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Digital Storytelling, Book Trailers and Literary Competence in Initial Teacher Education[2]

Abstract Storytelling and digital skills are core abilities that trainee teachers should be confident in as future educators in primary and secondary classrooms, and therefore both sets of skills should be integrated into formal instruction in initial teacher education courses in higher education. How can technologies and storytelling be combined in the ITE classroom in order to enhance the literary competence and pedagogic insights of our future teachers? What are the pros and possible cons of making a vernacular literacy practice such as digital storytelling central in formal learning? Can the new forms of expression, exploration, cooperation and communication associated with digital storytelling involve relevant areas of learning? This chapter analyses, in the light of these questions, an educational intervention on digital storytelling through the writing of a book 'trailer', designed as an assignment in a module on literary education for the BA in Primary Education at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Catalonia/Spain, academic year 2012–13). The study shows the contribution and possibilities that digital storytelling brings to initial teacher education, and the impact that it has on the development of literary and technological skills of trainee teachers.

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1. Introduction

The digital age has given rise to new challenges for the educational community. One of the most salient of these is surely the incorporation of new technologies within formal learning, which is associated with a new learning culture that makes the best of the communicative, informational, collaborative, interactive and creative advantages such technologies afford (Adell and Castañeda, 2012). This methodological renewal is mediated by digital tools and artefacts that give new significances to what is learned. In this chapter we focus on digital storytelling, which enables the production of unprecedented multimodal artefacts to build and share ideas and stories. How does digital storytelling contribute to this methodological renewal? What are the risks, the challenges and the opportunities of including digital storytelling in formal learning? How can it be integrated meaningfully into the curriculum?

In many developed countries, the digital focus of the Common Core State Standards – which guide teaching policies in the integration of digital media, emphasising information gathering, critical appraisal, communicative skills and meaning-making through the digital medium – emphasises that teachers should be confident in digital competences. This is because they are seen as agents of the curriculum change (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson, 2013) that seeks to move from the 1.0 mind-set to the 2.0 mind-set (Lankshear and Knobel, 2006). When our undergraduate students in initial teacher education (ITE) come to perform as teachers, they will have studied in print-centric classrooms but lived in a digitally driven world and thus accumulated their own "funds of (*technology*) knowledge" (González, Moll and Amanti, 2005); and they will work in schools with disparate ideologies regarding the educational uses of technology (Aliagas & Castellà, 2014). For all these reasons, we see university classrooms in ITE as spaces wherein new digitally enabled teacher identities can develop.

A route to unchaining a real change in education is to give technology-based learning experiences to trainee teachers (Davies and Merchant, 2014), so they can appreciate the learning advantages. Digital storytelling affords a comprehensive approach to technology as it requires a variety of tools for recording information (e.g. photography, audio/video recording) and editing (e.g. *iMovie, Movie Maker* and suchlike software) besides giving a narrative mould to learning. How can technologies and storytelling cooperate in ITE in order to offer new avenues to learning that might enhance (or extend) the literary competence, the storytelling and pedagogical skills of future teachers in relevant ways?

These are tough questions that we will tackle in this chapter by sharing our research-based analysis of an educational intervention on digital storytelling

through a book 'trailer' designed as a pair-based assignment on literary education. In this chapter we give an account of our experience integrating the book trailer artefact into the ITE curriculum as a tool for 'breaking' the classical print-focused approach to thinking about how to teach literature in primary classrooms, and we analyse the impact this task had on the learning of the trainee teachers.

2. Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling comes from oral storytelling, which is the art of telling an ephemeral story through a three-fold partnership of mutual influences between a storyteller, a listener and a spoken story. Storytelling is interwoven with social life and related to the basic human need to find order, explanations and intellectual clarification. Storytellers were particularly important in illiterate societies and their stories had a ludic/imaginative and moral/pedagogical function similar to the one performed by cathartic theatre in Ancient Greece. Storytellers are still alive in urban society in strong association with children, in literary events in libraries or bookshops or at children's parties (Poveda, Morgade and Alonso, 2009). Even teachers (and parents) become storytellers when they retell traditional tales or set up puppet theatres.

Digital storytelling (Ohler, 2008; Robin, 2008; Lambert, 2010) extends ephemeral storytelling into a narrative that blends voice, text and multimedia content through a "creative process" (Ohler, 2008) of meaning-making in which technological tools (e.g. a computer, video camera, sound recorder) and semiotic codes (e.g. visual, linguistic, graphical, auditory) are combined in order to create, tell or retell a short story that can be a traditional tale, a personal narrative or an instructive tale. It can adopt a variety of forms, ranging from a recorded oral story to complex narrative artefacts such as *book trailers* or *draw your life* videos. According to Lambert (2006), in digital storytelling, seven main elements are articulated:

- the *point* (*of view*) of the author(s)
- *a dramatic question*
- *emotional content* about issues that are tackled personally
- *the storyteller's voice*, which personalises the story
- *the power of the soundtrack*
- *economy* of language and information
- the *pacing* of the story

The landscape of the internet is expanding with digital storytelling artefacts that allow people to express their ideas to a wider audience. More recently, this landscape is being enhanced with education-driven artefacts that students create as

part of their formal learning. The successful integration of digital storytelling in education seems to be related to the expressive opportunities that it brings to the classroom in terms of literacies and multimodal communication, through which students can better connect their insights on academic content with their identities and vernacular ways of communicating in online life. However, some dissenting or sceptical voices have warned of the dangers of techno-centrism and the marketisation of education (Cuban, 2001; Ferneding, 2003), ideologies that carry a model of "student as a consumer" and that are supposedly infiltrating education through the digital storytelling movement. From this point of view, digital storytelling is seen as a promotional or persuasive form driven by market forces.

2.1 Why Digital Storytelling in the Classroom?

The pedagogical uses of digital storytelling are gaining popularity across the educational spectrum; in the elementary classroom (Nixon, 2013), in secondary education (Yang and Wu, 2012) and in higher education (Villalustre and del Moral, 2014). What are the pedagogical foundations that support digital storytelling as a teaching/learning approach?

The integration of digital storytelling in the curriculum is aligned with the sociocultural conceptualisation of literacy and learning represented by New Literacy Studies (NLS; Pahl and Rowsell, 2005). In its aspiration to reframe literacy in policy and practice, NLS has argued that connecting formal learning to vernacular, digital literacies helps to overcome the disconnect between the print-centric classroom and the more digital-centric world. From this point of view, the recognition in the curriculum of multiliteracies, multimodality, the use of Web 2.0 and the participatory nature of life online (Pahl and Rowsell, 2005; Cassany, 2012) have all been defended. The NLS position is sustained by the *funds of knowledge* approach (González, Moll, and Amanti, 2005), which works towards a culturally sensitive pedagogy capable of turning the cultural resources that learners bring to the classroom, in terms of literacy and ways of knowing, into valid resources for learning.

Moreover, the integration of digital storytelling in the classroom aligns with the constructivist approach to teaching/learning (Sadik, 2008) that has oriented the latest educational reforms, which have attempted to replace the knowledge-based pedagogy with a learner-centred one in which the student becomes the subject who critically reconstructs knowledge (Freire, 2004). In that sense, digital storytelling goes along with particular ideas developed in this tradition such as Vygotski's conceptualisation of learning as a cultural process, Piaget's idea of the learner as a meaning-maker and Ausubel's call for meaningful learning. It also

connects with particular constructivist forms of teaching/learning such as the project-based approach originated in Freinet's works, where learning is organised in a way that gives resources and agency to the student to solve a problem or to produce an output at the end of the didactic sequence. Moreover, digital storytelling fits in with the competency-based approach, since its process mobilises several competences such as reading, writing, talking and listening. As Pitler (2006) argues, the integration of technology in learning is more powerful when it is combined with situations where the students discuss before, during and after the project (e.g. cooperative and collaborative learning).

Within the socio-constructivist approach, the pedagogical applications of digital storytelling have been described as multiple: as a tool to acquire and share knowledge (Ohler, 2008; Lambert, 2010), as a powerful way to make abstract content more understandable (Robin, 2008) and as an effective teaching strategy to motivate struggling learners (Sadik, 2008). Others have shown that learning is reinforced through identity reflexion (Nixon, 2013) and through "vernacular creativity" (Burgess, 2006) – digital storytelling uses the discursive codes that consumers develop in everyday life (e.g. cinema, television) to tell its stories.

2.2 Why Use Book Trailers?

A book trailer is a brief multimodal artefact that encompasses images and sound in order to promote a book by showing its appealing features, as a movie trailer does for a movie; it merges a promotional discourse with narrative pleasure. As a result of this, its rhetoric is moulded by certain features (e.g. brevity, concision), time conventions (1–2 minutes in length) and attributes associated with the trailer format (Kernan, 2004) such as an opening that addresses the target reader and situates the book in a genre tradition, an introduction to the main character(s), and a montage of scenes from the source text.

In addition to being used commercially by the publishing houses, the book trailer has become a strategy for promoting reading among teens through competitions announced by libraries and schools. Instead of seeing book trailers as a snare, the emphasis is on promoting books in order to 'hook' new readers and readers who are closer to the cinema. Certainly, using book trailers in educational settings brings a range of discourses into the classroom, such as ones on social, media and consumer life (Ferneding, 2003), but in favour of nourishing, in line with the wider argument of NLS, more critical consumers of the publishing houses' sales strategies.

The extended educational uses of the book trailer typically consist of employing the trailer format to encourage the reading of a book (e.g. Villalustre and de

Morral, 2013). Creating a book trailer is a challenge, since it requires reading the book, defining its allure and showing an awareness of the target audience, besides some technological skills for the digital montage. The reasons why we chose the book trailer format include its affinity with our subject and what it can offer to primary classrooms. As we explain in the following section, we adapted the book trailer format to the pedagogical rationale of our subject with the goal of giving the students an alternative path to develop their competence regarding literary education in primary classrooms.

3. Making Sense of Storytelling in our Classroom Through Book Trailers

3.1 The Context

We implemented a book trailer-based activity in a course on literary education given during the academic year 2012–13 in four groups from the third year of the BA in Primary Education at the Autonomous University of Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain), with a total of 216 participants, all Spaniards. The sessions aimed to develop the required 'pedagogical imagination' to teach literature-based comprehension meaningfully, something which demands literary, storytelling and pedagogical skills.

3.2 The Adaptation

We adapted the book trailer format with the aim of reinforcing specific competences and, in particular, addressing the requirement of planning activities to help the schoolchildren develop a wider comprehension of the book. This presents a challenging 'thinking space' with which many trainee schoolteachers struggle due to difficulties related to a) the exercise of adopting a coherent, literary-driven reading of the book, b) the design of a set of activities with a clear literary-centred purpose (e.g. avoiding a moralistic perspective) or c) a combination of the two. This challenge deepens when the students are asked to offer literary and pedagogical reflections to support their proposal. If the management of that reflexive thought oscillating between literary appraisal and pedagogical imagination is complex per se, encapsulating it in academic writing further hinders the process and in many cases causes the students to produce descriptive or nebulous essays with rambling teaching proposals.

    In our specific context, we appropriated the book trailer as an artefact to facilitate that complex thinking between literary appraisal and teaching methodology, in tune with Robin's (2008) idea that digital storytelling can improve how teachers

are trained, since it facilitates the articulation between knowledge about content, pedagogy and technology, and thus makes conceptual aspects easier to grasp. This is the case because digital storytelling, besides being a motivational tool for both teachers and students, is a powerful tool for converting data into information and transforming information into knowledge. The emphasis on (historical or personal) stories and the integration of visual images and written text are also two elements that reinforce both expressivity and comprehension.

3.3 Modelling the Task

We asked the students to create a two-minute trailer for a children's book using the programmes *iMovie* or *Movie Maker*. The book trailer had to articulate freely two insights into the book:

- a *trailer* for the book emphasising its main literary aspects (e.g. genre, theme, plot, characters, settings) to arouse appealing anticipation of the story, and
- a classroom-oriented proposal as to how they would use the book in a primary classroom to mobilise particular literary skills

The trailer was expected to focus on the process of retelling the book's storyline and the classroom-oriented proposal of giving the students a narrative space for reflecting on their choices. In order to give a meaningful context to the activity, we set up a scene linked to the role of schoolteacher: our students were schoolteachers participating in a staff meeting and had to propose a book to read for the next academic year. The headteacher encouraged them to create a book trailer in order to upload it to the school's website after a vote. This imagined context framed the narrative and analytical dimensions of the activity, and positioned the students as storytellers, digital meaning-makers and teachers who make proposals and take decisions.

Given that the integration of technology in formal learning is more powerful when it is developed through peer talk (Pitler, 2006), the participants in the activity were organised in pairs (108 in total). They had to select a book from a list of twelve children's novels (see Annex 1), which included universal classics, recognised works of Spanish children's literature, and other genre novels such as detective stories. The students shared the book trailer through a YouTube link in the classroom's online environment. Afterwards, they individually chose one book trailer for each of the following categories:

a) the overall best executed book trailer
b) the book trailer that offered the most powerful literary arguments
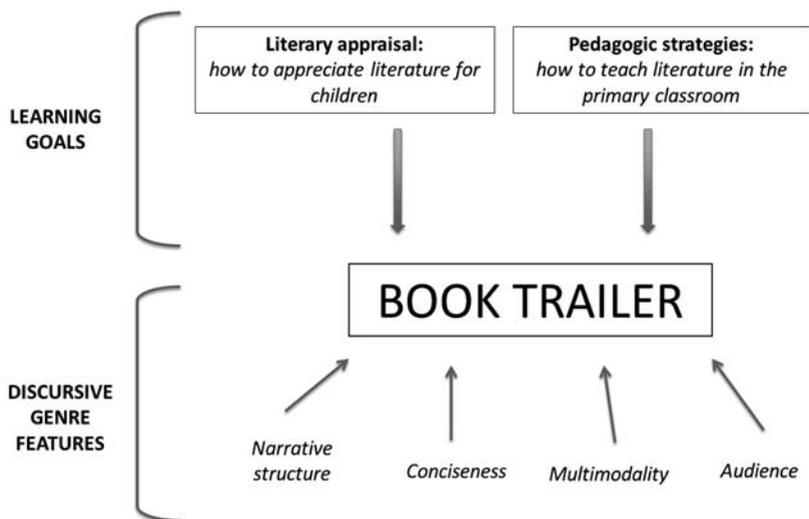c) the book trailer presenting the strongest didactic arguments

These choices had to be explained in an online form[3] created with Google Docs. The students individually chose one book trailer per category and then had to justify their choices with pedagogical and literary arguments using a maximum of 70 words. A list of the results, complete with anonymous explanations, was also made public. The winning book trailers were linked to on our research group's webpage.[4]

The students were given three weeks from receiving the instructions to the delivery of the book trailer, and had one more week to watch the other trailers and vote. In terms of assessment, the criteria employed by the teachers focused on the following points: a) the general quality of the presentation of the book trailer, b) the identification and analysis of the literary strengths of the story, c) whether the digital artefact was globally convincing and d) the appropriateness of the written and oral language employed. Which book trailers won, according to the students' votes, did not influence the academic assessment.

As shown in Diagram 1, literary appraisal and pedagogical strategies were the two pillars of the content that the students were asked to integrate into the book trailer. These learning goals were driven through the discursive features of digital storytelling (Lambert, 2006) and those of the book trailer in particular, the most salient being: the narrative structure, the informational conciseness, multimodality as a meaning-making resource and the awareness of their audience (conceptualised as an 'expert' one, since they had to convince the schoolteaching community). These were our criteria for the analysis of the corpus.

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3   Online form for participating in the vote: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1D_qKi14hPN759CqkMBNC2-b2_143oawEcFH6b6QNvX0/viewform?c=0&w=1

4   GRETEL's webpage: http://gretel.cat/materials-docents/book-trailers-de-llibres-lij/

Diagram 1. The underlying principles of the activity

LEARNING GOALS

Literary appraisal: *how to appreciate literature for children*

Pedagogic strategies: *how to teach literature in the primary classroom*

BOOK TRAILER

DISCURSIVE GENRE FEATURES

Narrative structure   *Conciseness*   *Multimodality*   *Audience*

4. The Research Lenses

4.1 Corpus and the Goals of the Analysis

The analysis of this educational experience is supported by 65 book trailers made in pairs, which correspond to three of the four courses in which the book trailer activity was implemented (those given by the co-authors), with a total of 136 trainee teachers, and the students' individual online forms (from two groups) in which they voted. The corpus also includes one audio recording of a pair of students working at home on the book trailer, made in response to our request to the class for voluntary participants.

Data analysis was driven by the following research question: what did the book trailer task bring to the students' understanding of the subject, in terms of literary analysis and pedagogy? The book trailers were analysed by looking at the underlying principles of the activity in terms of the discursive genre features of the output (Diagram 1).

4.2 Analysis

In this section, we present the results of our analysis by focusing on how the discursive features of digital storytelling and the book trailer in particular mediated learning and meaning-making. The analysis is enhanced with illustrative excerpts

from the interaction between the two students (one of whom was repeating the subject) who voluntarily recorded themselves while working on the book trailer of a recognised novel of Spanish children's literature, *Xolak badu lehoien berri* (*Xola and the lions*) by Bernardo Atxaga, a Basque author. It is a story about a tiny dog called Xola who, after listening to a conversation between her owner and a friend who had been to Africa, believes that she is a lion and behaves accordingly.

The Narrative Mould Afforded Different Operative Accesses to the Conceptualisation

The narrative structure or mould of the book trailer encouraged the students to find alternative ways of tackling the demanding task of defining the literary strengths of the books that best supported their classroom-oriented proposal. Many students imposed a sense of drama on the trailer's contents by enumerating the book's literary appeal or the reader's challenges in original ways, such as syncing the emergence of information with music. Those book trailers in which the content was successfully integrated into the narrative mould tended to display a more refined literary analysis than those that presented the information through schematic slices or random enumerations of general points. Refined literary analysis was usually articulated in the usage of metaliterary language, the identification of the literary elements (e.g. genre, narrative voice) and the expressive function (e.g. humour). The example analysed in the next section shows that literary analysis might be facilitated through visual presentation.

The reflective content overlapped with visual elements or stories that lent the literary analysis a congeniality that was appropriate to the book trailer format. This was the case with a book trailer about *Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver*, in which the density of an opening abstract reflection on the functions of a literary reading was set off against an introductory self-made film in which a little girl is walking along a railway track and decides to read Ende's book just as we hear a steam locomotive approaching. The scene was clearly connected to the novel's plot, which involves a train trip that symbolically represents an imaginative journey into friendship.

These observations suggest that the narrative mould helped the trainee teachers to appropriate abstract content (Robin, 2006) by experimenting narratively with the hybrid academic content between literary analysis and pedagogy, whilst the situation of 'feeling' like a storyteller encouraged them to impose a dramatic tension on their analyses or to illustrate them with allusive stories.

Conciseness Fostered Focalisation on the Essential Points

The economy of language was a requirement imposed by the time constraints inherent in book trailers, since the spectator expects a brief trailer that will not overload the story with too much information. This feature represented an effective incentive to drive the literary analysis to focus on the essential points, which also needed to be worded clearly. The following extract from a book trailer on *A Christmas Carol* shows how the authors managed to present the story by weaving a discourse that combined an anticipatory approximation of the plot (2–4) with literary analysis (5–9), and how they used this discourse successfully to frame the story in just a few written headlines:

1 *It will immerse the students in a revealing trip to the Christmas of the main character*

  The past

3 *present*

  and future Christmases of Ebenezer Scrooge

5 *It is a tale peculiar for its…*

  humoristic profile

7 *mysterious plot*

  caricaturisation of the main characters

9 *and for its brilliant and varied style.*

The need for conciseness led to a 'hidden' exercise involving synthesis of the content and finding effective ways to represent it multimodally. This underlying process surfaces in the following snippet from the dialogue between the students working on the book trailer of *Xola and the lions*. Aiana[5] proposes a schematic approach to the book's main theme (the duality of real and imaginary worlds) by adding brief headlines to two photos (1). Afterwards, she proposes to link that topic to their didactic proposal in a longer phrase (2–3) that caught Mònica by surprise (4).

1 Aiana *we can put these images, "real world" and "imaginary world" and afterwards "and the fact that Xola is undergoing this psychological process through the book gives us a basis to work on the duality"*

4 Mònica *but how would we set it? talking?*

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5   Names are pseudonyms.

5 Aiana   *yes, talking, with a voice-over, because it would be no good* [to write it]
                best not to get into the whole writing thing

The awareness of how inappropriate it would be to "get into the whole writing thing" led them to choose the voice-over technique (6) as a complementary way to introduce the lengthy content. This awareness was also explicit in the final competition vote, in which many students associated brevity with accuracy and subtlety, whilst any written excess was seen as "annoying" and "bewildering".

In short, the need for brevity led the students to search for non-textual strategies when the information was copious or complex, or other solutions to shorten it through headlines or visual elements. Conciseness also encouraged them to define and convey the essential points of their literary interpretation and teaching proposal, and thus the apparent simplicity of book trailers concealed a demanding exercise in analysis, thought and peer exchange.

Drawing on the Benefits of Multimodality – a Digital Tool to Create Meaning

The multimodal repertoire came from the pieces of editing software proposed for the task (*Movie Maker* and *iMovie*), which facilitate the assembling of diverse types of raw material (image, video, text, sound) by manipulating them (e.g. through cutting, embedding, crossfading) and enhancing the content with a range of effects (e.g. motion, soundtrack, filters). These features helped the students to find their own ways of 'textualising' their ideas as shown in the interaction between the students working on the *Xola and the lions* book trailer. Once they had conceptualised the theme, a complex process was unchained for selecting the most appropriate multimodal resources to narrate the idea. The search for meaningful resources led them to creative solutions, like mixing real photos of a dog and a lion (2–3) with an illustration from the book (3–4) where Xola looks at herself in the mirror, which reflects the image of a lion, and how this process was combined with the voice-over:

1 Mònica   *it would be, like… the lion story begins, whatever, I don't know, voice-over, and the lions, whatever, then "the real world", photos of the dog, "the imaginary world", photos of the lions eh… "duality", that mirror photo, and then the voice-over "how she sees herself and how others see her, the psychological process that she's going through"*

5 Aiana   *exactly!*

6 Mònica   *and what if when Xola talks we use a different voice-over, like a little girl, you know? Aaaa she talks like that* [imitating the suggested voice] *and then when we talk it's more like the narrator*

Regarding the voice-over, the students decided to separate the voice of the narrator (10), which had the function of guiding the contents, from the voice of the dog (8–9). Overlaying a voice in the artefact was an extensively commented aspect in the final peer assessment. The students valued the effectiveness of the voice-over, usually performing as a teacher, and the contribution of dramatised voices performing main characters; for instance the grandmother in *George's Marvellous Medicine* was usually performed in a slow, slightly malevolent voice to emphasise her scheming and cunning qualities. This exercise certainly contributed to the students' oral storytelling abilities.

The artistic possibilities expanded the students' expressive resources. The musical effects were used deliberately to liven up the interpretation of the book, and so Aiana and Mònica set the images of a lion in the jungle to an African melody that gave a humoristic, happy-go-lucky feel to the scene; others working on a detective story chose intriguing soundtracks, such as *The Pink Panther*. The use of background music, image, sound and voice gave new weight to words and ideas, as was evident in a book trailer about *Tom Sawyer*. The plot's setting was portrayed with a photo of the Mississippi river, which helped the audience to situate itself in a distant reality. Meanings were also enhanced with other creative elements such as devices of emphasis (e.g. encirclings, highlighting options) and animation (as when an effect was applied to an illustration, creating the illusion of movement, or when a zoom-in was used to create narrative tension). The meaningful use of these resources was evidence of a layered process of meaning-making that concealed complex, creative choices for 'materialising' ideas multimodally.

The Audience: Developing Teacher Identities and Fostering an Online Community

The book trailer became a 'conceptual space' within which talking as a teacher was possible, and thus the activity encouraged the students to situate their idea between literary interpretation and pedagogy. The process of creating the digital storytelling artefact encouraged them to incorporate terminology and ideas to which they had been exposed during the course. In the following snippet, the students, while working at home, talk from the position of a teacher who has to structure a reading activity considering the strengths of the book. The way these stances were articulated during the interaction (indicated in bold) suggests that

adopting the identity of a teacher was a driving force in the elaboration of the activity.

1	**Aiana**	*this reference about **why it's important** would be nice 'cos **we have to know how to appreciate this book,** because **we're promoting it***
	Mònica	*I know …*
4	**Aiana**	*and **we can work on the duality through** this character **because** she's undergoing a psychological process*
6	**Mònica**	*ok, or… how she sees herself and how others see her, you know?*
7	**Aiana**	*of course, and **we can use** the voice-over to say that **this triggers humour** and… **why and how we tackle it**, you know?*

The incorporation of a teacher's voice, which implies using specialised discourse and particular ways of thinking about pedagogy, was propelled by two features of the activity's design. Firstly, the simulated reality that framed the activity put the students in the position of defending their ideas in front of a forum of teachers. Secondly, the book trailer format challenged their positions as students and their identities attached to written essays. If the task of writing an academic essay typically positions trainee schoolteachers as learners, the book trailer 'space' positioned them in a more agentive way, as teachers.

Some of the nuances in their voices were triggered by the consciousness of having a larger audience beyond the teacher, since the book trailers would be available in the class online environment and on YouTube. This involved a new horizon that changed the students' audience from being a teacher *acting as a critical reader* to being *critical peer teachers* as a wider audience. In our case, the virality that publishing houses usually seek when launching book trailers to reach potential buyers had a positive effect on the activity, since the students had to watch all their classmates' digital artefacts in order to participate in the final debate and online vote. This last voting task positioned the students as critical teachers and compelled them to appropriate the activity guidelines as the basis of their criteria for the peer assessment, as this assessment of a book trailer for *The Adventures of the Black Hand Gang* demonstrates:

> *This book trailer shows in a synthetic and explanatory way what the most powerful literary elements are, and this is displayed clearly because, without reading the book and with just a few images and texts, we can see that one of its strengths is to make the schoolchildren participate in the story, to become detectives.*

The students' justifications also revealed their positionings as emergent teachers, with enthusiastic assessments (e.g. "these examples are a source of inspiration"), projections towards the future (e.g. "the aftertaste is that I want to work on this

book with children") or the construction of their own assessment criteria, such as deeming the link between the didactic proposal and the children's everyday life to be of value.

Moreover, the fact of uploading a learning-based task to YouTube (usually in public mode, although some decided to make their content private) positioned the students as contributors of an original artefact that put unique ideas at the disposal of other learners, teachers and internet users. As evidence, winning book trailers uploaded to Gretel's webpage (see footnote 28) accumulated between 100 and 600 views over the following two years. In this sense, these book trailers became part of the students' legacies on the net, their online identities, evidence that they might use to enhance their *curriculum vitae*, or just an available artefact with attached experiences, knowledge attainments and senses of a teaching community that they will re-visit in the future.

6. Conclusions

Despite the limitations imposed by case studies, the analysis of our educational experience focused on how book trailers contribute to some key issues in the larger debate about the functions of digital storytelling in education. These include: a) digital storytelling as a strategy for methodological renewal in pedagogy, b) the use of digital storytelling in breaking with the written text as the exclusive code for sharing/constructing academic knowledge, and c) the use of technology for the marketisation of education.

Digital storytelling provides a feasible 'working space' from which to propel the methodological renewal in pedagogy that, as prescribed by many Common State Standards in developed countries, seeks to integrate the digital learning culture into classroom *praxis* (Pahl and Rowsell, 2005; Adell and Castañeda, 2012). Our study has shown the possibilities offered by digital storytelling for driving pedagogy in this direction, if and when it is integrated into activities under a socio-constructivist approach. In particular, in our educational experience, the framing provided by the project-based learning methodology is key in positioning the student as a *meaning-maker* and as a 'valid' contributor of original ideas. This also reinforces *learning by doing*, learning through *collaboration* and *peer talk*, and the idea of *participation* in a community of practice (in our case in the schoolteacher community). These socio-constructivist principles, integrated into the task of creating a book trailer of a children's book, also emphasised certain features of the digital-driven learning culture, such as *multimodality*, *participation*, *shared knowledge* and *peer interaction* (Cassany, 2012), and thereby shaped learning as a professionally *meaningful* activity.

However, to make digital storytelling meaningful within the curriculum, its classroom integration requires an exercise of adjustment by *appropriating* it in particular learning contexts rather than just *applying* it. Our account, making sense of digital storytelling as a resource to support formal learning, highlights the importance of making a diagnosis of specific learning needs and a selection of the discursive features that might focus learning on the development of key competences. In our case, the reflective process led us first to choose the book trailer as a specific form of digital storytelling and then to adapt it for shaping an activity that, by stressing particular discursive features and learning goals, sought to mobilise our students' thinking between literary appraisal and pedagogy.

One of the pedagogical strengths of digital storytelling is that students learn about content and technology for academic purposes simultaneously. In that regard, ours and previous educational experiences (Ohler, 2008; Nixon, 2013) indicate a general function of digital storytelling in education focused on the possibility of enhancing learning with other "ways of knowing" (Pahl and Rowsell, 2005) beyond the written essay; it affords an alternative route to 'materialising' ideas multimodally, in addition to offering new ways of tackling abstract content, since, as Robin's (2008) argues, it is a powerful tool for converting data into information and transforming information into knowledge. The implications of this are profound, since any student will have accumulated identities as a more or less 'good' student and writer in particular subjects across his/her academic trajectory and these carried identities certainly influence the textual choices made and the risks taken by the student when writing, in terms of form, voice and ideas. In that regard, the resources that multimodality offers for meaning-making (e.g. image, voice, sound) position students in a more agentive way by allowing vernacular culture to support their learning (Erstad and Silseth, 2008).

At our specific level in ITE in literary education, digital storytelling constitutes a powerful approach for tackling digital and specific competences such as oral retelling of children's tales (Villalustre and del Moral, 2014) and, as our study suggests, literary appraisal and literary-focused pedagogy. Regardless of the dangers that have been identified concerning the marketisation of education and others associated with the 'infiltration' of consumerism into formal learning (Ferneding, 2003), we perceive the everyday-academic crossover as having strong learning benefits. The inclusion in the book trailer activity of the student's own "funds of (*technology*) knowledge" allows her/him to explore them as meaningful resources for formal learning. The positive effect of this coalescence reinforces our vision of trainee schoolteachers as "agents of the curriculum change" (Priestley, Biesta and Robinson, 2013).

We cannot finish this summary of the educational contributions of digital storytelling without broaching some unanswered questions about further implications. Firstly, a question that is still to be explored is whether digital storytelling has the same positive effects in all student profiles or whether, as our data imply, those students more at ease with academic writing encounter greater difficulties in using the book trailer's discursive features to mobilise conceptual content. A second underexplored question is to what extent technical competence affects the final results of the exercise. In other words: is there a correlation between previous experience using the software proposed and the production of effective digital artefacts? Does the learning of new software intimidate new users? Can a lack of technical experience be detrimental within academic parameters? Can it hinder creativity or the assimilation of educational content? Thirdly, considering the need to appropriate digital storytelling in each particular educational context through a reflexive exercise of programming, we wonder to what extent this might hinder its establishment in education, or lead to simplistic or ill-considered applications that might under-exploit its power. With these concerns in mind, we close this chapter by stressing the necessity of designing learning-focused, classroom-oriented applications. We would also suggest, in line with Barret's (2005) arguments, focussing educational research into digital storytelling on the collection of data from the process, in order to widen our understanding of the impact that it has on learning.

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Annex 1: Complete list of children's novels (titles have been listed in the original version and then translated into English although read in Catalan language).

Atxaga, Bernardo: *Xolak badu lehoien berri* [*Xola and the lions*].

Dahl, Roald: *George's Marvellous Medicine*.

Ende, Michael: *Jim Knopf und Lukas der Lokomotivführer* [*Jim Button and Luke the Engine Driver*].

Gaiman, Neil: *The Graveyard Book*.

Nöstlinger, Christine: *Konrad oder Das Kind aus der Konservenbüchse* [*Conrad: The Factory-Made Boy*].

Press, Hans Jürgen: *Die Abenteuer* der »*schwarzen hand*« [*The Adventures of the Black Hand Gang*].

Burnett, Frances Hodgson: *The Secret Garden*.

Collodi, Carlo: *Le avventure di Pinocchio* [*The Adventures of Pinocchio*].

Dickens, Charles: *A Christmas Carol*.

Jané, Albert (adaptation): *Odýsseia* [*Odyssey*].

Lancelyn Green, Roger (adaptation): *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*.

Twain, Mark: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*.