chicken adobo” (16:05). Chicken Adobo, which is made of chicken, soy sauce and vinegar, is a favorite of Filipinos. Kare-Kare, another Filipino dish, was also mentioned in the dialogues when Harry told Q that his parents miss Kare-Kare: “My dad and mom really miss your Kare-Kare” (15:33). Kare-kare is a dish made up of beef and rich and tasty peanut sauce.

It would have been better if, aside from mentioning these dishes, the series also showed and featured Adobo and Kare-kare. This is unlike *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, where they not only mention Korean food such as gimbap, but also show it, so viewers could visualize it as they can see it on television. Hence, more visual storytelling is recommended for Filipino dramas.

Cultural Customs and Traditions

Pamamanhikan as part of the Filipino culture was introduced in the story. *Pamamanhikan* is the custom of “a gathering hosted by the bride’s family and attended by the groom’s family. The wedding plans are usually discussed during this event such as the church, entourage, reception, budget, and the likes. The practice symbolizes honor and respect to the parents of both parties” (Moya, 2021). In the story, Korics and his family, went to Q’s house for their *pamamanhikan* and did not expect their families to disagree during this event. His family thought that the Capilis were insulting them and flaunting their money. Hence, chaos happened. “Yung boy na yan kailangan patunayan na kaya niyang tapatan ang Tatay mo (That young man should prove that he can level up to your father)” (25:22-25:20).

In a Filipino family, once the daughter gets married, the parents ensure that their daughter will live a good life with her future husband. In fact, in the Filipino culture...” the choice of spouse may be influenced by the preferences of the family. In some families, it is expected for the prospective partner to gain approval of their potential in-laws” (Cultural

Atlas, 2023). In the context of the drama, Korics had to prove himself to his potential in-laws.

In Filipino Weddings, the *barong tagalog* is the usual attire of the groom and his groomsmen. The *barong tagalog* and *baro't saya* are the Filipino National Costumes. The barong is usually made of *jusi* or *pina* and the design is intricate and sophisticated.

In the drama, Korics and the male members of the family all wore barong tagalog for their fitting.

The spirit of *Bayanihan* lived on in the *House Arrest of Us*. *Bayanihan* was the term used to describe the traditional action of neighbors and family members helping a person safely move their house to another location or *bahay kubo* by offering to carry the *bahay kubo* on their backs. The context of *Bayanihan* in the contemporary world is depicted as a form of help and cooperation family and friends rendered to a person in need. *Bayanihan* was instrumental in helping Filipinos survive the pandemic. Hence, during the pandemic, everyone shared what they had, helped those in need and contributed in their own ways to ease the effects of the pandemic to all the *kababayans*.

In the drama, Korics' family felt bad for Q's family because their employees were retrenched. The salon business had stopped earning money during the pandemic. The Korics' family introduced to the Capili family a way to stay afloat.

[Korics]: "Tito, Tita, Mahal, uh. Una una po sa lahat eh. Gusto ko pong magpasalamat sa pagpapatuloy sa aking pamilya sa bahay ninyo. Pasensiya na rin po sa abala at pangugulo minsan. Pero ngayon nga may pinagdadaan tayong krisis. Sana po isantabi muna natin ang mga issues at haya-an niyo po kami na makatulong sa inyo. Dahil naniniawala tayo na kapag sama sama tayo, malalagpasan

natin ang krisis na ito (Uncle, Auntie, Love. First, I would like to send my gratefulness to everyone for allowing us to stay in your home. I would like to apologize for the disturbance this may have caused you. But now we are experiencing a krisis. I hope we could set aside all our issues and please allow us to help you. I believe that we could survive this crisis as long as we are together) “

Cultural Practices

[Papatu] “Kapag ang lalake nag asawa na, kailangan bubukod na. Kasi may sarili na siyang Pamilya. Tama Korics?” (19:33-19:24) (When a man is already married, he needs to find his own home because he has a family of his own. Right Korics?)

As can be seen above, Filipinos have the cultural practice of letting the newlywed couple live on their own once they get married. However, there are times when the couple stays in the in-laws’ house, especially if they still lack the budget to buy a house. In the contemporary world, parents encourage their children to have a house of their own to avoid conflicts in the future.

In the drama, Sylver and Zena prepared a room for Korics and Q to stay after they get married. This did not sit well with Papatu, who asked Korics regarding his decision. At that moment Korics could not decide yet and he said it depended on Q.

[Sylver]: “We can’t eat if we are not complete” (17:30).

Filipino families eat together, “no matter how modest and meager the meal, it was best shared by family members together” (The Freeman, 2017). They eat as a family during mealtimes because this is the only time parents can talk to their children and vice

versa. However, in the modern times, some Filipino families no longer eat together because of myriad of reasons such as traffic, academics or careers, and playing gadgets. On the other hand, in the drama, the *Pamanhikan* Lunch would not start unless Q arrived. The drama wanted to highlight that it is the culture of Filipinos to wait for everyone at the table before eating a meal.

It is also a cultural practice of Filipinos to pray before meals. In the drama, the two families said a prayer first before they ate their breakfast (21:33- 21:28). However, in the drama it was portrayed in a rude way. The De Guzmans were too excited to eat to finish the prayer. They also wanted to insult Zena, who was too formal, and to show her that they were hungry, her slow praying getting in the way of their meal.

Karaoke and Videoke singing is truly a *Pinoy* cultural practice. Whether happy or sad, the Filipinos' top favorite activity was singing in the videoke. In the drama, singing in the videoke was featured in Manugang Moves # 2 Sakyan Ang Hobby Para Happy. Papatu and Papawan advised Korics on how to win Sylver over. He followed their advice and joined Sylver during the videoke session, singing the *Juan De la Cruz Band* 's song *No Touch* with him. *The Juan de la Cruz Band*, considered to be a pioneer of Pinoy Rock, was a Filipino rock group formed in 1968.

The concept of *pasalubong* is also very Filipino. Whenever a balikbayan or OFW comes home to the Philippines, he or she always has presents for his family. It could be items such as chocolates, soap, shampoo, clothes, towel, shoes, and canned goods. In the drama, Rudy, who came home from Japan to attend his son Korics' *Pamanhikan*, announced to everyone that he had *pasalubong* for all. He then opened his suitcase and presented his gifts for all.

Filipinos name their dogs in an unusual way. "Bakit ganon? Pangalan ba yan ng aso. Bakit hindi na lang Bantay, Brownie, Pulgas (Why did you name the dog that way?

Is that a name for a dog? You could have resorted to Bantay, Brownie, or Pulgas)". Bantay, Brownie, and Pulgas are common dog names in the Philippines. This argument stemmed from Korics giving Q a dog as a gift and they were all arguing what to name the dog. Filipino names for dogs were offered to Korics and Q but they instead chose Summer as her name.

In relation to the name of Summer, Berna and Zena wanted to give Summer a nickname. Berna wanted to call her Sum-sum while Zena wanted to call her Mer-mer. Filipinos are known to give repeating nicknames to their children, examples of which are John-john, Ann-ann, Lablab, Mac-mac, Dam-dam, etc.

Jack-en-Poy is a Filipino children's game. In other cultures, such as Koreans, they also have their own version of this game. In English, it is called rock, paper, scissors game. In the drama, while Zena, Sylver, and Q were discussing the future of their business, the game was included in the conversation. While Zena was explaining that she does not want their branches to close, she was making hand gestures which prompted Sylver to play *Jack-en-poy*. It was a silly action which added value to the humor of the scene.

It is a culture of the Filipinos that when they get drunk, one of the drinkers would share his problems. The other drinkers will listen and give advice. Oftentimes, the drinking session serves as a venue to air out frustrations, sentiments, and worries. In the drama, Papatu shared his sentiments on his wife Berna to Mang Roger and Sylver. He told them that he still loved her in spite of the truth. However, in truth, he was jealous of Rudy.

[Papatu] "Yung asawa ko na si Berna. Mahal na mahal ko yan. Kahit na ang katawan niya parang siyang elephant. Kahit tatlo ang anak nila ni Pareng Rudy, mahal na mahal ko pa rin siya. Kahit na ex niya si Pareng Rudy. Mahal na

mahal ko pa rin siya. Tapos minsan nalungkot si Pareng Rudy, parang binalewala niya na ako. Parang nagging etchepwera na lang ako. Parang thank you na lang for your cooperation. Ganon ba yun? Minsan nga nag lalabing labing kami, tumutulo pa yung mantika niya sa bunganga ko pero mahal ko pa rin si Berna (I love my wife Berna even if her body is as big as the elephant. Even if she and Rudy had three kids, I still love her. Even if Rudy was her ex-husband, I still love her. In one instance, Rudy was lonely. I was there but she ignored me. Is that the way of saying thank you for your cooperation? Sometimes when we made love, her sweat are flowing to my mouth but still I love her.)”.

Moreover, in the Philippines, there are two family set-ups, the nuclear family and the extended family. The nuclear set up is composed of the mother, father and the children. The extended family, on the other hand, is composed of the mother, father, children, grandparents and sometimes close relatives. They all live in the same house. In the drama, the modern family, wherein the former partners (Berna and Rudy), were in good terms with each other for their children, was introduced. In the words of Berna, “ganyan talaga sa showbiz” because this set up is common among celebrities.

Cultural Beliefs

Marriage is particularly important for Filipinos. It is considered a lifelong commitment, aptly described by this old adage usually said by old people: “ang pag-aasawa ay hindi katulad ng mainit na kanin na pag napaso ay iluluwa (Getting married is not like eating hot rice and when it burns your mouth, you will spit it)”. In the first part of

Episode 2 when Q and Korics faced a counsellor during the pre-cana seminar, the concept of marriage in the Filipino context was introduced.

[Counsellor] “Sigurado na ba kayo sa desisyon niyo (are you sure about our decision)? Kasi pag pumirma ako dito, walang atrasan ha (You see, once I sign this and we do this, there is no turning back)”.

For Filipinos, getting married means having children but the priority is to be stable and have a house first. In the drama, Q and Korics were talking about how stressful their engagement was. Korics said that when everything was stable, they would have children, but Q argued that they need to have a house first before having children.

“Mamahalin mo ang buong pagkatao niya. Kung magpapakasal ka, papakasalan mo rin ang buong pamilya niya (You will love the whole of him. If you get married, you will also marry his family).”

Moreover, the drama shows that marriage is not just for the couple. Marriage in the Filipino context means getting the whole family’s approval, too, even though acceptance of the relationship is a risk and may take a while.

In the Philippines, June is considered to be the best month to get married. As such, many women want to be a June bride. Juno, the Roman goddess of marriage, was the inspiration for the month of June. This is because there is a belief that “couples who married in June were supposed to be blessed with fortune and happiness” (Visaya, 2022). In the drama, Korics said that Q’s dream is to become a June bride, which showed this part of the culture.

Going abroad is tantamount to a good and abundant life. This cultural belief is the reason there is diaspora of Filipinos in other countries. Their purpose is to give their

families back home a better life. This the reason for the term OFW or Overseas Filipino Workers. In the drama, Q was planning to go abroad for two years, not to work but to study, because she had a scholarship. She thought that going to London will change hers and Korics' lives for the better. However, this decision did not sit well with Korics. It hurt his pride. This was one of the reasons why they almost broke up and cancelled their wedding.

[Q] "Mahal, it's just two years (Love, it is just two years)."

[Korics] "It's just two years? Mahal, two years yun, matagal yun (Two years? It is a long time.)."

[Q] "Sige na Mahal. Pumayag ka na. Magandang opportunity sa akin ang scholarship nay un. Mag kakaroon ako ng connections, other opportunities. Malay mo baka ma expand natin ang salon or maka pag open tayo ng own business natin. If you want pwede ka rin doon makapag film school, di ba? (Please allow me My love. It is a good opportunity for me because I got a scholarship. I will be able to establish connections and look for opportunities. You will never know; we can bring the salon business there. If you want, you can also go to film school in London)."

The drama also showed that colonial mentality is still embedded in Pinoys even up to the present time. This is shown through the Filipino belief that anything imported has good quality. This can be explained through the Spaniards ruling over the Philippines for 300 years and then the Americans and Japanese ruled over the Philippines next. As such, it was planted earlier Filipinos' minds that their culture and values should align with the

colonizers'. In the drama, Sylver invited Papatu for a drink. At first, Papatu declined the invitation but when he heard it was imported, he changed his mind.

[Sylver]: "Imported to!"

[Papatu]: "Imported?"

[Sylver]: "Oo"

Superstitious beliefs on marriage and death of Filipinos were also included in the narrative. For example, "Brides who try on their final wedding dress before the big day are doomed to experience bad luck. Some even believe that wearing the final gown during a dress fitting means the wedding won't push through" (Segovia, 2021). In the drama, Q tried her wedding dress on during the fitting before the ceremony. This foreshadowed what will happen next: her own wedding was almost cancelled.

Still another wedding day superstition is laying your eyes on your partner's before exchanging I do's will bring bad luck or cause the wedding will be cancelled. In the drama, they had a wedding re-enactment of the processional march. Before Q could walk down the aisle, Roger covered the Korics' eyes with a face mask (17:02-16:58).

Before Q went down the stairs, her parents also covered her eyes with a face mask so she could not see Korics (16:37-16:34). However, Korics' grandfather called and informed everyone that he had contracted COVID. Korics and Q thus removed their face masks, prompting Yaya Marie to say to Korics, "Nakita mo yung bride. That's a bad sign."

Another superstitious belief tackled in the drama is *Sukob sa Patay*. *Sukob sa Patay* means when there is death in the family, the wedding should not be scheduled on that same year for it means bad luck. In the drama, Yaya Marie found Q's wedding veil under the chair, and she said that their wedding is "sukob sa patay."

[Yaya Marie]: "Naku! Madam" (Oh! Madam)

[Zena]: "Bakit?" (Why)

[Yaya Marie]: Paano napunta ang belo sa ilalim ng upuan?
Naku sukob sa patay ang kasal niyo. Hindi kayong pwedeng
ikasal. Mamalasin kayo (Why is the veil under the chair? The
wedding will have bad luck. It is impossible to get married.
You will be doomed.).”

Cultural Values

Being pregnant out of wedlock is still not accepted in the Filipino society. For traditional Filipino families, this is still considered taboo. Although society is tolerant of this issue, it is still a source of shame for parents. This is grounded on the Filipinos’ Catholic faith which teaches that pre-marital sex is against God’s. It is still encouraged to get married first before having children.

[Korics]: “Alam mo, nangako siya sa akin na aalagaan ka
niya pero binuntis ka niya kahit indi pa kayo kasal (3:05) (He
promised to take care of you, but he got you pregnant even
if you are not married)! ”

Filipinos value their families, and they have close family ties. It is part of Filipino culture to show love and concern for a family member. In challenging times, family members of are there for each other to support and comfort. Children can depend on their parents in times of great need while parents will provide everything their children and try to be present in all their children’s milestones. In the drama, Korics was deeply troubled because his marriage to Q was going to be cancelled. His family knew how much this pained him and so they tried their best to show their love for him.

[Berna]: “Anak. Alam mo hindi ito madalas natin na sasabi
sa isa’t isa. Dahil siguro pamilya tayo. Yun tapos na iisip
natin na alam na natin ang lahat sa isa’t isa. Pero anak,

kamusta ka ba? (My child, you know we do not usually say this because as a family we are already familiar with each other. But my child, how are you?)”.

[Papatu]: Kahit naman indi normal yung pamilya natin, minsan magulo pa di ba? Pero sa ganitong pagkakataon. Dapat lagi tayong magkakasama(Even if our family is not normal. In fact, sometimes it is chaotic. But in moments like this, we should be together always).

[Papawan]: Pero sa kabila ng mga pagsubok na dumarating, ikaw lagi ang nagpapasaya sa pamilya natin. Kaya ngayon gusto sana naming bunmawi sa’yo (In every challenge that we face as a family, you always give joy. And so, we would like to return the favour back to you) .

House Arrest of Us is a cultural text because it featured many known and unknown aspects of Filipino culture to others. The platform of this series is on *Netflix* and because of the phenomenon called *transnational TV*, other countries could view this drama and learn about the Filipino culture. As filmmaker Condez (2023) has mentioned, “Narrative is always a reflection on how your culture tells a story”..

Integration of Familiar Values

Most of the values taught in the drama revolved around family values that some Filipinos might be forgetting. The values inculcated by the drama served as a reminder to Filipinos, especially the youth, to hold on to these principles as these will make them better people. These values will help a person survive the challenges and obstacles posed by the modern times.

[Q]: I can never trade my family for anything or anyone.”

This is a universal value, and everyone can relate. The family is one of the most important treasures a person has. For Filipinos, they believe that one must always go back to their family. The family is also the reason or the primary Filipino motivation to work hard so that they will have a good life. In the drama, Q was supposed to elope with Korics, but she changed her mind the moment she heard her mother cry and reminisce about her childhood. It hurt her and she had second thoughts. This showed the Filipino belief that though one can never choose their family members, one’s family will always serve as their strength.

[Q] “We don’t really know our families.”

Family members are also human beings with secrets, mistakes and imperfections. Acceptance is needed within the family.

[Berna]: No family is perfect. Korics, indi lahat ng pamilya perpekto. Minsan dysfunctional, magulo. At saka anak, hindi lahat ng bagay dapat mo akuin. Hindi lahat akuin mo kahit mahal an mahal mo ang tao. Hindi ka naman perpekto eh. Hindi ka palaging malakas. Kaya walang mali doon (No family is perfect Korics. Sometimes it is dysfunctional or chaotic. And also, my child, you should not carry the burden all the time just because you love the person. You are not perfect. Not all the times you are strong.).”

As such, Filipinos are expected to focus on the positive things and not dwell on the negative, such as not being able to understand one’s family.

If the going gets tough, our parents will never abandon us.

In the drama, Zenaida and Sylver talked to Queences and showed her their support because they knew she was pain. They were fair enough to present the two sides of the coin and as her parents, gave her advice. They encouraged Q to tell Korics how much she loved him.

[Zena]: “Sabihin mo sa kanya ang totoo (Tell him the truth)”.

[Q]: “Ano ang totoo Ma? (What truth Ma?)”.

[Zena]: “Na mahal na mahal mo siya. Na tatakot ka lang na mapunta sa wala ang pinag lalaban niyong pagmamahalan(That you love him, and you are just scared that what you fought for will just end up to nothing)” .

Marriage is a lifetime commitment.

Filipinos believe marriage is serious and one needs to stand by this choice no matter what. They believe that no matter how hard life is, no matter how many adjustments are needed to make it work, no matter how tempting it is give up and walk away, one must face their problems. In the drama, Q and Korics were teaching married couples that nothing came easy, that despite the challenges, that lifetime commitment made during the wedding day will save the couple during dark times. As such, the show showed the Filipino belief that it is important that one makes sure that he or she is ready to stand by this person through thick and thin, richer or poorer, and sickness and in health before he or she ties himself or herself to another person for the rest of his or her life.

Issue Based Narrative

As filmmaker Condez (2023) said, “Choose stories which will contribute to nation building. Truth is in your community. Go back to your core.” It is very important to tackle

issues which matter to the society. By doing so, the text becomes the voice of the voiceless. It will serve as a vehicle to inform the authorities of the plight of the homeless, unemployed, and poor. Texts should not be self-serving rather it should be an instrument that brings change.

The root of the issues tackled in the series was poverty. According to the latest Family Income and Expenditure Survey conducted by Philippine Statistics Authority “58.4 % or majority of the Filipinos belong to the low-income class” (Mangun, 2023). In *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, societal issues which affected the minorities, was the focus of the narrative while in *House Arrest of Us*, poverty was the focus. If the root of all evil is poverty, then this brings numerous problems such as crimes, unemployment, teenage pregnancies, environmental degradation, and immorality, among others. The widening gap between the rich and poor and the gruesome effects of pandemic were also major concerns raised in the drama.

Poverty pushes a person to do unimaginable things . Such was the case of Rudy. He lied about being an OFW in Japan to his family. The truth was he was a sexy star doing sexy films. He admitted that he did this to be able to send money to Berna and support his children. Many will frown on this profession, but it was very brave for Rudy to venture into this kind of work for his children. He was more concerned about the children’s future than his own. As the drama showed, it is really difficult to be poor especially if one already had children. Rudy was lucky because he did not have to commit crimes to provide for his family, unlike those who have to kill and steal in order to feed their families. While the Philippines is classified as a middle-income country, poverty remains a critical issue the government needs to address.

Teenage pregnancy is also one of the consequences of poverty. When the parents are busy earning money, children are left unattended with no guidance, as such they will

resort to doing things that they will regret after. In the drama, Abigail got pregnant out of wedlock, worse her boyfriend, who was still a student, could not support her. Blame must be placed not only on the parents but also the teen. The teen also has a choice. If she is really concerned about herself and her family, she will not do risky behaviors that will put her in danger.

[Abi] “Anong hindi mo paninindigan(What will you not stand by me?)?”

[Mark]: “Nag aaral pa kasi ako at wala kaming pera (I am still in school. We don’t have money)” .

[Abi]: “So ako lang to ganoon(So, it is all me?)?”

If the father will not stand by his child and the mother of his child, the woman is at a disadvantage, especially if the pregnancy happened outside marriage since there are many risks involved, such as abandonment of the pregnant woman. Such was the case of Abi in the drama.

The gap between the rich and the poor are getting wider and wider each year. The rich comprise 1.4 percent of Filipinos (Mangun, 2023). It is a small percentage compared to the percentage of poor people. The high-income class was portrayed in the drama as those who look down on other people especially those who do not belong in their class.

[Zena]: “Dapat malaman ng Korics nayan na hindi tayo basta-bastang pamilya (Korics must know, we are not an ordinary family)”.

[Zena]: “Yaya Marie kunin mo nga ang mga pang mayanam na gamit. Yung pang bisita natin. Kubyertos na gold, silver, ruby, emerald, lahat. Na kapag nabasag nila, hindi nila kayang bayaran (Yaya Marie, get all our rich looking thing

we use if there are visitors. Gold, silver, ruby, emerald cutlery. Make sure that if they broke it, they cannot pay for it)".

The drama showed how the rich prided themselves with their money and would rub it on the face of the poor. The context of the scene when Zena said this was, she was trying to explain to Q that she deserved a better partner. Korics was not well off and so she did not deserve him. Moreover, while Filipinos are also known to be hospitable, preparing the best food and using new cutlery for the visitors, the drama showed irony in the scene. In this scene, it was ironic that the Filipino hospitality bore a different meaning:

[Zena referring to Sylver] "Well you actually look expensive.

But you should've worn the Yves Saint Laurent suit."

In the drama, the Capilis seem "*matapobre*" in the guise of the line "we want the best for our daughter". In actuality, they want to rub their riches in the face of the poor.

The COVID pandemic caused so much havoc in the lives of the people. It caused unemployment, bankrupt businesses, death, and major effects on the mental state of people.

Korics was the pillar of their family. Being the eldest, he had to work hard to provide for all their needs. The pandemic pushed Korics up a wall. He lost his job, the only thing that made him secure. He was thus worried about his wedding, his sister and her baby. The pressure was slowly killing him. He was trying to show a strong façade, but the truth was his anxiety was slowly eating him away.

[Korics] "Lalong tumataas ang pressure sa akin Pre. Hindi ko na alam kung ano ang uunahin. Itong utol ko nabuntis pa. Saan ka hahanap ng trabaho? Eh bawal nga mag shoot. Kaya nga trinatrabaho ko ang project na ito dapat matuloy

ito. Kung indi ito matutuloy saan ako pupulutin. Kakasal pamandin ako. Ano yun ang groom walang trabaho (I am getting pressured. I do not know what to prioritize. Is it my sister who got pregnant? Where will I find work. We are forbidden to shoot because of the COVID restrictions. I am really working hard for this project to push through. If this do not materialize, what will happen to me? I am about to get married. Is it weird, the groom has no job?)?”

Korics was not the only victim, but also even Papawan/Rudy who were also put in a compromising position. Rudy vowed he would not die from COVID because he needed to go back to Japan. Rudy represented the OFWs were greatly affected by the pandemic. During the onslaught of the pandemic, many OFWs were forced to go home. Those who went home to the Philippines for a vacation were unable to go back because of lock downs, businesses shutting down, and retrenchment. COVID greatly affected the economy of countries. In fact, a total of 496, 435 OFWs were reported to have lost their jobs due to the global economics shutdown (Pazzibugan & Corrales, 2020).

Employers also faced a huge challenge during the pandemic. Some who were not lucky needed to close their businesses. There were others who needed to retrench their employees to keep the business afloat. Sylvester Salon represented the employers who lost millions in income and a trusted workforce because of the pandemic.

[Sylver] “Ah. Kaya kami nag patawag ng meeting na ito dahil gusto naming sabihin sa inyo ang status ng negosyo natin. And ah, siyempre, alam niyo na, gawa ng pandemyang ito, hindi tayo kumikita and we have to make tough decisions. Kailangan natin mag tanggal ng empleyado (We called this

meeting to inform you of the status of our business. We are no longer earning because of the pandemic and so we need to make tough decisions. We will retrench some of our employees).”

[Q]: “Di ba Mahal lockdown. Walang kita din ang Salon. Nag cocompute ako, medyo malaki ang mawawala sa amin kung hindi kami mag bubukas ng isang buwan(Love, since lockdown, our salon was not earning. I am trying to compute the incomeand expenses and it appeared that we would lose a lot of money if we cannot open in one month).”

During the COVID assault, “around 90,000 businesses, mostly micro small & medium enterprises remain close as the coronavirus pandemic continues to cause chaos on the economy (Ramos, 2020).”

The death of a family during the pandemic was also featured in the drama. As of 2023, there were a total 66, 188 recorded COVID deaths. In the drama, Korics’ grandfather was one of the COVID casualties. It caused so much grief in the family, especially for Korics, because his grandfather could no longer attend his wedding. Those who lost their loved ones during the pandemic, carry with them the pain every day. A person who died a COVID death needed to be cremated immediately, a practice that did not align with Filipino culture. Family members did not have a chance to say their final goodbye to their loved ones. It affected the mental state and well-being of those who were left behind.

[Berna] “Lintek na COVID to, ang lungkot. Indi ka man lang makapag pa-alam sa mahal mo kapag nawala (The hell to

this COVID. It is sad that you cannot say goodbye to your loved ones when they die).”

COVID did not just affect the economic aspects. It also tested the strength of the couple relationships, especially those who apart when the pandemic struck. In the drama, Rudy was not able to go home to his new wife because of the lock down and his wife was starting to demand attention from him, something he could not do at the moment:

[Rudy] “Cecil naman. Hindi pa nga akong pwedeng umuwi. Walang biyahe, lockdown pa (Cecil please, you know I cannot go home because there is no transportation because of the lockdown).”

[Cecil] “Diyos ko po Rudy, hindi ko na alam (Oh my God Rudy. I really do not know what to do with you).”

[Rudy]: “Bihira ka naman Cecil ho. Huwag mo naman gawin sa akin to(Cecil please do not do this to me).”

[Cecil] “Buti pa. Huwag na muna tayo mag usap. Magsama kayo ng dati mong asawa diyan (It is better for us not to talk. Join your former wife).”

The pandemic changed everything. It took a toll on people’s mental and emotional wellbeing. It wrecked businesses and took so many lives. The drama taught the viewers to never give up and trust that someday soon it would be all over.

Product Placement

The product placement tool is a technique that potentially influences consumers while having a concealed commercial purpose (Ong, et.al., 2022).

There was only one product which was featured in the series. This is the softdrink brand *Pepsi*, of which the main leads were the endorsers. The Pepsi can ring of this was

used as Q and Korics' engagement ring. There were scenes where Q was looking for snacks in the refrigerator and she got herself a Pepsi and some fruits (27:13). It was integrated seamlessly into the storyline and the product was given emphasis through the use of the ring as an engagement ring.

It is uncommon for dramas to have product placements in the Philippines. This is usually present in movies or films in the Philippines.

Information Education

The series was also an instrument to spread awareness regarding various information. It taught viewers how to identify COVID symptoms, the concept of digital remote branches, and even the simplest definition of the word pre-nup. Since the series had a wide reach, the creators took advantage of the medium to educate viewers. Information and Education was one of the major functions of media. *House Arrest of Us* combined entertainment and education for the benefit of the viewers.

It was in Episode 7, where the viewers are taught different information regarding COVID. First, Berna asked her family members to stand and check if they have symptoms of COVID.

[Berna]: "Alam niyo, mag si tayu an nga kayo. Papawan, Papatu hali na kayo ditto. Alam niyo kasi ang sabi, kapag umubo walang plema. So uubo tayo ha. One more time. Isa pa. One, Two, Three. Clear. Clear tayong lahat. Mga kamay niyo mag alcohol (16:04) (Everyone please stand up. They said to check if the the person has COVID, he coughs but there is no phlegm. Everyone let us all cough. One more time. Clear? We are all clear. Please use alcohol to sanitize)".

Second, Zena was advised to self-isolate because she went out of the house and met her friends. Sylver was busy checking on her if she had symptoms of COVID. In one scene, in Episode 7, Sylver was checking Zena's throat.

[Sylver]: "Say Ah."

[Zena]: "Ah" coughs

[Sylver]: "Wala naming maga ah (There was no swelling)."

[Zena] "Hindi Masakit. Namamaga o. Hindi mo nakikita (No. It is painful. It is swelling. Can't you see it?)?"

[Sylver]: "Mag steam ka. Mag steam ka nga muna. Dahan dahan ha (Please steam first. Do it slowly)."

Third, Q made sure that Zena had no fever and facilitated the swab testing. This was to ensure the safety of everyone and to make sure that Zena was not sick with COVID.

[Q]: "Pa, Ma, Relax muna. Ma can you check what is your temperature."

[Zena]: "36. 2!!!!!"

[Q]: "That's normal! That's normal!"

[Q]: "Ganito na lang. I will ask someone to come here para ma swab test ka. Hindi ka ba nahihiarapan huminga?"

[Zena]: "Sandali icheck ko ha Coughs coughs"

[Q]: "Inhale Ma. Exhale"

[Zena]: "I checked on Facebook. Marami na ang namamatay. Marami ang na iintubate. What if I go to the hospital? At wala ng mga kama (I checked on Facebook

many are dying. Many are intubated. What if I ended up in the hospital and there is no bed for me”).

[Q]: “Can you check naman this time kung mayroon kang panglasa(Please check if you have sense of taste)” .

[Zena]: “Ichechek ko muna”

[Q]: “Okay please. Coughs coughs”

[Zena]: “Wala akong malasahan (I cannot taste anything)!”

[Q]: “Okey Ma. Kami ni Yaya Marie will prepare something for you. Ikaw tahan ka muna diyan kasi pag ma stress ka lalong bababa ang immune system mo. Okay Relax. Papa’s here Okey Ma. Yaya and I will prepare something for you. Please calm down. Do not be stress or else your immune system will get low. Relax. Papa is here).”

The series was shown during the pandemic. As such, the scenes that included this information in the narrative were helpful to viewers, especially when they were confronted with the same situation.

The concept of digital remote branches was also introduced. Some of the physical branches of Sylvester Salon were forced to shut down because of the pandemic. Sylver and Zena were worried about their business and their employees. In Episode 10, Rufus discussed the possible alternatives to the couple so that things could still be maximized. He also informed them of the positive experiences of his Gen Z friends who also ventured in this kind of business.

[Rufus]: “This digital remote branches ang sagot sa pag salba sa Sylvester Salon dahil mas tipid, time saver, mas effortless at mas safe (Digital remote branches is the

answer to save Sylvester Salon. It is practical, time saver, effortless, and safe.).”

“Pero as a Gen Z, na mulat na sa digital execution ng businesses. I have known friends from streaming na nagging successful ang kanilang online transition. In fact, mas doble pa nga ang kinikita nila (As a Gen Z who is aware of the digital execution of businesses can prove that some of my friends became successful in their online transition).”

Q and Korics introduced to the viewers the idea of live selling using social media platforms. Online selling became a hit during the pandemic. People had a lot of time and so de-cluttering became a trend. After de-cluttering pre-loved items, live selling was the next step.

[Q]: So, nag declutter kami sa bahay and we found things na pwede na naming I let go pero power pa din (We declutter in the house and found things still in good condition and we decided to let it go)!”

Make-up Vlogging for Youtube was demonstrated by Zenaida while food photography and video production as a marketing strategy to sell frozen goods such as Embutido was presented by Korics.

The scene reflected the experiences of the people during the pandemic wherein they took advantage of the power of internet and different platforms to exchange goods and ideas. Some ventured into baking, cooking, and gardening in order to learn. The actions showed in the series were relatable to their viewers, making the viewing experience more exciting.

Lastly, Papatu brought up the word *pre-nup* twice in the series. In Episode 13, he mustered the courage to ask Korics the meaning of *pre-nup* or Pre-Nuptial Agreement.

[Korics]: “Papatu, ang prenup kasi, agreement yan ng dalawang tao bag ikasal. Iniilista kung ano mayron ang bride, kung ano ang meron ang groom. Tapos pagkakasundu-an ninyo, ano ang pagsasaluhan ng isa’t isa at kung ano itatago sa sarili niyo. Kung okey kayo sag anon (Papatu, prenup is a kind of agreement between to the couple before they get married. The bride lists down her properties and so is the groom. Then they decide which one to share and which one to keep).”

The series also introduced non-Filipino viewers to various places in the Philippines such as *Manila Cathedral*, *Manila Peninsula*, *Romblon*, *Angono*, *Rizal*, *Binangonan*, and *Marikina*. However, it was not shown visually. It was just mentioned in the dialogues. This is different from Korean productions, in that if they want to introduce a place in their country, they show the place and not just tell. Hence, non-Korean viewers will be enticed to visit the places which, in turn, could help boost the tourism industry.

Below is **Table. 17** which shows the comparison of narrative elements between Korean drama and Filipino drama.

Table 18.*Korean Drama Narrative Compared with Sub Themes*

KOREAN DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES	FILIPINO DRAMA MAIN THEME	SUBTHEMES
Korean Fusion: Narrative	Metamorphosis of the text	FIL-K Narrative Style	Integration of Popular Culture
	Classic Kdrama Narrative Elements		Song and Dance in a Drama
	Knowledge Sharing Vehicle		Transformation in the text
	Popular Culture Integration		Integration of Various Comedic Styles
	Multi-faceted Characters		<i>Koreanization</i> in the text
	Strong Plot		Information Education

Concluding Analysis

The message is at the core of the communication process. If there is shared meaning between the source and the receiver, then it is said that the communication is successful. In the context of *House Arrest of Us*, the message was conveyed, and the meaning was understood. It was able to impart valuable lessons, highlighted culture, injected innovative ideas and most of all it entertained the viewers. The drama was successful in communicating its message. However, the manner of crafting the message may have a different impact to the communication process. The plot points were not exhausted. The dialogues carried the story instead of the visuals and loose ends were not tied neatly. Hence, there was noise in the process of message creation. In the communication process, the noise must be removed so that shared meaning and positive feedback will be achieved. Again, the flaws in the narrative construction may not be entirely the fault of the production team. The corpus of work of the writer was more on

romantic love stories. She was known for her work, *Hello Love Goodbye* and *One More Chance*. While these films were popular and praised, *House Arrest of Us* seemed lacking. Perhaps a comedy writer should have taken the lead in writing this digi-movie series. The director, on the other hand, was popular for fantasy teleseryes such as *La Luna Sangre* or action genres such as *Iron Heart*. It must be his first time to mount a romantic comedy digi series since there were observable lapses.

The Filipino narrative was theorized as the *rise and fall* text. The narrative was able to achieve its purpose of conveying the intended meaning to the viewers (rise). However, there were still pitfalls which hindered the text from reaching that certain level of greatness (fall). To be able to rise again, the issues that resulted to the fall must be addressed.

Mythmaking in House Arrest of Us

The drama *House Arrest of Us* demonstrates the challenges a typical Filipino family usually face on a daily basis. The onslaught of the corona virus pandemic made matters even worse. It tested the strength and resilience of both the De Guzman and Capili families during the difficult times. It also became a baptism of fire to newly engaged couple Korics and Queences.

Star Cinema produced the digi movie series *House Arrest of Us* and it is an agency of mythmaking. Below are the myths unravelled in the digi series.

1. Heroines are empowered.

In the drama, it challenged the trope “the prince saved the damsel in distress”. Instead the “damsel in distress” saved the “prince” from his inner demons. The fact that Q allowed Korics to go even against her will is a showcase of bravery and inner strength. She allowed Korics to reflect on what he really wants. Korics’ short trip away from Q’s house made him see what he was going to miss if he turned away from Q. Q as the heroine here is empowered. She knew what she wanted and where she was coming from.

She was brave enough to make decisions. She did not depend on Korics. She allowed him to grow and find himself. She saved him from all his insecurities and doubts.

In the drama, she was also a successful businesswoman running the family's business. She had big dreams and wanted to explore the opportunities that awaited her abroad. She knew she loved Korics, but she also loved herself. She showed the epitome of an empowered woman.

2. Women have the upper hand.

In Star Cinema movies which star Daniel Padilla and Kathryn Bernardo, Kathryn is always painted as the rich and affluent one, while Daniel was either middle class or poor. The heroines took on the spotlight in the movies they produce.

In *House Arrest of Us*, Kathryn was the heiress of a salon empire while Daniel was a TV director. In the *Hows of Us* (Cathy Garcia Molina, Philippines, 2018), George Reyes (Kathryn) played a graduating medical student with Dutch blood on her father's side while Primo Alvarez (Daniel) played an aspiring musician. In another movie, *Crazy Beautiful You* (Mae Czarina Cruz Alviar, Philippines, 2015), Jackie (Kathryn) was a wild child rich kid while Eloy (Daniel) was the son of a politician out of wedlock. Eloy lived as a poor guy while his siblings on his father's side were living a rich life. In their latest teleserye, *2 Good 2 Be True* (Mae Czarina Cruz Alviar, Philippines, 2022), Ali (Kathryn) was a nurse, while Eloy (Daniel) was a mechanic/law student. In these movies and dramas, the heroine was always on the advantage side in terms of economic standing while the hero was always at a disadvantage. Except for *House Arrest of Us*, the rest of the drama and movies were mounted by women directors and it can be assumed that since they were at the forefront since they also gave their heroines the power.

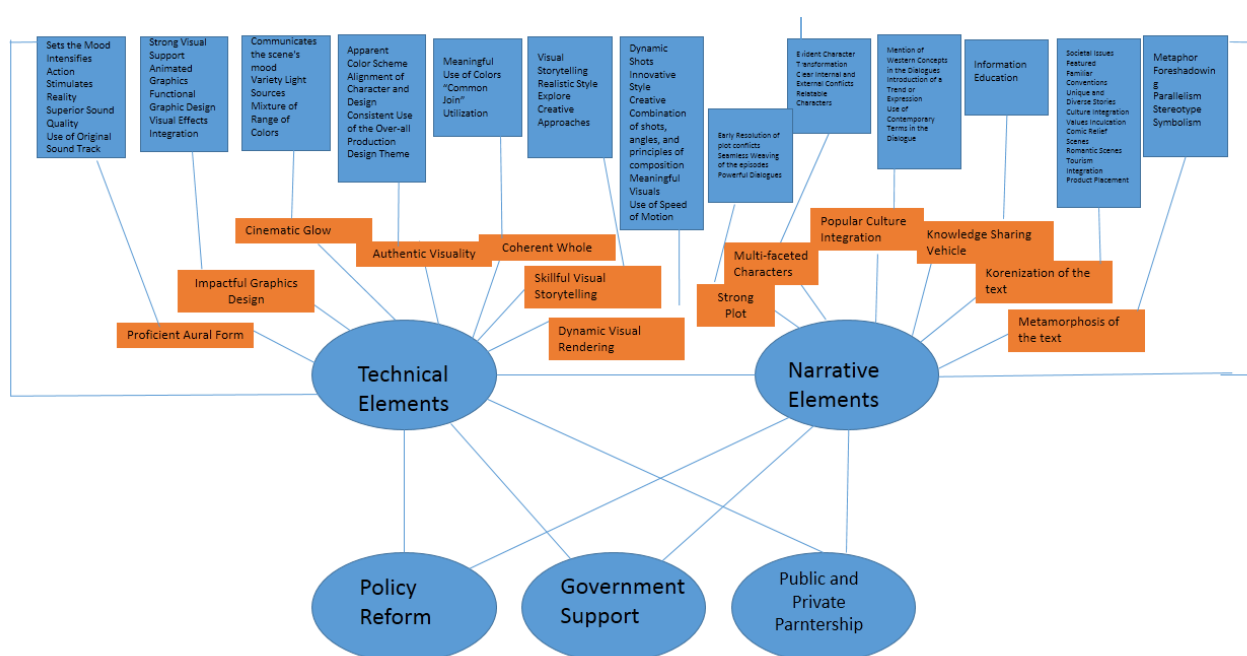
In the *House Arrest of Us*, Korics' economic standing was an issue to Q's family. They rubbed their riches to the family and questioned Korics' capability to support Q in their marriage.

This myth was the opposite of the trope, "poor girl fell in love with a rich guy". This time, the guy experienced judgment from the rich girl's family and the girl saved him from this unfortunate situation.

Drama Production Framework

Figure122.

Drama Production Framework



This framework is called the Drama Production Framework which was derived through socio-material basis. There are five major constructs which comprised the production of a high-quality TV drama. These are the technical elements, narrative elements, policy reforms, financial support and public and private parnterships. Policy reforms and financial support are forms of government support. Public and private partnerships refer to the cooperation of the government and business sector which aim to provide sponsorships and material support to networks and producers.

A TV drama is also composed of technical elements such as the Dynamic Visual Rendering, Skilful Visual Storytelling, Coherent Whole, Authentic Visuality, Cinematic Glow, Impactful Graphics Design, and Proficient Aural Form. Each has specific actions

which will contribute to the creation of a quality drama. The narrative elements, on the other hand, are composed of metamorphosis of the text (adopting of literary devices to enrich the text), Integration of universal elements known to be the narrative secrets of Kdrama which could be translated into the context of Filipinos, Knowledge Sharing Vehicle, Popular Culture Integration, Multi-faceted Characters and Strong Plot. Just like the technical elements, each has specific actions which will help enhance the narratives. The technical and narrative elements move together in synergy which explains the blue arrows above, below, to the left and right of the framework. Technical elements cannot function alone. It needs the narrative elements to complete the process. Finally, for these elements to achieve full potential, they need support through policy reforms and financial support from the government and sponsorships and material support through public and private partnerships.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Extraordinary Atty. Woo communicated its technical elements in various ways. The cinematography was characterized by dynamism, innovativeness, creativity, and meaningful discourse. The camera was able to effectively show the visual images needed to bring to life the story of Atty. Woo. Some of the techniques were basic but these were combined with fresh and creative ways. The “Korean Eye” combined high quality visuals with a meaningful discourse. Their actions helped shaped cinematography and created a standard worthy to be emulated.

Directing in this drama was reflected through its visual storytelling, realistic style and exploration of creative approaches. The director was able to effectively communicate his vision by showing this visually in different ways. The director wanted to achieve visual variety so he changed scene shots and different angles frequently. He explored creative transitions which can be produced using the camera and not through digital means. He also showcased different approaches to a flashback: through narration, talking heads, etc. He satisfied the viewer’s expectation through showing reality in his scene treatments.

The editing aspect of Kdrama was shown in their competence in color correction and color grading which helped to enhance the look of the scenes and at the same time help produce meaning.

Wood was the over-all production design theme in the drama. The various interior locations in the drama used wood as walls, flooring, furniture, or décor. The production

design choices aligned with the traits and behaviors of the characters. The drama also adopted a subdued and subtle color scheme.

The lighting design of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* used various light sources and took full advantage of the mixture of a range of colors. The primary purpose was to communicate the scene's mood and to enhance the image produced by the camera.

A huge portion of the budget went to graphics and visual effects. The graphics design of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* showed strong visual support and functionality. It also integrated visual effects and animation, which made the drama more visually appealing and informative.

The audio design boasted superior sound quality and original sound track. The drama also used a variety of music and sound effects in order to set the mood, intensify action or stimulate reality.

The requirements to achieve an excellent drama were satisfied because this drama's budget was sufficient. It was reported that this drama cost 20 Billion Won or approximately 800 million in Philippine peso. A big budget combined with the expertise of the production team and government support resulted in a powerful and globally competitive creative work.

The narrative of Korean drama successfully blended tried and tested elements and integrated it to novel treatments which helped developed the meaning.

There were several literary devices used such as metaphor, foreshadowing, parallelism, stereotype, and symbolisms. This enabled the reader to see that there were meanings embedded in the visuals, dialogues, and actions in the drama series.

The classic Kdrama elements comprised most of the text. Research showed that Korean drama text was formulaic. In the case of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, it shed light on the many issues that mattered to Koreans, tried out new concepts, introduced culture,

inculcated values, injected laughter and romance, and featured tourism. In the discussion of the different issues, the text challenged the status quo and served as the social voice of the minorities. It also presented the business side of Kdrama through product placement.

These elements were familiar to audiences and that was what made them go back and consume more Kdramas. The text was rich and it presented audience with various information that entertained and triggered their critical thinking skills.

Korean drama text is a vehicle for knowledge sharing and awareness. In the case of *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, it presented many ideas, which ranged from legal, medical, science, computer science and even to the mundane, such as tips. It cultivated knowledge to its viewers through education, which led the viewers to learn and apply it to their day-to-day lives. Kdrama was not only a text for entertainment but it was also a tool to propagate knowledge.

Popular Culture was also integrated into the narrative through inclusion of Western figures and concepts in the dialogues, introducing expressions and contemporary terms. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was an Asian text married to Western concepts.

The strength of Korean dramas was on their multi-faceted characters and strong plot. The characters were not superficial. They have depth. They have clear internal and external conflicts. The character transformation was evident and characters were relatable.

Even with a simple plot, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was able to capture the audience's hearts because of the creators' ability of to integrate plot seamlessly into the ongoing plot points. The narrative structure was flexible. For every episode, there was a theme that bound the story and kept it unified. It flowed from the past and went across the present and traversed to reach the future.

All in all, the Korean drama *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was meaningful text which did not only entertain but also triggered the audience to think, feel, and be critical.

House Arrest of Us is a text which demonstrated various similarities to *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. However, their similarities with each other have variations which are reflected in the execution, creativity, and culture.

In terms of cinematography, *House Arrest of Us* adopted the film style in shooting the scenes (depth of field, two to three angles in one scene, and moving camera) while *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* showcased the Korean standard of cinematography (quick shift of shots, 5 to 6 angles in one scene, consistent use of camera movements, and superior creative visualization).

The huge disparity was observed in terms of direction. The Koreans showcased visual storytelling, realistic executions of scenes and inclusion of creative transitions, graphics, and approaches. The Filipinos recorded several mishaps in the direction of *House Arrest of Us*. Exaggerated and hysterical acting were very obvious, there were unrealistic portrayals, scenes that dragged and scene continuity inconsistencies. The director failed to exhaust the different plot points, resulting in some scenes that dragged. Instead of well thought of plot points, the director resorted to using fillers such as the videoke challenge and dance battle just to finish an episode. The drama lacked visual storytelling skill.

Both *House Arrest of Us* and *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* used cut as the major transition tool to move from one scene to the other. The Filipinos, however, tried some transitions aside from cut. They used flicker, cross fade, and even experimented on using the character as a starting point of the transition. Video mosaic was also used to show a summary of the reactions of the characters.

The Filipino production design style showcased trendy style, use of symbolic objects and spaces, and alignment of costume to character's traits. The Filipinos shared similarities with the Koreans in terms of the alignment of costume to the character's traits. However, they differ in terms of extending the alignment into the spaces occupied by the characters.

Much like its direction, *House Arrest of Us* recorded some lighting mishaps such as lights that were not adjusted, reflecting on the face of character and shadows were not eliminated. On the other hand, both texts used mixtures of sources and colors.

Both texts used graphics as a form of visual support. *House Arrest of Us* used creative fonts, tried on animated graphics, created interface prototypes of various applications.

In terms of audio design, they shared similarities in terms of setting the mood, emphasizing sound and creating a realistic atmosphere. *House Arrest of Us* promoted OPM songs in the series and these served as background music in several scenes.

House Arrest of Us mirrored *Extraordinary Atty. Woo* in terms of integration of popular culture, transformation of the text using literary devices, information education and *Koreanized* text through unique stories, embedding culture, values inculcation, tackling of important issues and product placement.

The difference was on the Filipinos' integration of a song and dance in the series; exploring various comedic styles and tackling different issues that mattered in Filipino society.

The Koreans went above what was standard and experimented on different creative ideas. The Filipinos opted to use what worked best though they tried to experiment a little. The disparities discussed could perhaps be traced to budget. *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* was produced using approximately P 800 million pesos plus

government support. *House Arrest of Us*'s budget was unknown but it would not have reached that amount. The budget gave Koreans the liberty to execute the scenes in whatever way they liked because they had money to spend, whereas the Filipinos made use of what was equitable. Even if Filipinos wanted to produce globally competitive output, there are limitations to these.

The Filipinos, though, are catching up with the Koreans in drama production. *House Arrest of Us* proved that the Filipinos tried to improve their craft. However, there was a need to sharpen the production crew's skills more, lobby for the government's support to fuel the creative economy, introduce change in the drama production industry, lastly, forge a strong public and private partnerships.

Conclusions

The different technical elements analysed in *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* showcased expertise and competence in production work. From cinematography, directing, editing, production design, lighting, graphics design, and audio design; there was a strong synergy which combined these elements together in order to produce a superior output. It was not only the narrative which made Korean drama an excellent creative work, but the technical elements contributed to its success as well. The drama showcased a higher level of competence in directing, editing, production design, lighting, graphics design, and audio design. The narrative of the Korean drama was a rich source of meaning. It combined the classic elements which the KDrama was known for with new approaches that enriched the meaning of the text. The narrative of the Korean dramas, particularly *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, was the product of a thorough conceptualization process as evidenced by the different layers embedded in their text, multi-faceted characters, and strong plot. Korean dramas experimented with various concepts, and tackled different topics which made their text engaging and meaningful. *House Arrest of*

Us shared several similarities with *Extraordinary Attorney Woo*, in the technical and narrative aspects. However, the similarities had variations in terms of the manner of execution, creative choices, and cultural differences. The Filipinos were highly skilled in the field of production work as evidenced by various successful drama productions in the past. However, there is still room for improvement and growth. To be able to achieve global success and start a trend, there is a need for a consistent process of learning new approaches, unlearning cliché ways, and relearning methods in the past that worked. *House Arrest of Us* was similar to *Extraordinary Woo* in many aspects - integration of popular culture, transformation of the text using literary devices, information education and adopting the classic KDrama narrative elements into the text such as unique stories, embedding culture, values inculcation, tackling of important issues and product placement. The *House Arrest of Us* was a rich text which featured various narrative elements similar to the Kdrama. It highlighted the capability of Filipinos to craft a quality and meaningful output. On the other hand, *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* presented multi-faceted characters and strong plot, while *House Arrest of Us* had a simple and unique plot. The plot points of HAOU were not exhausted well, the conflicts in the plot too shallow to be a source of crisis or inciting incident. The Filipino series needed to improve on its visual storytelling because during the examination of the text, it showed that to tell the story, it relied on the dialogues of the characters. For Filipinos, there is still room for improvement in terms of visual storytelling and exhausting plot points, since they are capable of creating a unique plot. However, they need to sharpen their skills on visually executing the scenes and ensuring that the movement of the plot from beginning, to the end are adequately developed and shown through the visuals.

Recommendations

1. The Filipino production crew must undergo more capability trainings to improve their skills in the areas of directing, editing, production design, lighting, graphics design, and audio design. The Filipinos are competent drama production members. However, there is a need to catch up to the level of technical expertise required to produce a world class output. The networks and independent producers must join hands with the government to map out improvement plans for the artists, which includes not only capability building programs but also programs that ensures their welfare, education and opportunities.
2. The Senate Committee on Culture and the Arts must discuss and partner with the *National Commission for the Culture and the Arts* and major TV Networks and producers in the country to craft a proposal that will support the country's drama production in terms of budget allocation and policy reforms. This dissertation presented that Korea produced an excellent drama not only because of its competent staff but also because of the sufficient budget given to them. The South Korean government played a significant role in ensuring the global success of their Korean dramas.
3. The government, in partnership with the networks and producers, needs to evaluate the drama production system in the country. They may want to assess the dynamics involved in the pre-production, production, and post-production process. They may also want to conduct a root cause analysis to determine the issues that affect the production value and narrative of dramas in the Philippines.

4. The government, networks, and relevant organizations may want to institutionalize artists' welfare and protection so that it may ignite the artists' passion to do their work well, eliminating instability and assuring them of ample support for their lives and their craft.
5. Writers may want to experiment with new drama concepts and genre (legal or medical) to offer to the Filipino audience which could be shown in online streaming sites such as *Netflix* as there might be a market for these genres in the platform.
6. Future researchers may want to focus on a full-blown industry analysis using the lens of historical institutionalism and may want to explore critical discourse analysis to corroborate the results of this study.

REFERENCES

- ADB. (2022, August 10). *Philippines: Poverty*. Asian Development Bank.
<https://www.adb.org/countries/philippines/poverty>
- Abila, S., & Fernandez, C. (2020). *Practical Research 1* (1st ed.). Anvil Education.
- Adobe. (2023). *Color Correction vs. Color Grading*. [www.adobe.com](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/discover/color-correction-vs-color-grading.html).
<https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/discover/color-correction-vs-color-grading.html>
- Adobe. (2023). *Video Mosaic*. [www.adobe.com](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/hub/ideas/what-is-a-video-mosaic.html).
<https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/hub/ideas/what-is-a-video-mosaic.html>
- Adobe. (2023). *Cross Dissolve*. [www.adobe.com](https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/discover/video-cross-dissolve.html).
<https://www.adobe.com/creativecloud/video/discover/video-cross-dissolve.html>
- Adams, J. P., & Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures. (2010). Aristotle, the poetics. California State University, Northridge. <https://www.csun.edu/~hcfl004/poetics.html>
- Adorno, T., & Horkheimer, M. (1944). *The culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception, dialectic of enlightenment*. New York: Continuum. Originally published as *Dialektik der Aufklärung*
- Agence France-Presse. (2022, September 27). *Netflix K-drama 'Extraordinary Attorney Woo' sparks autism debate*. The Manila Times. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/09/01/news/netflix-k-drama-extraordinary-attorney-woo-sparks-autism-debate/1856853>
- American Psychological Association. (2022). *Illusion of Agency*. APA Dictionary of Psychology. <https://dictionary.apa.org/illusion-of-agency>
- Allrath, G., & Gymnich, M. (2005). *Narrative strategies in television series*. Springer.
- Amaran, M., & Wen, L. (2018). Factors of watching Korean Drama Among Youth in Kuching City, Malaysia. *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, 7(17). www.ijac.org.uk
- Andrew, J. M. (1975). Structure and Style in the Short Story: Babel's "My First Goose". *The Modern Language Review*, 70(2), 366-379. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3724287>
- Arellano, R. (Director). (2020). *House Arrest of Us* [TV series]. Star Cinema.
- Asia Society. (2023). *Historical and modern religions of Korea*.
<https://asiasociety.org/education/historical-and-modern-religions-korea>
- Barlibo. (2020). *Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding Model but it's easier to understand* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3ThZumdcV0>

- Berger, A. A. (2016). *Media and communication research methods: An introduction to qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Sage Publications.
- Braid, F. R., & Tuazon, R. R. (1999). *Communication Media in the Philippines: 1521-1986*. pssc.org.ph. <https://www.pssc.org.ph/wp-content/pssc-archives/Works/Florangel>
- Brummett, B. (2019). *Techniques of Close reading* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
(n.d.). The Black List: Where filmmakers & writers meet. https://blcklst.com/help/tv_script_standards.pdf
- Bremond, Claude. (2018, December 3). De Gruyter. <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.3138/9781442674417-072/pdf>
- Caiga, B., Cruzat, S., & Encarnacion, R. (2020). Evaluation of Philippine TV Series: Basis for Production Enhancement. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts, and Sciences*, 2(2), 65-80. <http://apjeas.apjmr.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/APJEAS-2020.7.2.06.pdf>
- Capacillo, J. (2018, May 4). *10 Beki Slang Terms, Translated*. www.spot.ph. <https://www.spot.ph/newsfeatures/humor/73595/10-beki-slang-terms-a1894-20180504-lfrm>
- Chua, K. (2019, November 24). 'Mobile legends: Bang bang': What you need to know. RAPPLER. <https://www.rappler.com/technology/features/244728-mobile-legends-what-to-know-sea-games-2019/> *Cinema and the Mirror*. (2022). Film Reference. <https://www.filmreference.com/encyclopedia/Independent-Film-Road-Movies/Psychoanalysis-CINEMA-AND-THE-MIRROR.html>
- Clemente, M. (2020, November 19). *Direk Joey Reyes Goes Viral for His Analogy Between Korean Dramas and Pinoy Teleseryes*. Preview.ph. <https://www.preview.ph/culture/direk-joeey-reyes-analogy-korean-dramas-pinoy-teleseryes-a00318-20201119>
- Co, C. (2015). *How Pure is Pure Love? : A Comparative Textual Analysis of the Korean Drama Series 49 Days and its Philippine Adaption Pure Love* [Undergraduate dissertation]. https://iskomunidad.upd.edu.ph/index.php/How_Pure_is_Pure_Love
- Cohen, J. (1999). Favorite characters of teenage viewers of Israeli serials. *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, 43(3), 327-345. DOI:10.1080/08838159909364495
- Comedic Devices* [Power point]. (n.d.). Jacksond. Org.
- Condez, A. (2023, March 11). Story Development: Paper to Screen [Powerpoint Slide]
- Conran, P. (2021, June 26). *How much do K-dramas cost to make? More than you'd think*. South China Morning Post. <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/k-pop/k-drama/article/3138546/how-much-do-k-dramas-cost-make-budgets-keep-growing>

- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Croucher, S. M., & Cronn-Mills, D. (2015). *Understanding communication research methods: A theoretical and practical approach*. Routledge.
- Cruz, G. (2022, November 10). "2 Good 2 Be True" Stars Kathryn Bernardo, Daniel Padilla, and Ronaldo Valdez Wax Nostalgic As Their Hit Series Comes To An End". Metro.style. <https://metro.style/people/celebrities/2-good-2-be-true-kathniel-ronaldo-valdez-cover/34183revealed-70341>
- Cultural criticism/cultural studies*. (2022). Poetry Foundation. <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/cultural-criticism-cultural-studies>
- Del Castilla, C. (2018). Close Reading. In *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. SagePublication. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411>
- Definition: Hermeneutic and Proairetic codes. (n.d.). College of Liberal Arts - Purdue University. <https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/narratology/terms/hermeneutic.html>
- Depew, A. (2022, June 8). *Types of Lighting in Film: Basic Techniques to Know*. Adorama. <https://www.adorama.com/alc/basic-cinematography-lighting-techniques/>
- Desai, M. (2005). Intra and Inter-Cultural Diversities in the Era of Globalization: Transnational Television in India. *Global Media Journal | Peer Review | Articles List*. <https://www.globalmediajournal.com/open-access/intra-and-intercultural-diversities-in-the-era-of-globalization-transnational-television-in-india.pdf>
- De Witte, M. (2021, November 9). *Secret to K-pop, K-drama success*. Stanford News. <https://news.stanford.edu/2021/11/09/secret-k-pop-k-drama-success>
- DigitalSynopsis.com. (2021, January 7). *How filmmakers use colors to set the mood of a film*. Digital Synopsis. <https://digitalsynopsis.com/design/film-movies-color-psychology>
- Dissanayake, W. (2012). Asian television dramas and Asian theories of communication. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 7(2), 191-196. DOI:10.1080/17447143.2012.666246
- Edley, L. (2018, September 4). *Understanding comedic devices*. Thanet Writers. <https://thanetwriters.com/essay/authenticity/understanding-comedic-devices/>
- Enriquez, E. (2022, August 16). *Did You Know? "Extraordinary Attorney Woo" Took Over 850 Million Pesos to Produce*. [www.preview.ph. https://www.preview.ph/culture/extraordinary-attorney-woo-production-costs-20-billion-won-a00378-20220816](https://www.preview.ph/culture/extraordinary-attorney-woo-production-costs-20-billion-won-a00378-20220816)

- Espiritu, B. (2011). Transnational audience reception as a theater of struggle: young Filipino women's reception of Korean television dramas. *Asian Journal of Communication*, 21(4), 355-372. DOI: 10.1080/01292986.2011.580852
- Esquire Philippines. (2022, September 20). *10 Filipino Character Tropes That Deserve To Die a Fiery Death (in a Warehouse)*. <https://www.esquiremag.ph/culture/movies-and-tv/filipino-character-tropes-a00203-20190920-lfrm>
- Extraordinary Attorney Woo (Original television Soundtrack) special by various artists*. (2022, August 19). Apple Music. <https://music.apple.com/us/album/extraordinary-attorney-woo-original-television-soundtrack/1640609941>
- Feldman, D. (2021, December 10). Here Are The 10 Most-Viewed Korean Series On Netflix In 2021. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/danafeldman/2021/12/10/here-are-the-10-most-viewed-korean-dramas-on-netflix-in-2021/?sh=7785e4da2e08>
- FlixPatrol. (2022). *TOP 10 on Netflix in the Philippines in 2022* • *FlixPatrol*. <https://flixpatrol.com/top10/netflix/philippines/2022/>
- Francisco, B. (2002, June 8). *Remembering 10 wholesome TV shows*. *Philstar.com*. <https://www.philstar.com/entertainment/2002/06/08/163806/remembering-10-wholesome-tv-shows>
- Garcia, K. (2015, September 30). *If you did it, flaunt it: Status symbols, then and now*. *RAPPLER*. <https://www.rappler.com/brandrap/finance-and-industries/107484-status-symbols-then-now/>
- GMA News. (2021, April 26). *Team Kahoy, team Puti and other home design trends Pinoys are raving about online*. *GMA News Online*. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/hobbiesandactivities/785141/team-kahoy-team-puti-and-other-home-design-trends-pinoys-are-raving-about-online/story/>
- A guide to Korean family names 상세보기* | Citizen Journalists Embassy of the Republic of Korea to Norway. (2023). 외교부. https://overseas.mofa.go.kr/no-en/brd/m_21237/view.do?seq=140
- Griffin, E. (2012). *A First Look at Communication Theory* (8th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Hartzell, K. (2022). Foreign but Familiar: Genre and the Global Korean Drama Fandom. *Research Anthology on Fandoms, Online Social Communities and Pop Culture*, 189-215. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8914-2053>
- Hartzell, K. (2019). *Melodramatic and Formulaic: The Global Appeal of Korean Television Dramas* [Master's thesis]. https://repository.library.georgetown.edu/bitstream/handle/10822/1054912/Hartzell_georgetown_0076M_14317.pdf?sequence=1

- Hellwig, H. (2020). *Frasier: A Film Noir Comedy*. Academia.
Edu. https://www.academia.edu/83439354/Frasier_A_Film_Noir_Comedy
- Hicap, J. (2022, August 31). *Korean drama 'Extraordinary Attorney Woo' No. 1 on Netflix weekly chart for 7th time*. Manila Bulletin. <https://mb.com.ph/2022/08/31/korean-drama-extraordinary-attorney-woo-no-1-on-netflix-weekly-chart-for-7th-time/>
- Hueth, A. C. (2019). *Scriptwriting for film, television and new media*. Routledge.
- Hurlbut, S., & ASC. (2022, April 8). *Filmmakers Academy premium education*. Filmmakers Academy. <https://www.filmmakersacademy.com/colors-in-filmmaking/>
- Hye-jin, B. (2022, March 4). *[Newsmaker] K-drama filming locations among most popular attractions in Seoul: Report*. The Korea Herald.
<https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220304000699>
- Hyun-su, Y. (2022, January 13). *Discrimination against women, LGBT people 'pervasive' in Korea, human rights watch says*. The Korea Herald.
<https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220113000881>
- Iglesias, I. (2022, October 3). *'Maria Clara at Ibarra' — A modern retelling of history*. The Manila Times. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/10/03/entertainment-lifestyle/show-times/maria-clara-at-ibarra-a-modern-retelling-of-history/1860647>
- Ignio, J., & Cenidoza, M. (2016). Beyond the "Fad": Understanding Hallyu in the Philippines. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 6(9). <https://doi.org/10.18178/ijssh.2016.6.9.740>
- Jae-hee, C. (2022, July 20). *[Newsmaker] [Herald interview] we need more 'Attorney woos,' says Florida's first publicly autistic attorney*. The Korea Herald.
<https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20220720000804>
- Jackson, B. (2017). Confuciansim and Korean Dramas: How Cultural and Social Proximity, Hybridization of Modernity and Tradition, and Dissimilar Confucian Trajectories Affect Importation Rates of Korean Broadcasting Programs between Japan and China. *Auctus: The Journal of Undergraduate Research and Creative Scholarship*. <https://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1041&context=auctus>
- Javier, H. (2022, April 19). *'2 Good 2 Be True' to first stream on Netflix!* starcinema.abs-cbn.com. <https://starcinema.abs-cbn.com/2022/4/19/news/2-good-2-be-true-to-first-stream-on-netflix-72364>
- Ju, H. (2018). Korean Wave and Korean Dramas. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.715

- Ju, H. (2020). Korean TV drama viewership on Netflix: Transcultural affection, romance, and identities. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 13(1), 32-48. DOI: 10.1080/17513057.2019.1606269
- KathNiel's new show will be the first Filipino series to air on TV and Netflix.* (2022, April 19). NYLON MANILA. <https://nylonmanila.com/kathniel-new-show-2-good-2-be-ture-first-filipino-series-tv-netflix/>
- Kim, R. (2021, August 17). Addicted to K-dramas? You're not alone. ELLE. <https://www.elle.com/culture/movies-tv/a37293494/korean-drama-renaissance-explained/>
- Kyung-don, N. (2023, March 5). *[Graphic news] S. Korea's suicide rate up in 2021 amid pandemic: Data.* The Korea Herald. <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20230305000178>
- Lazaro, C. (2022, January 22). *Leni Robredo Wants to Draw Inspiration from K-Dramas to Support the Local Entertainment Industry.* Preview. <https://www.preview.ph/culture/leni-robredo-inspiration-k-dramas-local-entertainment-a2150-20220122>
- Lois. (2022, October 11). *Kdrama - The complete guide to Korean dramas.* 90 Day Korean®. <https://www.90daykorean.com/kdrama/>
- Lopez, G. (2018, May 25). *ASMR, explained: Why millions of people are watching YouTube videos of someone whispering.* Vox. <https://www.vox.com/2015/7/15/8965393/asmr-video-youtube-autonomous-sensory-meridian-response>
- MacDonald, J. (2013, November 8). *Understanding Kdrama: Begging for forgiveness.* KDramaStars. <https://www.kdramastars.com/articles/11888/20131108/understanding-kdrama-begging-for-forgiveness.htm>
- Mambrol, N. (2019, June 16). *John Fiske and television culture.* Literary Theory and Criticism. <https://literariness.org/2018/07/17/john-fiske-and-television-culture/>
- Manalo, J. (2022, February 11). *Filipino humor and Pinoy comedy films: A sacrosanct relationship.* The Lance. <https://thelance.lettran.edu.ph/home/ReadMore/1561>
- Mangun, J. (2023, February 21). The middle class. *The Business Mirror.*
- MasterClass. (2019, April 29). *Writing 101: What is symbolism? Symbolism definition and examples in literature.* <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/writing-101-what-is-symbolism-symbolism-definition-and-examples-in-literature>
- MasterClass. (2019, November 5). *Examples of literary tropes and how to use tropes in writing.* <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-use-tropes-in-writing#8-examples-of-tropes>

- MasterClass. (2020, January 8). *What is Intertextuality? How to apply literary inspiration to your writing*. <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-apply-literary-inspiration-to-your-writing>
- McGowan, T. (2011). *Psychoanalytic film theory*. obo. <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/display/document/obo-9780199791286/obo-9780199791286-0052.xml>
- McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. SAGE Publications.
- Media literacy and media studies research – Media, society, culture and you*. (2022). Rebus Press – OER by Rebus Community. <https://press.rebus.community/mscy/chapter/chapter-3-media-studies-research/>
- Men's Health. (2021, June 29). *How to break things off quickly instead of ghosting someone*. <https://www.menshealth.com/sex-women/a25560707/what-is-ghosting/>
- Mercurio, R. (2020, November 20). *ABS-CBN launches iWant TFC*. Philstar.com. <https://www.philstar.com/business/2020/11/20/2058069/abs-cbn-launches-iwant-tfc>
- Miège, B., & Miaege, B. (1989). *The capitalization of cultural production* (p. 44). New York: International General.
- Miller, A. F. (2007). *Cultural Values, Narratives, and Myth in Reality Television* [Doctoral dissertation]. <https://aquila.usm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2299&context=dissertations>
- Mosco, V. (1996). *The Political Economy of Communication*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Miyose, Colby Y., "Unrealistic Weeds of Love and Romance: The Korean Drama and the "Flower Boy" Genre" (2015). UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones. 2390. <http://dx.doi.org/10.34917/7645975>
- National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage of Korea. (2017). *Research of fine arts - National research Institute of cultural heritage*. National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage. <https://www.nrich.go.kr/english/page.do?menuidx=1038>
- Naver. (2022, July 12). '우영우' 신드롬 일으킨 고래 CG의 비밀... "드디어 세상 밖으로" [엑스O/슈]. [naver.com. https://n.news.naver.com/entertain/now/article/311/0001474067](https://n.news.naver.com/entertain/now/article/311/0001474067) (n.d.). Lewis University. <https://lewisu.edu/writingcenter/pdf/narrative-elements-1.pdf>
- The New York Times. (2022, September 4). *In South Korea, a hit show brings autism into the spotlight*. The New York Times - Breaking News, US News, World News and Videos.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/04/world/asia/south-korea-autism-extraordinary-attorney-woo.html>

Netflix. (2022, June 29). *Watch Extraordinary Attorney Woo*. Netflix - Watch TV Shows Online, Watch Movies Online. <https://www.netflix.com> *House Arrest of Us* [Netflix]. (2020). Star Cinema Productions.

Nikon. (2016, August 24). *A Quick Guide to Flat Lay Photography* [PDF]. Nikon. <file:///D:/Downloads/a-quick-guide-to-flat-lay-photography.pdf>

Nitura, J. (2021, December 14). The 10 Most Viewed K-Dramas on Netflix This 2021. Preview. <https://www.preview.ph/culture/most-viewed-korean-dramas-netflix-2021-a00268-20211214>

OECD. (2021, October 25). *25 years of ambitious environmental reform*. www.oecd.org. <https://www.oecd.org/country/korea/thematic-focus/25-years-of-ambitious-environmental-reform-16cde12d/>

O'Donnell, V. (2017). *Television Criticism* (3rd ed.). Sage Publication.

Oh, Y. (2013). *Spectacular Cities, Speculative Storytelling: Korean TV Dramas and the Selling of Place* [Doctoral dissertation]. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6722g87r>

Oh, Y. (2018). *Speculative Producers*. In *Pop city: Korean popular culture and the selling of place* (pp. 39-71). Cornell University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781501730733-004>

Ong, C., Santiago, C., & Verdejo, C. (2022). Product Placement in Filipino Films: An approach to Consumer Purchasing Intention. *Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 179-188. DOI: 10.32996/jbms

Oquiza, R. (2022, May 17). '2 good 2 be true' review: A different KathNiel, the same magic. *RAPPLER*. <https://www.rappler.com/entertainment/series/2-good-2-be-true-review-different-kathniel->

Osur, L. (2016). *Netflix and the Development of the Internet Television Network* [Dissertation thesis]. <https://surface.syr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1448&context=etd>

Park, J. (Director). (2022). *Alchemy of Souls* [TV series]. TVN.

Park, S. (Director). (2022). *Business Proposal* [TV series]. SBS.

Pazzibugan, D. Z., & Corrales, N. (2020, October 23). *1.6M OFWs displaced by pandemic*. *INQUIRER.net*. <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/191713/1-6m-ofws-displaced-by-pandemic>

People Chairs. (2023). *Repetition in comedy – People and chairs*. People and Chairs. <https://peopleandchairs.com/tag/repetition-in-comedy/>

PEP. (2007, July 19). *The "Marimar" Craze*. PEP.ph. <https://www.pep.ph/lifestyle/13166/the-marimar-craze>

Pernia, E. E. (2004). *Communication research in the Philippines: Issues and methods*. UP Press.

Pinlac, B. (2023, March 10). *COVID-19 positivity rate in Metro Manila climbs to 2.1%, remains low — Octa*. INQUIRER.net. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1740846/covid-19-positivity-rate-in-metro-manila-climbs-to-2-1-remains-low-octa>

Plaza, M. A. (2022, May 18). *'2 good 2 be true' is leading TV series on Netflix Philippines*. Philstar.com. <https://www.philstar.com/entertainment/2022/05/18/2182028/2-good-2-be-true-leading-tv-series-netflix-philippines>

Porter, M., Larson, D., Harthcock, A., & Nellis, K. (2002). Re (de) fining Narrative Events Examining Television Narrative Structure. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 30(1), 23-30. DOI: 10.1080/01956050209605556

Practical Psychology. (2023, March 22). *Megalomaniac (Definition + examples)*. <https://practicalpie.com/megalomaniac/>

Quirante, A., & Sugbo, V. (2010). In the Minds of Philippine Audiences: Construction of the Malaysian Culture from Two TV Soap Operas. *Plaridel*, 7(2), 39-57. <https://www.plarideljournal.org/article/in-the-minds-of-philippine-audiences-construction-of-the-malaysian-culture-from-two-tv-soap-operas/>

Quora. (2023). *What does parallelism in film theory mean?* <https://www.quora.com/What-does-parallelism-in-film-theory-mean>

Quora. (2023). *Where and when did the expression "the plot thickens" originate?* <https://www.quora.com/Where-and-when-did-the-expression-the-plot-thickens-originate>

Ramos, C. M. (2020, September 28). *DTI: 90,000 businesses remain closed amid pandemic*. INQUIRER.net. <https://business.inquirer.net/308391/dti-90000-businesses-remain-closed-amid-pandemic>

Rankin, A. (2022, November 17). *What are cinematic techniques? (with pictures)*. Musical Expert. <https://www.musicaexpert.org/what-are-cinematic-techniques.htm>

Rawat, K. M. (2023, April 20). *Explained: Why's military service mandatory in S Korea, not sparing even BTS? Know history, controversies*. WION. <https://www.wionews.com/entertainment/explained-why-is-military-service-mandatory-in-south-korea-a-look-at-history-scandals-and-controversies-584360>

The Reading Tub. (2023, June 3). *The spiritual meaning of wood*. TheReadingTub. <https://thereadingtub.com/spiritual-meaning-of-wood/>

- Rocchi, M., Pescatore, G. Modeling narrative features in TV series: coding and clustering analysis. *Humanit Soc Sci Commun* 9, 333 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-022-01352-9>
- S Magazine. (2019, September 16). *Cinematographers and the color palette: The impact of color*. Student Filmmakers Magazine.
<https://www.studentfilmmakers.com/cinematographers-and-the-color-palette-the-impact-of-color/>
- Sagar, R. (2020, June 25). *Netflix is using AI for its subtitles*. Analytics India Magazine.
<https://analyticsindiamag.com/netflix-ai-subtitles-transalation/>
- Sanchez, L. A. (2022). The Teleserye Story: Three Periods of the Evolution of the Filipino TV Soap Opera. *Rupkatha Journal*, 14(1), 1-16. <https://rupkatha.com/V14/n1/v14n113.pdf>
- Sanchez, L. A. (2014). Koreanovelas, Teleseryes, and the “Diasporization” of the Filipino/the Philippines.
- Santos, J. (2017). Synergies: Production, Marketing and Promotion of Philippine and Korean Television Series. *Hanpil*, 1, 116-153. https://upkrc.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/upkrc_occasional-papers_manuscript-v20170410_.pdf
- Seguerra, L. D. [<https://www.facebook.com/lizadino>]. (2022, October 23). *On Kdramas and Movies vs. Filipino Content*. Facebook.com.
- Sensational Color. (n.d.). *Meaning of gray: Color psychology and symbolism*.
<https://www.sensationalcolor.com/meaning-of-gray/>
- So-hyun, K. (2023, April 18). *[Korean dilemma] can we blame public education?* The Korea Herald. <https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20230418000701>
- Spot PH. (2015, November 1). *10 unforgettable Telenovela theme songs*. SPOT.PH.
<https://www.spot.ph/entertainment/movies-music-tv/64106/10-unforgettable-telenovela-theme-songs>
- Stanford University. (2023). *Stereotypes*. Gendered Innovations | Stanford University.
<https://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/terms/stereotypes.html>
- Studiobinder. (2021, January 2). *Why and when to use a Zoom shot*. StudioBinder.
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-a-zoom-shot-definition/>
- Studiobinder. (2022, May 2). *VIDEO: Types and creative uses of foreshadowing*. StudioBinder.
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-foreshadowing-definition/>
- Tan, M. L. (2019, May 3). *Emotional Filipino?* INQUIRER.net.
<https://opinion.inquirer.net/121113/emotional-filipino>

- Tomada, N. (2021, April 29). What Filipinos love watching on Netflix. Philippine Star. <https://www.philstar.com/entertainment/2021/04/29/2094416/what-filipinos-love-watching-netflix>
- Tomasulo, F. (1980). Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film by Seymour Chatman. *Journal of University Film Association*, 32(4), 71-74. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20687541>
- Uchenna, R. (2020, February 12). *Wood characteristics*. LinkedIn. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/wood-characteristics-uchenna-richard>
- The University of British Columbia. (2023). *Positionality & intersectionality*. CTLT Indigenous Initiatives. <https://indigenousinitiatives.ctl.ubc.ca/classroom-climate/positionality-and-intersectionality>
- University of Minnesota. (2016, September 29). *15.2 functions and theories of mass communication – Communication in the real world*. <https://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/chapter/15-2-functions-and-theories-of-mass-communication>
- University of Washington. (2023). *3.1 political economy – Media & society: Critical approaches*. University of Washington Libraries – Pressbooks Publishing Platform. <https://uw.pressbooks.pub/mediacriticalapproaches/chapter/3-1/>
- Verywell Mind. (2005, November 23). *How white impact moods, feelings, and behaviors*. <https://www.verywellmind.com/color-psychology-white-2795822>
- Vocabulary.com. (2023). *Megalomania*. [www.vocabulary.com](https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/megalomania). <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/megalomania>
- Wazzup.PH. (2020, October 21). *Star cinema brings different movie experience via KathNiel starrer film “The House Arrest of Us”*. <https://www.wazzup.ph/star-cinema-brings-different-movie-experience-via-kathniel-starrer-film-the-house-arrest-of-us/>
- Whitehouse, L. (2020, August 12). *Mandarin duck*. Biology Dictionary. <https://biologydictionary.net/mandarin-duck/> (Yoo, I. (Director). (2022). *Extraordinary Attorney Woo* [TV series] The Young Journalist Academy. (2023, January 17). *Red: The importance of colour in cinema*. The Young Journalist Academy – Establishing newsrooms based in schools across the UK. <https://youngjournalistacademy.com/red-the-importance-of-colour-in-cinema/>