Emilia Djonov & Chiao-I Tseng

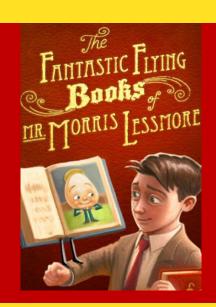


HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF ENGAGING WITH AND COMPARING

TRANSMEDIAL NARRATIVES

FOR ENHANCING YOUNG LEARNERS'

MULTIMODAL AWARENESS



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A large body of research has established the need for systematic investigations into learners' ever more pervasive engagement with new technologies and their competence in accessing, interpreting and authoring multimedia texts (cf. Buckingham 2003, Finch & Arrow 2017; Marsh et al. 2017). As a step towards addressing this need, we consider the question of how engagement with different media can be effectively harnessed for teaching multimodal literacy. Our presentation opens with a quick overview of definitions of and approaches to multimodal literacy. Inspired by studies that recognise the value of studying 'transmedial narratives' for both multimodality (e.g. Tseng & Bateman 2018) and critical multiliteracies education (e.g. Unsworth 2014), we then examine the potential of engaging with adaptations of the same narrative in different media to build on young children's awareness of the affordances of different media and the modes they support. Specifically, we integrate:

- selected results of a study in which 16 dyads of university-educated mothers and their 4-5-year-old children, each read the narrative The *Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* as an interactive picture book app (Moonbot Studios 2011) and as a traditional-format picture book (Joyce 2012), and
- the systematic, comparative multimodal analysis of action and event development (based on methods presented in Tseng 2013, 2018) in three versions of that narrative: the award-winning animated short film (Joyce 2011), the book app and traditional-format book.

We argue that comparing basic aspects of the materiality (e.g. presence or absence of interactive hotspots) and semantics (e.g. constructions of events; depictions of and interactions between characters) of adaptations of the same narrative in different media is a method that can help young children enhance their existing multimodal awareness, and support teachers in both evaluating transmedia narratives and later adopting and introducing, in age-appropriate ways, a metalanguage for discussing more complex semantic systems (e.g. 'focalisation' – see Unsworth, 2014).

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