

BREAKING THE LANGUAGE:

ANIMATED POETICS AS A TEACHING METHODOLOGY FOR DIGITAL MEDIA ECOSYSTEMS

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Abstract:

This paper presents the pedagogical outcomes of a three-year postgraduate course within the "Audiovisual Arts in the Digital Age" program at Ionian University. Centered on the concept of "digital poetics", the course investigates how animation, coupled with digital design methodologies, can redefine storytelling within contemporary media ecosystems.

The course explored the intersections between creative writing and thinking within the expanded field of digital culture, where text is no longer confined to linguistic structures but becomes a hybrid, multimodal construct spanning image, sound, code, and interaction. At its core, the course introduces students to electronic literature and digital poetry while simultaneously engaging them in the development of creative methodologies that bridge theory, conceptual design and creative practice. Emphasis is placed on the notion of poiein (the act of making) as a dynamic process emerging through experimentation across media. Students are encouraged to critically and creatively engage with animated text as a fluid entity, capable of transforming or being reinterpreted within digital environments.

The paper presents a series of teaching outcomes that revolve around the idea of "breaking the language", approached as both artistic research and a conceptual design strategy. Language is treated not as a stable system but as a malleable material that can be fragmented, distorted, and reassembled. By engaging with a diverse range of practices, from lettrist-inspired text manipulations to typographic experiments and technological deconstructions, the showcased works challenge conventional modes of representation. Students investigate the boundaries of narrative and meaning by reconfiguring textual and visual elements, producing new layers of interpretation. This exploration reveals how digital platforms, tools, and techniques facilitate not only novel aesthetic outcomes but also critical reflections on the very nature of text, narrative and expression in digital environments.

The paper introduces an indicative step-based research and teaching methodology developed through this three-year course, based on the concept of 'breaking the language' as deconstruction, disruption, transmediation, recomposition, recontextualization. In all cases the linearity of textuality is discussed, encouraging an understanding of how animated text and image relate to storytelling, narrative or concept creation. Student projects demonstrate a wide range of approaches, including moving image, experimental animations, video-poems, generative writing systems,

interactive installations, web-based systems, that explore traditional distinctions between author, medium, and audience.

The findings suggest that engaging with language as a breakable, transmutable system enhances creativity and critical approaches. It also enables students, as future creators, to navigate and contribute to contemporary transmedia ecosystems, where storytelling unfolds across various platforms and formats. The paper argues for a redefinition of text as an expanded expressive field within digital arts education, and positions the act of “breaking” of language as a vital pedagogical and creative strategy for exploring new forms of meaning-making in animation and transmedia storytelling .At the same time, a framework is set for training the future workforce of the transmedia animation industry.

Keywords:

animation; digital culture; poetics; creative methodologies; language deconstruction