

## MULTIMODAL BOOKS AS A BRIDGE FOR THE NET GENERATIONS

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### **Abstract**

For those who were born in the seventies and after, electronic gadgets might have become their first playing tools. These generations had been so used to using these electronic gadgets that a lot of them forgot or did not know how to use manual tools and equipment. There was a story about a young boy who was given a book for the first time, while usually reading on a tablet. He was trying to swipe the page instead of turning it over. For these generations, reading a traditional book might not be their first choice since they spend a lot of time on their gadgets. However, reading is still a very important habit that needs to be taught to the young. To get their interests to read a book, a bridge needs to be made so that a smooth transition from reading in a gadget to reading a book can be achieved. In this presentation, I would like to discuss some multimodal books that consist of not only texts but also other types of mode representing internet or cellphone page. In books like *ttyl*, *tfn*, *i-Drakula*, and *An Order of Amelie*, *Hold the Fries*, the authors are using IM (Instant messaging), text messages, emails, web browsers, and even memos. Thus, the net generation will read books that will feel like a gadget page as a bridge to read regular books and textbooks later on.

**Keywords:** *multimodal books, radical change books*

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

For those who were born in the seventies and after, electronic gadgets might have become their first playing tools. These generations had been so used to using these electronic gadgets that a lot of them forgot or did not know how to use manual tools and equipment. For these generations, reading a traditional book might not be their first choice since they spend a lot of time on their

gadgets. However, reading is still a very important habit that needs to be taught to the young. To get their interests to read a book, a bridge needs to be made so that a smooth transition from reading in a gadget to reading a book can be achieved.

## **B. THEORETICAL REVIEW**

Reading is meaning making (Kress, 2003; Hillesund, 2010; Walsh, 2006). When reading, readers are not passive but active in doing the interpretation. Iser (1978) states that reading a text is one way of communication. In communication thus two parties are necessary, in this case the text itself and the reader. The text only offers a frame where the readers can construct their own aesthetic response. The process is not a one way process that the text gives something to the reader but it is a two way process where the reader brings something when reading, too, and the aesthetic response (the 'poem' in Rosenblatt's term) will meet half way in the middle. Iser argued that when reading readers have some expectations based on what they read and while they continue reading, the expectation changes because readers are supplied with new information along the way. Thus the old and new information merge to form the poem. The information can be from the previous part in the text or previous information that readers carry with them all the time. Rosenblatt is also stating similar thing by saying that a text is just "inkblot" on a piece of paper if reader does not make meaning out of it. A text is a stimulus and guidance to the readers, but the readers are also bringing their background knowledge when reading. Thus, readers are active when reading, not just passive (Rosenblatt, 1968, 1994, 2005).

When reading, readers make association of what is printed on the text with something that they have encountered in the past. Thus a word can have different association from reader to reader (Iser, 1978). According to Rosenblatt, there is a selective attention process made by the readers when reading. When reading (also when listening) stream of thoughts come to the reader's mind because reader associates what they read with the storage of their memory.

Certain memories move forward and the other stay at the background (2005). That is why meaning can be different from reader to reader, similar to what is stated by Iser. However, what happens to readers when reading is still a mystery (Benton, 1999).

Iser and Rosenblatt are discussing the reading of traditional literature. However, what they say can be applied to readers reading graphic or multimodal literature. Traditionally, in a literary work, everything that is written has a value or a purpose for the readers to understand or to expect what will happen in the next part of the text. In a highly graphic and multimodal literature in some parts of the novel there is information that is highly important to understand the story and there is some that is not so important. Readers need to choose by themselves which ones is important and the choice might be based on what they have read in the previous part of the book, or based on their understanding of media devices, such as computer screen or newspaper. Readers will know which information is more useful and which one is less. Thus, unlike in a traditional story where readers read everything in the order given by the author, in the graphic or digital literature they need to choose based on their previous background. The selective attention does not happen only in the reader's mind when selecting the stream of thoughts, but happens when selecting what parts of the text that is important for them to read.

Iser (1978; 1989) added that as a communication, literature is different from human to human communication. In human communication, it is done face to face and people can directly react to each other. In communicating with literature, readers cannot ask question and thus there is a blank that cannot be fulfilled by communicating. Readers need to fill in the blanks with projections. Readers are to make meaning from what is not said in the literature (Daley, 2002). And according to Iser, this is when the communication happens, because the readers react to the literary work. Dresang also mentions about gap in radical change books, as also mentioned by Iser. In multimodal literature, the gap that must be filled is different from the traditional one mostly because of the form that is adopted.

With the transformation of text from words only (one mode) to multimodal, the ways of meaning making might be impacted by the changing of the form of the texts.

Literature for youth has traditionally been linear (that is, written to be read in a step-by-step, “one way only” progression). It has been sequential (that is, what comes next is clearly related to what came before). But digital-age books are designed in a different way. Digital-age children are able to gain information from “bits and bytes,” from text fragments which are not necessarily organized in a straight line from beginning to end, or from left to right. (Dresang, 1999, p. 21)

Brenner’s (2011) opinion also supports the idea that reading multimodal books is different from reading a traditional text. When discussing comics, she argues that previous generations who are used to reading traditional fiction need adjustments when reading comic books which consist of both text and images. They tend to ignore the images and pay attention to text, and by doing so they will lose information provided in the images because in the images can be found “description, asides, and background information” (p. 258).

Furthermore Dresang argues in her book that now words and pictures have synergy that is more than the traditional picture book has. The distinction between pictures and words are less visible. They blend together to weave the story. This is in line with the fact that the Net Generation reads in a different way. “Reading no longer means interacting with words on page alone. In an increasingly graphic environment, words and pictures are merging” (1999, p. 65). Multimodal books are suitable media for this generation because it can be read in a more interactive way.

In his chapter, Gunther Kress (2003) discusses the need of “new thinking” regarding the multimodal books. He states that in the past, because of conventions and availability, books were associated with printed words. Thus, when reading, readers associate it with a book page. Right now with the emergence of new media reading can be associated with other thing such as a screen. Thus, book pages can look like a screen and consists of not only words but also images.

Linguistics theory alone is not enough to understand the meaning making process when readers read a book (Kress, 2003; 2003a; Walsh, 2006). When reading, there was a convention to read a book from left to right, top to bottom (when reading a book in English and books consist only of words); with multimodal books, a new convention is necessary because image and colour and other icons are involved. Icons are spatial mode and they do not usually have sequence, unlike words. Thus when reading multimodal books readers need to adjust their way of reading.

The difference of 'reading path' in verbal and image is explained more in Kress (2004; 2003a). Kress describes that each mode of representation has its affordances. Speech, for example, is rich in that it can show intonation, up and down of the voice, or melody; and these can make speech clearer for example to show emotion or expression. Written/graphic words cannot do all of these although graphic words are derived from speech. Both speech and writing are temporal and order is very important in these verbal modes. Sequence in a sentence implies causality of events, and in some cases also "affective proximity" for example when talking about people order can show which one is closer to the speaker by referring to which one is mentioned first.

Image is not temporal but spatial. Image can be seen in different ways, it does not need to be from left to right. Proximity in image can be seen from the size or the distance in a picture. For example, when a child is drawing a picture of himself and his parents, the affective proximity can be seen from where he puts himself; closer to his mother or his father. His point of view can also be seen from the size, how big does he draw his parents compared to his own size in the drawing. Thus, the way to read verbal mode is different from image mode.

Iser also mentions that in a (traditional) text, it is difficult to distinguish sentences from one another because the signals are "extremely restricted" (1978, p. 113). According to Iser, the most "striking" one is maybe the quotation marks. Another one is the use of italics to give emphasis on a particular thing. In my opinion, with the graphic and digital literature, signals can be found in different ways. In *ChaseR*, for example, the use of graphic smiley can

distinguish sentences from each other. The smiley can show the tone of a particular sentence or give emphasis to certain things. In *ttyl*, font types and font colours can signal the speech of different characters. Thus, in multimodal literature the signals are more varied.

In her article, Walsh (2006) lists the similarities and differences when reading a print-based text and a multimodal text. Among the similarities she lists that besides similarly meaning making, readers of both types of texts are influenced by social context when reading and associating the meaning; and thus, they are always adjusting meaning during the reading process and their background knowledge are activated by the texts. Among the differences she mentions that in print-based text the words “tell” more while in the multimodal text the images “show” more of what happens in the books. “Affordance means what is made possible by the modes used. In the case of print-based texts this affordance lies in the ‘telling’” (p. 34) while the affordance of image is ‘showing’ the elements. In the print-based text, visual and verbal play a very important role because words are a very important part of the story. Interpersonal relation is shown using words such as dialogue or narrative description; tone, intonation, and imagery are also found in words; reading pathway is mostly linear and sequential and author has a powerful say because readers just follow this pathway. In the multimodal text both words and images play important role. Visual sense is used more than the verbal because it is used to read both the words and images; tone, intonation, and imagery are shown mostly using images and not just words; the reading path is not always linear, readers can choose and thus author is not as powerful as in the print-based text.

When reading multimodal books, children are not reading the same way as when reading traditional text because the text itself is different. According to Dresang, readers need to decide their own path when reading such kind of books because the form of the books enabling readers to do it. They also need to “point and click” (p. 21) to find the information that they need to keep the story going. This is in line with the growth of the children themselves as stated in Dresang (2005) where the information seeking behaviour of children

changes in the net era. Children are so used to the computer because they live with it and when seeking information, such as reading, they tend to read like reading a screen with scanning and being active rather than following the regular path.

The Net Generation, having been exposed to computer and the internet, are also used to chaos. When surfing the internet or even watching television, they do not watch it “linearly,” in an orderly manner. When watching television they tend to jump from channel to channel watching a lot of different shows at the same time but can follow them all. This is like when they are surfing the internet or do stuffs on their mobile phones. They do not stay on one website but open different pages at the same time (Dresang, 1999). They can check their emails and facebook page and at the same time chatting or sending instant messages with each other. The same is true with their mobile phone. They can send messages and do something else. In most cases, young people can even write and send text messages while doing other things like talking to their friends or listening to teachers in class.

When reading multimodal books or even comic books, where the story is not linear or sequential, these young people are using their multitasking ability to read. They can “process visual information very rapidly” (Dresang, 1999, p. 59) and can choose which one carries information that they need. This is how they choose their reading path in the nonlinear and non-sequential books.

McClelland, quoted by Dresang (1999), stated in her speech about how comfortable children are with technology and how they think differently from adult.

They are completely comfortable. They are also completely engaged—interactive. They move about freely inside the computer space which has been described as an exitless maze. In a format which does not move toward only one correct conclusion, they are developing a tolerance for openendedness, for ambiguity. They are actively and freely making their own connections, not from left to right, not from beginning to end, not in the traditional straight line, but in any order they choose. They are endless explorers! And they have the power to organize their own explorations in any

direction—mostly any way but straight! (McClelland in Dresang, 1999, p. 62).

This, again proves that children can do and want to do the same thing when reading, especially the multimodal books that resemble the computer screen. Albers and Harste (2007) also supported the idea that technology is now a usual thing especially for the young. They wrote that “[t]oday’s technology is just as commonplace as the high-tech 8-track tapes were for us back in the 1970s” (Albers and Harste, 2007, p. 7).

When asked whether children are changing or is it the environment that changes the children, Dresang stated that both are probably the answer. The changes in the environment to become more digital allow the children to grow certain capabilities with the digital media. However, she also mentioned that there was research done showing that long term exposure to certain environment, digital in this case, let the children develop certain cognitive and social ability (Dresang, 1999; 2005).

### C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In books like *An Order of Amelie*, *Hold the Fries*, *ttyl*, and *Regarding the Sink*, narration is almost not found. *An Order of Amelie* consists of exchange communications between Amelie, Tim, Sebastian and some other characters using letters, emails, text messages, and memos or notes. Thus, the book only carries the ‘direct speech’ of the characters. It lacks in description and narration like in traditional literature. The same thing is true for *ttyl* and *Regarding the Sink* and some other multimodal books. *Ttyl* consists of instant messaging among three girls, school mates and best friends, Zoe, Maddie and Angela. They are talking about what happens to them in their messages but in some cases readers need to fill in the blanks by creating in their minds the things that happens to the girls because there is no description about the event in their instant messages because it will not make any sense if the event is described because they all experience it. The readers do not



experience it so they have to recreate the event in their minds. It is true also for *Regarding the Sink*. Thus, a gap is created because of the form taken for the presentation of the literature.

In Myracle's book *ttyl* there are three girls chatting to each other and each girl is using certain type of font with certain colour. In the traditional text, the font is all the same and what is important is the words that are written. Readers do not really pay attention to the type of font used because it does not really carry meaning. In books such as Myracle's, the font type and colour can be important because it might show something, just like the words themselves. Readers, however, can choose to pay attention to this or just ignore it. Another example is in Black's *iDrakula*. When the main characters in this book are texting to each other, the texts appear inside the image of a cell phone. The cell phones used have different casings, one has casing with images like tiger skin, another one is solid black with paisley images at the bottom, and the last one is solid black with images of skulls. These cell phone cases might mean something in relation to the owner for example. They might be able to add more explanation about the characters. However, readers can choose to pay attention to these images or they can ignore it. Thus, unlike in traditional text where the readers are led to read all the words, in books such as these readers are given choices, basing on what they think are important to pay attention to. Brenner (2011) states a similar idea when writing "reading comics requires self-direction: the reader chooses what to look at first, the images or the text, and chooses how much of the page to concentrate on" (p. 258). Findings on each book is discussed below.

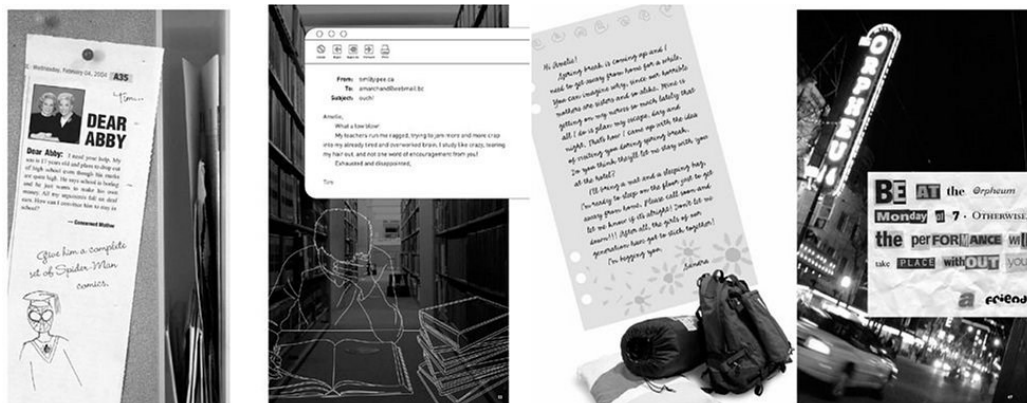
### ***An Order of Amelie, Hold the Fries***

Dresang mentions several types of plot, from the traditional, liner ones to the non-linear multi layered ones. Although this story is not told in the traditional narrative novel, the plot is quite linear and straight forward. The story started from the beginning when Tim was walking behind a girl who dropped a piece of paper. When he picked it up, it turned out that there was a name of a girl and her address. He thought the woman he saw was Amelie and he wrote her a letter to introduce himself and to get to know her. But the girl was

not Amelie. She was her friend Vanessa. Amelie wrote him back to let him know and they wrote back and forth and get to know each other. At first Amelie did not want to get involved with him because she was engaged, but then they became friends and dating. There is a conflict, too, in the story. Basically the conflict is Amelie's inner conflict because she liked Tim but she had already had a boyfriend. The story has an open ending. It is not clear whether she is going back to her boyfriend or she is dating Tim.

Both the main characters, Tim and Amelie, have something in common. They are humorous. It can be seen from the letter and notes that they sent back and forth. They look at life not as a burden. Tim, for example, was not angry or disappointed or sad when he found out that he wrote to the wrong person. Amelie was the same. She found out that Tim was following her friend and he said that she was beautiful and attractive, but Amelie did not feel down about it. On the other hand, she 'confessed' that she was not as beautiful as her friend; she was being honest. Tim also was not disappointed about it and tried to know more about Amelie. Both of them had genuine interest on the person inside, not only physical attraction. The characters traits can only be seen from what they said in their notes or email or letters, the way they said them, because there was no description in narrative form in this novel.

Since there was no narrator in this novel, the point of view in this novel is different from the traditional novel. This novel consists of exchanging emails, text messages, letters, and notes of the characters. Thus, the characters spoke for themselves in each document. The novel has multiple points of view based on the many characters that are involved in the story. What readers know about Sebastian, for example, is based on Amelie's point of view when she was talking about him to Vanessa and also Tim. It is also from Sebastian himself when he left messages or notes to Amelie. So readers are not given direct description or explanation about people or events in the novel, but they have to conclude by themselves from the characters' notes and messages. This novel, then, is perceived from different points of view. In Dresang's words, this novel has authentic, first hand records and sources.



Instead of using traditional narration, the author of the novel presents to the readers authentic and first hand documents exchanged by the characters of the book. There are letters, emails, text messages, memo/notes, and cards that are used by the characters to communicate to each other. These are in line with the characteristics of the characters who were young people and these days people, especially young people who was born and raised in digital era, tend to use these types of communication to each other.

Besides those devices, readers will also found in the book some other documents such as movie or concert tickets to show what the characters did and how their relationship were. A lot of pictures are also presented in the book in relation to the topic discussed by the characters at a particular time. For example there was a picture of a box of Kleenex when Amelie felt sad. Tim said to use it to wipe her tears and blow her nose. Other pictures found are, among others, the hotel itself, park, people, playing card, flower, and a door. These pictures sometimes stand alone and sometimes serve as background of the notes or mails or text messages. In my opinion, most of the pictures serve as a kind of illustration of what is going on in the book without giving additional meaning to what the characters are talking about. Without those pictures, what happened in the novel is still understandable.

*ttyl*

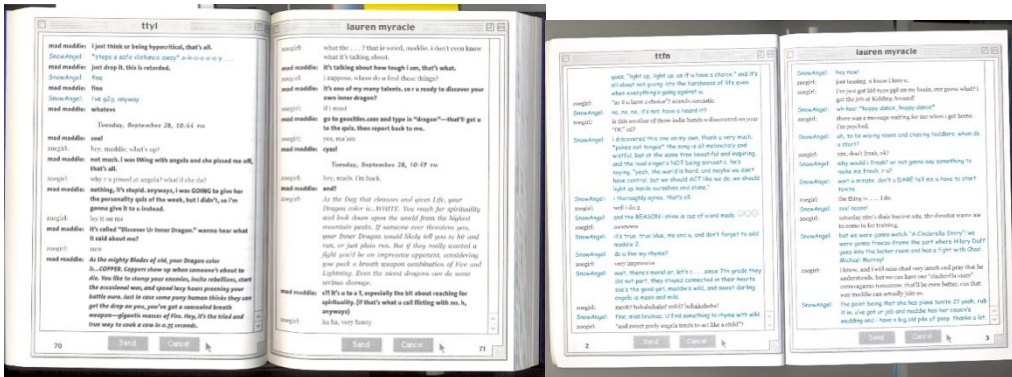
This whole novel was written in instant messaging (IM) among three school mates, Zoe, Maddie, and Angela. Since IM includes specific date and time they were writing it, it is very clear that the story happened chronologically as they were telling each

other what they did or what they would do in the IM. However, the whole story is told in a kind of episodic way since the topic that they discussed in their messages were not always related to each other. For example, in some of their conversation they talked about Mr H, one of their teachers, who was trying to date Zoe who was not 15 yet. In other parts they were talking about a girl named Jana Whitaker whom they did not like because she liked to show off and pretended to be nice only to nail them later on. Some other conversations between Zoe and Angela discussed the surprised birthday party that they prepared for Maddie and also in some parts it was just between the two of them because Maddie was angry at them because they kept a secret from her. Although the story is episodic, it revolves around the lives of the three of them and that is what binds the events together.

Myracle is using instant messages through the whole novel. She is using different font and different font colour for each person and in my opinion her decision is in line with the traits of the characters themselves. Angela the romantic, for example, was using light blue colour as her font colour when IM-ing. Light blue is a girlie romantic colour and it is suitable for her traits because it seems that she always wanted to be in a romantic relationship. She was also girlie since she cared a lot about clothing. Zoe, the smart and neat and innocent girl of the three, was using a finer type of font which is appropriate to her traits. Maddie was using the bold type of font which showed her tough life and tough and hard-headed traits that she had.

Myracle's choice of using IMs in the novel is also appropriate for the present condition since a lot of young people are using it now to communicate to each other because it is more private than a phone, for example, where people can overheard what they say, and IM is just like a regular conversation. She is also adding emoticons and abbreviations used for messaging to add to the emotions of the 'speaker' so that readers can catch the tone of each character's feeling when communicating to each other. This also adds to the tone of the novel in general showing that it talks about young adults and their lives. This is their world and this is how they communicate to each other.

Just like in the first book discussed, *An Order of Amelie*, this novel also offers different points of view because it uses IM as the method of communication among the characters. When the



characters were sending instant messages, events and other people were perceived from their points of view. For example, when the girls were talking about Jana Whitaker, readers' impression about her would be based on what the characters said about her. Readers cannot possibly have objective description or opinion about her because there is no objective narrator in the novel. From Maddie's point of view, Jana was an annoying girl because she always showed off and never looked up at her. Another example was when Angela was talking about a boy named Rob. Rob was a handsome and cool boy seen from her point of view because she had a crush on him. At other time, Rob became a bad boy because he disappointed her by going out with his friends when Angela was grounded. Another obvious example was when they were talking about one of their teachers Mr H. From Zoe's point of view he was a good teacher who cared about his students, such as Zoe, by taking her to Sunday school and church and by listening to her and giving her advice. This impression appear because Zoe was an innocent girl and she did not have any boyfriend before. Angela and Maddie had a different impression about Mr H. They thought that Mr H just wanted to have sex with Zoe who was innocent and pretty. So, readers impression about characters or events would be based on one of the three characters who perceived it.

*iDrakula*

The plot of *iDrakula* is very much similar to Bram Stoker's novel or the movie. Jonathan Harker who worked for Mr Renfield had to go to Bucharest, Rumania, for a business meeting with a count. Mina, his girlfriend, who stayed in the United States, communicate with him through emails and text messages until suddenly Jonathan did not reply to any of her emails or text messages anymore. Jonathan's father received news from Jonathan's office that he was sick so together with Mina Jonathan's father picked him up in Rumania to find out that he was in a nunnery. It turned out that Jonathan was infected by the count to be a Dracula. The count also went to the United States and infected Lucy, Mina and Jonathan's friend, and van Helsing's girlfriend. At the end of the story, Mina and van Helsing succeeded to kill the Count. Lucy died. Jonathan healed, but Mina broke up with him because he was unfaithful to her. Mina was getting married to van Helsing at the end of the story.

There are many characters in the novel but at least five are the main characters. Those characters are the Count Dracula, Mina Murray, Jonathan Harker, Lucy Westenra, and Abe van Helsing. The Count was viewed by some characters as mysterious and very powerful. He was also strange because he asked Jonathan to send soil in containers to the United States. Of course at first Jonathan did not know what the soil was for. Lucy was Mina's best friend but she changed from a regular girl into a Dracula after being infected by the Count. She had a lot of boyfriends and could not seem to be faithful to one. Jonathan was Mina's boyfriend and he was also unfaithful to Mina, although otherwise he was a good person. Mina and van Helsing were pictured as the good persons here and finally they were the ones who lived happily ever after.

Like the previous books, this book also consists of first hand documents such as emails, text messages, pictures, and web pages. It does not have a regular narration such as the ones in the traditional novels. Thus all information is found from these first hand documents. There are some short narrations found for example from the web pages, but these narrations are not like the traditional ones. Most of them are explanations or descriptions about something, not a story narration.

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Some of the pictures attached in Mina's emails help to form the tone of the story. For example when Mina sent a picture of the empty seats in the hospital while she was waiting for Jonathan, the empty seats created a sad and lonely tone of the story. That was how Mina felt at that time. Another picture on page 92 was also giving the same impression. This is when Mina and van Helsing visited Renfield and how Renfield seemed to be sad and scared. This picture of someone against the wall, alone, and scared seemed to add to the lonely atmosphere of the story.

Events and people in this novel were perceived from the main characters' point of view since this novel consists of their emails and text messages, except the Count. The Count was in most cases discussed by the other characters but not really involved in communicating. Thus, he was the only main character that was perceived, not perceiving the events and other people.

### *Regarding the Sink*

The plot of this book is quite simple. The sink of the cafeteria at Geyser Creek middle school was clogged and excess food could not go to the sink and that made the school smelly. They need a new one with a better design so that it would both work well and look good. The students, especially the sixth graders, wanted Florence Waters to design it for them. Flo Waters was the president of a company that designed fountains and she designed one for the school the previous year. The students liked her design and liked her very much; that was why they wanted her to design the sink for them, too.

The students and their teacher, Sam, and also their principal were wondering why Flo did not reply to their letters at all. A lot of thought came to their minds. They thought Flo was probably busy, or probably angry with them. Until one day the students received a

Mina's browser



Mina's browser



letter from Flo's pilot saying that she could not get hold on her, too. She said that Flo was on her way to China when the communication stopped. Flo was missing and the students felt that it was their duty to find her. So they were trying to raise money for their class trip to China to find her and they did find her after following some clues. Not only that, they also found out the terrible plan done by their Senator involving bad treatment to animals and also lying to people to donate beans.

The main characters in the novel are the six sixth-graders at the Geyser Creek middle school and their teacher Sam, with Flo Waters and her pilot, and also Walter Russ, the principal. The villains are Sen Sue Ergass and Snedley Silkscreen. Since the novel consists of letters they wrote to each other, schedule, notes, newspapers and the like, the characteristics of the characters can be interpreted by the readers from those documents. For example, Sam was a persistent teacher and cared about his students. This can be seen from his letters to the principal. Although the principal was his superior he was not afraid to show his opinions, even when he was threatened to be fired. The children's letters were funny and childlike, just appropriate with their age. While Mr Russ' letters were formal and strict, which was in line with his everyday attitude. Senator Ergass' characteristics can be predicted from her answers to the newspaper readers who wrote to her asking about certain things.

The names of the characters are unique because some of the names carry meanings. For example the name Florence Waters is related to her profession as fountain designer which is related to water. Flo sounds like flow, which is again related to water. A.V. Aytor, Flos' pilot's name, sounds like aviator and shows her occupation as a pilot. Sue Ergass is related to gas that she spread across China from the cows that produce gas for the airplanes. Even the mail system in the school is abbreviated as LIMA BEAN and very closely related to the 'bean' topic in the novel.

The whole book is using letters, emails, newspaper, tables, maps, pictures and the like to move the story forward. Readers need to read closely because everything gave new information to the readers regarding the issues and the people in the story. The part that needs most careful reading, in my opinion, is the newspaper because



it consisted of news, ads, and other things and they all are related to the story, directly and indirectly. The news, for example, was about the school and the smelly sink. It tells readers what happened at the

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Page 2 THE GEYSER CREEK GAZETTE September 21

### New Sink or Stink

Middle school needs new sink

On the heels of federal budget cuts that have slashed funding for class trips, school parties, art teachers, librarians, cooks, and custodians, the students at Geysler Creek Middle School have written in for a "quiet, no-nonsense" academic year.

So said Principal Walter Russ yesterday in his first report of the academic year to the Geysler Creek School Board.

"The lack of distraction means we can focus on my major administrative goal, which is creating a letter-free school," Russ said. "Old-fashioned letters are an unnecessary burden for busy people like me. By March 1 all school correspondence will be sent electronically by BIAN-mail."

Brief Educational and/or Administrative Note correspondence, or BIAN-mail, is a free instant-messaging system developed for educational communication. All faculty and staff at Geysler Creek Middle School have been provided with a LIMA ("Electronic Instant-Messaging Apparatus) for BIAN-mail use.

"This state-of-the-art technology will allow me to communicate with my staff anywhere in the world," explained Russ.

In other news Russ reported that even in these dire economic times, the cafeteria sink must be replaced because of a persistent clog.

"The sink is 40 percent clogged," Russ said. "Unless we replace the sink and its surrounding plumbing, we will have a serious problem controlling and eliminating filthy waters, which could create a real stink around here."

The school board established a sink replacement fund of \$200. Russ is soliciting bids from various vendors, including Florence Waters of Waterston, Calif., designer of the school's unique fountain.

"There has been no response from Ms. Waters," said Russ, who did not seem entirely disappointed by the famous fountain designer's silence regarding the sink.



Principal Russ says school needs a new sink.



**GUM GUM GUM**  
liver flavored!

ERGASS (Continued from page 1, column 2) your bellyaching and line up so I can take a good look at you.

Ergas, known for her trademark white gloves, closed the rally as she did all of her campaign stops by enjoying a large bowl of pork and beans while offering free advice to her constituents.

In addition to serving in the Senate, Ergas writes the popular advice column "Because I Said So."

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### Wall Street Wrap-up

Stocks to Watch	Yesterday's	Opening price:	Closing price:	Change:
ABR-gate, Inc.	\$18.49	\$21.11	\$21.11	+2.62
Drying to Please	\$1.76	\$1.88	\$1.88	+0.12
Giant Guns	\$1.78	\$1.53	\$1.53	-0.25
Rainy-Day Rainwear	\$1.22	\$1.00	\$1.00	-0.22
Tough Beans	\$3.22	\$2.12	\$2.12	-1.10

### Mander and Eel Petition Denied

Judge Anne Chovey has denied Sally Mander and Dee Eel's request to submit a bid on the new sink for Geysler Creek Middle School.

Chovey, who popularized the "three scams and you're earned" sentencing guidelines, said at yesterday's hearing: "Mander and Eel have no business in sinks. Those two are where they belong—in the sink."

Mander and Eel were convicted in May after an investigation revealed their slimy business practices regarding the fountain in Geysler Creek Middle School.

### Geysler Creek Feed 'n' Seed

Everything you need for farm, lawn, or garden.

It's tulip-planting time!

### Ima Crabbie Moves to Geysler Creek Senior Home

Leaving her home of 89 years was not difficult for Imagenne "Ima" Crabbie.

"I might as well move," Crabbie crabbied yesterday. "I'm all alone in this big house with nobody to help me."

Mrs. Crabbie is the widow of Gus Russ and of Uri Crabbie. She has one child, Walter Russ.

### Investor's Corner

By Macon Highbanks, Investment Counselor

Remember, the secret to investing in the stock market is to buy low and sell high. You want to buy stocks at a relatively low price and then sell them when they increase in value.

Example: On Monday buy 500 shares of Rainy-Day Rainwear at \$1 per share.

BUY price 500 x \$1 = \$500

On Tuesday Rainy-Day Rainwear stocks rise to \$9 per share.

SELL price 500 x \$9 = \$4,500

How to calculate profit!

\$4,500 You sold for  
- \$500 You bought for  
\$4,000 PROFIT!

Get rich quick—in just one day!

But remember, there are no guarantees.



Ima going to move.

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school and why they needed a sink desperately. Another news was about the stock that Mr Russ and his mother bought and this is important because this is related to a lot of events in the story, for example how Mrs. Crabbie got her \$100,000 and could do everything she wanted to do and how Mr Russ got his \$100,000 and could help the children fund their trip to China. The map showed the kids' journey to China and how it was from the United States. Thus, everything in the novel is essential for the story and not just functioning as illustration only.

Although this novel does not have traditional narrative form in its delivery, there are some devices that replace the narration. The letters written by the characters obviously had their point of view, the point of view of the writers. The newspaper, for example, did not show point of view of the characters but as newspaper it was trying to be objective. It gave readers necessary information about the characters or the events in the story, even the places, but it was trying

to be objective. Thus, the newspaper functions as replacement of the narration.

#### D. CONCLUSION

History of young adult literature shows that young adult literature changes from time to time to adjust with the changes that are experienced by the (intended) readers. Radical change young adult literature also comes to being because of the changes in the society that is experienced by the teenagers, among others the growth of the internet that makes the world seem to be borderless and the growth of the digital media and the internet that makes the teens think and read in different way. However, because radical change young adult literature emerged from the traditional literature, some similar elements can still be found.

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