



HARNESSING THE POTENTIAL OF ENGAGING WITH AND COMPARING TRANSMEDIAL NARRATIVES FOR ENHANCING YOUNG LEARNERS' MULTIMODAL AWARENESS



11. Oktober 2018 | 16.15-17.45 | GW2 A3570

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).

Buckingham, D. (2003). *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture*. Cambridge, UK/ Malden, MA, USA: Polity Press. | Finch, B., & Arrow, A. W. (2017). Digital technologies in the literate lives of young children. In C. J. McLachlan & A. W. Arrow (Eds.), *Literacy in the Early Years: Reflections on International Research and Practice* (pp. 221-238). Singapore: Springer Singapore. | Joyce, W. (Producer), & Joyce, W., & Oldenburg, B. (Directors). (2011). *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore* [Motion Picture]. USA: Moonbot Studios. | Joyce, W. (2012). *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore* (Illustrations by William Joyce and Joe Bluhm). New York: Moonbot Books. | Marsh, J., Hannon, P., Lewis, M., & Ritchie, L. (2017). Young children's initiation into family literacy practices in the digital age. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 15(1), 47-60. doi:doi:10.1177/1476718X15582095 | Moonbot Studios (2011). *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore* (Version 1.4). [Mobile Application Software]. | Tseng, C.-I. (2013). Analysing characters' interactions in filmic text: a functional semiotic approach. *Social Semiotics*, 23(5), 587-605. doi:10.1080/10350330.2012.752158 | Tseng, C.-I. (2018). Unravelling the myth of multiple endings and the narrative labyrinth in *Mr. Nobody* (2010). In S. Zhao, E. Djonov, A. Björkvall & M. Boeriis (Eds.), *Advancing multimodal and critical discourse studies: Interdisciplinary research inspired by Theo Van Leeuwen's social semiotics* (pp. 131-145). London/New York: Routledge. | Tseng, C., & Bateman, J. A. (2018). Cohesion in comics and graphic novels: an empirical comparative approach to transmedia adaptation in *City of Glass*. *Adaptation*. | Unsworth, L. (2014). Point of view in picture books and animated film adaptations: Informing critical multimodal comprehension and composition pedagogy. In E. Djonov & S. Zhao (Eds.), *Critical Multimodal Studies of Popular Discourse* (pp. 202-216). London/New York: Routledge.