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**Post-global and Post-digital Children's Literature :
Some Users' Legitimation Strategies on the Net**

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Abstract:

Our starting point is the hypothesis that we live in a post-digital and post-global era, even a post-data one. In this current time, our objects of study have become transmedial and the different media versions of a product cannot be separated one from the other, but rather should be taken as one single object. These transmedial cultural objects are subject to readings, discussions, and appropriation in social networks, which exist in a “permanent now”, ephemeral by its very nature. In this context, we ask ourselves what the role and the function of the literary is. In a moment when online users claim ownership of the product, what value and position do they give to the literary? We intend to search for testimonies in social networks for three products of children's literature: *My Little Pony*, *Caillou* and *Manolito Gafotas*, in order to observe what is being said in social networks about them. Working with *Goodreads*, *Babelio*, *Reddit* and *Tumblr* that function as platforms for reviews and fan expression, we will carry out an analysis of our corpus by means of some digital tools. Our goal is to show how literature still acts as a legitimizing instance and how networks function as a vector for globalization/localisation in the current post-digital, post-global and transmedial context.

Key-words: post-digital, post-global, ephemerality, transmedia, children's literature, social networks

We are living in a post-digital era¹, when the existence of digital technology is taken for granted, and the division between 'digital' haves and have-nots determines access (or lack thereof) to economic, social and political power. If the digital era (or the Information Age, the Computer Era, the New Media Age, etc.) is defined as the time period s

l adoption of digital devices and especially the Internet: nowadays being digital is conspicuous because of its absence, rather than its presence. In fact, these were Nicholas Negroponte (1998), founder of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Media Lab's words in 1998, when he declared that the digital revolution was over in an article entitled « Beyond Digital ». But the term « post-digital » was coined by Kim Cascone (2000) for contemporary electronic music and developed afterwards by Florian Cramer and other scholars, who defined the term not as a break from the previous era, but as a subtle and pervasive **shift**

¹ This paper forms part of a Project developed by the LEETHY Research Team: *Reciclajes Culturales: Transliteraturas en la era postdigital* (RTI2018-094607-B-I00).

(Cormier, 2019; Llamas, 2020). Since then, the meaning and values of « post-digital» have not yet been set across fields, but the term is already present in academic journals². Thus, our use of « post-digital » resembles how we use the concept of postcolonialism: a time after colonization but not without, since colonization continues to frame cultural perspectives, even more so indigenous ones (Clements, 2018).

In fact, a succession of crucial events that changed our daily lives happened during the first decade of the 21st century: in 2001, cell phones were able to connect themselves to the Internet and *Google Suggest* was operative in 2004; *Wikipedia* was born in 2001, *LinkedIn* was founded in 2002, *Google Books* was launched in 2004, and in 2005 we saw the release of *The European Library*, as well as that of *Google Maps*. *YouTube* appeared in 2005, and *Facebook* became public in 2006; *Twitter* dates from 2006, *WhatsApp* from 2009, and lastly, the *Instagram* app was released for iOS devices in 2010. The iPhone launch took place in 2007. Needless to say, our intellectual lives have been modified when Thomson Reuters expanded the coverage of *Web of Science* in 2009, when *Research Gate* and *Academia Edu* were founded in 2008. In parallel, the massive field of culture was invaded by the GAFAM companies: *Google* (even *Google Books* and *Google Arts*), *Apple*, *Facebook*, *Amazon*, *Microsoft*, and more recently *Netflix*, *HBO*, *Filmin*, and *Amazon Video Prime*, in such a way that fiction/culture image production has come to be under their control: the monopoly on fiction is no longer owned by literature.

These technologies were shaped by us, and we, in turn, are being shaped by them: users can either turn back towards nostalgia of the analogue, or encounter a certain disenchantment, even a rejection of digital technologies; they can also acknowledge the ever-increasing role played by digital tools. But it is a question of facts: technology has become integral to us, to such an extent that the digital is embedded in our environments and embodied in our daily practices, as a continuum, not in parallel; as a condition (Cramer, 2014) , not just a prosthesis (McLuhan, 1964).

Therefore, it is time to focus not on digital tools and the fetishization of the new, but on human engagement within a performative digital world. If, in 2009, we already called for the assumption that technology was not neutral and we demanded to fight against technological transparency (Sanz and Goicoechea, 2009), ten years later we are aware that the network of tech objects and practices are so intertwined with everything that it is more difficult, or even impossible, to isolate one from the other. So, we have taken up the challenge to observe practices, as a better position to obtain information about post-digital cultural and reading behaviours. Moreover, the acceleration and the amplification of computer processing allows us to share content in real time, user-friendly software lets us internalize and naturalize its design and its rules, and massive digitization is building a colossal information archive, the memory of the World.

This is another new scenario: we are living in a post-global era, when the process of globalization, as well as the backlash against it, has become part of our daily lives. This term, “post-global”, has been used in newspapers, as much as in the scholarly press with a political, economic and even social outlook as a different stage of globalization, dealing with the post-global financial or environmental crisis (for

² Such as *Post-Digital-Culture*. Hamburg. (2015-2019) <http://post-digital-culture.org/>; *Postdigital Science and Education*. Switzerland. (2019-2020) <https://www.springer.com/journal/42438>.

example, from Deaglio, 2004 in Italian, and Ponce, 2009 in Spanish to Bandyopadhyay, 2018 in English). But we also find that new marketing practices (Dinnie, 2005) particularly in the art market (Salanova, 2011), new populisms (Flew, 2019) and African and Latin-American studies are using the term (Tejumola, 2016; Adesanmi, 2018).

Nowadays we are rather interested in the collective imagination of post-globalization: it is critical to observe cultural and reading behaviours within this context: the literature on the subject is not enough. We have been inspired by some works such as Bergermann *et al.* (2010) or Latour (2013) and encouraged by recent events such as Schaub (2020), since they use the term and link it with digital cultures. Thus, we consider it is time to analyse how post-digital cultures are modifying the representations and even the expressions of the global imagination, in such a way that it is becoming a post-global one, defined as a condition (López, 2008) and a position (Levander and Mignolo, 2011), as a narrative frame (Cosgrove, 2003) and a narration (Said, 2010; Thiesse, 2010).

Beyond the local-global dichotomy, the post-global would be a mutation (not a dialectical overcoming) characterized by virtual, massive, hegemonic archives, collective discursive constructions, de- and re-contextualizing operations and, especially, circulation as the quintessential formula for legitimacy. For us³, post-global is a stage or a modality of a normalized globalization, due to digital technologies which have transformed not only the way of producing global phenomena, but moreover the way of imagining circulation: neither in the sphere of the globe, or as a journey, but as overlapping, immediacy, simultaneity, repetition; not travelling cultures (Clifford, 1992), but connecting/connected cultures: the collective imagination of the Net. Consequently, we are using the prefix “post” in the sense of *cum hoc* rather than *post hoc*.

To explore the aesthetic instantiation and valences of this collective imagination in media such as literature, transmedial literary objects, and the set of readings circulating on the Net about them, we have decided to exploit this fascinating milieu for observation. Our intention is to look for testimonies of the value and position of literature in social networks for three objects of children’s literature that have become transmedia products: *My Little Pony*, *Caillou* and *Manolito Gafotas*. These works are an interesting workbench: they come from a minor, peripheral literary position, and they have reached a larger, global position in mass consumerism. Children’s books in particular can be transferred to other formats and become commodities such as television series, movies, a comic book saga, toys, etc. Under these conditions, the literary field existing in the frame of the pre-digital *République des Lettres* can no longer exist in the same way in the post-digital era (Sanz, 2017).

Caillou was created by French-Canadian author Christine L’Heureux, and the illustrator, Hélène Desputeaux, and was first published by Les Éditions Chouette in 1989, in Montréal. Since then, more than 15 million copies of the book series have been sold worldwide and it has been translated into more than 20 languages. An initial Canadian production of the television series based on the character and his stories ran

³ LEETHY Research Group (*European Literatures from Text to Hypertext*) at the Complutense University of Madrid (<https://www.ucm.es/leethi>).

from 1997 until 2010. After this original run, since 2012, further episodes have been developed by the American television channel PBS Kids. The broadcasting rights to the series have been secured in 75 countries.

Manolito Gafotas is the creation of Spanish author Elvira Lindo. What started out as a radio character voiced by the author herself became a successful, best-selling series of eight books, the first of which was published in 1994 and the last in 2012, with the release of the latest book in the series. The books of *Manolito Gafotas* have been translated into over 20 languages. There are also two movies produced and released in Spain based on Manolito's adventures - the first one from 1999 and the second one from 2001. *Manolito's* transmedia run is not limited to the big screen, since a 13-episode television show was also broadcast on Spanish TV in 2004.

My Little Pony first started as a collection of children's toys produced by the American company Hasbro. Its wild success was channeled into four different television series - its most popular adaptation being *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. The entertainment franchise also spans books, comic books, and movies based on the *My Little Pony* universe.

These transmedia cultural products are subject to readings, discussions, and appropriation on the Internet, in the frame of a kind of "permanent now", this oxymoron meaning the highest expression of "ephemerality". This ephemerality does not come from the products themselves, but rather from readers' behaviours and the memory of these behaviours collected online. There needs to be a constant stream of content in different platforms for the products to be (and stay) in this state, and it can quickly disappear, either symbolically (no actions from readers about this product on platforms that continue to function) or effectively (the platforms where content was being posted by readers disappear from the net).

For this reason we focus mainly on social networks intended to function as spaces of discussion, review, and fan expression by readers/viewers/users: namely *Goodreads* (created in 2006), *Babelio* (in 2007), *Reddit* (in 2005) and *Tumblr* (in 2007).

We are particularly interested in the apparently synchronic (as if everything existed at once) and syntopic (as if everything occurred/happened at the same place) character of those net discourses, as if it were a technological "hyper-present". And indeed, we are interested because those discourses have expanded in space and time, not only reproducing, but also remixing signs that collide and produce new meanings during their circulation. Post-digital space is mainly replicative and performative, as has been proven by Prada (2015) concerning artistic practices, by Reynolds (2011) for pop culture, by Saint-Gelais (2011) and Sierra (2016) for fiction. Paradoxically, all these replicative practices succeed in stabilising some symbolic values and thus it is how cultural memories (and the identities within) are being produced: readings and discussions on the Net are a fundamental space to observe memory functioning at the beginning of the 21st century. It is time to ask what the role and the function of the literary is in this context.

Last but not least, since we are no longer living in the information age, but in a post-data era - even a post-big data era (Burkhardt, 2015)- where we are dealing with increased computer capacity and massive data sets, with the resulting mediatization of memory (Hoskins, 2014). But having massive amounts of data at our fingertips is not relevant; what matters is digging into what it means and how it can provoke action.

We know private companies don't just gatekeep the world's information but also control how we describe that world, a world datified, algorithmically interpreted, and cybernetically reconfigured. It is done. But perhaps a way to escape from twentieth-century scientific positivism is to observe how data is collected by humans, manipulated by researchers, and ultimately massaged by theoreticians to explain a phenomenon, as we do (Cheney-Lippold, 2017).

In this sense, we are aware that immediacy, obsolescence, unsustainability are some of the keywords of our post-data era: any data extracted from an online source older than three years might already be "outdated". That is why we chose to extract our corpus from two types of social networks with a nine-year timespan, from 2010 to 2019, in order to ensure enough user participation and data to create our corpus of study.

We faced, then, two issues when we tried to obtain data about readers and reading: first of all, the potential lack of information for quantitative research if we hew too closely to the release dates of the platforms in question, as we might not find enough users in the platform, or a community for that specific product might not have been formed at the time; second, we are also faced with the lack of access to "dead" platforms such as *LiveJournal* (1999), *MySpace* (2003), *Fotolog* (2002) or *Tuenti* (for Spain, created in 2006), since their use has either become marginal or directly obsolete. Once again, the issue of ephemerality comes up, as content that once was stored in these « old » platforms might have been deleted – by the users themselves or by the company that hosts the site. The immediacy afforded by digital networks means that trends appear and disappear at a much faster pace than in the predigital era. The cultural/digital memory of the beginning of the 21st century is at stake, because of the **lack of** sustainability and obsolescence of devices and software for all kinds of digital cultural objects.

More concretely, concerning our research, we have compiled our three corpora manually, searching for comments on networks of discussion, both specifically dedicated to readers and reading (*Babelio* and *Goodreads*), and other networks for general discussion (*Tumblr* and *Reddit*). Our initial intention was to obtain three different corpora in three different languages (English, Spanish, and French) that we would analyse separately through a corpus analysis tool. As we gave ourselves a limited time frame from which to select our data, one of the main issues we encountered when building our corpus was the amount of text that we would be able to extract in a given language. This was the case with *Caillou*, where we did not meet the minimum requirement of 10,000 words, so we had to discard French comments and turn to English ones.

In fact, we were not working with a data deluge (in the sense of Jockers, 2013), but our energy went into the construction of representative and coherent samples. We succeeded in extracting over 10,000 words from each of the three objects we studied and we looked for the key semantic fields and topic networks to observe how the local and global scopes appeared in them. As has been discussed about different issues of scalability, samples longer than 5,000 words in modern languages provide reliable « guessing », because they are not immensely affected by noise (Eder, 2014). Moreover, it seems better to excerpt samples of 10,000 randomly chosen words from a whole corpus rather than to rely on subsequent passages or sequences as samples. In fact, word n-grams (capturing topic information) have proved to be useful in single domain settings, while punct n-grams (capturing style information) are useful in cross-domain settings (Sapkota,

2015), even for data sets coming from social networks such as Twitter (Saha *et al.*, 2018). So our corpus has the length we need for the reliability of the results and that is the reason why we have focused on word n-grams provided by digital tools.

Although each of the corpora was treated separately from the others, we decided to not separate the texts based on their origin (literary networks vs non-literary networks) in order to observe the influence of the literary vs the influence of other transmedial audiovisual iterations of the products as organically as possible. This was possible to carry out in the cases of *My Little Pony* and *Caillou*, where the amount of comments from non-reading-centered networks of discussion was proportional to comments from reading-centered networks. The case of *Manolito Gafotas*, however, was different: although there wasn't much of a problem in finding texts that discussed *Manolito* as a book, it was much harder to find comments on it as a series or as a movie. For this case, we decided to split the corpus in two – one which discussed *Manolito Gafotas* as a book, and the other as an audiovisual product - and analyse them separately.

We used Sketch Engine (2019) to carry out a quantitative and qualitative analysis of our corpus, looking for the key semantic fields and topic networks to observe the literary and the audiovisual, as well as the local and the global, that appear in each of the corpora. Sketch Engine is an online corpus analysis tool that, through use of an algorithm, identifies frequent, as well as rare apparitions of terms in a given corpus. In fact, we use these tools for discovery and exploration, as a device to extend the range of our perception to phenomena that we can examine systematically afterwards. They let us observe the trends of a feature over the entire corpus, but also the individual occurrences of this feature in a specific context.

Our initial analysis was carried out through “Keyword”, a function which allows the user to observe the most frequent words in a corpus, ranked from highest to lowest level of frequency. Although we focused this study on single-word keywords, Sketch Engine also allows for multi-word frequency search. For the purposes of this article, we will employ the term “keyword” according to the definition given by Sketch Engine: words (single-token items), that appear more frequently in the focus corpus than in the reference corpus. In this phase, we focused on the first fifty single-word keywords for each of our three corpora in order to have a general overview of the corpus. After this first overview of the corpus, we used the “Wordlist” tool, which provides a frequency list of words that can be filtered by grammatical category. This allows us to observe the most frequent nouns, verbs, and adjectives in each of the corpora. Thirdly, we used the “WordSketch” tool, which analyses collocations and word combinations. This tool helps us observe and analyse not only the relations between different terms in the corpus, but also whether there are any relations in the corpus between the literary and the audiovisual terms that have previously appeared with the other two tools. Finally, in view of these findings, we chose to analyse the passages where the keyword “book” was found more closely and specifically, thus moving from a quantitative to a qualitative approach.

My Little Pony

Out of the three corpora we have obtained, this was by far the most extense, spanning a total of 73,950 words taken from comments made on *Goodreads*, *Babelio*, *Tumblr*, and *Reddit*. This corpus has

been compiled in English. It should be noted as well that this corpus does not contain the whole scope of discussion about *My Little Pony* (hereinafter, *MLP*).

When obtaining the keywords of this corpus, we noted the following elements:

First of all, the appearance of the product's character names and locations: whereas names such as *Twilight* or *Equestria* make frequent appearances in the corpus, there does not seem to be any mention that specifies the product as being an American production.

Secondly, mentions to the fan community: the term "brony" (in different spellings as well: "bronie", "broni") also makes an appearance within the first 50 keywords of the corpus. The etymology of this term comes from the combination of the words "bro" and "pony", and it is used to refer to the fans (more specifically to the male fans) of the *MLP* saga. Out of the three corpora, this was the only case where we found specific mentions of fans or fandom of the element discussed.

Another element to note is the appearance of lemmas associated with gender ("daughter", "girls"). In opposition to its intended audience (young girls), which may consume the product, but not participate in its discussion, we have a fanbase (bronies, generally male, older) which discusses it with an awareness that it was not conceived for them.

There are more frequent mentions of *MLP* as a broadcast product than as a literary product. The terminology referring to this product as a non-printed object in different transmedia forms was more varied: mentions of the cinematic ("movie", "film") and TV ("series", "show") products, whereas *MLP* as a literary object is only mentioned as a comic book. Out of the top three most frequent nouns, two of those were words in relation to the audiovisual ("movie", "show"), and we have to look further until we find any mention of the literary ("book", number 16 of the most frequent nouns). With verbs, as well, there is a difference between the non-literary and the literary – whilst "see" and "watch" could be found amongst the first 20 most common verbs (number 5 and number 16 respectively), "read" does not appear until further down the list (number 28).

We can establish that *MLP* is a product with stronger ties to its transmedia audiovisual forms than to its literary forms, but the point is to verify whether the literary might also surface in the audiovisual discourse and vice-versa. To that end, we used WordSketch to look for word associations for the terms "book", "series", "movie" and "film". What we found is that within the associations for "movie" and "series" (Image 1) there is an infiltration of the literary: "comic", "book", "theater" and "write" appear in the cloud of word associations of the audiovisual. On the other hand, when we ran our analysis for "book" (Image 2), we found no terms in relation to the audiovisual. That is to say, the discussion of *MLP* as a literary object is not infiltrated by the audiovisual, but the audiovisual may be infiltrated by the literary.

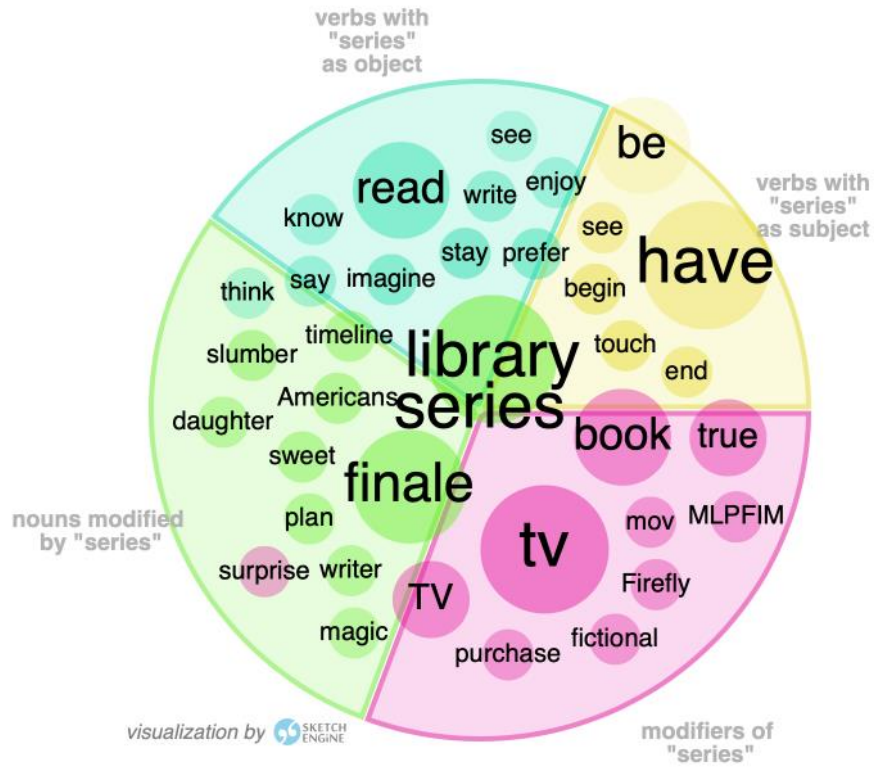


Image 1: a WordSketch visualization of the term “series” in *My Little Pony*

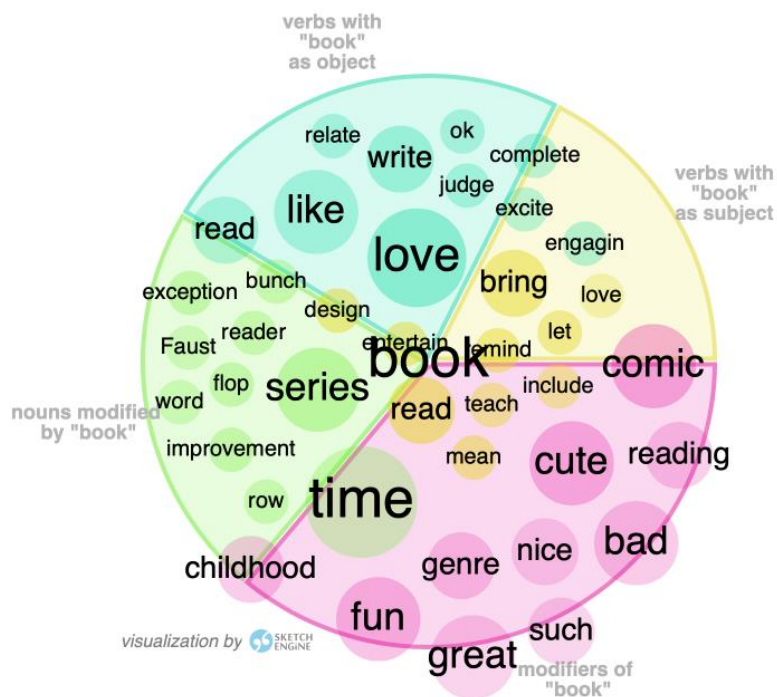


Image 2: a WordSketch visualization of the term “book” in *My Little Pony*

A closer reading of “book” in *MLP* gave us two basic ideas that repeat themselves throughout the iterations of the term. The first and most frequent idea that shines through is the enjoyment of the book(s). Readers seem to enjoy the different books in the *MLP* saga and enjoy the contents: “An excellent book, being honest”, “Loved this book- I would have given it five stars”, say two of the comments. There doesn’t seem to be a very deep discussion of the books themselves, or an in-depth expression of their quality, or the reader’s experience of reading them, although there are some light expressions of the pedagogical aspect of the book: “Fun book, good story, cute characters, good moral”. The book is good, acceptable or entertaining, but nothing more is discussed. The second most frequent idea is the mention of the audience for these products: they are children’s books, and more specifically targeted to girls: “I read this book with my ten-year-old daughter”, “My daughter enjoyed reading this book”. Overall, comments seem to come from adults that have either read the book themselves for their own enjoyment, or adults that are giving their opinion on the adequacy of the book for children to read, specifically in relation to the positive messages that the books convey: “the other two are books entertaining for an elementary age”, “A nice fun book that teaches young children the value of friendship”.

Manolito Gafotas

This corpus in Spanish counts a total of 12,371 words, taken from several different sources. As all the content we found discussing *Manolito Gafotas* on *Reddit* was only available in English, we decided to look to other sources in Spanish in order to complete our corpus. We took comments from the webpage *Filmaffinity* in order to include mentions of the product as a film/series. As we mentioned before, the majority of comments that make up this corpus come from literary discussion sites – that is to say, *Manolito Gafotas* is more discussed as a literary object than as an audiovisual object. To which end, we chose to analyse each discussion of *Manolito Gafotas* (literary and audiovisual) in a separate corpus.

When we analyse the reception of *Manolito Gafotas* as a literary object, what first grabs our attention is the appearance of names that localize the action – Carabanchel, the neighbourhood in Madrid where the action takes place features prominently in the keyword list, as well as other nouns that localize the action in time and space (“secarral”, “escay”).

We find, as well, lemmas from the semantic field of amusement: “divertido”, “carcajada”, “destemillar”, as well as lemmas coming from literary tradition: “relectura”, “releer”, “desventuras”, “andada”, “requeterretocada”. It is notable that those words from the semantic field of reading indicate repetition as well – that is, *Manolito Gafotas* is an object which is read throughout a period of time or reread on different occasions. The position of *Manolito Gafotas* as a literary object is well established through the comments, as no mention was found of terms that come from the disciplines of cinema or television.

As we analyse *Manolito Gafotas* as a film, we also notice names that localize the action in space (Carabanchel, Navacerrada), as well as in current time (“verbena”, “gayumbos”, “extrarradio”). We hardly see lemmas that come from the semantic field of amusement; only one appears (“divertidísimo”). But we do find several lemmas that come from literary tradition (“hiperrealista” – from literature or art, “desventurado Quijote infantil”, “naturalismo”, and from theatre “sin dramatismos” and “lacrimógeno”), as opposed to only one cinematographic term (“metraje”, which appears 50th in keywords).

As opposed to *MLP*, a closer reading of “book” in *Manolito Gafotas* offers us a richer discussion, where several topics come up, of which, we will sum up three: first, the comments that portray *Manolito Gafotas* as a fun book to read – there is a sense of enjoyment in reading the book(s), which are fun and make the reader laugh out loud, such as “Hacía muchísimo tiempo que no disfrutaba tanto ni me reía tanto con un libro” and “No es diferente de los otros tres libros, pero siempre me hacen soltar buenas carcajadas”. A second idea that comes up frequently as well is the overall experience and memory of reading *Manolito Gafotas*. This second idea we can split into two different experiences that are being described: first, adult readers are recalling the first time they read the book when they were younger – as one comment says, “Creo que este libro fue el que más me gustó leer durante mi infancia”, and their impressions and sensations from that moment; then, they discuss their re-reading or revisiting of the book series as adults, and their enjoyment of the book: “Qué bien me lo estoy pasando releendo estos libros, de verdad”, says another comment. Finally, in relation to this crossover reading, come the statements that, although *Manolito Gafotas* might be classified as a children’s book, it can also be enjoyed by the adult reader: “Da igual la edad que tengáis, este libro puede ser leído tanto por niños como por adultos”, says one comment, an idea which is repeated several times. Out of the three products, this was the only case where the comments recommending the book are not by older (adult) readers recommending the book for children to read, but rather by adults recommending that other grown-ups read this children’s book: “Si os gusta la literatura adulta de Elvira Lindo, no dejéis de acercaros a los libros de Manolito Gafotas”.

Caillou

As well as for our other two products studied, *Caillou*’s corpus was extracted from social platforms specifically dedicated to literature (*Babelio* and *Goodreads*), as well as social platforms of discussion not specific to literature (*Reddit* and *Tumblr*). We extracted a total of 12,828 words from comments written in English, which equates it approximately to the corpus we constructed on *Manolito Gafotas*.

Through an initial look at the keywords from this corpus, we notice the appearance of one of the authors (Hélène Desputeaux), the only case in the three corpora in which the author’s name comes up on the list of keywords.

Another element in opposition to the other two corpora was the presence of lemmas associated with complaining and scolding (“whiny”, “whine”, “reprimand”), as well as pejorative terms (“brat”, “fucker”, “bitch”). Other pejorative terms, such as “suck” and “shit” appeared on this keyword list. This made us look deeper into our corpus in order to confirm our suspicions concerning negative reactions towards the product, which we found in phrases such as “Caillou sucks”, “the plot sucks”, “I didn’t even know other people hated that little animated shit”, “‘Caillou’ is derived from the ancient Latin term for ‘piece’ of shit”. As we mentioned above, this is the only case out of the three objects that we analysed where we found negative reactions in the comments on the product. Excepting the appearance of the term “brat”, with its pejorative connotations, there is no other lemma associated with childhood. This critique is mostly centered on the main character, but there is also criticism attached to the product itself.

From the list of most common nouns, we notice that the incidence of the object as a literary product is more common than as an audiovisual product: “book” comes up third on the list, while “show” and “series” are respectively 6th and 12th. This also happens when we look at the verbs: “read” can be found two places above “watch” (7th and 9th respectively). While looking at the list of verbs, we notice as well lemmas pertaining to the semantic field of education: “learn”, coming 6th on the list of common verbs, has more mentions than “read”, and also, further down (17th), we find “teach”. Contrary to the analysis of *Manolito Gafotas*, where we may infer an attitude towards the object more related to enjoyment, to having fun whilst consuming it (by reading or watching), *Caillou* seems to draw more towards the educational aspect of reading and/or watching.

In contrast to *Manolito Gafotas*, there was just one lemma that localized the product: “Canadian” (43th on the list of adjectives) was the only mention that we found concerning the origins of the product. What was interesting as well, looking at the adjectives, was the extreme polarization in terms of lemmas expressing quality: “bad” and “terrible” vs “good” and “great”.

When we looked at the terms associated with “book” and “series”, several phenomena can be observed. On the one hand, for the series, we found “watch” and “rewatch”, a lemma pertaining to the repeated consumption of the object as an audiovisual product. We observed once again the apparition of lemmas with negative connotations, be it negative feelings or actions (“soil”, “hate”, “abhorrent”, “awful”). We found no mention of *Caillou* as a literary object, but there were some lemmas that came from literary and artistic traditions such as “character” or “create”. On the other hand, when looking at the term associations for “book”, we did find an infiltration of audiovisual lemmas in the literary (“series”, “portray”), but no direct reference to the action of watching. Finally, “teach” appeared once again, reinforcing *Caillou* as an educational tool. Contrary to its analysis as a television series, there were lemmas with positive semantic connotations used in company with the object as a book (“fun”, “great”, “cute”, “reassuring”).

What we observe in the case of *Caillou* is a consumer that is very polarized depending on the type of object. The prestige, or the quality associated with *Caillou* as a book has not made it to the screen: the series is considered with great negativity. Although we found no association with the literary when the series is discussed, we might suppose that it is due to the disparity in quality associated with each of this product’s versions. In fact, while there was no evident difference in quality associated with the book and screen versions of *My Little Pony* and *Manolito Gafotas*, that did not happen in the case of *Caillou*, where the audiovisual infiltrated the literary to gain validation from it, thus positioning first the book and then the series.

A closer reading of “book” in *Caillou* provides us with three ideas that are more frequently discussed in comments. First of all, this is the only case where a discussion on the illustrations unfolds: although both *MLP* (as comic books) and *Manolito Gafotas* have illustrations in them, there are no specific references made to them; but, concerning *Caillou*, the discussion regarding the illustrations is of a more transmedial nature, since they present Caillou’s figure as a character in relation to the series; more specifically, comments notice that Caillou is portrayed in the series as the book illustrations do: “Although he’s a toddler on the tv show, in the books he was only a baby”, or “Caillou is bald because he started out

as a character in books targeted toward infants and young toddlers”. The second recurring topic deals with the appropriate public for these books: very young children, mainly toddlers and kindergarten-age children to whom the book would be read: “I think this book would be best if read to children in preschool or younger”. Finally, unlike the other two previous cases, there is a strong reference to the educational in the discussion of these books: whereas *MLP* and *Manolito Gafotas* are books to be read and enjoyed for the most part, *Caillou* is perceived as an educational tool in the form of a children’s book: it is placed in the finest literary tradition of pedagogical usefulness from the 18th century: “*Caillou* is actually meant to be really good books, with great learnings”, “Little children will love the book and the message is invaluable”, “This is a really cute book for kids to encourage them to read”...

Conclusions

It is time to draw some conclusions. We have studied three transmedial objects coming from the 20th century to our post-digital era. It must be noted that literary issues cross over: there is a deep attachment to the literary origins of the three products, despite their transmedial nature. In fact, words we associate with literature and literary studies have been traditionally applied to cinema and visual studies, but it goes further: the literary values of these objects were pointed out, particularly with moral issues, in such a way that literature seems to legitimate the value of the product. As we have seen, an important bundle of terms users employed came from literary readings and academic frameworks: schools teach to read and to analyse literature even nowadays, more than images. Still, literature holds, due not only to these social-historical-institutional reasons, but perhaps because of anthropological, radically human ones, as language is previous to other forms of symbolization.

Furthermore, we have to accept some conditions for a transmedial object to be considered as global. Neither translations or transmedialisation can be taken as the ultimate sign or means of globalization: a digital cultural product becomes global not because words are translated into other languages or into other media, but when readers (active users) take hold of it in networks, fan creations, memes... So research programs on reading behaviours have to be reoriented: they are not only routes for circulating, but also networks for “prosuming”.

Indeed, we have taken a fixed image of ephemeral social readings on transmedia cultural objects in the current context of the post-digital and post-global era, from 2010 to 2019, when the Net is working as the great(est) information archive and memory in the world, when algorithms have become the mediators between present and past. This position is no longer held by professors, books, libraries or newspapers. Since Google launched its auto-complete system in 2004, which provides possible/suggested endings for terms typed in by its users, the algorithm has turned into the “gatekeeper” of a “techno-logical memory” (Stiegler, 1998).

That is why it is so important to measure the distance between pre-digital content and its post-digital reception in space and time (Thompson, 1995), just when prosumers are introducing data in the Net. So, vindications of literary origins and moral values seem to end up fitting within a common narrative of the globalization process but lacking social (and economic) concerns according to more local experiences.

Current ephemeral comments have implications for cultural practices, as they will become a form of memory-based engineering, nearly inescapable to future individuals.

Because we are living in a post-data era...

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