



Heidi Höglund

# Video Poetry: Negotiating Literary Interpretations

Students' Multimodal Designing in Response to Literature

YOU DON'T  
TAKE A  
PHOTOGRAPH.  
YOU  
MAKE  
IT.



## Heidi Höglund

(born 1982)

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The quote on the cover originates from the photographer Ansel Adams (1902–1984) and is designed into a cover image by Heidi Höglund.

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*To Saga and Tova*





## Abstract

This study focuses on students' multimodal designing in response to literature by studying how a transmediation process of digital videomaking in response to a poetic text influences interpretive work among a group of students in lower secondary education. The research interest reflects a desire to strengthen the research-based platform for multimodal designing in relation to literature education, and thus this study aims to contribute to the larger conversation about the rationale for reading and teaching literature.

Grounded in a performative approach to literary interpretation, referring to interpretation as something one *does* and actively *negotiates*, the research design builds on an analytical framework based in social semiotic theory of multimodality. Analytically, the focus is on how students make use of semiotic resources in representing their interpretation of the poetic text during a multimodal designing process, examining both the process of the students' collective work and the digital video that they produce. Two research questions are posed: What characterises the students' transmediation process regarding their use of semiotic resources as a means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem? And, how do the students, in their digital video, use semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem? The data consists of (1) video observations of a collective process of digital videomaking by four students and (2) the digital video made by them. The data is produced at a Swedish-speaking school in Finland with students attending the eighth grade (age 14–15 years).

The findings illustrate how the process of multimodal designing in response to literature continuously requests, encourages, and urges negotiation, indicating that the transmediation process from poem to digital video is a highly complex one with much potential for negotiating the literary text. The analysis reveals how the negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources, suggesting that the semiotic resources available and in use can be a key factor in students' interpretive work on literary texts. The students' process of transmediating poetry to digital video was not always a straightforward walk facilitated by a multiplicity of

available semiotic resources; the process both enabled and challenged the students in their interpretive work. However, the analyses demonstrate that the challenges and possibilities are what offer and accommodate *spaces for negotiations*. With reference to the findings of this study, negotiating interpretation encompasses ways of combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations.

Based on these understandings, this study argues for an approach to literature education that creates *spaces for negotiating literary interpretations*. This approach emphasises the ability to negotiate different stances, perspectives, positions, and views in order to handle ambivalent and ambiguous situations and perspectives. In such spaces, literary reading activities would not strive to arrive at a consensus. Instead, students would be encouraged to reflect on differences, contrasting understandings, and fostering awareness of multiple views. With support in the findings of this study, such spaces can be offered in the literature classroom.

**Keywords:** literature education; performative approach to literary interpretation; transmediation; multimodality; poetry in education; literary instruction; literary reading

## Abstrakt

Denna studie fokuserar elevers multimodala textskapande inom litteraturundervisning. Detta görs genom att studera hur en arbetsprocess med att omvandla poesi till film inverkar på en grupp elevers tolkningsarbete kring den litterära texten. Forskningsintresset är ett led i att stärka forskningsbaserad kunskap om multimodalt tolkningsarbete inom litteraturundervisningen och följaktligen avser studien bidra till den vidare debatten om litteraturläsningens legitimering och till det litteraturdidaktiska forskningsfältet.

Teoretiskt baseras studien på ett performativt förhållningssätt till litteraturläsning och litteraturundervisning, ett förhållningssätt som utgår från att litteraturtolkning är något en *gör* och *förhandlar*, inte något som *är*. Den analytiska ramen grundar sig på multimodal socialsemiotisk teori och riktar fokus mot hur eleverna under filmskaparprocessen använder sig av olika semiotiska resurser för att förhandla och representera sin tolkning. Datamaterialet består dels av videoinspelningar av en grupp elevers (fyra elever) kollektiva arbetsprocess, dels av deras digitala videofilm. Datamaterialet är insamlat i en finlandssvensk skola med elever i årskurs åtta.

Resultaten visar hur litteraturtolkning är något som eleverna aktivt förhandlar och hur semiotiska resurser sätts i spel för att förhandla om den litterära texten. Vidare visar resultaten hur förhandlingen om den poetiska texten är nära kopplad till användningen av och förhandlingen om semiotiska resurser. Detta antyder att de semiotiska resurser som är tillgängliga och som används är av betydelse i elevernas tolkningsarbete av litterära texter. Att omvandla poesi till film är en komplex och mångfasetterad process som kontinuerligt erbjuder, utmanar och uppmanar elever till att förhandla om den litterära texten. Således öppnar processen upp till förhandling om olika tolkningar, läsningar och perspektiv. Med stöd i studiens resultat innefattar förhandling om tolkning diverse sätt att kombinera, kontrastera och framhålla olika tolkningar.

Studien för fram en performativ ingång till litteraturundervisning som utmärks av *utrymmen för att förhandla om litterära tolkningar*. En sådan ingång betonar förmågan att förhandla om olika synvinklar, perspektiv, positioner och åsikter för att kunna möta motstridiga och

mångtydiga perspektiv. Avsikten med litterär tolkning är därmed inte en strävan efter att nå konsensus, utan istället uppmuntras eleverna till att reflektera över skillnader, olika förståelser och medvetenhet om avvikande uppfattningar. Studien ger stöd för att sådana utrymmen kan erbjudas i litteraturklassrummet.

**Nyckelord:** litteraturdidaktik; performativ ingång till litteraturtolkning; transmediering; multimodalitet; poesi i undervisning; litteraturundervisning; litteraturläsning

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Vaasa, August 1<sup>th</sup>, 2017

*Heidi Höglund*



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

*Imagine a photograph, whatever its motif. The photograph is composed according to the choices of the photographer, either intentionally or unintentionally. In the photograph, something is framed and something else is left out; objects are positioned and aspects may be blurred. In the composition of the photograph, viewpoint and perspective are chosen, as are lightning and scenery. The photograph is chosen as a metaphor for this thesis. That choice of metaphor is based on the assumption that the thesis is composed by me as a researcher – just as a photograph is composed by the photographer. Taking a photograph is an act of preference and choice. The perspective taken is a view taken, but not the only view. From another perspective the view would be a different one. This thesis, just as the photograph, is constructed and defined by me as a researcher; some aspects are chosen and others are left out, in this case, deliberately.*

## 1.1 Framing of the study: background and context

The purpose of this study is to contribute to furthering the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature by studying how a transmediation process of digital videomaking in response to a poetic text influences the interpretive work among a group of students in lower secondary education. Attention is focused on both the process of the students' collective work and the digital

video that they produce; meaning-making is considered both in the multimodal digital video and in the negotiations during the process of videomaking. The research interest reflects a desire to strengthen the research-based platform for multimodal designing in relation to literature education; and thus this study aims to contribute to the larger conversation about the rationale for teaching literature – the legitimisation of literature education.

A study on this matter is required for (at least) two reasons: the rapidly changing conditions for literature, and the significance of visual media in contemporary culture and how this influences what it means to be literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Literature education is facing a tension between the position of literature and literature reading in school curricula and the position of, and attitude towards, literature among youth outside school. Although literature is brought forward as valuable and important in national policy documents in the Nordic countries, the motives for literature reading in school are not self-evident (Persson, 2007). Nordic scholarly works with titles such as *Why Read Literature?* (Persson, 2007, my translation) and *The Usefulness of Literature* (Skaftun, 2009, my translation) testify to a need to legitimise literature reading, and a similar debate is also recognised internationally (see Farrell, 2004; Felski, 2008; Nussbaum, 2010; Roche, 2004; Sumara, 2002).

Such questions about the reading and teaching of literature reflect a concern that the importance of literature and literature reading might be decreasing. Some researchers address the issue in light of rationalistic and utilitarian views, where literature is not valued as beneficial or asserted in an era of market values and measurable results (see e.g. Felski, 2008; Nussbaum, 2010), in which its “usefulness” needs to be legitimised (Skaftun, 2009). Others call attention to the competition from digital media in attracting youths’ engagement and reflect a concern about youths’ literature reading, particularly in relation to their use of and engagement with other media (see e.g. Kåreland, 2009). However, many researchers emphasise the potentials and positive influences of digital media in relation to literature and literature education as well as the necessity to relate to the overall media landscape in contemporary literature

education (see e.g. Alghadeer, 2014; Lindberg, 2016; Persson, 2012; Tønnessen, 2014).

In the current public debate, there is a newly awakened interest in reading in general with educators, library personnel, and researchers bringing forth reading in TV shows, newspapers, and social media. This interest is partly a consequence of the extensive reporting of results in international reading studies (e.g., OECD, 2010), but the interest also stems from the changing conditions for literacy and literature today. There seems to be a consensus on the importance of reading, but when it comes to the motives for reading literature, the answers are not as obvious. The existence, features, and discipline of literature are key questions in the present Nordic discussions concerning literature teaching and research, which indicates that literature education – once again – is at a crossroads (e.g., Andersson, 2010; Jönsson & Öhman, 2010)

The second reason for a study on this matter is the position and significance of visual media in contemporary culture and how they significantly influence what it means to be literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Today's society is highly visual and visual media can no longer be considered – and are no longer considered – supplemental to other forms of expression. The term *visual turn*<sup>1</sup> refers to the central role the visual plays in our society and the importance of studying visual representations to understand society at large. Jewitt (2008) describes the visual turn as an effect of social changes in the global society: changing approaches to truth and authority, extended access to information and knowledge, and the technological possibilities for visual representation and communication. The possibility to express oneself through a range of modes, e.g. photographic stills or moving images, has increased considerably during recent years, mostly because of technological development. For instance, mobile phones, digital editing technology and more recently apps on tablets have

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<sup>1</sup> The term *the visual turn* or *the pictorial turn* was introduced by W.J.T. Mitchell in his book *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (1994).

made it accessible and possible to work with photography and moving images. Moving image production now lies at the heart of the everyday literacy practices of children and adolescents around the world (Bazalgette & Buckingham, 2013; Gilje, 2013). From an educational point of view, it is interesting to note how technology affects our ways of reading and interpreting and our ability to develop other communicative and interpretive competences (see e.g. Jewitt, 2008; Öhman-Gullberg, 2006). Digital technologies have made it possible to create and share images, yet the ubiquity of visual media does not automatically mean that individuals are able to critically view, use, and produce them. These skills are essential to competent engagement in a highly visually oriented society.

Then again, as Paul Duncum (2004, p. 252) points out: “Visual culture isn’t just visual”. Contemporary cultural forms that in everyday speech are viewed as visual include multiple communication modes. The cultural form of film is more than image; it is also music, sound effects, and spoken voice – it is multimodal. Quite indisputably, one can state that in today’s social and cultural contexts, meanings are more and more represented multimodally – with images, sounds, movement, and words combined to represent and communicate meaning (see e.g. Kress, 2010). Modern literacy could be described as a shift from *telling* the world to *showing* the world (Kress, 2003). This shift has caused a broad interest in multimodality, which refers to multiple modes of representation, such as written text, image, moving image, and sound – all with equal potential to make meaning in the text or act as a whole (Kress, 2003; 2010). From a multimodal perspective, all communication and representation consist of several modes, all with the potential to make meaning (Kress, 2003; 2010; Jewitt, 2009a). The underlying assumption and vantage point of multimodality is that people use many means for representation and communication because these offer differing potentials. Also, modes have been shaped through their cultural, historical, and social use, and are not fixed but changeable and situated. Similar to the idea of multimodality are what Eisner (2008) calls *multiple forms of representation* and what Leland and Harste (1994) refer to as *multiple ways of knowing*. All these views emphasise



that knowing and learning are not merely language-based processes, nor are they merely cognitive processes, but multimodal and social processes.

During the past two decades, the notion of literacy has significantly shifted from the conventional sense of reading and writing mostly printed texts to an expanded sense of reading and writing multiple forms that combine various modes. Now, it is more relevant to speak of *literacies* than of *literacy* in the singular. Smidt stresses the importance of viewing literacy not only as a means to open the world for insight, but as a means to reconstruct it: “[w]e are talking here about literacy that implies the ability to find texts, interpret texts, reflect on texts, use texts, produce texts, in short: act with and through texts of all sorts and in various modes and media, for particular needs and purposes” (Smidt, 2011, p. 659).

The concept of *multiliteracies* developed in the early 1990s when a group of researchers called the New London Group<sup>2</sup> saw a need to develop a new approach to literacy that acknowledged the multiplicity of communication channels and the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of the world. They called for a much broader view of literacy than that represented by traditional language-based approaches and described two main arguments for changing literacy practices: the multiplicity of communication channels, modes, and media; and the increased cultural and linguistic diversity (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015; New London Group, 1996). Several theoretical approaches in the field of literacy have developed, such as New Literacy Studies (Coiro, Knobel, Lankshear & Leu, 2008; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006), multimodal literacy (Burn & Parker, 2003; Jewitt & Kress, 2003) and visual literacy (Serafini, 2015) – all intent on promoting a broad definition of and view on literacy. Including all kinds of texts, especially media texts, under the broad title of literacy

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<sup>2</sup> Original members of the New London Group who authored the “Pedagogy of Multiliteracies” manifesto in the *Harvard Educational Review* (1996) include Courtney B. Cazden, Bill Cope, Norman Fairclough, James Paul Gee, Mary Kalantzis, Gunther Kress, Allan Luke, Carmen Luke, Sarah Michaels and Martin Nakata (Mills, 2011b, p. 24).

have become more generally accepted in the past decade, largely because of the influence of digital media. This more inclusive view of literacy obviously reflects the growing social and cultural importance of digital media, as well as the continuing attempt to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to youths' changing practices outside school (Albers & Harste, 2007; Bazalgette & Buckingham, 2013; Lundström & Olin-Scheller, 2014).

By tradition, written language has had a dominant role in school settings, whereas visual, dramatic or musical modes have been valued mainly for aesthetic purposes (Eisner, 2008; Kress, 2008; see also Whiting, 2009). Also, as Eisner (2008) points out, the arts as a form of knowledge do not have a secure past in an epistemological sense; the arts have mainly been regarded as emotional or decorative (see also Kress, 2008, p. 91). However, in the past fifteen years there has been a considerable initiative in educational research to expand the views of literacy and meaning-making to a variety of means of communication (Mills, 2010). Another feature of this expansion is a cultural shift from the consumption of digital media to its creative production (Burn & Parker, 2001; Mills, 2010; see also Jenkins, 2006); a shift emphasised in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (see Finnish National Board of Education, 2014). Multiliteracy is a core concept in the Finnish National Core Curriculum and one of seven main competencies emphasised. Multiliteracy is described as the ability to produce and interpret diverse texts, and refers to the interpretation, composing and evaluation of written, spoken, and multimodal texts within a rich textual environment (Finnish National Board of Education, 2014).

The interest in and potential of multimodal and digital approaches to literature instruction have also been set forth by several researchers (see e.g. Alghadeer, 2014; Elmfeldt & Erixon, 2007; Erixon, 2007; Jocius, 2013; Lindberg, 2016; McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008; Miller, 2011; Ringler, McVerry & O'Byrne, 2014; Xerri, 2012). However, the process of composing multimodally and digitally in response to literature remains an understudied area<sup>3</sup>. Empirical

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<sup>3</sup> For an overview of previous research, see Section 1.2.

research on students' readings of literature has mainly focused on their verbal and/or written statements (Arfwedson, 2006; Degerman, 2012; Vasudevan, 2008). Other representations of students' encounter with literature are still relatively unexplored. This verbocentric view (Siegel, 1995; 2006) raises concerns about the potential loss of meaning-making and learning by using mainly verbal language (see also Curwood, 2012; Eisner, 2008; Kress, 2003; 2010). Other representative modes are not being fully engaged in the methodological approaches to the study of literature reading; researchers continue to conduct interviews and collect reading and writing artefacts (Vasudevan, 2008). However, as mentioned above, there is a theoretical and educational interest in exploring representational modes other than the linguistic in relation to literature education.

The research design for this study was developed in response to both the need for study of multimodal designing in response to literature, and its potential educational interest. The starting point was an interest in how students use semiotic resources in interpreting literary texts, which implied a research design that gives recognition to and acknowledges students' meaning-making using a multiplicity of modes. The approach of multimodality, transmediation, and visual responses functioned as an entrance to work with literature in lower secondary education, a project referred to as Video Poetry. Inspired by Peacock's reference to poetry as "the screen-size art" (as cited in Hughes, 2008), with its brevity and conciseness of form but not content, I saw the potential in using visual responses as means of interpreting poetry.<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of its position as one of the oldest literary genres, and the fact that students from time to time express aversion to poetry in print-based modes (McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008), its interdisciplinary character enables a modern view on poetry in the age of digital media and online communication (Alghadeer, 2014). I

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<sup>4</sup> For an elaborated description of the research design and the principles guiding it, see Section 4.3.

developed a research design to undertake a systematic analysis of how a transmediation process from poem to digital video might further the understanding and knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature. The empirical material generated for analysis was (1) video observations of a collective process of digital videomaking and (2) the digital video made by the students. The data was produced at a Swedish speaking school in Finland with students attending eighth grade.<sup>5</sup>

This study is an attempt to contribute to the body of knowledge on literature education with a performative approach and follows previous work on contemporary literature reading and education, in which some Nordic scholars have adopted a performative view of literature reading (see Hetmar, 2013; 2016; Hetmar & Rørbech, 2012; Rørbech, 2013; see also Meyer & Rørbech, 2008 for a postmodern view on literature education). A performative approach to literature reading and literature education emphasises active, on-going processes; the focus is not on final results but on social practices that actively create gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, and other social categories. With a performative approach, meaning is continuously constructed, which means that literary interpretation is viewed as negotiating, constructing, and exploring meaning(s).

Social semiotic theory of multimodality is used as an analytical angle to examine how semiotic resources are used in representing multimodally in a digital video, and to examine the students' multimodal designing process regarding the affordances and constraints of the different modes and mediums during the videomaking process. The analyses of the empirical material are then interpreted and discussed as a process of transmediation and discussed with a performative approach to literary interpretation in order to develop an understanding of how the digital videomaking process influences students' interpretive work of the literary text. The lens of transmediation offers an opportunity to examine how the literary text is explored, revised, and negotiated throughout the

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<sup>5</sup> In Finland children usually start school at the age of 7 (or the year they turn 7). This means that the students in eighth grade are about 14–15 years of age.

videomaking process, and offers opportunities to discuss what this could mean in light of a performative approach to literary interpretation.

Video Poetry refers to the literature project as a whole, the process of transmediating poetry to digital video as well as the final digital video. Video Poetry offers several semiotic resources for meaning-making, both during the process and in the digital video. As the students recast poetry into digital video, they are involved in a transmediation process; “the act of translating meaning from one sign system to another” (Siegel, 1995, p. 455). Transmediation, a multimodal designing process, allows students to negotiate both their interpretations of the literary text and the representation of their interpretations in a digital video. In the move from page to screen, the process includes many “loops” of interpreting meaning from different sign systems. Shanahan, McVee and Bailey (2014) stress the importance of viewing multimodal composing – or designing – as a meaningful learning experience, rather than just a technology-related activity.

A transmediation process – to transform meaning from one sign system to another – challenges the students to negotiate the meaning of the text and to relate not only to the original text but also to the new one (see e.g. Siegel, 1995; Whitin, 2005; McCormick, 2011; see Section 2.5 for an expounded discussion on transmediation). By analytically focusing on the co-constructions and negotiations during the videomaking process, the attention shifts from studying merely the relation between text and reader to studying the negotiations and co-constructions of the meaning(s) of the text(s). Thus, this study draws attention to how the interpretation of the poem is constructed, negotiated, and renegotiated using a variety of semiotic resources during a transmediation process from poem to digital video.

With its interest and scope, the study is positioned within the discipline of literature pedagogy.<sup>6</sup> Research on literature pedagogy has studied and pointed out contextual conditions, textual structures, and social as well as cultural conditions as central aspects that influence reading of literature and literature education. This study aims to shed light upon how a digital videomaking process in response to literature influences the interpretive work of a poetic text among a group of students in lower secondary education. Just as the contextual conditions, textual structures, and literary socialisation influence the reading process, so do the available resources for communicating and representing. Hence, it is of interest to study how students make meaning in response to a literary text by their use and negotiation of the semiotic resources available. As a result, this study can be seen as an effort to advance and develop the discipline of literature pedagogy methodologically and also to some extent theoretically.

The ontological and epistemological presuppositions of interpretive research influence the methodological considerations of this study with an approach that views meanings as constructed, socially embedded, temporary, and plural. These presuppositions influence the study both methodologically, in the view it takes on the students' interpretations and representations of the poem, as well as epistemologically, through my interpretations as a researcher. Methodologically, the focus is not aimed at a more or less appropriate interpretation of the poem. Instead, it is aimed at how the students, with the semiotic resources available, multimodally co-construct meaning with the literary text in designing a digital video. Epistemologically, since there are no guidelines that guarantee "one, true meaning" or that the meaning will not change over time,

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<sup>6</sup> Literature pedagogy refers to what in a Nordic context is named *litteraturdidaktik*. As the term didactics can be misleading in English speaking contexts, I use the term literature pedagogy. In a Nordic tradition, literature pedagogy is a relatively young research discipline, and is not only engaged with literature instruction but it also adopts a critical view of literature education from both educational and societal perspectives (Degerman, 2012; Kaspersen, 2012).

research from this point of view is bound to be interpretive (Hall, 1997; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). However, the interpretations made are based on theoretical stances, and to justify interpretations there is a need for an explicit methodology.

Although the main intention is to contribute into literature pedagogy and literature education, yet, with its interdisciplinary approach, the study can also contribute to a wide range of research disciplines interested in multimodal designing and meaning-making. Also, given the significance it puts on using a variety of modes in representation and meaning-making, this study can contribute to a larger pedagogical debate on what counts as “knowing” (see e.g. Albers, 2006; Danielsson & Selander, 2014; Eisner, 2008; Kress & Selander, 2012; McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008).

## 1.2 Reviewing previous research

This section aims at defining the research gap for this study. Initially, I position the study in the research field of literature education with an introduction on some identified gaps in and requirements for research. Due to limitations of space, this introduction is done in broad strokes to place the study within the research context; the subject is further explored in Chapter 2. Following this introduction, I turn to previous research on students’ transmediation of literature, after which I review more closely the research on digital video composition in response to literature.

Much of the previous research on students’ reading of literature is based on their verbal or written language, whereas other representations of students’ reading are still relatively unexplored. Furthermore, few studies on the reading of literature explore the actual processes of reading, although researchers have put forward the importance of examining these processes (McVee, Bailey &

Shanahan, 2008; see also Gibbons, 2010<sup>7</sup>). Often the reading process is viewed in retrospect through interviews. However, in research on reading and teaching of literature there has during the past decade been a considerable interest in literature discussions within educational practices (for a review, see Janssen & Pieper, 2009; Tengberg, 2011). These studies have contributed to the body of knowledge on youth “processing” and responding to literature but the focus is still on students’ verbal responses, written or spoken. Other representational modes are not being fully engaged in the methodological approaches; researchers continue to conduct interviews and observations as well as collect reading and writing artefacts (see Vasudevan, 2008).

Researchers in the Nordic field of literature education request new theoretical and methodological approaches to develop the research field (see e.g. Degerman, 2012; Kaspersen, 2012; Olin-Scheller, 2013). Much of the previous research is theoretically framed by reader-response and reception theory, and methodologically the emphasis has been on ethnographical classroom observations, with a strong focus on students’ written or spoken responses (Arfwedson, 2006; Degerman, 2012; Holmberg & Nordenstam, 2016; Kaspersen, 2012; Mehrstam, 2009).

During the past decade, a growing interest in the changing media landscape and its consequences for and influences on the research, teaching, and reading of literature has developed. In the Nordic countries this is approached by proposing new theoretical concepts for studying literary reading (see e.g. Elmfeldt & Persson, 2010), by studying children’s and youths’ digital literature reading (Nissen & Henkel, 2013; Tønnessen, 2016), by proposing theoretically and methodologically developed rationales for teaching literary texts integrating media pedagogy (Elf, 2009), by establishing research

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<sup>7</sup> Gibbons (2010: 8) notices the same development in research on media production among children and young people, where she acknowledges the great work of analysing youth media texts but emphasises that analysing the texts in isolation from the process and the social context is not sufficient.



schools (e.g. SPLIT<sup>8</sup>), and by studying issues related to the reading and teaching of fan fiction literature in school (Olin-Scheller & Wikström, 2010). Hence, researchers are engaged in, and acknowledge the necessity of, studying literature reading and teaching in relation to the media landscape (see also Degerman, 2012). Still, students' multimodal composing in response to literature is an understudied area of research in a Nordic context.

Internationally, there is an interest in research into multimodal designing in response to literary texts; however, this area of research is rather new. There is a large amount of research on students' multimodal designing and digital video designing in general (see e.g. Bruce, 2009; Miller, 2013; Smith, 2014 for metasynthesis and reviews). Several studies have also followed the digital designing process closely (see e.g. Gilje, 2010; 2011; Ranker, 2008) and studied the practices of multimodal digital production and communication in the context of L1 (Burgess, 2015<sup>9</sup>), and how students' out-of-school and multimodal literacies could be shaped to support their participation in dialogic discussions of literature (Chisholm, 2010). Research on transmediation of literature has studied the shift from written text in print to visual representations in print (Whitin, 2005; 2009; Siegel, 1995), and from written drama texts to spoken-word performances (Anglin & Smagorinsky, 2014). But, because of the scope of this study and a need to delimit the review of previous research, these perspectives are not further elaborated in this section; instead, it focuses on students' digital, multimodal designing in

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<sup>8</sup> SPLIT is an abbreviation for *Språk- och litteraturredaktik i medielandskapet* (Language and Literature Didactics in the Media Landscape, my translation), a Swedish research school involving five different universities and university colleges. The research school takes its starting point in the medialised, multilingualistic, and culturally diverse society and how such factors affect the conditions for language development and literature reading.

<sup>9</sup> Burgess (2015) studies the digital filmmaking process of students in grade 9 and their film adaptations of literary short stories. Her study shares several common grounds and interests with this study; however, since Burgess focuses on multimodal text production as a literacy practice within L1, not as means to expand on the literary text or in relation to literary education, it is not further elaborated in the section on previous research.

response to literature. Previous research on students' multimodal designing in general does, however, provide this study with valuable insights both theoretically and methodologically.

Research studies have addressed students' transmediations from literature to digital text, such as slide shows (Jocius, 2013; Ringler, McVerry & O'Byrne, 2014) and podcasts (Rozema, 2007), but not many studies have addressed transmediation from literary text to digital video composing with moving images. And even fewer studies have closely followed the working process of the multimodal designing process of literary texts – a research gap this study aims to fill.

Studies of students' digital video designing in response to literature demonstrate how they are careful with their use of the elements that digital video offers. Jocius (2013) studies adolescent learners' multimodal compositions created in response to the contemporary novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini. The analysis focuses students' multimodal products together with their questionnaire responses and reflections, teacher interview, and researcher observation. Jocius finds that the students are careful with their use of visual and auditory modes to create tone and mood, as well as to invite participation and collaboration from the audience by provoking thought (Jocius, 2013). Similarly, Carey (2012) demonstrates how students creating a video mash-up based on their understanding of Shakespeare's play *Othello*, were well aware of the choices of video transition-effects and juxtaposing images with lyrics. By engaging fully with the literature and analysing figurative language, they aimed at representing the latent meaning through other sign systems.

Studies also demonstrate how digital video designing processes provide students with an understanding of their literature learning. Miller (2011) illustrates, by analysing interview data on the students' reconstructions of experiences of digital video composing, how they learned strategies for making meaning from the literary text and the world through analysis, synthesis, symbolic and metaphoric thinking, and thematic abstraction. These findings are supported by studies

that show how a multimodal approach to literature instruction increases students' agency to support them in interpreting literary texts and addressing social issues (see e.g. Ajayi, 2015).

Research on teachers' and teacher students' views on multimodal composing in response to literature demonstrate findings that acknowledge a greater appreciation for the student learning processes and agency. Studies show that a multimodal approach to literature instruction allows teachers to help students use multiple interpretive perspectives and different modalities for reading complex texts such as Shakespeare's plays (Ajayi, 2015; see also Carey, 2012; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell, 1998). In a study on pre-service teachers' use of digital media to interpret poetry, McVee, Bailey and Shanahan (2008) discuss what is afforded by a multimodal approach to teaching poetry. They emphasise that it is not learning about poetry or learning about technology that are their end goals. Their wish is to explore significant changes in what knowledge is, how it is represented and communicated to reshape curriculum and pedagogy to be relevant for children and youth.

Reports on teacher experiences of teaching literature through a process of digital videomaking (Schwartz, 2009) and in relation to moving image (Durrant & Morrison, 2004) emphasise the potential of such an approach. Schwartz (2009), for instance, turns to the process of videomaking, which includes storyboarding, shooting, and editing. He examines the creative, interpretive, collaborative, and transformative elements of digital poetry. By focusing on how poetry functions in different media, Schwartz (2009) encourages students to critically consider how the introduction of multimodal elements shapes the design and interpretation of poetic texts.

Scholars have studied and emphasised the dramatic (Hughes, 2008), visual (Albers, 2009) and multimodal (Xerri, 2012) potential of literature from an educational point of view. Hughes (2008) discusses the potential of new media for reading, representing, and performing poetry, and how the students' use of text, image, and sound were used to mediate meaning-making. Albers (2009) discusses, with reference to the highly visual nature of contemporary society, that it is

important that English language arts should include the teaching of how to read visual images with an informed and critical eye. In her approach, she has worked with teachers to study the visual text their students create around literature, in order to provide insight into their understanding of it (Albers, 2009). Xerri (2012) discusses the theoretical underpinnings of a multimodal approach to poetry teaching and what claims can be made about the benefits of employing a multimodal approach. With reference to video poetry, Xerri reviews how the visual modes and elements are considered effective means of encouraging students to enjoy the reading and discussion of poetry.

In a review of research on poetry pedagogy, Sigvardsson (2016) clearly shows that poetry pedagogy is understudied both in Sweden and internationally. The findings of the review demonstrate a view on poetry reading as an individual performance, regardless of whether it illuminates the cognitive reading process of an individual or the development of the individual's personal response within the classroom collective. Sigvardsson concludes that the many suggestions of reader-response pedagogies can be viewed as a signal to researchers of a need to explore other aspects of poetry pedagogy if the body of knowledge is to develop further.

This review of previous research demonstrates how different approaches to the transmediation of literature have been studied; however, there is still much to explore in terms of students' digital video designing in response to literature. Although a multimodal approach to literature education is widely put forth as valuable in previous research and scholarly works, few studies have examined what these processes actually involve. Regarding the methodological approaches used in the research referred to above, few studies of students' multimodal designing in response to literature have both attended to the student-produced material itself and followed the working process closely.

Consequently, we have arrived at the purpose of this study.

### 1.3 Rationale, aim, and research questions

Based on the background discussed above, the rationale for this study can be characterised by three interrelated motives: (a) the current scholarly and public debate on literature reading and a need for pedagogical and research development of literature education; (b) the position and significance of visual and multimodal media in contemporary culture and how they significantly influence what it means to be literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; and (c) a need for research-based knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature, as pointed out by previous research.

With reference to the background and rationale discussed above, the purpose of the study is to contribute to furthering the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature by studying how a transmediation process of digital videomaking in response to a poetic text influences the interpretive work among a group of students in lower secondary education. Attention is aimed at both the process of the students' collective work and the digital video they produce; meaning-making is considered both in the multimodal digital video and in the negotiations during the multimodal designing process. The research interest reflects a desire to strengthen the research-based platform for multimodal designing in relation to literature education, and thus this study aims at contributing to the larger conversation about the rationale for reading and teaching of literature – the legitimisation of literature education.

To understand how a transmediation process from poetry to digital video influences the students' interpretive work, the following research questions are posed:

1. What characterises the students' transmediation process regarding their use of semiotic resources as a means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem?
2. How do the students, in their digital video, use semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem?

Social semiotic theory of multimodality is used as an analytical lens to examine both how semiotic resources are used in representing multimodally in the digital video as well as to examine the students' multimodal designing during the transmediation process from poem to digital video. Social semiotic theory of multimodality offers an opportunity to understand how meaning is represented and negotiated using a variety of semiotic resources, and thus provides the theory behind the analytical framework developed to examine the empirical material of this study. Multimodal designing refers to the process of students as active meaning-makers utilising a multiplicity of semiotic resources according to individual interest and ideological positioning as well as perception of audience and context. Multimodal designing, and more specifically the digital videomaking process that is studied here, is a well-developed area of study as such. But due to the interest and scope of this study, where the interest is in multimodal designing in response to literature, the approach of transmediation serves as a conceptual bridge between digital video designing and literature: a transmediation process from poem to digital video.

Transmediation refers to the process of transforming meaning from one sign system, such as written language, to another, such as pictorial representation. The approach of transmediation offers an opportunity to examine how the literary text is explored, revised, and negotiated throughout the videomaking process. The concept of transmediation is used on an interpretive level to expound the findings of the analyses of the students' digital video and the process of digital videomaking. The approach bridges the analyses of digital videomaking with literary interpretation, and offers insight into how the digital videomaking process influences the students' interpretive work with the literary text. This is then discussed in light of a performative approach to literary interpretation and, by extension, literature education.

The empirical material consists of (1) video observations of a collective process of digital videomaking and (2) the digital video made by the students. The empirical material is produced at a

Swedish-speaking school in Finland during five weeks in 2010. The students are of age 14–15 years, attending the eighth grade. The use of video recorded data in combination with “textual” data allows for a rich recording of the activity and provides data for in-depth analysis.

## 1.4 Composition of the thesis

In this first chapter, I have introduced the frames and central outset of the study, and the challenges this may imply for literature education. I have presented two central outset of the study, positioned it in the research area of literature education by presenting some gaps in and requirements in the field, and reviewed previous research on students’ transmediation of literature, particularly digital video designing in response to literature. Thus, I have presented the rationale for this study. Following this, I have presented the purpose and research questions and provided initial positioning both theoretically and methodologically.

Chapter 2 is the first of two establishing the theoretical framework for the study. In this chapter, I theoretically position the study within a performative approach to reading and teaching literature. This includes defining terms such as text and reader, definitions and positioning regarding literary interpretation, and reviewing the scholarly debate on why literature should be read and taught, and what this debate has brought forth regarding literature education in a Nordic context. In this chapter I also present and discuss the concept of transmediation and how it offers an opportunity to examine how the students explore and negotiate the literary text throughout the whole process from poem to final digital video.

Chapter 3 serves as the second chapter establishing the theoretical framework. Here I present and discuss social semiotic theory of multimodality and how it is adopted theoretically in this study, including a discussion on multimodal designing as a meaning-making process and the kineikonic mode as a “grammar” for the

moving image. The chapter also introduces the metafunctions of text and strata of text production, which are further elaborated in the analytical framework presented in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 4 I position the study ontologically and epistemologically and discuss considerations regarding methodology and research design. Much consideration is given to the processing of data and proceedings in analysis to illuminate the process step by step and show how several rounds of analysis have been conducted. In this chapter I also discuss the trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the study in order to describe the research process as transparently as possible.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the analyses of the students' videomaking process and the digital video. In Chapter 6 the analyses are discussed in relation the theoretical framework and previous research; the chapter also provides a critical evaluation of the methods used. Finally, in Chapter 7 I present conclusions, discuss insights and interpretations, and consider the contributions and possible implications of the study.



## 2 LITERATURE READING AND TEACHING: THEORETICAL POSITIONING

This chapter is the first of two establishing the theoretical framework of the study. It deals with theoretical views on reading and teaching of literature. Initially, I begin by introducing a *performative approach* to literature reading (2.1.) and in line with this approach define the terms *text* and *reader* (2.2), which are central for any study on the reading and teaching of literature. Following these definitions, I theoretically position *literary interpretation* (2.3), and review the scholarly debate on the rationales for reading and teaching literature in school on *literature education* in a Nordic context (2.4). This review also serves as a contextual positioning within a Nordic context. Finally, I discuss the concept of *transmediation* (2.5) and how it offers an opportunity to examine how the literary text is explored and negotiated throughout the process of digital video designing in response to literature – a transmediation process.

### 2.1 A performative approach

The term performativity is used and developed in several research disciplines and is anchored in theories developed by John L. Austins, Michel Foucault and Judith Butler (Hermansson & Rudeke, 2007; see also Hall, 2000). Characteristic of performativity is the emphasis on active, ongoing processes; focus is not on fixed, final results but on

social practices that actively create gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity, and other social categories (Rørbech & Hetmar, 2012; Rosenberg, 2005). Performativity in this study is not grounded in theories such as Austin's theory of speech acts and performative utterances or Butler's theories developed in relation to gender constructions as an act or performance (see Hall, 2000). Instead, the study adopts the notion of performativity in relation to literature reading and teaching – and thus literature education. According to such a performative approach, meanings, interpretations, texts, identities, and cultures are continuously constructed and transformed in social groups and communities; it is something one *does* or *negotiates*, not something that *is*. This is further defined throughout this chapter.

Considering readings and meanings of texts as part of cultural and social interaction enables the possibility of multiple meanings and multiple constructions of the text. A performative approach to literature education is acknowledged from different perspectives (see e.g. Meyer & Rørbech, 2008; Rørbech, 2013; 2016; Rørbech & Hetmar, 2012). Rørbech and Hetmar (2012) discuss, with reference to classrooms examples, how meaning, culture, and identity are constructed in the interactions during literature lessons. By studying how the students position themselves – and are offered to be positioned – they discuss examples of how culture and identity are constructed, negotiated, and explored. During a discussion about gender, war, and sex related to a literary text, the teacher asks the students in the classroom: “Are there any Muslim girls here?” There is no reaction from the students. Rørbech and Hetmar stress that this does not necessarily mean that there are no Muslim girls in the classroom, but viewed from a performative approach, no student in this particular situation wishes to position herself within the category “Muslim girl”.

Such a view of constructing and negotiating culture, identity, and meaning is a central shift in perception and understanding within contemporary ideas of literature education. From a performative approach, culture or meaning is not inherent in the text or as a part of the readers' ethical, social, or cultural background, and the reading

is not a result of the readers' cultural or social background or heritage (Rørbech & Hetmar, 2012). Instead, "cultural heritage" or "social heritage" is seen as a potential for cultural and social remaking: texts offer voices, perspectives, and meanings to create and negotiate new meanings (see also Smidt, 2011). This study approaches the students' negotiations of how to represent their interpretation of a poem as crucial part to their attempt to make meaning with it. In line with this approach, interpretation is seen as a meaning-making process that is highly dependent on the circumstances, people, and semiotic resources available at that particular moment; interpretation of the poetic text is *performed* and *negotiated*.

## 2.2 Text and reader

Although it has been accepted in literary theory for several decades that readers interpret texts differently, there has been, and still is, much debate about this issue. The discussions relate to questions such as, does the text have or possess meaning in itself; is the meaning of the text created in interaction with readers; does the meaning of the text simply come to being through readers' transaction; is the text a fixed or unfixed entity; are our responses to literature the same as its meaning(s); and do readers read texts as individuals or as part of larger communities of interpretation? These questions are related to how the ontological status of the text is viewed, and thus have explicit consequences for the teaching of literature.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> In this study the notion of literature is to be viewed as not limited to books; literature exists on stage, in newspapers, in oral performances and now, increasingly, in electronic media contexts (see e.g. Koskimaa, 2007). Similarly, the notion of text in this study is to be viewed as not limited to alphabetic text; instead, this study applies the notion of a broadened concept of text. In this section, however, the theories discussed are for the most part developed in relation to literary texts.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the starting point for understanding a text was the author's intention, often connected to biographical context. During the mid-twentieth century, with theories such as New Criticism, the focus shifted from the author to a close reading of the text, extracted from its historical and social context. Supporters of New Criticism opposed the biographical-historical approach to studying texts, and focused all their attention on the literary work as the only source of evidence for interpreting it. (Culler, 1997; Nolte, 2012.)

In opposition to decontextualised and "objective" theories such as New Criticism, focus began to shift towards the readers and the readers' role in the making of the literary text. Two main theories developed: reader-response theory and reception theory. From the standpoint of reader-response and reception theory, the question is not so much what the text *is*, but more importantly what the text *does* (Nolte, 2012). Texts are no longer viewed as stable structures that only bear only one, true, correct meaning. Instead, texts are viewed as negotiable, embedded in a constant process of re-reading and re-interpreting in different times and places. Texts are open to multiple interpretations, and readers are not passive recipients of ideas included in the text but active participants in the production of meaning. Such a shift of viewpoint is by Barthes (1991) suggested as viewing literature as *work* or *text*, where work refers to something definite and complete, while text refers to something negotiable and open.

However, reader-oriented literary theory is not a unified field without tension. Roughly collated reader-response theory emphasises the actual reader(s), while reception theory puts emphasis on how texts offers structures and different levels of openness for different readings. The shared interest is a shift of attention from the author and the text itself, to the interaction(s) between texts and readers. The relation between the readers and the text is central, but the social and cultural context is also of importance. Depending on which theorist one refers to, the relation between reader, text, and social context is viewed somewhat differently. But, the key issue that appears to divide the field is what Mehrstam refers to as the split between the

interactional and transactional approach: the ontological status of the text (see Mehrstam, 2009).

An interactional approach, represented by scholars such as Wolfgang Iser (Iser 1978; 1980), acknowledges the text as the same for everyone, even though their readings may vary. With an interactional approach, the text offers or prepares a structure that the readers interact with. This structure, that does enable different readings, is however essentially the same for every reader. In Iser's theory, the text controls by an appellative structure and offers blanks, or gaps, and the reader's activities are confined within the borders set by the literary work. The transactional approach, represented by scholars such as Stanley Fish (Fish, 1980) and Louise Rosenblatt (Rosenblatt, 1938/1994), asserts that there is no predetermined text since the text is beheld differently by different readers and in relation to the reading event. Accordingly, a text does not exist prior to a readers' reading of it. According to Fish's theory, the meaning of the text is bound to cultural assumptions and that individuals interpret text as part of an interpretive community (Fish, 1980) that gives us particular ways of reading a text.

The idea of interpretive communities has been influential yet controversial among reader-oriented theories. According to Fish (1980), the interpretive community influences the way the reader understands the text; what "form of reading" the reader chooses. The form of reading is thus the vantage point that both enables and restricts the reading of the text. The interest in forms of reading has developed during recent years in Nordic literature research (see e.g. Tengberg, 2011); how one approaches the text influences what kind of meaning one applies to it. Whether this is conscious or not, ruled by the structure of the text or by cultural and social factors, seem to be constant issues of debate.

The difficulties in choosing either one of these approaches, the interactional or transactional, are reflected in previous research on literature reading where the approaches tend to merge, and both perspectives have disadvantages and advantages for studying the manifold action of literature reading (see Degerman, 2012;

Mehrstam, 2009; Tengberg, 2011). In his doctoral thesis, Mehrstam (2009) addresses the issue of how to approach the text ontologically, and refers to what he calls the split between the interactional and transactional approaches to texts and the troubles this has caused researchers. This has resulted “in either reception studies that hardly take the text into much consideration at all, or studies that make unproven claims between the response-inviting textual structures and the documented response” (Mehrstam, 2009, p. 303). Tengberg (2011) acknowledges that this remains an unresolved issue in reception theory on which there is no consensus (see also Kåreland, 2009). His solution to this problem is to make a distinction between the text as an artefact and the text that is perceived by the readers, what he refers to as the “discerned text” (Tengberg, 2011, p. 29).

In the scope of this study, the text that the students read is not taken into consideration separately. In line with a performative approach, the focus is on the text “discerned” (Tengberg, 2011, p. 29) by the students, and how they negotiate it and its representation. It is probably not possible or even desirable to state once and for all the role of the text or the role of the readers; the relationship between these two are not something fixed and static. Rather, with the possibility of viewing the role of the text and reader differently according to the aim and scope of what is being studied, different views can be presented and discussed. Without disregarding the fact that there are aspects of the text that are not negotiable, this study approaches text not as a static artefact with an inherent correct meaning, but as dynamic and open with rich potential for multiple interpretations.

Research has studied and pointed out contextual conditions, textual structures, interpretive communities, and social as well as cultural conditions as central aspects that influence the reading of literature and consequently literature education. This study aims at throwing light upon how responding to literature is influenced by the semiotic resources available and in use, focusing on a digital videomaking process in response to literature among a group of students in lower secondary education. Just as the contextual conditions and textual structures influence the reading process, so do the available resources

for communicating and representing. Hence, it is of interest to study how students make meaning in response to a literary text by their use and negotiations of the semiotic resources available.

### 2.3 Literary meaning-making: negotiating interpretations

What is meaning, then, with reference to literature? Turning to literary theories this issue is viewed from different angles: meaning as the intention(s) of the author, meaning as inherent in the text, meaning dependent on the contextual or historical circumstances, or meaning as the experience of the reader (Culler, 1997, p. 65). Arguments made for all of these approaches show that meaning is complex and difficult to track down, and not something determined once and for all by any one of these factors. In this study the interest is turned towards a meaning-making process among a group of students and their videomaking process in response to a literary text. The interest is focused on the process of making meaning with the poem – acts of interpretations – not to aim at a fixed interpretation, but applying a performative approach to literary interpretation that views meaning, identity, and culture as constructed and negotiable in different settings and among different social actors. From a performative approach, literary interpretation is to be understood as something one *does* and actively *negotiates*, not something fixed and constant or a level to achieve or accomplish.

Literary interpretation is a concept that is used in a wide range of ways and it is a constant matter of discussion (Janssen, Pieper & van de Ven, 2012; for a review on different approaches to literary interpretation, see Kubik, 2012). In this study, literary interpretation is viewed as a meaning-making process that is influenced by social and cultural factors – and regarding this study, particularly semiotic resources – and will vary in time and space. The emphasis on *negotiating* interpretations clarifies the use of the term literary interpretation in this study. Often interpretation is referred to as offering possible meanings and that readers infer, rather than find, meaning(s). However, even though interpretation is about making

inferences and drawing conclusions, this study takes a performative approach, which means that besides making inferences and drawing conclusions, literary interpretation also involves negotiating, constructing, and exploring meaning(s).

Negotiating, thus, becomes a central concept in a performative approach to literary interpretation. Sigmund Ongstad (2004), building on Bakhtin, speaks about positioning. Ongstad emphasises the dynamic and active in the term positioning, in contrast to the terms role and position, which he perceives as static and fixed. Positioning serves as a means to understand and describe dynamic processes. Hetmar (2016) uses *positioning oneself* as a way of doing and being within a specific domain, with reference to James Paul Gee's views on doing identity. I use *negotiating* interpretations, instead of positioning, but the core meaning is similar.

In this study, the performative approach is applied by analysing the students' engagement with semiotic resources and how these resources serve as a means for negotiating the text and their interpretation, and also offers possibilities for positioning themselves. Thus, representation plays an important role; our understanding needs an expression, a form, a shape (Selander, 2009). Through representation our understanding is given voice. Representation is therefore not to be understood as a mirroring of the world but as an expression of how we understand and interpret the world (Selander, 2009; see also Crotty, 1998; Hall, 1997). With reference to educational contexts, it is of importance what resources are available for representation. In this study, representation is to be understood as closely connected to design, where design refers to the process of making the representation and how people create different conditions for meaning-making based on their interests and choices of semiotic resources. In this understanding, design does not primarily point to aesthetic or artistic aspects, but to meaning-making and collaborative processes as well as performative and transformative activities (Selander, 2017).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> These concepts are further discussed in Section 3.1, *Meaning-making: a multimodal designing process*.



Abraham (2011) recognises a need to acknowledge the communicative and social aspects of the interpretive act, which he describes as “an appreciation for the *learning community* as the subject of interpretation” (Abraham, 2011, p. 1, italics in original). Abraham advocates an approach to literary interpretation that is about establishing a common platform to discuss attitudes, experiences, and values by negotiating the meaning of the text and communicating this to others.

Interpretation as a cultural activity in this context is not something students in the classroom (or critics in their writing, for that matter) do *for the sake of* interpretation. If it is anything at all, it is a joint activity resulting in a literary work being challenged or confirmed, approved of or disputed. And it is this that students have to learn ... (Abraham, 2011, p. 5, italics in original)

Janssen, Pieper, and van de Ven (2012) recognise the challenge in approaching the matter of interpretation openly, and rhetorically ask if anything rightly can be called an interpretation. The distinction between initial response and interpretation, as illustrated by Pace (2006), states that every utterance might not be called an interpretation, while still approaching literary interpretation as socially and culturally constructed and negotiable. Consequently, initial responses may not be fully-fledged interpretations but they are part of the meaning-making process and the constructing of joint interpretation.

## 2.4 Literature education in a Nordic context

Literature education in the Nordic countries<sup>12</sup> is greatly influenced by both German and Anglo-American theoretical movements. The German tradition is reflected in the view of literature with a certain

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<sup>12</sup> The Nordic countries are generally considered to refer to Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, including their associated territories (Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Åland Islands). Here, when I refer to the Nordic countries I refer to Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden.

respect for classical, canonical literary works, and reading and interpretation in a hermeneutical sense. Supported by the theoretical underpinnings of New Criticism in combination with historical-biographical readings, this view was prevalent in literature education during the greater part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although German and Anglo-American theories have had a great influence on Nordic literature pedagogy, the development of literature pedagogy was strongly developed by Nordic researchers.<sup>13</sup>

The legitimisation of literature education in a Nordic context was for a long time established in a tradition that aimed to foster affinity with the national state (Kaspersen, 2004; Meyer & Rørbech, 2008; Persson, 2007). This view was later extended with a strong focus on close readings of the text, and latterly also on the readers' perspective. This development in literary theories follows the same tendencies as in theory in general; in a postmodern view of reality and knowledge there is a shift in focus from the author to a focus on the reader and the variations of readings that are possible (Selander & Ödman, 2004). These conditions are also reflected in the literature classroom, which has implications for literature education on how to approach and acknowledge these different readings.

In the Nordic countries, the focus on the reader and the readers' encounter with literature has attracted considerable interest within both literature education and in research on literature pedagogy since the 1970s. In that decade, a Swedish research team called Pedagogiska gruppen combined a German tradition with inspiration from the American reform pedagogy, and their work has had a considerable influence on literature education and pedagogy in the Nordic

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<sup>13</sup> Although the Nordic countries have separate policy documents, traditions, and policy decisions, there are common threads in literature education and research on it in a Nordic context. The intent is not to give a detailed description of the similarities and differences between the countries; the intent is rather to discuss some current trends within the field. Some differences between Finland and the other countries are mentioned, when necessary, to give insight into the contextual setting of this study.

countries. Their approach to literary reading emphasises recognition and shift of perspective, a combination of the already known with the unknown, in order to engage in the text as a reader (Malmgren, 1986). Often referred to as *erfarenhetspedagogik* (directly translated: experience pedagogy), this view was deeply founded in reader-response theory, and its focus was on the reader and his or her encounter with the literary text (Degerman, 2012; Kaspersen, 2012). The scholarly work initiated and developed by Pedagogiska gruppen has had a great influence on literature pedagogy in the other Nordic countries, and has been further developed and advanced (see Kvalsvik Nicolaysen & Aase, 2005; Krabbe & Strøm, 2010; Kaihovirta-Rosvik, Østern & Heilä-Ylikallio, 2011 for Norwegian, Danish, and Finnish perspectives).

Even though the reader-oriented theories have had a significant impact on the research on and teaching of literature, several critical voices have been raised during recent years (see e.g. Andersson, 2010; Degerman & Johansson, 2010; Penne, 2012a; Årheim, 2011). Studies indicate that the implementation of reader-oriented theories in Nordic schools has laid emphasis on students' own experiences at the expense of aesthetic knowledge and literary competence (see e.g. Penne, 2012a). Sørensen (2001, p. 11) stresses the importance of developing critical thinking and asserts that a literature instruction that emphasises students reading experiences builds on the perception that the students are able to develop critical thinking on their own. Årheim (2011) uses the metaphors of mirror and window and illustrates how the reader-oriented approach in practice runs the risk of being solely a mirror in which the students meet no one else but themselves, instead of offering them a window to provide new and different understandings of the world.

Persson (2007; 2012) questions the notion of literature as “good” and calls for a more critical reading. In educational contexts, news features and media texts are often read with a critical approach, while literature is seldom subjected to critical reading. Also, ideas and values presented in a literary text do not necessarily need to be “good” and the values that need to be fought or resisted are *outside* the text, whereas the literary text provides “suitable” contrasting

pictures and is *per se* “good” (Persson, 2012, p. 20). There seems to be a constant opposition between a critical, analytical approach to literature and an experience-focused approach (see Degerman, 2012; Kaspersen, 2013; Rejman, 2013). Steffensen, Møller, and Poulsen (2010) argue that a critical and analytical approach to literature does not have to be in contrast to the readers’ experiences of the text. There is no need to focus solely on a text-oriented or a reader-oriented approach to literature pedagogy. Quite the opposite, a combination of these two approaches may be valuable and even necessary (see also Sørensen, 2001). However, this is considered to be more challenging in practice than in theory.

Faust (2000) recognises the struggle in combining a reading subject, stemming from a reader-oriented approach, with a textual object, stemming from a structuralist approach. According to Faust, teachers struggle to combine the aim of engaging students with literature on a personal level while at the same time upholding a commitment to authoritative readings. He argues “this assumption has produced a double bind for teachers who find themselves seeking to validate students’ personal responses to literature without simultaneously warranting unbridled subjectivism” (Faust, 2000, p. 9). In Faust’s understanding, the meaning of the text is neither in solely the text, nor in the reader’s first response; an understanding is developed through the processing that is done in the classroom, where the text is understood as a social construction of different intertextual references (Faust, 2000, p. 26). Faust exemplifies the difference between these two approaches with the metaphors *courtroom* and *marketplace*. Faust illustrates how teachers place demands on students to produce evidence to support their interpretations, a procedure he refers to as the courtroom metaphor. This metaphor entails the notion that the literary text carries a hidden meaning that can be revealed through questioning and cross-examination, and once the best claims to truth have been presented the jury can deliberate and the case can be closed. Faust is careful to emphasise that he does not argue that teachers intentionally structure their instruction and classroom designs like courtrooms or use legal terms to present literature, but uses the metaphor to illustrate different

stances. The metaphor of marketplace includes the notion that literary texts are sources of truths, and in the classroom as a marketplace, ideas compete for survival. These ideas may draw on personal experiences, and all ideas can be fairly assessed; however, the students' different stances are not brought together, challenged, or explored, and only the best and brightest withstand.

One can object to these two polarised metaphors, but Faust's point is the double bind that emerges when trying to combine them. His alternative approach to this problem is based in the theories of John Dewey and Louise Rosenblatt on the literary work as experience. He suggests a reconstruction of these two metaphors where classrooms are public spaces where literary readings are produced and shared, suggesting the metaphor of a *reconstructed marketplace*. In the reconstructed marketplace there is not a desire to arrive at consensus, especially not a consensus built on the assumption that literary works contain timeless and universally acceptable truths. Instead, students would be encouraged to reflect on differences based on their own and others' ways of reading.

According to my vision of the classroom as a marketplace, teachers would assist students in negotiating their differences by foregrounding the sociocultural context in which reading events take place. They would teach students how to use writing and speaking to textualize their reactions as readers of literature. In addition they would require students to reflect upon and question those reactions in light of their own and others' emerging concerns. Overall students would be encouraged to view the experience of reading with others as an opportunity to achieve thoughtful responses testifying to their enhanced awareness of multiple possibilities for making meaning with literature. (Faust, 2000, pp. 28–29).

In such an understanding, making meaning of a literary text is never finished at a certain stage but rather continually shaped into new interpretive text and, as Smagorinsky and O'Donnell (1998, p. 221) point out, in turn serve as the basis for continued reflection and development of thinking.

At the turn of the millennium, a certain issue became apparent: the legitimisation of literature. Why read literature, and particularly, why

read literature in school? The role and legitimisation of literature in the school context is widely discussed, both internationally and in a Nordic context (Farrell, 2004; Felski, 2008; Jönsson & Öhman, 2010; Kåreland, 2009; Meyer & Rørbech, 2008; Nussbaum, 2010; Persson, 2007; Skaftun, 2009; Smidt, 2005). The question “why read literature” should most certainly be viewed on a general societal level, not just as a subject-oriented issue of what subject content that is most relevant (Degerman, 2012; see also Öhman, 2015). The question reflects a concern that literature and literature reading may be of decreasing importance. Some address the issue from a rationalistic, utilitarian perspective, where literature is not valued as beneficial or asserted in an era of market values (see e.g. Felski, 2008; Nussbaum, 2010). Others call attention to the competition from digital media in attracting young people’s engagement. However, many researchers emphasise the possibilities and positive impacts of digital media in relation to literature and literature education (see e.g. Lindberg, 2016; Tønnessen, 2014). Paradoxically, this means that the strengthened position of literature pedagogy during the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century may be a result of the weakened position of literature reading outside school (see Degerman, 2012). As a result, the question “why read literature” (in school) must always be put in relation to societal, educational, and political currents.

Clearly, there is not a simple or unanimous answer to the question, or any consensus within the scholarly debate. Some even argue that it does not serve the purpose well to establish an answer to an issue that is continuously changing (see e.g. Öhman, 2015, p. 20). Researchers have addressed the question from several angles, for example, by studying policy documents and curricula (Persson, 2007), educational materials (Dahl, 2015), and by examining the views of teachers (Rejman, 2013) and students (Kabel, 2016; Gouvernec, 2016). By studying Swedish policy documents, syllabuses and teaching material, Persson (2007) examines how literature teaching is legitimised in a quest to discuss the question of “why read literature?” He emphasises that the discussion of literature in school must be contextualised and historicised, since the status and position of literature is no longer the same as it used to be. The results of his study indicate that the

motives for reading literature are founded in notions of literature as a source of experience and knowledge, and as a means to develop language skills, create good reading habits and have a positive influence on empathy and tolerance; what Persson summarises as literature as a function of a promotion of democracy.

Some purposes served by teaching literature, which still remain today, involve issues such as the principles of narrative structure, developing reading pleasure, providing moral examples, encouraging personal growth, and illustrating existential and social experiences (Svensson, 2015b). Also, literature reading is understood as closely connected to culture and identity explorations (Penne, 2012b). The legitimisation of literature reading must, according to Molloy (2009), be grounded in more than arguments of genre and form. Although genre-based and form aspects are central to understanding aesthetic value and literary elements, an approach that focuses on form and genre might lead to a development of textual competences for the sake of textual competences. In that case, the justification for reading literature in school is to be able to read literature “better” (Molloy, 2009). Instead, an approach that prepares the students to negotiate the text, reflect about themselves in the issues the text bring forward and, accordingly, develop competence in moral and existential matters is preferable. Instead of knowing only *about* literature, the principles of knowing how to read literature and how to benefit from it personally are stressed. The negotiation of the text is then given just as much importance as the text. An approach to why we should read literature in school could then be viewed as a way of thinking about and negotiating important issues in school (Molloy, 2009). Reading literature can in this regard be understood as being an active citizen in a democracy (see e.g Molloy, 2009; Rejman, 2013).

Consequently, the legitimisation of literature can be addressed from different perspectives. Jørgensen (as cited in Gouvernec, 2016) points to different strategies to define the discipline of the subject Danish, including literature, (a) by describing the objectives, which are measurable and concrete, (b) by defining the indispensable and absolutely necessary content, or (c) by defining in which ways to work with the texts. According to such a division, this study

contributes to the latter perspective by studying how multimodal designing in response to literature influences the students' interpretive work. Gouvernec (2016) points out that in a goal-steered and utilitarian-oriented school, the first of Jørgensen's strategies are emphasised and practices that are not of immediate benefit lose ground. But the legitimisation of literature reading in school can also be found in the practices of literary reading, for example, in students' multimodal designing in response to a literary text.

To sum, the legitimisation of literature in the Nordic countries has previously been established in a literary tradition where literature serves as a keystone of nation-building (Meyer & Rørbech, 2008; Persson, 2007; see also Krogh & Piekut, 2015). Later, this view was, if not replaced, at least extended with a stronger focus on the text including close readings for analytical purposes. During the past 30 years, the strong focus on the reader has been widely spread and literature education has emphasised the interests and readings of the students. Looking at recently published scholarly work, there is an indication that literature pedagogy – once again – is at a crossroad. According to Koskimaa (2007), the challenge for literary teaching is to keep clear the specific nature of the literary discourse, and at the same time acknowledge the overall media landscape and the broad repertoire of media forms, with literary discourse seen as an inseparable part of this larger field. Felski (2008) suggests a similar approach, arguing that literary studies will need to reinvigorate their aims and approaches by creating closer links to the study of other media rather than clinging to unconvincing claims to unique status. However, Felski (2008, p. 22) emphasises: “[s]uch collaborations will require, of course, scrupulous attention to the medium-specific features of artistic forms.” Similar ideas are put forward by Swedish researchers, who call for a broadening of the theoretical approaches to studying literature pedagogy and education. They argue that the changing media landscape imposes other demands on literature pedagogy (see e.g. Elmfeldt & Persson, 2010; Erixon, 2007; Olin-Scheller, 2013). In their study on how semiotic resources are utilised in youth role-playing activities, Lundström and Olin-Scheller (2014)



emphasise the importance of being open to the role of semiotic remediation practices in various learning processes connected to literacies.

In Nordic research on literature education, literary reading is ultimately seen as a practice deeply embedded within the larger domain of socialisation, rather than as a skill to be developed. Studies on literary socialisation (see e.g. Johansson, 2015; Smidt, 2005) have contributed significantly to the body of knowledge on literary education. However, Tengberg and Olin-Scheller (2013) call attention to how this view has left out the possibility that readers' reception is also a product of individuals' deliberate and strategic choices. This study can be seen as an answer to that call; a study of students' deliberate and strategic choices during a videomaking process in response to a poetic text.

### Literature education in a Finnish context

Literature plays a central part in the curricula of the subject L1: Mother Tongue and Literature.<sup>14</sup> Just as in the other Nordic countries, literature is generally included in the subject L1 in both primary and secondary education, as well as upper secondary education. In Finland it is regarded as a subject of language and literature, and during the past 15 years the view has been considerably extended to include a view of literacy and literature in a broader sense (Oker-Blom, 2010). A broadened concept of text<sup>15</sup> was

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<sup>14</sup> *Mother Tongue and Literature* is a translation of the school subject Modersmål och litteratur in Swedish-speaking schools in Finland. The subject is equivalent to the subjects of English in English-speaking countries, Svenska in Sweden, Norsk in Norway and Dansk in Denmark. It is the subject of language arts and literature, often referred to as L1.

<sup>15</sup> The following is the description of a broad conception of text in the Finnish national core curriculum (2004, p. 56): "The subject is based on a broad conception of texts – meaning that they may be founded on fiction or fact and be handwritten, printed, graphic, or electronic. This broad conception of texts encompasses media texts, voice, illustrations, mime, and combinations of these – in addition to spoken and written text."

included in the Finnish National Core Curriculum in 2004 (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004), and the present National Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2014) includes the terms multiliteracy and multimodal skills. This development follows the development discussed by Krogh and Penne with reference to a Scandinavian perspective: “[t]he traditional dyad of L1 as ‘language and literature’ now calls for quotation marks and appears more convincingly represented in the plural forms of languages, literatures, and literacies” (Krogh & Penne, 2015, p. 5).

During the past 15 year, the position of literature in the Finnish educational context has been strengthened in policy documents. Generally, literature is regarded as a form of art with educational values, not only a means to learn the language, particularly in secondary education. This strengthened position is also reflected in the change of subject name from *Mother Tongue* to *Mother Tongue and Literature* in 1999,<sup>16</sup> which expressed a wish to equate literature with language and emphasise its cultural importance. The change of the name was a response to concern about young people’s lack of interest in reading, especially among boys, the increase of other narrative forms and interests among children and young people, and a perceived view among young people of literature as primarily entertainment. Among the motives for the change of subject name, one can see a conscious emphasis on the importance of the reader in the reading process, literature’s potential to develop thinking and identity, and a fear of literature losing its function and power in relation to other narrative practices and the overall media landscape (von Bonsdorff, 1999). Now, many other narrative forms are included in the National Core Curriculum and emphasised as important (National Board of Education, 2014).

In international reading surveys, Finnish students achieve very high results (see e.g. OECD, 2010). But the results are not unambiguous; national evaluations by the Finnish National Board of Education reveal that the Finnish students need more practice in reflective

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<sup>16</sup> In Swedish, the change of name was from *Modersmålet* to *Modersmål och litteratur*.

reading and interpretation of literary texts (Silverström 2006; 2008). The students tend to do well with shorter texts and with questions where the answer can be found directly in the text, but do not perform as well when they are required to draw conclusions from longer texts or reflect on or express their understanding of the text. One of the conclusions of these national evaluations is that the students need more practice in reflective and interpretive reading of literary texts (Silverström, 2008, p. 9).

Literature education in Finland has largely followed developments in the other Nordic countries. The shift from viewing reading literature as a systematic skill to reading as an aesthetic experience and part of forming personal development and growth was particularly noticeable during the 1980s, and the shift was not only noticeable in The Finnish National Core Curriculum but also in teaching and instruction materials (Hansén, 1991). Although the developments are similar there are some differences worth mentioning. First, the position of literature in school is not questioned as strongly in Finland as in, for example, Sweden<sup>17</sup>. By studying teachers' views on literature, Rejman (2013) demonstrates how it has a recognised and acknowledged role within L1. Rejman (2013) finds that the teachers' views correspond well with the view on literature in national policy documents and the strong focus on textual competence prevailing in the matriculation exam. Nor does the interest in literature seem to be declining among L1 teachers, which some Swedish studies indicate (see Kåreland, 2009; Ulfgard, 2015).

The role of literature within L1 education changes noticeably from primary to secondary, and particularly in upper secondary education.

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<sup>17</sup> In 2016 the position of literary reading in school was hotly debated in Sweden, where some contended that literary reading was taking too much time that would be better given over to reading more information-based texts. This, again, initiated a debate on the legitimisation and role of literature reading in school (see e.g. Melin, 2016; Molloy, 2016). The debate also spread to Swedish-speaking Finland, but instead of questioning the role and position of literature in educational context, the views put forward insisted rather on the importance of literature and other narrative forms (see e.g. Perera, 2016).

In primary education reading literature is often integrated into other fields of language learning and education, for example with learning to read or language development, whereas in secondary education, particularly in upper secondary education, literature may even develop the status of a discipline. Literature education in lower secondary education is thus somewhere in the middle. In the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2014, pp. 287–288) for grades 7–9 (in this study referred to as lower secondary education), there is a strong focus on developing a positive attitude towards reading and stimulating reading practices. Literature instruction is focused on supporting the student in developing cultural knowledge, ethical experience, and enriching their language and imagination. The connection to language development and culture is emphasised as literature is considered to broaden students' views of themselves as language users and assist them in understanding their own and other cultures. Both student-oriented and text-oriented approaches to literature instruction are emphasised; when reading literature, the students are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences in relation to the text, in addition analysing and interpreting it and using appropriate literary devices. The literary devices exemplified are symbol, imagery and narrative techniques (Finnish National Board of Education, 2014, pp. 287–288).

Researchers and teacher educators in Swedish-speaking Finland<sup>18</sup> have during the past decade initiated and expanded an artistic, art-based, and multimodal approach to literature education. By producing teaching material and guides for teacher instruction focused on basic education (grades 1–6), as well as researching teachers' experiences utilising these approaches in their own classrooms, researchers have established a literature instruction

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<sup>18</sup> Finland has two official languages, Finnish and Swedish. The Swedish-speaking population of Finland is a linguistic minority with an educational system in Swedish from early childhood to higher education. Needless to say, the educational system follows the laws and policy documents of Finland, but influences from the Scandinavian countries are significant for linguistic, cultural, and historical reasons.

rooted in an artistic, art-based, multimodal approach (see Heilä-Ylikallio, Østern, Kaihovirta-Rosvik & Rantala, 2004; 2005; 2007; Kaihovirta-Rosvik, Østern, Rantala & Heilä-Ylikallio, 2011; Kaihovirta-Rosvik, Østern & Heilä-Ylikallio, 2011; Østern & Heilä-Ylikallio, 2008; Østern, Heilä-Ylikallio, Kaihovirta-Rosvik & Rantala, 2010). This approach can therefore be considered to some extent established in literature education for younger students, but is rarely explored for adolescents in secondary education (see also Lewis & Dockter, 2011; Lundström & Olin-Scheller, 2014).

## 2.5 Transmediation – a process of designing

Transmediation refers to the process of transforming meaning from one sign system, such as written language, to another, such as pictorial representation. Therefore, a transmediation process is always a designing process, but a designing process is not necessarily always a transmediation process. Transmediation always entails the shifting of sign system, for example from written text to pictorial image or from pictorial image to moving image. Engaging in a transmediation process offers the possibility of exploring key themes and ideas from one text by creating a new text. The concept of transmediation stems from semiotics and was introduced by Charles Suhor in the article *Towards a semiotic-based curriculum* (Suhor, 1984). Suhor argues that the movement across sign systems “stretch[es] the receptive and productive capacities of the students” (Suhor, 1984, p. 254). The concept of transmediation is based on a constructivist approach, which views learning and knowledge as a creative and exploring activity, not something that is transmitted, and which enables the learner actively to create and participate in representing meaning in new ways (Siegel, 1995).

The recasting of meaning across sign system is always multidimensional, and transmediation impels both the exploration of the original text and the creation of a suitable representation in another sign system (McCormick, 2011, p. 580). A transmediation process offers opportunities to engage with interpretation of the text.

Albers (2009) explains this by arguing that students “create symbolic, metaphoric and literal messages that point to their interpretation of texts, their connection to a text, and what they want the viewer to know about their reading of this text” (Albers, 2009, p. 8). Transmediation offers possibilities for negotiations of multiple interpretations and representation, and thus “has the potential to capture the postmodern reality of multiple texts, multiple meanings, and multiple interpretations” (Semali & Fueyo, 2001, n.p.). In my understanding, this echoes a performative approach to literary interpretation, reading, and text.

Research on transmediation (Carey, 2012; McCormick, 2011; Oldakowski, 2011; Siegel, 1995; Smagorinsky & O’Donnell, 1998; Suhor, 1984; Whitin, 2005) has demonstrated how students who recast meanings from one mode or sign system into another, expand the interpretive potential of the text under examination. Transmediation’s ability to enable students to create new meaning in another sign system is what scholars have referred to as its non-redundant potential; each form or representation we engage in uses its own features on the meaning we make or interpret (Zoss, 2009). Thus transmediation promotes new ideas potentially unavailable in other semiotic systems. Smagorinsky and O’Donnell-Allen (1998) show how students who transmediate new understandings of literary texts take ownership of their own learning by semiotically mediating their understandings of texts, interpreting difficult texts using contemporary stances toward literature, and connecting their own lives to the contexts of the characters represented in literary texts.

Mills (2011a, p. 6) describes three key principles of transmediation regarding children’s multimodal and digital meaning-making; the process of knowledge transformation; continual revision of intents for representing knowledge in response to the possibilities and constraints of sign-making systems; and the centrality of digital text production with its potential to convert semiotic content via the discrete sign-making system inherent in software interfaces.

Suhor (1984) warns that, like any pedagogical process, transmediation could be approached superficially, and distinguishes

between “literal” and “imaginative” forms of transmediation, the latter of which results in generative meaning-making. Literal transmediation, where concepts are merely reproduced rather than explored in another sign system, does not encourage students to engage in a reflective process. Transmediation, as an act of translating meaning from one sign system to another, is considered to increase opportunities for generative and reflective thinking (Siegel, 1995). Semali (2002) also uses transmediation to describe the process whereby one’s negotiation with texts is represented in new text forms through other sign systems, and discusses how that process supports students in more complex thinking.

Given this potential, transmediation appears to enable critical examinations of literary texts since mediating across sign systems can illuminate such textual elements as underlying values of the text creator(s), hidden biases, and cultural symbols, as well as the values, biases, and cultural lenses of the readers themselves (Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2014). This way the approach of transmediation can bridge the analyses of the digital videomaking process and literature interpretation, and offer an interpretive approach in relation to literary reading and literature education.

The concept of transmediation has common features with several concepts developed within theoretical approaches to multimodality; there are several concepts that try to explain the shifting of sign systems. The concept of transmediation has common features with the term *transduction* developed within the social semiotic theory of multimodality (Kress, 2003; 2010), which refers to remaking meaning across modes. The process of transmediation is also described using terms like *transformation* (Kress & Selander, 2012), *resemiotisation* (Iedema, 2001b) and *re-design* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000), where every transformation and transduction is viewed as a creative act of designing and re-designing. Transformation, transduction, resemiotisation, and re-design all produce changes in meaning (Kress, 2008; Lindstrand & Selander, 2009). The representation and communication through a series of different modes is also referred to as *semiotic chain* (Stein, 2008); Semali and Fueyo (2001) use the term *transmedial experiences*, by which they refer to the abilities to engage

in multiple ways of mediating knowing between sign systems. The different sign systems become alternative ways of seeing, knowing and expressing ideas.

The choice of transmediation rather any other closely related concept is grounded in its use in relation to literature reading, and specifically poetry reading, in several previous studies (see e.g. Albers, 2009; Carey, 2012; Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2014; McCormick, 2011; McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008; Mills, 2011a; Siegel, 1995; Oldakowski, 2011; Whitin, 2002; 2005). In this study the concept of transmediation is used to interpret the findings of the analyses of the students' digital video and the process of digital video designing, with the intent of considering how the literary text is explored, reviewed, and negotiated throughout the process. In order to analytically explore the transmediation process from poem to digital video, I theoretically need an approach that takes into consideration multiple modes of meaning-making. The next chapter therefore deals with the theoretical underpinnings of a multimodal approach.



### 3 MULTIMODALITY: A SOCIAL SEMIOTIC APPROACH

This chapter is the second of two establishing the theoretical framework of the study, and deals with social semiotic theory of multimodality. Initially, I discuss some central theoretical concepts and how they are to be understood in the study, including a discussion of multimodal designing as a meaning-making process (3.1). Following this, I present and discuss the *kineikonic mode*, the mode of the moving image (3.2). The approach of social semiotic theory of multimodality offers an opportunity to examine analytically both how semiotic resources are used in representing multimodally with the *kineikonic mode*, and students' negotiations of the affordances and constraints of the different modes and mediums during the process of videomaking. Accordingly, I present the metafunctions of text (3.3) and the strata of text production (3.4) to explain how these theoretical approaches inform such an analytical angle.

Multimodality takes the approach that meaning is made out of a multiplicity of modes. The starting point of multimodality is that representation, communication, and interaction consist of a multiple of modes, all with the potential to make meaning. Additionally, all modes are formed by the cultural, historical, and social context they are part of (Jewitt, 2009a; Kress, 2003; 2010), meaning that they will change over time and with use. The idea of meaning-making with several modes simultaneously is not new; disciplines such as

linguistics and semiotics have studied different forms of meaning-making long before the term multimodality came to being. However, the use of the term and the theorising around the notion of multimodality have grown remarkably during the past two decades.

What multimodality specifically wants to turn attention to is how different resources for making meaning are not separated but combined into an integrated multimodal ensemble (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). This fact becomes even more noticeable with the development of digital technologies, which enable people to combine resources more easily and affordably than before. A relevant example is the moving image (Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001; Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). Pointing at a constellation of technological, economic, and social changes, the literature around the concept of multimodality traces the start to 1990s (Jewitt, 2008; Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016), with the New London Group's (1996) manifesto on a pedagogy for multiliteracies and Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) grammar of visual design. Design was an essential concept to both publications and was used to signify the process of designing meaning, as well as the product (Siegel & Panofsky, 2009, p. 100).

Multimodality is by now a commonly used concept, and is rather a field of research than a theory or discipline (Jewitt, 2009a; Kress, 2010). As such, it can be approached using different theoretical perspectives, which has contributed to an actively evolving area of research (see e.g. Jewitt, 2009c). Jewitt (2009a) compares the approach of multimodality to the definition of ethnography by Green and Bloom, who make a distinction between doing ethnography, taking an ethnographic perspective, and using ethnographic research tools. Jewitt, Bezemer, and O'Halloran (2016, pp. 5–6) distinguish between *doing multimodality* and *adopting multimodal concepts*. This study I categorise as *doing multimodality* since multimodality is significant both theoretically and with regard to research design. Multimodality is applied by using social semiotic theory of multimodality to adopt a lens for exploring students' multimodal designing in videomaking practices using several semiotic resources

to represent and negotiate their interpretation of a poem. Multimodality is also applied in the methodological approach in the research design because of the deliberate choice to enable and acknowledge students' possibilities to represent and explore their interpretive work of literature using a variety of semiotic resources.

Despite the range of perspectives and theories within the field of multimodality, there are some common essential principles. These are: (a) representation and communication always draw on a multiplicity of semiotic resources, all with equal potential to contribute to meaning; (b) all resources have been shaped through their cultural, historical, and social use and are not fixed but articulated and situated; (c) and people orchestrate meaning through their choice and configuration of semiotic resources (Jewitt, 2009b, pp. 14–15). Nevertheless, the variation of theories and perspectives within the field of multimodality requires a clear positioning. In this study, social semiotic theory of multimodality is used because of its emphasis on the agency of sign makers and its focus on modes and their affordances, as well as the social uses and needs they fulfil (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016).

Social semiotic theory of multimodality is strongly associated with the works of Kress and van Leeuwen (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; 1996/2006; see also Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). It takes Halliday's theories of social semiotics and system functional grammar as a starting point, which Kress and van Leeuwen developed and extended to a range of modes (Jewitt, 2009b, p. 29). Hence, multimodality indicates what is attended, namely all the modes that appear in multimodal ensembles, whereas social semiotics provides the theoretical and analytical tools (Kress, 2008, p. 92). However, Machin (2009) is sceptical about the application of a theory from linguistics in trying to explain visual communication, or any other communicative mode. He acknowledges several well-made attempts to highlight multimodality's potential to allow us to think more of the communicative function of images, but calls for a need to be aware of work on visual communication if we are to develop a more robust multimodality.

Social semiotic theory of multimodality focuses the person and the process of meaning-making, the social agency (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2009b), where the emphasis is on the sign-makers and their situated use of semiotic resources. There is an interest in understanding how people communicate and make meaning with a wide range of semiotic resources (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001). This focuses the question of what choices people make from the resources available in process of meaning-making. Krogh and Piekut (2015) investigate processes of "voicing" viewed as agentive endeavours in writing, and stress that agency emphasises the writer's subjective and transformative engagement with knowledge. Even though Krogh and Piekut approach agency from a different theoretical perspective, and in relation to students' writing, they present an understanding of how agency is linked to the overall education aim of linking personal experience with a collective reality (Krogh & Piekut, 2015).

### 3.1 Meaning-making: a multimodal designing process

From a multimodal social semiotic perspective, meaning-making processes use various semiotic resources that are available within the social context in an on-going process of producing and communicating meanings – a process referred to as semiosis (Ranker, 2008). The concept of *semiotic resource* offers a view for taking into account semiotic systems and the role of the sign-maker in the process of meaning-making. From this understanding, signs are products of a social process of sign making, which stands in contrast to the traditional semiotic understanding of signs as fixed and resistant to modification (Jewitt, 2009b, p. 23). Semiotic resource refers to a community's means for making meaning; which can be both material resources (i.e. modes) and immaterial conceptual resources, which are realized in and through modes (i.e. salience, intensity etc.) (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). In social semiotics the term resources, instead of sign, is preferred because it avoids the impression that what a sign stands for is somehow pre-

given and fixed and not affected by its use. Jewitt, Bezemer, and O'Halloran exemplifies the semiotic resource of “length of shot”, or frame shots, in the following way:

For instance, the (material) resource of physical distance has been shaped by photographers and film-makers over time into the semiotic resource of ‘length of shot’. That resource is used to instantiate levels of social intimacy: a close-up is often used to suggest a ‘close’ social relationship – ‘intimacy’ or ‘intensity’ among other things, while a long shot tends to be used to suggest a more ‘formal’, ‘absent’ or ‘distant’ social relationship. (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016, p. 71)

A *mode* refers to a socially organised set of semiotic resources (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). Bezemer and Kress (2008, p. 171) define a mode as a “socially and culturally shaped resource for meaning making”. Thus, modes are socially shaped and culturally given resources for meaning-making, encompassing a variety of things, including but not limited to print. Image, speech, gesture, and written language are examples of modes; and in order for something to count as a mode, a set of resources and organising principles that are recognised within a community is required (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016). Throughout the transmediation process in this study, the students are involved in utilising different semiotic resources during the different phases of the videomaking process; for example the use of the mode written language and mediums of paper and pencil during the phase of writing the synopsis, or the use of the semiotic resources of sound and transition in the medium of digital video. Multimodal digital designing, then, extends beyond alphabetic print to include still and moving images, colour, and sounds.

A fundamental concept within the social semiotic theory of multimodality is *design*. Design refers to the focus of the sign maker in the meaning-making process; “[d]esign refers to how people make use of the resources that are available at a given moment in a specific communicational environment to realise their interests as makers of a message/text.” (Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 17). The notion of design recognises that meaning-making is about choosing and assembling resources according to individual interest and ideological position –

and positioning – as well as perception of audience and context. The terms aptness (Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 11) and agency also refer to the underlying principal of the relation between what is to be expressed and how. What establishes this relationship is the interest of the sign makers. Bezemer and Kress (2008, p. 174) propose design instead of composition to reflect a social shift, conceptually, from competence in a specific practice considered in terms of understanding to a focus on the interest and agency of the designer in the making of texts (see also Kress & Selander, 2012, p. 267). In social semiotic theory of multimodality the connection between meaning-making and the social interest of the sign makers is emphasised, which acknowledges the sign makers' social agency (Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2009b). Fulwiler and Middleton (2012) use compositing, referring to the process where novice filmmakers are able to combine different modes and semiotic resources into a seamless, complex, and rich whole; a process of compounding and mixing. With the terms compositing and recursivity, Fulwiler and Middleton question the sequential and linear process often connected with digital video composing as going from script to film to edit, rejecting a one-to-one relationship where still images are matched to a corresponding idea or word. Compositing refers to “layering”, which requires “a careful assessment of the multiple competing modes of meaning-making, and the ways they can be synthesized to create a specific, synchronous effect” (Fulwiler & Middleton, 2012, p. 43). It is in line with these definitions that I use the term *multimodal designing*; a process of active meaning-making utilising and layering a multiplicity of semiotic resources according to interest and ideological positioning as well as perception of audience and context.

Considering design as a forming of ideas in the shaping of new products, the understanding of design is first and foremost engaged with the idea that form precedes function (Kress & Selander, 2012). To use this understanding of design in relation to a social phenomenon such as learning is, according to Kress and Selander, to make a categorical mistake. Instead, Kress and Selander emphasise what they refer to as interaction design processes where one not only focuses on products but also on the making of products together with

users. “This further emphasises an understanding of *designs in learning* as a central aspect to understand learning as meaning-making activities and engagement. It is about what takes place when human beings learn and how possible learning paths, including all kinds of choices and decisions are constructed” (Kress & Selander, 2012, p. 266, italics in original).

Design is the practice in which semiotic resources, the interests of the sign-maker(s) and the social context are brought together. From the perspective of the designer, it is a process of giving shape to the interests, purposes, and intentions in relation to the semiotic resources available for realising these purposes in a specific situation (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Kress, 2010). Consequently, meaning-making is a process of design. This implies that there are not only individual aspects of design, but also cultural, social, and historical aspects of what is possible to express (Selander, 2011). In this understanding, design does not primarily point to aesthetic or artistic aspects, but to meaning-making and collaborative processes as well as performative and transformative activities (Selander, 2017).

Bazalgette and Buckingham (2013) are doubtful about the term design, which in their opinion implies a view of communication as a wholly rational, controlled process. They argue that to describe the meaning-making processes involved in film production as design limits our understanding of the plentiful creative, and indeed accidental and unexpected, discoveries involved in processes during the filmmaking. Additionally, they argue that multimodality cuts off consideration of the institutional, technical, economic and historical dimensions of these choices. Much of what Bazalgette and Buckingham call attention to is worth taking into consideration, and anyone who has taken part in activities inside a classroom will understand how many different factors, such as social hierarchies, group dynamics, economics, and pedagogical and personal values, come into play. But, that does not turn aside the possibilities of students’ agency and interest as a valuable and interesting analytical approach, just as it is valuable and important to study the intentions of teachers and the economical and structural conditions for teaching and learning.

Design draws attention to the affordances of the modes and media, which in the social semiotic theory of multimodality is referred to as modal and material affordance (Kress, 2003; 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003). Affordance refers to what is possible to express and represent with a mode, given its materiality and cultural and social history of that mode. Different modes of expression hold particular potentials and limitations for meaning-making. The modal affordance refers to the material features of the mode, whereas modes also have social, cultural, and historical aspects that affect how they are and can be used. The written text has possibilities and limitations, different affordances than the image. The written text and the image appear differently; written text uses temporal dimensions where something is expressed before something else, while the image uses spatial dimensions where everything appears simultaneously. Writing is structured by the logic of time; in writing some words precede others. Meaning is therefore attached to the organisation of first, second, third – and last. The image, on the other hand, is organised by the logic of space and of the visual elements in spatially organised arrangements. Placing something centrally or above means that something else will be placed on the side or under, and all this can be used in the meaning-making of the text as a whole. That indicates the differences in the affordances of different media, the medial affordances. (Kress, 2003; 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006.)

The affordances of modes also bring forward what in social semiotic theory of multimodality is referred to as semiotic principle. The term refers to principles that apply across modes. Jewitt, Bezemer and O'Halloran (2016) exemplify the semiotic principle by explaining how different modes produce intensity.

For instance, all modes have resources for producing *intensity*. In the mode of *speech*, that is realized by the intensity of sound – 'loudness', it is also realized lexically, e.g. as 'very'. In the mode of *gesture*, intensity might be realized by the *speed of movement* of the hand or by the *extent* of the movement. In the mode of colour, it might be done through degrees of saturation, and so on. (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016, p. 62, italics in original)



In my understanding, the semiotic principle may serve as a reply to some of the critique aimed at the social semiotic theory of multimodality. Some researchers point out that the theorisation developed by Kress and van Leeuwen mostly deals with still images, photographs, or advertisements, and call for a development in relation to the special features of moving images (see e.g. Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2003; Halverson, 2010; Halverson, Bass & Woods, 2012). This is by all means a valid remark, and is further elaborated in the next section (3.2). But by applying the semiotic principle, the analytical concepts and theory developed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) can be related to the moving image just as well. Issues of contact, distance, and point of view prominent in the interactive level of the metafunctions, might be established by other modes than visual, such as sound, written text, or other resources of the kineikonic mode. Similarly, the analysis on the compositional level certainly applies to the kineikonic mode with the focus on sequencing for semiotic rhythm by the organisations of clips and transitions, as well as how salience might be created by the use of sound, visual effects, or gestures.

Representation, in the approach of multimodality, is not to be considered as a direct mirroring of the world, but a reflection of how we make meaning of and interpret the world (Selander, 2009; 2011). Similarly, Hall (1997) considers representation as a process through which individuals in a cultural context use language to create meaning. Here language refers not only to linguistic language but also to modes such as image, body language, and music. Representation is therefore a central part of how meaning is created and mediated. Meaning is something that is made, rather than something already fixed to be interpreted (Hall, 1997). Meaning is from this view always constructed and reconstructed according to time and space, and therefore changing. From this perspective, representation is understood as ways individuals choose to express their understanding of specific aspects of the world and transform them to their own representation (Selander, 2011). Halverson (2013) points out that whether one considers digital production as art or as literacy, representation lies at the core of its practices.

An essential aspect from a multimodal approach is not just the multiplicity of modes, but also how the modes interact and what this interaction creates. Multimodal ensemble refers to representations or communications that consist of more than one mode, brought together not randomly, but deliberately, to make meaning. The meaning maker “orchestrates” an ensemble that includes modes have been chosen with rhetorical intent for their affordances and in the interest of the meaning maker (Kress, 2010, p. 161). In a study on multimodal composing, Hull and Nelson (2005) discover how a unique synergy is created when multiple modes are combined in digital compositions. They argue that is in the “semiotic relationships between and among different, co-presented modes [...] that the expressive power of multimodality resides (Hull & Nelson, 2005, p. 224). In their study they argue that multimodal composing is not simply an add-on art where images, words, and music are combined to increase the meaning-making potential of the text; rather they wish to highlight how multimodality affords not just a new way of making meaning, but a different kind of meaning (see also Fulwiler & Middleton, 2012).

As the students in this study decide how to combine modes for a specific purpose, analysis of the moment-by-moment processes of multimodal designing enables the analytical focus of “unpacking” how meanings are brought together, as well as the possibilities and constraints of the semiotic resources available. When the text shift from print-based to digital or screen-based, the semiotic resources used expand to include e.g. sound effects and moving images, and the complexity of multimodal ensembles clearly expands in the digital environments (see also Burn & Parker, 2001; Serafini, 2013). With a focus on students’ use of semiotic resources during a digital videomaking process, the next section elaborates the mode of the moving image: the kineikonic mode.

### 3.2 The kineikonic mode – the mode of the moving image

Andrew Burn and David Parker coined the term “kineikonic mode” with the intention of developing a multimodal theory to construct a grammar of the moving image (Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001; 2003). The term is used to denote the moving image as a multimodal form, acknowledging all the different modes combined, but particularly the multimodal ensemble that contains both the modes themselves and the interplay of these modes.<sup>19</sup> The theory of film and moving image has to a large extent already been established; however, Burn and Parker (2001) see the need for a new grammar of the moving image. They suggest a move forward from a psychoanalytical and poststructuralist theory that proposed notions of an ideal viewer, commonly evolved in earlier film theory. They also note that theories have principally addressed the act of viewing film, rather than moving image more broadly conceived. Such theories, are, according to Burn and Parker, are therefore inadequate to deal with the practices of viewing and making moving image texts that are now common in schools and other educational settings, as well as in society at large. They acknowledge and value previous research on young people’s engagement with the moving image within the Cultural Studies tradition, but wish to complement these accounts with a theory of signification. They do so by building on Kress and van Leeuwen’s work on visual design, but they see the need to develop visual semiotics further to focus on the moving image; this they set out to do in several scholarly works (see Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001; 2003; Burn Brindley, Durran, Kelsall, Sweetlove & Tuohey, 2001).

The work on the analysis of visual design by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) has provided a set of semiotic resources for the study of

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<sup>19</sup> The kineikonic mode functioned as a valuable approach to the transcriptions of the students’ digital video as part of the analytical process. The way the kineikonic mode is adopted and used in the transcription work is further discussed in Section 4.4.2, *Transcription*, in the chapter *Methodological considerations*.

multimodal texts such as photographs or advertisements for the field of multimodality. But the moving image includes further semiotic resources with which to construct and express meaning, such as sound, movement, and transition (Burn & Parker, 2001; 2003; Halverson, 2010). The moving image can be described as a matter of filming and editing, which Burn (2013, p. 4) refers to as the orchestrating modes of the moving image. The orchestration of these modes occurs in both spatial and temporal dimensions; spatial logic dominates the selection of an individual frame when filming; whereas temporal logic dominates the editing phase. The nature of the moving image is the relation between these two modes, the modes of filming and editing (Burn, 2013, p. 4).

The split into two overarching modes also implicates contributory modes to each (Burn, 2013). Filming uses framing, camera angle, and camera movement as well as setting, possible actors, and action. Editing uses temporal framing, transitions between cuts as well as the organisation of sound effects and music. In kineikonic texts, time can be signified by transitions – conjunctions between scenes that signify a temporal shift (see Mills, 2011b). The transitions offer a specific grammar of cuts, wipes, and dissolves, and construct both spatial meaning (moving to a different position) and temporal meaning (whether there has been a gap in time or not) (Burn & Parker, 2003, p. 64).

The kineikonic mode can be seen as a furthering of the social semiotic theory of multimodality to attend the multimodal texts involving moving image. The furthering of the theoretical development of this area is of urgency and importance because of the fundamental role moving images play in the everyday literacy practices of children and adolescents.

### 3.3 Metafunctions of texts

In the social semiotic theory of multimodality every text<sup>20</sup> consists of three functions that are always performed simultaneously, these are referred to as metafunctions (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). These metafunctions are adopted from Halliday's theories in social linguistics, and in the theory of social semiotics they are termed the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual metafunctions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The metafunctions are constituted by the assumption that all communication consists of these three functions and that meaning is made through their interplay. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have extended this idea to images from the approach of multimodality and are using a slightly different terminology: representational instead of ideational, interactive instead of interpersonal, and compositional instead of textual (see also Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). Because this study has adopted the social semiotic theory of multimodality as its theoretical approach, the terminology representational, interactive, and compositional is used.

The metafunctions offer an analytical tool to explore meaning-making on different levels in communicating through digital video (Burn, 2013; Lindstrand, 2006). Much research applying social semiotics promotes detailed analysis, but its start and end points are about situated praxis (Iedema, 2001a, p. 186). In this study the metafunctions are used as an analytical tool aimed at the students' digital video. Kress and van Leeuwen's theory on visual design mostly deals with still images, photographs, or advertisements, which calls for a development in relation to the special features of moving images (see e.g. Halverson, 2010; Halverson, Bass & Woods, 2012; Burn & Parker, 2003, Burn, 2013), which is particularly taken up by Burn and Parker in their development of the kineikonic mode (see Section 3.2).

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<sup>20</sup> Text is here, as in the thesis in general, referred to in a broad sense, and not limited to print.

### 3.3.1 Representational meaning

Representational meaning focuses on the *what*; what people, places, actions, and things are represented through different modes. Meaning on the representational level can be expressed visually, verbally, and musically or otherwise sound-wise, and the questions posed address issues of representation (Iedema, 2001a). Representational meaning focuses on how different modes are used to represent aspects and interpretations of the world. The setting and people involved imply something, just as the sound of a bell implies something for meaning-making.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) distinguish between two kinds of representational patterns: narrative representations and conceptual representations. Narrative representations relate participants in terms of doings and happenings, of the descriptions of actions or events. Conceptual representations deal with participants in a more stable or timeless “essence” and do not represent them as doing something, rather as being something, or meaning something or having certain characteristics or components. The choice between these two patterns is regarded as important, since it provides a key to understanding the discourses that support the representation (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 141).

### 3.3.2 Interactive meaning

The analysis on *the interactive level* focused the *how* of the digital video; how relations between the digital video and the viewers are created. It deals with matters such as choices of camera angles, shot types, and camera movement, but also sound and written text. Such matters have an impact on how the audience is positioned and what interpretations that might give rise to. Is the video specifically addressing the viewer by direct eye contact with the character, using close-up shots to create an impression of intimacy, or does the camera move with the subject to construe dynamism and immediacy? (Iedema, 2001a, p. 192; also see Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 145).

In the visual social semiotics developed by Kress and van Leeuwen, three factors play a central role in the realisation on this level: contact, distance, and point of view (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; see also Iedema, 2001a; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001). A person in a picture or a digital video can “make contact” with the viewer by looking directly at them and this way may “demand” something of the viewer. But not all pictures demand something of the viewer; Kress and van Leeuwen also acknowledge that some pictures might address us indirectly. The viewer is not the object but the subject of the look, and a direct contact is not made. They refer to this as an image that “offers” – it “offers” the represented participants to the viewer as items of information, objects of contemplation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 119). The choice of offering or demanding depictions of people can also make distinctions between pictorial genres. In genres as television newsreading and commercial pictures, the demanding portrait is preferred, whereas in television drama or scientific illustration an offering portrait is favoured.

The placement of the camera and the use of shot types and camera angles are powerful resources to create formal or informal relations with the viewer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2006). Bringing people, places, or situations close to the viewer, or creating remoteness, affect the notion of distance. Looking up or down on a person is easily effected by choice of camera angle. Involvement is often made using the horizontal angle of depicting from the side; the frontal angle is often regarded as the angle of maximum involvement, whereas a high angle is regarded as the angle of maximum power (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 145, 148). However, all these examples are to be viewed as *meaning potentials*; it is not possible to say what specific angles, shot types, and camera placements always mean, but it is possible to describe the meanings they will allow image producers and viewers to create (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001).

The making of an image engages not only the aspects of distance and contact, but also the selection of a point of view. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 129), this aspect implies the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes towards represented participants or

issues of representation. The subjectivity is in this case not necessarily located in the sense of individual or unique attitudes, but often socially determined attitudes and values.

In the theoretical development of the visual social semiotics by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), the focus is on still images. In digital videos there are many modes to attend to, as meaning is made through the sounds, music, written text, and transitions that are part of the digital video as a whole. Nevertheless, the three central factors of contact, distance, and point of view, can be applied to other semiotic resources than the visual; sound effects, voice-over, and written text can also establish and create contact, distance, and point of view.

### 3.3.3 Compositional meaning

Compositional meaning is concerned with the organisation and the structuring of the text as a whole. A digital video is thus composed by both temporal and spatial aspects; the video is constructed partly by the actions represented in the individual clips and the merging of individual clips into a whole, and partly by spatial composition of the individual clips in terms of what is placed where in the image frame. Compositional meaning focuses on the digital video as a whole, with regard to the structure of both time and space. It highlights how resources are used to organise a cohesive ensemble; how written text, sound, scenes, and clips are structured to compose a cohesive ensemble, and how represented participants or objects are placed and drawn attention to.

Spatial aspects mostly focus the composition of individual frames, with three main principles for composition: information value, salience, and framing (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). These principles are primarily developed for the analysis of still images, but also work with moving images. The principle of information value deals with the placement of elements or participants in various “zones” of the image: left or right, top or bottom, centre or margin. The principle of salience deals with how attention is drawn to or realised by the use of colour, size, light, or zooming. The principle of



framing deals with how the presence or absence of framing devices disconnects or connects persons or objects of the image, indicating that they belong together or not in some sense.

In the composition of time aspects, the focus is on the semiotic rhythm: how the video is structured into a coherent “text”, how different clips are organised, and what resources used at certain points to move the video ahead in time. Such sequencings have to do with how meanings are linked together, in what order and of what kind of rhythmic units (Iedema, 2001a, p. 192). A central part of a digital video on the compositional level is the use of transitions: how the clips are linked to each other. Transitions can indicate both movement in time and space, as well as a change of viewpoint or perspective. Compositional meaning also draws attention to dramaturgy and genre. The moving image is associated with different genres of dramaturgy, although the classical structure of beginning – middle – end, or exposition – rise of conflict – denouement – coda, is still commonly used.

In this section, I have discussed the metafunctions to establish an analytical approach to examine how students use semiotic resources in multimodal representation in a digital video. In the following section, I will discuss the strata of text production, and how this can establish an analytical approach to how the students negotiate the use of semiotic resources during the multimodal designing process.

### 3.4 Strata of text production

Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) have developed the theorisation of multimodality, and elaborate further on four domains of practice in which meaning is made. By this view, production of text is taking place within four domains or strata: discourse, design, production, and distribution. The strata generate an analytical structure and are not to be considered as hierarchically or chronologically ordered, but concerned with different layers or levels of text production (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 4). The level of discourse focuses on what

discourses the students bring forward. The level of design acknowledges how the students' ideas are constructed and represented in relation to the discourses; what is suitable for the specific purpose and occasion of the text-making, and best articulate the discourses in play. On the level of production, the ideas are realised in form of actual semiotic resources during the videomaking process. Distribution refers to the technical "re-coding" of semiotic products or events, and acknowledges how technological development has changed the conditions for meaning-making and communication. (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001.) In this study the strata are used as an analytical approach to the process of multimodal designing; an analytical entrance to explore the students' negotiations of representation and semiotic resources during the digital videomaking process.

Text production on a level of *discourse* involves decisions and negotiations of what the poem and their digital video represent, what will take place, and who is involved – in relation to purposes, values, and ideas that they choose to bring forward. Thus, aspects of discourse attend to the social interests of the students in this specific context (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 4). Just as in other theoretical approaches that apply a critical perspective, the concept of discourse is central to the social semiotic theory of multimodality (Lindstrand, 2006, p. 53). In this study, discourse is applied the way Kress and van Leeuwen have incorporated it in their development of the four strata for text production. Kress and van Leeuwen define discourse, based on Foucault, as "socially constructed knowledge of (some aspect of) reality" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 4). "Socially constructed" refers to the fact that discourses are developed in specific social contexts and in ways that are appropriate to the interest of the social actors in these contexts. Text production on the level of discourse includes aspects of the events constituting that reality; what takes place, where and when it takes place, who is involved, as well as a set of related purposes, values, and ideas. Thus, discourse considers socially constructed ideologies, values, and practices within a specific context.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) take up the assumptions that underpin much of the work in discourse analysis developed over the past two decades; discourses are socially and culturally constituted in a way that produces knowledge, meaning, power, and control. Physical reality exists but receives meaning through the discourse. That means that discourses are never static but always changing, and that the discourses are forming and are formed by language. In the approach to discourse by Kress and van Leeuwen, these assumptions are adopted, but they insist that discourses are forming and formed by all modes, not only language (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 24). Following Kress and van Leeuwen's use of discourse (2001), Burn points to the "openness" of the term discourse in contrast to, for example, ideology. How discourses represent and mediate reality, then, is a process to which all members of society contribute, in small or large ways, just as all must negotiate which representations they will believe and value (Burn, 2008, p. 154). By this token, discourse is socially constructed knowledge of reality, or specifically, how social awareness influences the way one interprets a specific communication. In this study, discourse is not analysed in the sense of discursive practices of the classroom; instead the analysis focuses on the discursive values the students bring forward in their multimodal designing process in response to a literary work. By studying the students' negotiations regarding both the literary text and the semiotic resources used to represent their interpretation of the text, the analysis illuminates the discursive values the students want to communicate.

The concept of design evokes several associations and is linked to both things and actions. As described earlier, from a multimodal social semiotic perspective, design refers to the process of giving shape to interests, purposes, and intentions in relation to the semiotic resources available (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Kress, 2010). In the strata of text production, *design* is a way to realise discourses in a specific situation. Design is separate from the actual material production of the semiotic product. Text production on the level of design may involve drafts, sketches, or blueprints, but not the form in which the design will eventually reach the public (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001,

p. 21). It is at the level of design that the semiotic resources for what to represent are chosen on the basis of the possibilities and constraints they offer. Text production at the design level involves decisions and negotiations about suitable ways to bring forward ideas and what best corresponds to the aspects of discourse. The focus shifts from *what* to represent to *how* to represent it. The work on how to represent is further specified when dealing with the level of production, when all the ideas are to be realised.

*Production* refers to the actual articulation in material form of semiotic products or events (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 21), that is, the physical work with the material resources. However, production does not only give form to design but also adds meanings that are related to the physical process of articulation (as in the voice of a speech production) or the physical qualities of the materials used (as in the functions of the software of the computer).

*Distribution* refers to the technical “re-coding” of semiotic products or events, for purposes of recording or distribution (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 21). The technologies for distribution are generally used for re-production, but may nevertheless obtain a semiotic potential of their own (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 87).

To conclude, text production on a level of discourse involves decisions and negotiations about what both the poem and the digital video represents, what will take place, and who is involved – in relation to the purposes, values, and ideas that the students choose to bring forward. Thus, aspects of discourse attend the social interests of the students in this specific context. Text production on the design level involves numerous decisions and negotiations about suitable ways to bring forward their ideas and what best corresponds the aspects of discourse. The focus, then, shifts from *what* to represent to *how* to represent it. The work on how to represent it is continued at the production level, when all the ideas are to be realised in form of actual materialised semiotic work.

## 4 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this chapter the considerations behind the choice of methodology and research methods are discussed. Initially, I discuss the ontological and epistemological presuppositions of the study (4.1), after which I discuss the considerations behind using multimodal and visual methodology (4.2), describing and reflecting upon the research design and research method (4.3), processing of the empirical material and proceedings in analysis (4.4), the trustworthiness of the study (4.5) and its ethical considerations (4.6); the overall objective is to describe the research process as transparently as possible. None the less, the research process is by no means a straightforward one that can be simplified or reduced to the examples in the research handbooks. This chapter intends to illuminate and elaborate on the methodological considerations made during the process.

Methodology refers to the choices made concerning cases to study, methods of data gathering, and procedures of data analysis in planning and executing a research study (Silverman, 2011, p. 53). The choice of methods is not only about which tools and instruments are most helpful in collecting the empirical material; it also reflects the approach the researcher brings to the object of research. The specific choices of methodology are grounded in ontological and epistemological considerations, which means that, depending on from which perspective a phenomenon is viewed, different things can be illustrated and explored. This study is situated in a research tradition that is concerned with deeper examinations and

understandings of the research object, not to search for general applicability. The study does not apply an approach that starts with a prior hypothesis to be tested and proved, but with a focus of analysis that is open to discovery.

With the metaphor of the photography used for this thesis, is it particularly important to emphasise that *photography* in this sense is not considered a true and objective reflection of “reality” (see Sørensen, 2001, p. 41). This study is based on the presuppositions that it is not methodologically possible, or even desirable, to portray a situation “as it is”; social reality can be constructed in different ways (see Bryman, 2004, p. 267; see also the introductory chapter on the metaphor for the thesis). From this perspective there is no definite truth, only aspects that broaden and deepen the understanding of the world. Since there are no guidelines that guarantee that there is one true meaning, or that meaning will not change over time, research from this point of view is bound to be interpretive (Hall, 1997; see also Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). However, the interpretations made are based on theoretical stances, and to justify these interpretations there is a need for an explicit methodology to approach the issue of interest.

#### 4.1 The presuppositions of interpretive research

This study is positioned within a constructivist-interpretative paradigm.<sup>21</sup> Paradigm is here referred to as a “basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 91). Interpretive research is designed to understand the perspectives of the participants as they interact in their social context. By employing this paradigm,

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<sup>21</sup> For practical and clarifying reasons I will henceforth use interpretive research when referring to the constructivist-interpretative paradigm. Researchers tend to use somewhat different terms to describe interpretive research. For this study, overviews and contributions by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012; see also Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011) have served as a base for understanding interpretive research, its ontological and epistemological presuppositions and implications for methodology.

researchers are oriented to the production of reconstructed understandings of the social world. The “interpretive turn” in social and human sciences was developed in debate with and as a contrast to critical and logical positivism, opposing the presuppositions behind the natural sciences to provide sufficient grounding for inquiry in social and human sciences. Interpretive research emphasises the value and importance of meaning in human life, as well as reflexivity in research practices related to meaning-making and knowledge claims. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006.)

Positioned as interpretive research, this study ontologically proceeds from the assumption that meaning-making does take place and that it is by all means possible to study, but not through purely objective evidences aimed at explaining something “as it is”. The approach taken in this study does not reject the notion of a material world or go to the extreme of relativism in a radical social constructionist view, but is accepting of a world, and things in the world, existing independently of our consciousness, and agrees with the view that acknowledges the pre-existence of objects (see Bryman, 2004; Crotty, 1998). However, this existence is not what is of interest in this study; as Crotty explains: “The existence of a world without a mind is conceivable. Meaning without a mind is not.” (Crotty, 1998, pp. 10–11.) Here, the interest is in the meanings and constructions of the world, how reality is built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors, rather than something objective that has an external reality.

Ontological and epistemological issues tend to emerge together and implicate each other; to talk of the construction of meaning is to talk of the construction of the meaningful reality (see Crotty, 1998, p. 10; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006, p. xviii). Turning to research handbooks, epistemological stances are named and positioned somewhat differently, and not always considered as sealed compartments. What is of importance, then, is to recognise that epistemology strongly influences what kind of research is carried out. The epistemological foundation of the study is therefore grounded in constructivism in order to study humanly fashioned ways of seeing

things, which can only be understood by the researcher's adopting a similar process (see Crotty, 1998, p. 9). Constructivism is here referred to as discussed in Crotty (1998), where it is viewed as an epistemology alongside objectivism and subjectivism.<sup>22</sup> From this perspective, there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover; meaning is made individually and socially. Meaning comes into existence with our engagement with the realities in our world; therefore, meaning is not discovered, but constructed. A constructivist view acknowledges *ways* of knowing, not *the way*; knowing is socially and historically situated and is a way to create order out of complexity. People construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon, and meaning is developed not separately within the individuals, but in interaction with others (Crotty, 1998, p. 9). This means that knowledge cannot be described as objective, more as something constructed and in a constant state of revision (Bryman, 2004, p. 17). However, making ontological and epistemological commitments should not be considered as stating once and for all the certainty of a certain perspective or searching for an absolute foundation on which to build (see Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 7). A viewpoint is adopted to ensure the accuracy of one's own understanding and to contribute to the field of research from a specific perspective.

However, as mentioned before, this is not driven to the extreme of considering the role of the researchers' interpretations as "anything goes"; the interpretations made are based on theoretical stances with certain perspectives and missions in mind. But epistemologically,

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<sup>22</sup> In research literature, constructionism and constructivism are often used interchangeably. Crotty (1998) uses constructionism as an overall term, while acknowledging a distinction between the two. Some scholars (see Crotty, 1998; Gergen, 1999) consider that constructivism refers to epistemological considerations focusing on the meaning-making of the individual in relation to a social environment, while constructionism focuses on socially created meanings. Because of its focus on the jointly created interpretations of individuals, not the socially constructed environment embedding these individuals, constructivism is used in this study.



researchers in the social and human sciences have to acknowledge that they are meaning-making humans, just like the persons they are studying, and identify their role in the research process as co-constructors in partnership with the respondents of an interpretation of their reality (Darlaston-Jones, 2007, p. 25; also see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 16). The researchers' own worldviews and frames of references influence the whole research process, from its initial motives and purposes to the selection of data, theoretical frameworks, and methods of analysis. Importantly, in this study I do not make the claim that the analysis of the students' meaning-making and use of semiotic resources makes it possible to say what it means exactly, but it is possible to describe the meanings they will allow me as a researcher to make. This is not only an epistemological grounding but also a theoretical one; in social semiotic theory of multimodality, all modes are considered to have been shaped through their cultural, historical, and social use; they are not fixed but articulated and situated. Consequently, what it is possible to say something about is not what the semiotic resources actually mean, but the meaning they, in this particular case, allow the image producers and viewers to create; the focus is on their *meaning potential*.

## 4.2 Multimodal and visual methodology

How then, methodologically, does one go about to seeking new knowledge? What principles are important to the inquiry? The theoretical approach of multimodality influenced the methodological approach of this study. Its scope and interest called for a research design that recognised students' possibilities to represent and explore their interpretations using a variety of semiotic resources – especially visual responses. There are numerous ways of responding to, and transmediating, literature, but because of the significance of visual culture today – the shift from telling the world to showing the world (Kress, 2003) – a special interest in visual responses to literature became the focus of the study.

Even though digital video is considered a highly visual medium, it is more than image. Digital video is also music, sound effects, and spoken voice; it is multimodal. Consequently, multimodality serves not only as a theoretical framework but also as an important methodological approach for this study, on account of the significance and potential it accords all modes of representation and communication in meaning-making, not regarding any as trivial, secondary, or decorative (see Burn, 2009, p. 81).

Visual methodology is a broad and rapidly evolving area of research with a philosophical grounding in several fields.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, the conception of the camera as a tool of objective documentations emerged along with the development of photographic technology (Stanczak, 2007). This conception of the camera and the use of visual media in research soon became contested by a more subjective and interpretive approach, acknowledging the epistemological concerns related to visual data. Over the past three decades, qualitative researchers have given serious thought to using images to develop understanding of human meaning-making and condition, including forms of films, photographs, drawings, cartoons, graffiti, maps, and symbols. These media are providing researchers with not only a different sort of data but also, more importantly, an alternative way to perceive meaning-making and communication (Prosser, 1998).

Regarding the considerations discussed above, both epistemological and theoretical stances influenced the research design and methods of the study. With reference to the students' transmediating process, this means that the process is different in different contexts and in interaction with the surrounding world and other people, as well as in interaction with resources available. From this perspective, representation, interpretation, and meaning-making are socially

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<sup>23</sup> This section will not review the philosophical grounding for visual methodology, but it can be noted that it echoes well with interpretive research. For introductions, current trends, and overviews of the field of visual methodology, see e.g. Rose (2012), Stanczak (2007) and Prosser (2011).

constructed, continuously reshaped and negotiated, rather than something definite, objective, and static.

In an overview of current trends in visual research, Prosser (2011) outlines four different areas evolving in visual research: representation of visual research, technology and visual methods, training in visual methods, and participatory visual methods. At the end of 1960s, visual research grew to combine researcher and participant insights and visual elicitation; using photographs or drawings in a research interview to stimulate response is one of the most commonly used methods within the participatory visual research methods (Prosser, 2011, p. 484). With the purpose of researching students' multimodal designing, this study is placed in the last category, participatory visual methods.

During the past decade, educational researchers have started to focus on youth as producers of media and multimodal production as a form of literacy, especially in the field of media education (Buckingham, 2003; Burn & Parker, 2003; Gilje, 2010; 2011) and new literacy practices (for an overview, see Miller, 2013). Participatory video for researching youth identity and learning (e.g. Halverson, 2010; Gibbons, 2010; Lindstrand, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009) has developed the methodology in educational research and influenced the research field of literature education, where interest in multimodal composing in response to literature has started to grow (see e.g. Jocius, 2013; Miller, 2011; Mills, 2011a; McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008). However, studies that include visual and multimodal designing in the research design – particularly related to literary reading – are still rare.

In this study, visual methodology is applied through participatory visual methods of a group of students' collective designing of a digital video in response to a literary text, as well as the students' final digital video. Also, visual material such as the students' storyboard and visual drawings and sketches are used to support the analyses, although not analysed in detail. Additionally, the students' working process is documented with audio-visual recordings. As emphasised above, the video recordings are not viewed as objective or the camera

as a tool for capturing the “truth”, but as data material generated to get an insight into the students’ meaning-making during the transmediation process. Multimodality is methodologically applied as a central part of the research design to give recognition to and acknowledge students’ meaning-making using a multiplicity of modes, and is also applied in the analytical framework for unpacking the empirical material (see Section 4.4 for elaboration of the analytical process).

### 4.3 Research design and research methods

Although there are guidelines and strategies in the research literature handbooks, each research project is unique and ultimately the individual researcher must determine how to proceed according to the project at hand. The following sections deal with the “hands on” part of the process of research design and methods, describing and discussing the accessing of the field as well as generating and analysing the empirical material, illustrating the decisions made according to this particular study. The ambition is to present a thorough elaboration of the considerations underlying both the research design as well as the analytical perspectives and tools of the study.

#### 4.3.1 Gaining access to the field

The empirical material for this study has been produced at a Swedish speaking school in Finland with students in the eighth grade (age 14–15). The production of data could not be done anywhere at any time because of the specific interest of working with literature and digital, visual representation. To gain access to the field I contacted two teachers and the principal at a school and asked if they were interested in participating in my study.

The production of the empirical material was made collaboratively between two teachers, one L1 (Swedish) teacher and one art teacher,

and me as a researcher. The teachers were voluntarily interested in participating in the study. Having the two teachers collaborate together was a conscious choice since the design was intended to enable students to co-construct their interpretations of poetry through visual responses. In my first meeting with the teachers, I shared with them my research plan and expressed my interest in researching students' digital, visual responses as interpretations of poetry. Consequently, I was involved in the production of the empirical material because of the requests in design that I made prominent during my meeting with the teachers. However, every research design is based on conscious decisions by the researchers during all stages of the project (Derry et al., 2010), which also echoes the presuppositions and principles of interpretive research design (see Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012).

The choice of poetry as a literary genre was grounded in the lack of research on poetry reading and teaching in a Nordic context (see e.g. Sigvardsson, 2016, for review), but also an instructional-based choice, since poetry offers possibilities for a multiplicity of interpretation. Poetry is often condensed in its form but not content; its conciseness and power to convey so much in a limited space are its appeal (Hughes, 2008). Peacock refers to poetry as “the screen-size art” providing a “quick dive in a deep pool” (as cited in Hughes, 2008, p. 149). Poetry often consists of rich imagery that in transmediating visually might enable interesting possibilities and, as Hughes (2008) points out, often leads participants to think in synthesising ways required by its use of metaphors. Poetry may function as an invitation to experiment with language, to create, to know, to engage creatively and imaginatively with experience (Leggo, 2008, p. 165). In this study, the approach to poetry is a notion of poems not as static texts with an inherent correct meaning, but as dynamic texts with rich potential for multiple interpretations.

Besides these principles, the teachers were in charge of the planning and teaching of the Video Poetry project at their school. They were in charge of issues such as choosing the poems included in the booklet, organising the students into focus groups, and choosing which editing program to work with. The use of moving images was not a

criterion from my side, but a choice made by the art teacher. From my point of view as a researcher, the use of digital visual responses were of importance, but what kind of digital visual responses the students would produce was up to the teachers. Before the students started transmediating the poem into digital video they had worked with poetic language with the L1 teacher during two lessons. The teacher introduced literary concepts such as imagery, metaphor, and simile. They discussed the format of poems as well as rhythm, rhyme, and tone. During these lessons the teacher emphasised an open approach to interpreting poetry and emphasised the symbolic and metaphorical meaning of poetic language and interpretation.

The teachers assigned the students to transmediate their interpretations of a poem to a digital video by going through four different phases: discussion of initial responses and writing a synopsis, making a storyboard, filming, and editing. Besides these guidelines and some comments on the format of storyboard and a short technical introduction to the camera and editing software, the students were not given particular guidelines for the assignment; they were given free hands throughout the project. The students had, as far as I know, no prior experience of this type of project.

#### 4.3.2 Produced data: video recordings and students' digital video

The students' working process was documented through audio-video recordings<sup>24</sup>. Recordings were made during five lessons (of 90 minutes) over a five-week period. During the production of the empirical material, the students worked in groups of four, referred to as focus groups.<sup>25</sup> The focus groups included students from two

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<sup>24</sup> The recordings were made with a DV-camera, recording both audio and video. In the text I use the term video recordings or video observations to refer to the recording of both audio and video.

<sup>25</sup> The way I use the term focus group is not to be compared with the methodological approach of focus group. In this study, focus group refers to the students being part of the generated data, in contrast to the students in the classroom that were not a part of the study.

parallel classes in the eighth grade who had chosen art as an optional subject. There were three focus groups in total, comprising 12 students altogether. I consider the students to be participants and not “merely” informants, and therefore use the term participants instead of informants. Also, in interpretive research, data production or data generation are more suitable terms, than the often-used “data collection”, because of the view of data not as something given or located in the outside world independent of the researcher. Instead, data is viewed as something observed and made sense of – interpreted – related to the purpose or interest, whether by researchers interacting with sources or co-produced in conversational or participatory interactions (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006; see also Darlaston-Jones, 2007).

There are several ways of conducting video observations; depending on the placement of the camera, number of cameras, and the audio recording, there are different conditions for what can actually be studied. As discussed above, I do not consider the video observations to be objective. The choices made by me in relation to the purpose of the study have impact on what I actually can study. The arrangement of the video recordings is influenced by theoretical and methodological presuppositions and is of crucial importance to meet the purpose of the study and what kind of analyses can be made (Erickson, 2006; Heikkilä & Sahlström, 2003). I am particularly interested in the working process of the students, not only the final digital video, and therefore I chose to focus one camera on every focus group and attached a wireless microphone on one of the students in the group. Every focus group was recorded by a video camera, which means that during the lessons I needed assistance in filming. The assistants were given detailed instructions for the video documentation and were informed about the confidentiality and professional secrecy that was required of them. As the researcher accountable, I was present at every video recording session.

Erickson (2006, p. 177) suggests that for research purposes it is recommended to use raw video footage prepared with a minimum of camera editing, shot continuously and with little movement of the camera. The advantage of this procedure is that it provides a

continuous and relatively comprehensive documentation. During the video recordings the focus group was filmed in one frame whenever possible. If the students moved around, the camera mostly followed the student wearing the microphone. Some of the lessons were recorded continuously the whole lesson through, while some were divided in several clips to a maximum of four clips in exceptional cases. The reasons for this could be that a microphone was adjusted or some other minor technical alteration was made. Otherwise, everything was shot as continuous footage.

A pilot study conducted in autumn 2009 revealed that the use of video recordings provided significant insight. The pilot study<sup>26</sup> applied ethnographic observations using field notes, but I realised that I was missing out on the students' discussions containing the negotiations of interpretations of both the literary text and the digital story. It was difficult for me to perceive what was said in the different groups. With this central methodological insight from the pilot, study I chose to proceed by using video recordings and to focus one camera on each group instead of the whole class. I consider video recordings of the students working process necessary because of the continuous discussions, interpretations, and negotiations of the texts during the whole process. This "multi voiced" process is full of information, and through video recordings I have the possibility to go back to the material on several occasions and study it thoroughly.

The role of the researcher during the actual (video) observations can be conducted in different ways. Depending on the extent to which the researcher is involved during the observations, the observer has different roles. During the video observations I chose to keep a low profile and leaned towards the observer side of the participant-observer continuum (see Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 101),

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<sup>26</sup> The pilot study was conducted with a group of students aged 11–12 over three weeks. The students worked in groups of four, and their task was to interpret a literary prose text and represent their interpretation in a digital story using photographic pictures. I used ethnographic observation where I as a participating observer took field notes during the lessons. At the end of the school day I elaborated the field notes in a field diary.



mostly managing the recording equipment. During the actual video recordings I did not intervene if I was not directly addressed, which for the most part I wasn't. However, I do not consider myself as an "invisible" or "unnoticeable" researcher; to the contrary, the students were well aware of my presence. Even though I did not interact directly with the students or intervene in their work, I interacted with them before the lessons started in situations such as attaching the microphone to one of the students. It was also to make my role as a researcher clear to the participants, and two weeks before the video recordings started I visited them at the school and informed them about the research project, explaining the purpose of the video observations and answering their questions regarding the project. My presence and role as a researcher is thus not to be considered in terms of "invisible" or "disturbing", but rather as a crucial factor in orienting the research towards processes of understanding human meaning-making; an interpretive research approach "it accompanies the researcher's physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in and engagement with the persons and material being studied" (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 98).

## 4.4 Processing of the empirical material

The different stages of the processing of the empirical material – from producing the data with all the choices that involves, to presenting the findings – is all part of the analysis. Analysis is omnipresent through the selections and delimitations made throughout the whole process of the study (Colley, 2010; Derry et al, 2010; Erickson, 2006). In the following sections I present and discuss the processing of the empirical material to answer the questions of the study in the presentation of findings.

### 4.4.1 Selection and delimitation

Acknowledging the limits and focus of the study is of great importance; a researcher can only explore some singled-out aspects of

the phenomenon being studied (see e.g. Brown, 2010). Analysis builds on constant choices made by the researcher; choices of what sections to analyse and what framework to apply to the selected sections. Even the act of transcription is a matter of choice (see e.g. Erickson, 2006; Flewitt, Hampel, Hauck & Lancaster, 2009). The delimitation of material and focus in analysis are important choices during a research process, which also means that ranges of perspectives are left out.

During the research process there has been a constant consideration of where the focus of the analysis should lie: on the video recordings, on the digital video – or on both. I ultimately recognised that in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the students' multimodal designing, the process could not be separated from the digital video, and vice versa (see also Halverson, Bass & Woods, 2012). Analysing both the process of the students' multimodal designing process and the resulting students' digital video would give a thorough insight into the choices and negotiations made.

Since at the beginning of qualitative research, “the researcher does not know what will be discovered, what or whom to concentrate on, or what the final analysis will be like” (Merriam, 2009, p. 171), my decision to focus on solely one group of four students occurred during the process of analysis. Initially I gathered data from three different focus groups, but during the process of analysis the actual analysis was focused on solely one group. The decision to focus one group was motivated by the analytical choice of doing an in-depth analysis of both the videomaking process and the students' digital video. This decision was empirically grounded and grew during the process of analysis.

The choice of this particular group of students, out of the three possible, was based mainly on the fact that the students in this group had granted their permission for the empirical material to be used as examples at research conferences, in teacher education, or in teacher in-service training. Also, this group of students worked mainly with the assignment they had been given, which was not the case with one of the other groups. The second group (group B) had trouble focusing

on the assignment and the digital video was mostly designed by one of the students, and therefore the negotiations around the interpretive and representational work remained concealed. Regarding the third group (group C), there were minor audio errors on the video recordings, which made parts of the process inaudible. Also, the digital video and the videomaking process by one group of students (group A) provided such “rich” material that I did not find it served the purpose to include the other groups. One group seemed sufficient for this detailed analysis of both the process and final digital video. I have, however, transcribed the recordings and digital videos of two groups, which also supported my decision to go use only one group for in-depth analysis. Consequently, from a large amount of empirical material, only parts were used for in-depth analysis, focusing on the video recordings and digital video of group A (see Table 1).

Table 1. Total production of data and processing of the data

<i>Produced data</i>	<i>Processing of the data</i>
<b>Video recordings of group A, a total of 7 hours of recorded material during five lessons.</b>	<b>Transcribed and analysed in detail.</b>
Video recordings of group B, a total of 6 hours of recorded material during four lessons.	Transcribed. Not analysed.
Vide recordings of group C, a total of 3,5 hours of recorded material during four lessons.	Viewed, but not transcribed or analysed.
<b>Digital video 1 made by group A.</b>	<b>Transcribed and analysed in detail.</b>
Digital video 2 made by group B.	Transcribed. Not analysed.
Digital video 3 made by group C.	Viewed, but not transcribed or analysed.
Photographs of storyboards, sketches, and synopsis.	Storyboard, sketches, and synopsis from group A are used to support the analyses.

The data used for analysis consist of (1) video recordings of a collective videomaking process and (2) the digital video made by the students. The video recorded material of the students' working process covers about 7 hours recorded during five different lessons (once a week over five weeks). The students' digital video runs for 2

minutes and 14 seconds. Additionally, photographs of the students' storyboard, sketches, drawings, and synopsis are also included to support the analysis, but are not analysed specifically.

In the following section I will describe and elaborate on the different steps in the process of analysis. Initially, I describe and elaborate on the transcriptions of the students' digital video and of the transcription of the video recorded material, after which I describe and elaborate on how I approached the two different types of material in the process of analysis: the analysis of the video recordings and the analysis of the students' digital video.

#### 4.4.2 Transcription

Transcription is part of the process of analysis, since the act of transcription involves several decisions related to the study. The choices made during and before the act of transcription are based on the focus of the study; the research interest is what determines the choice of the transcription (Flewitt et al., 2009, p. 51). The transcription of the empirical material is also a form of transduction practice (Kress 2003; 2010) for me as a researcher, in which I "translate" the empirical material from one sign system to another. Consequently, I consider transcription as a part of the process of analysis and wish to clarify that it is an analytic approach I apply at this stage of the processing of the empirical material.

The transcription process has included two different kinds of transcription, transcription of the video recordings of the students' working process and transcription of the students' digital video. Initially, I describe and elaborate on the transcription of the video recordings of the students' videomaking process after which I describe and elaborate on the transcription of the students' digital video.

## Transcription of video recordings

Video recording of students in a classroom is a rich material that can be studied from a variety of perspectives. Faced with a large amount of rich video recorded material, I developed criteria for what to transcribe for further close examination. The theoretical framework and the purpose of the study guided me to develop two criteria: 1) events involving discussions about the poem and how it was interpreted, revised, and elaborated upon; and 2) events incorporating negotiations of the use of semiotic resources. These two criteria were focused on the scope of the study but at the same time open enough not to rule out relevant data. During the analytical process I realised that these two criteria were closely interconnected.

The transcriptions of the video recordings are primarily based on verbal language, including temporal information such as pauses and overlapping talk as well as features such as accentuated words or obvious laughter. The approach for transcription resembles the *manifest content approach* (Erickson, 2006), which means that focus is on content-related discussions regarding the students' meaning-making and representation during a transmediation process from poem to digital video. The transcriptions follow the spoken language verbatim, but sometimes punctuation marks are included to support the reading (see Appendix 4 for transcription symbols). The original transcripts are, naturally, in Swedish, but in the translation to English the colloquial language is replaced by written language.<sup>27</sup> The reasons for this are to facilitate the reading of the excerpts. All transcriptions are done in the software program Transana,<sup>28</sup> which is an application for transcription and analysis of audio-visual material (see Appendix 5a for a screen shot of Transana and the transcription of the video documentation). Because of the theoretical framework of the study, other semiotic resources are also noted in the transcription that are of interest for the focus of the study. Such notations include, for

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<sup>27</sup> I have only translated the transcripts that are included as excerpts in the presentation of findings in Chapter 5. All other transcripts are in Swedish.

<sup>28</sup> Information about Transana can be found on [www.transana.org](http://www.transana.org).

example, obvious gestures while filming or pointing at something of importance on the screen during the editing phase.

It may seem contradictory to focus largely on the students' talk in a study that puts emphasis on multiple means of meaning-making, and which theoretically and methodologically applies a multimodal approach. But because of the need to limit the objects of analysis I have chosen to focus on the students' talk about their multimodal designing to get an insight into the choices made during the transmediation process. Their talk is considered as *a* mode in understanding the students' meaning-making, not *the* mode. It is also questionable whether it is possible, or even desirable, to include every semiotic resource in transcription and analysis. The focus of the study is what determines what is transcribed. The students' talk during the designing process provides me with the possibility of following their choices and negotiations regarding their interpretation and representation.

### Transcription of students' digital video

For transcription of the students' digital video I developed a transcription system based on the kineikonic mode (Burn & Parker, 2001; 2003; Burn, 2013) with inspiration from the way Halverson, Bass, and Woods (2012; see also Halverson, 2010) apply the kineikonic mode in their analysis of youth films as representation of identity. The kineikonic mode is used to describe the moving image as a multimodal form, acknowledging all the different modes combined in film. The point is not to decompose semiotic modes into smaller elements,<sup>29</sup> although Burn (2013) recognises that this might be a valuable analytical path for some researchers.

The transcription system is structured around the two central representational systems within the kineikonic mode: filming and editing (see Figure 1). The transcription is meant to attend to both

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<sup>29</sup> See Burn (2013, p. 8) for examples of different levels of decomposing semiotic modes into smaller elements.

the content and form of the students' digital video, not to decompose it into small analytic elements to analyse in detail. Based on the interest of the study, I found that by approaching the digital video from the two representational systems of filming and editing, the interplay of the semiotic resources was more relevant than the decomposing of smaller elements. That is indeed the very focus of the multimodal approach: the way that different modes interact with one another and what is created as a result of their interaction (Burn & Parker, 2003; Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016; Kress, 2003; 2010). This analytical choice makes it possible to attend the students' digital video openly without locating modes made up beforehand.

In the transcript *filming* I note resources possible in the filming phase, for example, camera movement, camera angles, length of shot, audio (such as dialogue or sounds occurring during the filming phase), cuts, settings, actors, and the action taking place. In the category *editing* I note resources possible in the editing phase, for example, audio (such as music, voice-over or sound effects), written text, transitions, and special effects (such as slow motion or freeze-frame). Researchers have attended the transcription and analysis of youth-produced digital videomaking with somewhat different terms (see e.g. Burn, 2013; Halverson, 2010; Halverson, Bass & Woods, 2012; Mills, 2011b) but the attention on the resources of the kineikonic mode is ultimately the same: to acknowledge the resources distinct for the medium of film – or moving image in a broad sense – and finding a way to analyse them.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Halverson's (2010) use of *mise en scène*, sound, editing, and cinematography are also acknowledged in the transcription system developed in this study. *Mise en scène* and cinematography are incorporated in the transcription of *filming* and the editing is noted in the transcription of *editing*. However, in the transcription system that I have developed, sound is incorporated in both the *filming* and *editing*, since it might appear either as a dialog or a knock on a door during filming, or as voice-over or sound effect during editing. Likewise, the four categories that Mills (2011b) has created for the analysis of features of claymation movies in kineikonic design – screen elements, spatiotemporal elements, technical conventions, and multimodal compositional meanings – for the most part incorporate the same resources for meaning-making as in the transcription system developed for this study.



FILMING	EDITING
Resources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• camera movement and angles</li> <li>• length of shot</li> <li>• settings</li> <li>• actors and action</li> <li>• audio</li> </ul>	Resources such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• audio</li> <li>• written text</li> <li>• transitions</li> <li>• special effects (e.g. slow motion, freeze-frame)</li> </ul>

*Figure 1. Description of the transcription system of the students' digital video based on the kineikonic mode developed by Burn and Parker (Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2001; 2003).*

The transcription of the digital video was made in Transana (see Appendix 5b for a screen shot of Transana and the transcription of the students' digital video) because of the possibility of using multiple and simultaneous transcripts for a single media file, which serves the multimodal transcription and analysis well. Transana also allows me to analyse them as films, instead of extracting individual images and creating text-based transcripts (see also Halverson, 2010, p. 2365).

The interrelating of the processes of transcription and analysis was especially evident in the processing of the students' digital video. The process of "translating" the digital video into written language consists of multiple choices, which require a constant attention to the focus and theoretical approach of the study (see Flewitt et al., 2009). Once the transcriptions of the video recordings and the students' digital video were made, the process of analysis proceeded to the next step, which involved carefully examining the transcripts for noticeable patterns (as in any qualitative study). This step will be further elaborated in the next section.

#### 4.4.3 Analysis

In the process of data analysis there is no golden key that will unlock the data and resolve with certainty the problems of making sense of the qualitative material (Colley, 2010, p. 183, 195). The keys to the data are a selection and adoption of methodological and theoretical techniques to best suit the aim of the study and the data at hand. The process of analysis was a constant interchanging between an open approach to the empirical material and a theoretically based approach, what in research handbooks is referred to as an abductive reasoning or abductive process (see Alvesson & Skjöldberg 1998; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). The empirical material was viewed, examined, deliberated, and re-examined with a simultaneous puzzling with theoretical literature. The approach to the empirical material was open, but given the scope and aim of the study, as well as the theoretical preunderstanding, there was a certain focus present throughout the process of analysis. As mentioned above, analysis started as early as the transcription phase; indeed, one can argue that the process of analysis actually begins with what data one gathers or produces. The abductive approach in this study meant that I approached the empirical material openly, creating analytical structures that were appropriate and suitable to capture the qualitative distinctiveness of the data. The data was then reflected and expounded on with reference to the theoretical and analytical principles of the study. I combined the analyses of the empirical material with theory not to transfer theoretical principles directly to the empirical material, but rather as a lens to discover patterns and understand the data.

The analytical focus was on how students make use of the semiotic resources in their digital video and what characterises their digital videomaking process regarding their use of semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem. Studying both the digital video as well as the making of it enables me to situate the digital video in a social context. A social semiotic analysis of any text has been criticised for not being able to take into account the social circumstances of the making (see e.g. Iedema, 2001a; Siegel &

Panofsky, 2009). In this study, by including both the digital video and the process of videomaking in the analysis, the intention is to acknowledge the students' perspective on their own design and designing process.

In the process of analysis the two different empirical materials were viewed and examined both separately and at the same time. However, it is important to emphasise that I could not disclaim my preunderstanding and insights into the students' process when analysing the digital video – and vice versa. While this gives me a more detailed insight into the students' meaning-making, it also implies that without the insights from the working process, the analysis of the students' digital video could produce different findings.

The video recordings are analysed using the strata of text production, and the students' digital video is analysed using the metafunctions of text (See Table 2 for an overview and short description of the data used for analysis and means of analysis). Both analytical approaches are developed within the social semiotic theory of multimodality. The strata of text production are considered suitable if the object of analysis is the process of moving image production and the metafunctions are considered suitable if the object of analysis is a final text (see Burn, 2013, p. 5). The metafunctions have been used and demonstrated useful for analysing youth produced films in previous research (see Burn & Parker, 2003; Lindstrand 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009). However, social semiotic analysis is not an end in itself, "it only becomes meaningful once we begin to use its resources to ask questions" (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 147). Consequently, the intention of this study is to explore how a digital videomaking process influences the students' interpretive work with a literary text.

Table 2. The empirical material for the study and means of analysis

<i>Produced data</i>	<i>Use in the study</i>	<i>Means of analysis</i>
Video recordings of a group of four students during five lessons; totally 7 hours of video recorded material.	Used to explore the students' reflections regarding their use of semiotic resources as means to negotiate their interpretation.	Analysed using the strata of text production developed within the social semiotic theory of multimodality.
Students' digital video	Used to explore how the students represent their interpretation of the poem using a variety of semiotic resources in their digital video.	Analysed using the meta functions of text developed within the social semiotic theory of multimodality.
Photographs of storyboard, sketches, drawings, and synopsis	Used as support for the analysis of both the process and the final digital video.	Not analysed in particular. Considered as secondary data.

### Analysis of video recordings

The analysis of the video recordings focused on the students' negotiations of the poem, and their reflections on their use of semiotic resources during the multimodal designing process. I approach the students' reflections on how to represent their interpretation of the poem as a crucial part of their attempt to make meaning of the literary text. In line with this approach, interpretation is seen as a meaning-making process that is highly contingent on the circumstances, people, and semiotic resources available at that particular moment; interpretation of the poetic text is *performed* in line with the available resources.

The analytical process was done in several steps following the procedures of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008; Guest, 2012). Thematic analysis emphasises identifying and examining patterns, or themes, within data. Themes are patterns across data sets that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are often associated with a specific research question. Analysis is performed through coding in six phases to create established, meaningful patterns. These phases are: familiarisation with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p. 93).

In the first phase, familiarisation with data, I viewed, and repeatedly re-viewed, the video recordings to become familiar with what the data entailed. This phase started already prior to transcription. The following phase, transcription, also served as familiarisation with the data at hand. Following this I categorised *significant incidents* into four different phases of the videomaking process: *initial responses and writing of synopsis*, *making of storyboard*, *filming*, and *editing*. The significant incidents are similar to what Halverson and Gibbons (2009) refer to as key moments; situations which require participants to reflect on their reading of the poem and their representation of it during the multimodal designing process. The analytical interest focused on what characterised the different phases in relation to the students' work with negotiating and representing the poem by applying the strata of text production. I coded the video recordings during each of the phases in relation to the concepts of *discourse*, *design* and *production*. The videomaking process deals with, in the terms of the theoretical framework, levels of discourse, design and production.<sup>31</sup> These levels, the strata of text production, generate an

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<sup>31</sup> There are four strata of text production: discourse, design, production, and distribution. Some researchers have viewed the editing phase of film making as distribution (see e.g. Öhman-Gullberg, 2006), but in this study it is considered as a central part of the production phase, since much of the actual material work is made during the editing phase. The analytical process of the empirical material revealed that work on the level of distribution, in the sense of the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), is not present in the empirical material of this study and therefore the level of distribution is not included analytically.

analytical structure and are not to be considered as hierarchically or chronologically ordered but concerned with different aspects of text production.

Text excerpts were coded as *discourse* when the process of text production involved decisions and negotiations of what the poem represents, what will take place and who is involved in the digital video – in relation to purposes, values, and ideas the students choose to bring forward. Text excerpts were coded as *design* when the process of text production involved decisions and negotiations on suitable ways to bring forward ideas that best correspond to the aspects of discourse; the focus shifts from *what* to represent to *how* to represent it. Text excerpts were coded as *production* when the process of text production involved decisions and negotiations dealing with how the ideas are to be realised in the form of actual, material semiotic resources planned for earlier. The focus is still on how to represent, but on a more tangible level than on that of design.

After this, the coded material was examined to discover patterns, or themes, to capture the qualitative distinctiveness of the empirical material. I listed patterns that occurred from the coding based on the strata of text production and continuously returned to the data to review the themes to eventually define and name essential themes. The final phase was completed by a thick description of the findings, which can be found in the presentation of findings (see Chapter 5.1). The analytical process was highly influenced by the abductive approach throughout, since the categorisation into four different phases of the videomaking project, which was mainly an empirically based categorisation, was reflected and expounded on the theoretically based coding of the strata for text production.

### Analysis of the students' digital video

In my review of research literature on the subject of analysis of youth-produced digital video, several of the studies drew upon the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), although developing the analysis for their own particular purposes. Hull & Nelson (2005) offer a detailed

analysis of one youth's video focusing on the visual and text modes of a digital story. This study has greatly contributed to and influenced the analysis of multimodal compositions, but it has also received criticism for not including several modes in the analysis (see e.g. Halverson, 2010). Halverson (2010) develops this focus by including the mode of sound, turning to film theory to develop a coding scheme to support the analysis, and presents a framework for analysing youths' films as products of identity. In addition to these frameworks of analysis, several studies (e.g. Mills, 2011b; Ranker, 2008) contributed to the development of the analytical framework ultimately used in the study.

The analytical framework for this study is mainly based in metafunctions of text developed within the social semiotic theory of multimodality. However, the studies referred to above served as valuable support in the transcription phase and in developing the metafunctions to address digital video as unit of analysis. The metafunctions offer an analytical tool to explore meaning-making on different levels in communicating through film, and other genres incorporating moving images, proven valuable by previous research (see e.g., Lindstrand, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009; Iedema, 2001a; Burn, 2013; Burn & Parker, 2003). This approach also acknowledges social agency (Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 200b); students are viewed as active meaning-makers who act from their interests in a specific situation and to their situated use of semiotic resources. For these reasons, I chose to use the metafunctions of text from social semiotic theory of multimodality and developed an analytical framework to suit the purposes of this particular study. The analytical framework developed and used in this study acknowledges that what the students communicate with their digital video is not only based on the content but also *how* they choose to represent it, and that the digital video is communicating on three different levels simultaneously (see also Lindstrand, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009). In the analytical process of the students' digital video, the focus was on what the video represents on the three levels of metafunctions and how, with what semiotic resources, these representations were created.

In the process of analysing the students' digital video the transcription and analysis programme Transana allowed me to view the transcripts at the same time as the video was playing. To view the digital video as such, not just as transcriptions in writing, was a valuable function. The analysis was made on three different levels according to the metafunctions of text. The analysis on *the representational level* focused on how different modes were used. Attention was aimed at what persons, settings, and things were represented, and through what different modes and semiotic resources. The analysis on *the interactive level* focused the *how* of the digital video; how relations between the film and the viewers are created. Attention was aimed at the students' choices of camera angles, shot types, camera movement, and other means of interacting with the viewer. The relation to the viewer is also created with other modes than just the visual, such as sound, voice-over, and special effects. By such means the digital video interacts with the viewer and suggests the attitude viewers should take towards what is being represented. Three factors play a key role on this level of the analysis: contact, distance, and point of view (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Iedema, 2001a). In the analysis on *the compositional level* the focus is on how the digital video is structured to compose a cohesive and coherent "text". Two distinct aspects are prominent at this level of analysis: the structure and composition of temporal aspects and the structure and composition of spatial aspects. The analysis of the composition of temporal aspects focuses the semiotic rhythm: how the digital video is structured into a coherent text; how different clips and the use of different modes are organised and used to structure the digital video as a whole. The analysis of the spatial aspects focuses on two central principles for composition: information value and salience (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 177). The principle of information value deals with the placement of elements or participants in various zones of the image: left or right, top or bottom, centre or margin. The principle of salience deals with how attention is drawn to or realised by the use of resources such as colour, sound, light, or zooming.



The metafunctions served as a lens to discover the students' use of modes and semiotic resources in their digital video. The abductive approach was prominent as the empirical material was reflected and expounded on with reference to the analytical principles of the metafunctions, but at the same time viewed openly for the qualitative distinctiveness of the students' use of modes and semiotic resources.

In analysis of film, the basic unit for analysis is often the shot. However, as Halverson (2010, p. 2359) points out, "dividing a film into individual shots leaves out a fundamental affordance of film as a meaning-making tool: the ability to hold certain elements constant while simultaneously introducing new elements". Meaning is made in the combination of these modes, not in the separation. The analysis of the students' digital video was therefore made on two different structural levels: scene<sup>32</sup> and the digital video as a whole. The importance of including transition in the analysis is highlighted by several researchers (see Halverson, 2010; Burn & Parker, 2003; Burn 2013), since transitions play an important role in meaning-making across scenes to the film as a whole. Transitions were therefore included in the compositional analysis.

The students' digital video has been continuously reshaped according to the semiotic resources available during the videomaking process before it reached its final shape. This process is filled with choices and negotiations. This essential insight was already clear during the pilot study, which resulted in the video recording of the working process (see Section 4.3 for a further elaboration on this matter), but it was also prominent during the analytical process. I quite quickly recognised that it was difficult to distance my preunderstanding of the students' working process when I was viewing their digital video. My analysis of the digital video is, consequently, influenced by the insights I have into the students' working process as I was present during the video recordings and had viewed and reviewed the video recordings numerous times. Hence, the analysis of the students'

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<sup>32</sup> A scene is a series of several shots that establish location and continuity, with integral consistency across multiple modes. A scene often ends with a visible transition to another time, location, or person.

digital video is not strictly separated as a singled out artefact, and in the presentation of findings references to the working process are made when valuable and beneficial. This is consistent with the students' agency that is emphasised within social semiotic theory of multimodality and is also reflected in the word choices in the second research question: "how do the students use ...". The preunderstanding of and insights into the students' working process that I have, thus, influences the analysis of the digital video. This is not necessarily a negative factor, but offers a valuable insight; but it is important to call attention to my role as a researcher in the analytical process. Also, as mentioned above, the analysis of the digital video emphasises the *meaning potential* of the different semiotic resources used, underlining that it is not possible to say what different semiotic resources mean exactly, but it is possible to describe the meanings they will allow image producers and viewers to create.

#### 4.5 Trustworthiness

Several scholars (see e.g. Bryman, 2004; 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012) argue that the terms and frameworks developed in quantitative research are not sufficient to apply in qualitative research, and propose other approaches and terms in establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) assert that evaluating and establishing trustworthiness involves four criteria or concepts: *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability*. In the following, I will attend to issues of trustworthiness in regard to this study with reference to the criteria set forth by Lincoln and Guba (1985) together with criteria developed in interpretive research as set forth by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012). However, trustworthiness is not something I can attend to only in a separate section; it is the sum of the study as a whole and is thus omnipresent throughout. In this section I bring out the issues to consider for establishing the trustworthiness of the study, but the base to consider in establishing

the extent to which the trustworthiness is addressed is to view the study in full.

Assessing criteria for interpretive research in the human and educational sciences needs to be consistent with the presuppositions of interpretive research, which include recognition that situations can be analysed from a variety of perspectives, and that the researcher's knowledge, background, and relation to what is studied can influence the choice of analytical foci. In order to provide the reader with sufficient base to consider the trustworthiness and reason of the study, researchers in the interpretive research field need to explicitly and transparently make clear personal knowledge, research methods, data generation, and data analysis; this is also referred to as *confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) or *reflexivity* (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012; see also Gerber, Abrams, Curwood & Magnifico, 2016). How researchers disclose their presuppositions, such as sharing the beliefs that underpin their methodological decisions, is crucial in establishing trustworthiness. Interpretive research proceeds from the understanding that the perspective and position of the researcher shapes all research, and that reflexivity is an attitude of attending systematically to the context or object of study, especially to the effect of the researcher at every step of the research process. Since no researcher can be truly objective, confirmability or reflexivity depends on how a researcher reflects on and discloses such issues. Reflexivity is thus understood as researchers' recognition of their precedence in the interpretations made. Such awareness extended throughout the research process; to what extent this study deals with reflexivity is up to the reader to judge. I have tried to make the research process as transparent and reflexive as possible by reflecting on the research design, methods, considerations in selection of critical incidents for analysis, presuppositions for transcription, and analytical tools for understanding the empirical material (see particularly Chapter 4). The disclosure of interpretive presuppositions and how the choice of perspective is crucial to what this study can accomplish is something I have touched upon already in the first sentences of this thesis, using photography as a metaphor for this research. This should not be viewed as excuses for what the

study *cannot* do, but as a conscious reflection on how research is bound to the frames, perspectives, and angles the researcher chooses.

A rich description of research methods and analytical principles also reinforces the *dependability* of the study, showing that the findings are consistent in relation to the purpose, theoretical outsets, and methodological choices. Besides reinforcing the dependability by understanding the logic of inquiry that links the research questions, theory, methods, and findings, other researchers should also be able to repeat the study. This study is transparent in the analytical framework, and the theoretical presuppositions of the analytical framework are thoroughly presented and can be performed by other researchers – with respect to the researcher and the students as interpreters. A step-by-step explanation of how the process of analysis is done (see Section 4.4) and the presentation of findings (Chapter 5) further illustrates this in action. The presentation of findings complements the description of the process of analysis, and furthers an understanding of the process of analysis.

The presentation of findings is also fundamental to the trustworthiness of a study. The process of analysis must be as transparent and believable as possible in order to establish its *credibility* and establish confidence in the “truth” of the findings. Often credibility is assured by demonstrating prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 301–304), by spending sufficient time in the field to learn and understand the culture and social setting of interest. My involvement with the field for this particular study was not particularly long (about six weeks), but my engagement with the field should be viewed not only in relation to this particular study; it is based in my previous experience and knowledge of the field as teacher and teacher educator.

Credibility can also be addressed by persistent observation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 303–304), identifying the characteristics that are most relevant to the issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail: “[i]f prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 304). In this study, an in-depth analysis of the students’ work and working process

were the focus, supporting the choice of persistent observation rather than prolonged engagement. Persistent observation was facilitated by the use of video recordings offering the possibility to go back to the material on several occasions and study it thoroughly. In the presentation of findings, the excerpts of the students' working process and the screen shots of the students' digital video are included to reinforce the credibility of the findings.

*Transferability* is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as a way of achieving description in sufficient detail to evaluate the extent to which the conclusions are transferable to other times, settings, situations, and people. Once again, this is established by a thorough description, or thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Although the study was focused on only one group of students, I argue that the study contains findings that can be transferable to other contexts; perhaps not in terms of qualitatively distinct results, but in terms of indications of the possibilities for negotiating interpretations that the transmediation process encourages and requests and the spaces for interpretation this process facilitates, as well as how practice development might be facilitated in educational contexts.

## 4.6 Ethical considerations

All research needs to elaborate on the ethical considerations in relation to the study at hand. Where people participate in empirical studies there are several important aspects to take into account. In a study with children or young people under observation the ethical aspects are of even greater importance. The ethical aspects apply to all stages of the research process: the generation of empirical material; the handling and reporting of the material; and the respect of previous and other ongoing research. Regarding the ethical considerations for this study, I have considered and applied the guidelines for responsible conduct of research settled by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012). I have also taken into consideration the set of recommendations issued by the Advisory

Board on the ethical principles to be followed in research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2009), which are further elaborated below.

#### 4.6.1 Information and consent

Before the data generation started I contacted the principal at the school asking for research permission (see Appendix 1a). After receiving permission from the principal (see Appendix 1b) I informed the students and their parents about the research project. I informed the participants both orally and in writing. Two weeks before the data generation started, I visited the school and informed the students about my research interest and the project. I pointed out that the object of interest, what they were to work with during the lessons, were part of their school curriculum and nothing extraordinary. I stressed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. I contacted the participants' parents in writing, describing my research interest broadly, informing them about the video recordings, how long the project was intended to last, and reporting the consent of the school principal and participating teachers. I asked permission in writing from the parents of the students in the focus groups (see Appendix 2a and 2b). I asked them to respond in writing by choosing between three different options. The following three different alternatives were given: (1) granting permission for their child to participate in the research project and for the data to be used as examples at research conferences, in teacher education, or for teacher in-service training; (2) granting their permission for their child to participate in the research project but *not* for the data to be used as examples at research conferences, in teacher education, or for teacher in-service training; or (3) not granting their permission for their child to participate in the research project. The parents of students who were not in the focus groups, and therefore not a part of the actual generated data, were informed about the research project but were not asked for a written consent (see Appendix 3). All parents were requested to make contact if they had questions or concerns.

## 4.6.2 Confidentiality

A central ethical aspect is the confidentiality of the participants, and the participants were informed about this issue. I have in different ways tried to keep the identity of the participants confidential; I have created fictive names for them, not mentioned the name or location of the school, and the transcriptions do not reveal linguistic variation or dialect typical of a certain region. In the presentation of the findings and excerpts, everything has been translated from Swedish to English, which is a noticeable act of confidentiality. The photos presented have been blurred to secure personal integrity. I have chosen not to report the exact time of the data production, noting only that it was in the autumn of 2010.

I have stored video recordings, digital videos, consent forms, and other documentations where others do not have access to them. I am the only researcher who has made use of the data. During the video recordings three different research assistants assisted me and they were all informed about confidentiality and research ethics. None of them had access to the research data.

On seminars and conferences I have only presented examples of the group of students who granted their permission for this (the first alternative in the consent form). This is the group of students that is ultimately analysed in this study. As described in the section on produced data (4.3.2), I initially gathered empirical material from three groups, but ended up analysing only one. One of the teachers organised the students into focus groups and this organisation was partly based on which alternative the students' parents had chosen in the consent form. The result was that in one of the three groups (group A) all students had chosen the first alternative in the consent form, giving their consent to participate in the research project and agreeing that the data may be used as examples in research conferences, in teacher education, and for teacher in-service training.





## 5 FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the analyses. The findings build on data analysis of the students' videomaking process and digital video as described in Section 4.4. The first section (5.1) aims at answering the first research question: what characterises the students' transmediation process regarding their use of semiotic resources as a means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem? Excerpts from the students' videomaking process are presented to exemplify each essential finding. The second section (5.2) presents the findings of the analysis of the digital video and aims at answering the second research question: how do the students, in their digital video, use semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem? Screen shots from the students' digital video are presented to expand the understanding of it.

In the genre of scientific writing there is an established procedure in both the research process and the presentation of findings to verbalise the process in written form. Yet, different approaches are developing that are challenging the prevailing ways of presenting and conducting research.<sup>33</sup> A notable challenge in working with digital, multimodal data is to use a print-based mode to explicate digital design features. In this thesis the prevailing approach of verbalising the analysis is used. I do, however, acknowledge several limitations and difficulties

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<sup>33</sup> An example of such an approach is arts-based educational research (see e.g. Barone & Eisner, 2012; Knowles & Cole, 2008).

with this “translation”. To some extent this could be addressed by, for example, linking to a server where the students’ digital video could be viewed. This is, however, not possible because of the ethical requirement to secure the anonymity of the participants in the study. To some extent I have addressed this issue by including still images as examples of the students’ digital video and by describing the multimodal designing process and students’ digital video carefully to ensure the trustworthiness of my analyses.

The students participating in this study, Catrin, Linda, Casper, and Philip (all names are pseudonyms) worked with the poem *I want to meet...*<sup>34</sup> by the Swedish poet and novelist Karin Boye (1900–1941). The poem was first published in *The Hearths (Härdarna)* in 1927.

**I want to meet ...**

Armed, erect and closed in armour  
forth I came –  
but of terror was the mail-coat cast  
and of shame.

I want to drop my weapons,  
sword and shield.  
All that hard hostility  
made me cold.

I have seen the dry seeds  
grow at last.  
I have seen the bright green  
spread out fast.

Mightier than iron  
is life's tenderness,  
driven forth from the earth's heart  
without defence.

The spring dawns in winter's regions,  
where I froze.  
I want to meet life's powers  
weaponless.

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<sup>34</sup> The poem was originally written in Swedish and named *Jag vill möta...* The English translation used here is by David McDuff. See Appendix 6 for poem in the original Swedish.

The students' choice of poem was made collectively in the group. The students had individually, as an assignment by the L1 teacher, chosen a poem beforehand that in some way spoke to them. They were able to make their individual choice based on a selection of poems assembled by the L1 teacher in a booklet. The students shared their poems with each other by reading them out loud and giving a short explanation why they had chosen this poem. They were to agree on one poem to work further with, and they settled on the poem by Karin Boye rather quickly. Their choice was not particularly substantiated or discussed, however, Casper acknowledged the message or statement of the poem as a criterion, which suggests an interest in establishing their work on a discursive level. The students did not further elaborate the message of the poem at this point, and the final choice of the poem *I want to meet...* was chosen without further discussion, but with what seemed to be common agreement.

## 5.1 Tracing the videomaking process

The students' digital video was continuously designed and redesigned according to the semiotic resources available during the videomaking process before it took its final shape. This process was filled with choices and negotiations. The analysis of the video recordings focused the students' reflections on and negotiations of the poem as well as of modes, media, and semiotic resources during the transmediation process; analytically attention was focused on what characterised the students' work in negotiating and representing their interpretation of the poem.

The process of analysis revealed how the different levels of text production are closely interconnected throughout the transmediation process. There are very few occasions when the students elaborate solely on issues on the level of discourse or issues on the level of design; the students focus on both *what* to represent as well as on *how* to represent it, and the different layers of text production support each other. This section will illustrate the findings of how the intertwining of the levels of text production requests continuous

negotiation; *what* to represent is closely and continuously connected to *how*, leading to a multifaceted process that continuously requests, encourages, and urges negotiation. Three essential themes were distinguished in the students' working process: symbolic responses requesting and providing negotiation; modal affordances encouraging and urging negotiation; and semiotic tools enabling and expanding negotiation. In the following section, I will detail the processes engaged in by the students across the span of the whole Video Poetry project.

### 5.1.1 Symbolic responses requesting and providing negotiation

The intertwining of the layers of text production is particularly noticeable in the students' work on symbolically representing their interpretation of the poem in pictorial images. This is predominantly noticeable in the two first phases of the videomaking process, *initial responses and writing of synopsis* and *making of a storyboard*. The students compose collaborative and individual sketches in response to the poem. As the students discuss the poem, they sketch exploratory pictorial images on paper. This sketching is characterised by the students representing their interpretations symbolically through the use of symbols such as helmet, fog, façade, and blanket (see Excerpt 1 below). The work with imagery, the sketching of symbols, serves both as a way of co-constructing and as a way of communicating their reading of the poem; by sketching they are both communicating their own thoughts as well as jointly building collective interpretations of the poem.

#### *Excerpt 1.*

- |   |         |  |
|---|---------|--|
| 1 | Catrin: | So this is my lovely picture of it (( <i>sketching on paper</i> )) |
| 2 |         | (1.5) uhm well (1.5) beautiful. This is a helmet, a combat         |
| 3 |         | helmet. And this is like (1.5) this beautiful human being          |
| 4 |         | and this is like death or fear that sort of floats around [like    |
| 5 | Philip: | [Yeah! That will be good.  |
| 6 | Catrin: | Yes, this will be drawn as floating around like this. And          |
| 7 |         | that is like the fear and horror then and (0.5) well... (2.0)      |

8 Casper: Casper the ghost  
 9 Catrin: Yeah ((*the students chuckle*))  
 10 Linda: Have you seen, ooh, it is soo great!  
 11 Catrin: So this is the fear, or the terror ((*sketching fog*)) and (1.0)  
 12 yeah (2.0)  
 13 Linda: Well I need to read the poem. I don't understand.  
 14 (18.0)  
 15 Catrin: And then we could have something symbolising life  
 16 Linda: Hey listen, you need to help me. "Armed, erect and closed  
 17 in armour forth I came but of terror was the mail-coat  
 18 cast and of shame" (2.0) Okay, explain. What is that?  
 19 Casper: She's referring to life.  
 20 Catrin: Well I see it as like, (2.0) behind the façade it is like  
 21 Linda: Okay, okay, it is like a blanket that she  
 22 Catrin: A blanket that she's hiding behind.  
 23 Casper: Symbol of life. [What is that?  
 24 Linda: [Well, okay. (2.0) So is this that she wants to come out  
 25 from behind this blanket?

(Lesson 1: 0:23.23 – 0:25.04)

The excerpt above (Excerpt 1) illustrates the intertwining of the levels of discourse, design, and production; it involves the students' discussion of *what* to represent as well as *how* to represent it, and illustrates how it is visible in their work with symbolically representing their interpretations. The excerpt involves decisions and negotiations on what the poem represents (level of discourse), how to represent it (level of design), and the actual semiotic work of sketching these ideas with pen and paper (level of production). By discussing what kind of symbols to use, the students are collectively negotiating an understanding of the poem. By sketching her ideas as pictorial images on a paper, Catrin is making clear her thoughts and ideas to the rest of the group. The sketching of these symbols gives the students an opportunity to co-construct an interpretation. Catrin mentions façade (line 20), which Linda further elaborates and expresses by using the symbol of a blanket (line 21). Catrin accepts the use of the symbol of a blanket for the issue of hiding oneself, and

by discussing these issues on the level of design the students are working together on a joint interpretation. The issue they want to represent is a person who wants to show his or her true self. By examining and testing different symbols and metaphors that best express this issue, the students are working on the levels of discourse, design, and production intertwiningly, which both challenges and provides them with means for negotiating their interpretation of the poem.

The students' visual responses, their work with symbolically representing their interpretation of the poem in pictorial images, requests a continuous negotiation. The excerpt below (Excerpt 2) shows how Catrin is not satisfied with representing the lines "*I want to drop my weapons, / sword and shield*" literally as weapons, but wants to represent this symbolically in another way. This challenges the students to further negotiate their interpretation, and they reach an agreement on representing the issue of showing one's true self.

*Excerpt 2.*

- 1 Casper: So, should there be weapons on the ground?  
2 Linda: Hey!  
3 Catrin: That's like too (0.5) or I think it's too directly from the  
4 poem [...] it's like straight from (0.5) we could symbolise it  
5 somehow. (2.0)  
6 Casper: [Symbol of life  
7 Linda: [So she slash he wants to crawl out into the world being  
8 one's true self  
9 Catrin: Coming out of the closet.  
10 Linda: Exactly (1.0) exactly (1.0)  
11 Catrin: Yes that might be  
12 Linda: Show one self (0.5) show its true self.  
13 Catrin: There we have it. (1.0) Really! (0.5) Great  
14 Linda: Really good!  
15 Catrin: Well this is like life, but it doesn't have to be like this. (0.5)  
16 This is only my interpretation ((*sketching plants*)).

(Lesson 1: 0:26.50 – 0:27.40)

The creation of symbols is under constant revision, and the students are metaphorically talking about coming out of the closet. The metaphor “coming out of the closet” is commonly used in relation to homosexuality and might play a role in their thematic storyline of the poem being about a homosexual revealing her and his sexual orientation. The empirical material cannot, however, substantiate whether or not the earlier comment on using the symbol of a closet to represent the issue of showing one’s true self influences their choice of creating a plot of a homosexual revealing their sexuality. Yet about 15 minutes later, the students return to and agree on the idea of homosexuality as a central part of their storyline.

*Excerpt 3.*

- 1 Casper: It can be a, uhm, hard working woman within the public  
2 sector that wants to quit, proving that she can do better  
3 ((*the students chuckle*))  
4 Catrin: Or it is a homosexual who wants to  
5 Linda: Yeah, come out of its shell (0.5) that wants to show that it  
6 is homosexual. Hey nice, that is the best interpretation we  
7 have ever done of this poem. Okay, we go for this. And in  
8 the end it walks hand in hand with a boy.  
9 Catrin: Or girl.  
10 Linda: Well, that’s right.  
11 Catrin: Well, it can. I think it can, everything points to that.  
12 Linda: Do you know if Karin Boye is homosexual?  
13 Catrin: No, probably not but...

(Lesson 1: 0:40.21–0:41.13)

The sketching calls forth symbolic representation among the students. By sketching their thoughts symbolically the other students in the group can respond to these visual symbolic representations, and juxtapose or confirm them in relation to their own thoughts; a process requesting and providing negotiation of their interpretations. The sketching serves as a means to communicate and negotiate, not as a means to present a definitive, settled idea.

Alongside the videomaking process, the students developed some of the sketches into a drawing. This was a sketched pictorial representation of their thematic interpretation of the poem (see Figure 2), which they collectively worked on collectively throughout the whole process. They wanted to finish this drawing, although it was not part of the actual assignment of creating the digital video given by the teachers. Catrin and Philip were the ones who sketched the drawing, but all the students participate in discussions concerning it.



*Figure 2. The students' pictorial representation of the thematic interpretation of the poem*

In the drawing (Figure 2) the students make use of the symbolic meaning of seasons, or more precisely the changing of the seasons from winter to spring, as a representation of personal development of the poetic voice (see Excerpt 4 below). Winter symbolises the poetic voice being withheld and suppressed, whereas spring symbolises the breaking free of the poetic voice and an opportunity to show one's true self. The pictorial representation above also includes the idea of homosexuality, how the poetic voice finds another person on "the other side", which is represented by the two girls sitting together in



the tree holding hands. This final pictorial representation is preceded by several negotiations and includes many of the aspects the students have discussed during the whole process.

*Excerpt 4.*

- 1        Catrin:        This might be about herself even though it's written as "I  
2                        have seen". That this is like, [so she became  
3        Casper:        [And what year is this? 1927 this has been very strange this  
4                        issue we have. It has been regarded as an illness. In Finland  
5                        it has been criminal.  
6        Catrin:        But I came to think of something [that  
7        Linda:        [But what a remark Casper, that was very good.  
8        Catrin:        But I came to think of something, that "I have seen the dry  
9                        seeds grow at last. I have seen the bright green spread out  
10                        fast." that this can be about herself even though it says  
11                        seen, so she has (0.5) what she herself has experienced,  
12                        her relationship with her parents (1.0) that she has been  
13                        withheld by them, and then she has made herself free and  
14                        dared, like dared to show who she is.  
15        Casper:        We'll take that.  
16        Linda:        Yeah, we'll buy that.

(Lesson 1: 0:47.35–0:48.26)

The students do not only create their own symbols as means for communicating, co-constructing, and negotiating their interpretation of the poem; they also make use of the imagery the poem offers on several different occasions in their attempt to interpret it. In the excerpt above (Excerpt 4), this is noticeable in Catrin's attempt to understand the imagery used in the poem and relate this to their thematic interpretation (lines 8–14). The students' attempt to interpret imagery in the poem is also exemplified in the excerpt below (Excerpt 5). The students negotiate their interpretation of the sword and shield, and interpret them as symbols of parents' conflicting and contradicting role as both protecting and fighting the poetic voice at the same time.

*Excerpt 5.*

- 1        Catrin:        Well (2.0) Well, so this person is homosexual. Is it anything  
2                            else? It is afraid of showing its true self.
- 3        Linda:        Exactly.
- 4        Catrin:        But has come past it, or are afraid of showing its true self?
- 5        Casper:        The parents have been like really overprotective and have  
6                            not let her... that is like her weapon. Her shield that also  
7                            has become a weapon against her.
- 8        Linda:        Exactly.
- 9        Casper:        Yes. (3.0)
- 10       Catrin:        So what did you say? (*writing on the paper*) Wait.
- 11       Linda:        So the parents want to protect her from evil.
- 12       Casper:        Yeah, so they are at the same time her shield but also a  
13                            weapon against her because they don't want to let her  
14                            step out.
- 15       Linda:        Yeah exactly.
- 16       Casper:        ... tell who she really is.
- 17       Catrin:        Cleaver! How should I write?
- 18       Linda:        Parents weapon plus shield.
- 19       Casper:        Parents are at the same time shield and weapon because  
20                            the shield tries to protect her but are holding her back.
- 21       Philip:        Yep, exactly.  
22                            (11.0)
- 23       Catrin:        Shield and weapon. And then? Parents are both shield and  
24                            weapon.
- 25       Casper:        Yes, because they want to protect her but are at the same  
26                            time pushing her back. She can't go ahead and tell whom  
27                            she really is.

(Lesson 1: 0:44.26-0:46.16)

The excerpt above (Excerpt 5) also shows the students summarising their thoughts and discussions in writing a synopsis. The form and function of a synopsis challenges – or encourages – the students to think of both a narrative structure and the narrative elements of their storyline. The synopsis calls for a summary and a dramaturgy, and

the students try to meet that request. This is an example of the modal and material affordances of different modes and mediums (see Kress & Jewitt, 2003, p. 15; Kress, 2010, pp. 79–81), where written text uses temporal dimensions; something is expressed before something else. Writing is organised by the logic of time; in writing some words are prior to others. Meaning is therefore attached to the organisation of first, second, third – and last. This leads to the next essential finding of the study: how the modal affordances encourage and urge negotiation.

### 5.1.2 Modal affordances encouraging and urging negotiation

The different levels of text production are sometimes difficult to match; what to express is not always easy to discover through the available modes and semiotic resources. The analysis of the videomaking process substantiates how its different phases are characterised by different modes and mediums, and a large set of available semiotic resources for meaning-making. This is not remarkable as such, but what is an essential finding is how this process incorporating a great variety of semiotic resources leads to a continuous negotiation of both the poem and the digital video. In the first phase of *initial responses and writing of synopsis* the students mainly use talk and sketching to co-construct and negotiate what the poem is about and how this can be reshaped into sketched images and, possibly, photographs. Following this, the students are to summarise their interpretations in writing in a short synopsis for the digital video.

In the next phase, the *making of a storyboard*, the students use pictorial representation by sketching and the special affordances of the storyboard as a form. Although this phase also includes the temporal, time-based logic that prevails in talk and writing, it principally brings out a spatial-based logic of sketching and pictorial representation. In the following phase, *filming*, a considerable amount of semiotic resources come into play: the use of camera with the possibility of recording moving images, including sound, the surrounding setting, actors, and lightning. The semiotic resources

available for meaning-making are further expanded in the final *editing* phase when the students organise the digital video into a coherent “text” by sequencing clips, using sound and visual effects, and applying possible elements that the editing tool offers. This transmediation process from poem to digital video with a multiplicity of different modes and mediums and a large set of available semiotic resources for meaning-making, encourages and urges negotiation. There is a continuous negotiation – and re-negotiation – of both the poem and the digital video from the beginning of the first responses to the final editing.

### Initial responses and writing of synopsis

The first phase, *initial responses and writing of synopsis*, is characterised by the students’ use of symbols through sketched images to represent and negotiate their interpretation of the poem. As presented earlier, the sketching requests and provides negotiation as the students communicate their thoughts through their symbolic representation, respond to each other’s visual representations, and thus juxtapose or confirm them in relation to their own thoughts; a process of negotiating their interpretations. The sketching functions as a means to communicate and negotiate, rather than to present a fully settled idea, and prompts the students to represent ideas symbolically (see Section 5.1.1 for an elaboration on this issue). The visual representation, the actual sketching, has a central role in negotiating the thematic interpretation of the poem. In sketching, the students need to articulate, negotiate, and reshape their thoughts. They even encourage and request each other to substantiate their ideas by sketching as a way of communicating their ideas.

### Making the storyboard

In the second phase, *making the storyboard*, the students’ process can be roughly divided into two different parts: part one, as a continuation of the earlier phase of sketching; and part two, when

they realise and acknowledge that they will work with moving images and act in the digital video themselves. In the previous phase, the students have discussed and negotiated the poem mainly with the support of sketching. The summarising of this process is shaped in the writing of a synopsis. In the following phase, the making of a storyboard, the issues the students have been discussing are to be summarised in yet another format, with yet other semiotic resources. Although the students have sketched during their earlier discussions – and this sketching has supported and challenged them in their negotiation of the poem – it is at this stage that they are definitively confronted with and requested to use images to represent their thoughts. The form and function of a storyboard offers other affordances than the students have worked with so far. Storyboard drawings, with writing as a supportive mode, are used to represent moving images that will be realised on screen. The format of the storyboard is thus highly visual.

The first part of the storyboard phase resembles the earlier phase when the students used sketching to co-construct and negotiate the poem. The process is still a multifaceted one where levels of discourse and design are closely connected; what the students want to bring forth also includes features of how to represent it. But this phase does, however, include the level of production much more noticeably than the earlier phase. Consequently, the students' discussions at this stage concern to a great extent the modal and medial affordances of the modes and mediums in use. Work related to the level of production is, just as on the level of design, connected to *how* to represent the issues at play, but the level of production refers to the actual articulation and shaping with the material resources. This far into the process the students are planning on photographing their own-sketched images, which they plan to edit digitally into a filmic representation. In the excerpt below (Excerpt 6) issues on the level of production in relation to image production is prominent.

*Excerpt 6.*

- 1 Casper: How are we to tell that the parents are the sword? Should  
2 we have speech bubble coming from the sword (0.5)  
3 "Clean your room" (*everyone laughs*) (2.0) "Did you do  
4 your homework?"  
5 Catrin: But hey, this is then like (4.0) this is when she dares to  
6 come out. Like this. (*points at her sketches*)  
7 Casper: That is good.  
8 Catrin: This is a plant, it is not a chair but it is like a plant.  
9 Linda: But how about showing that she would open up (0.5) well  
10 like she is opening up  
11 Catrin: We could ...  
12 Casper: That is like one of those cartoons.  
13 Catrin: Well we could have  
14 Linda: ( ) she comes out of a flower, I don't know.

(Lesson 1: 0:57.15–0:57.40)

The level of production is visible in the students' comments on actual semiotic work on how to represent their symbolic interpretation of sword and shield as parents' conflicting and contradicting role as both protecting and fighting the poetic voice in the format of storyboard. Casper acknowledges this by suggesting, although somewhat wittily, the use of speech bubbles, referring to typical parental comments such as cleaning one's room and doing one's homework (lines 1–4). But the level of production is also visible in Excerpt 8 (see below) on the requests of the storyboard format, and the actual physical requests and demands of the storyboard. Thus, the affordances of the modes and semiotic resources, as well as the medium, offer the students possibilities to discuss and negotiate the poem and, as a result, the modal affordances encourage and urge negotiation. Yet the issues the students want to bring forward are not always easy to represent in certain modes and with certain mediums; the mode and medium both enable and constrain. The excerpt below (Excerpt 7) also exemplifies this matter as the students struggle with the representation of homosexuality in images, as well as the issue of a neutral-gender poetic voice – levels of discourse, design, and

production that are difficult to match using the available modes and semiotic resources of a particular medium.

*Excerpt 7.*

- 1        Catrin:        Well I would like (0.5) but everyone would shout and  
2                        scream if I would put forward my ideas, or my  
3                        interpretation  
4        Linda:        Well!  
5        Philip:        She throws away the weapons.  
6        Catrin:        But then I would like to have her completely naked, like  
7                        well (0.5) well like weaponless  
8        Linda:        So without clothes.  
9        Casper:        Then it has to have to have a gender.  
10       Catrin:        Yeah, then it has to have a gender. But we don't need to do  
11                        it this way because everyone [will be  
12        Linda:        [But can't there be two (0.5) uhm if it would be, then then  
13                        she shows that she is homosexual. If there were two?  
14        Casper:        Yeah, like a reflection in the mirror where one is a woman  
15                        and the other a man (2.0)  
16        Linda:        But if she is, it is homosexual?  
17        Casper:        Well, well, they hold each other's hands (0.5) but it is like  
18                        the same person (2.0) No.  
19        Catrin:        But we should somehow express this clearer (1.0) uhm...  
(Lesson 1: 0:59.27-1:00.30)

When the art teacher introduces the concept of a storyboard, the students comment on a central aspect of the format: the sequencing of the frames (see Excerpt 8). The sequencing of frames resembles the act of writing a synopsis regarding temporal dimensions; something is expressed before something else. Meaning is therefore attached to the organisation of first, second, third – and last, just as in the mode of written text.

*Excerpt 8.*

- 1 Linda: But then we need several pictures.  
2 Catrin: Yeah (1.5) this could be the first picture then (0.5) and the  
3 tree or whatever it doesn't have to be included. ((*Pointing*  
4 *at the sketches*)).  
5 Linda: Yes, but (3.0) is this (2.0) like (5.0) this is difficult.  
6 Catrin: There can be a nice (1.0) whip (2.0) beautifully like this.  
7 And then it lies on the ground. This is the first picture and  
8 then here is the person. Like this.  
9 (13.0)  
10 Linda: Yeah so this is the first picture and this is the second  
11 ((*points at the sketches*))  
12 Catrin: Hm, but this one we can skip.

(Lesson 1: 0:34.25–0:35:37)

The storyboard format offers semiotic resources for representation, visual, such as shot types, camera movement, and camera angles; audio such as dialogue, sound effects, and music; and textual such as written text, colour, and typography. Audio resources are to some extent addressed by the students, such as suitable background music and suggestions to include the poem as a voice-over. They do not, however, make use of the format with the typical storyboard framing. The students are handed a blank paper, not a standard storyboard template with frames and lines. Instead, they try to arrange the images they have already sketched, and continue sketching on a paper what to photograph. At this stage the students do not even know that they are to use moving images; they are still planning on using photographs set together to form a filmic representation of still images.

This far into the process, the students have mainly explored the poem by sketching pictorial images, with the exception of some comments on the sequencing of the pictorial representations and on adding music and voice-over – up until now. At the beginning of the second lesson the art teacher challenges them to think of representing the issues they want to bring forward using moving images. The medium



of the film camera and the modes and semiotic resources of the kineikonic mode request other ways of representation. This requires the students to once again work with issues on the level of design and production, on how to represent the discursive aspects they want to address. In other words, they once again need to attend to the modal and medial affordances of the moving image and the digital video camera, and the use of other semiotic resources to represent their ideas.

### Filming and editing

In the filming phase a considerable number of semiotic resources come into play: the ability of the digital video camera to record moving image and sound gives topical interest to such matters as the surrounding setting, performative elements, and audio. Also, the affordances of camera angles and camera movement become apparent. Considering the storyboard being as a blueprint for the actual video, it is remarkable that the students do not use it during the filming at all. For them, the role of the storyboarding was something other than to function as of a blueprint for the digital video.

The students were unwilling to work with moving images, and the art teacher urged them on several occasions during the second lesson to start thinking about how to represent using the video camera and the moving image. The students had trouble transforming their ideas to moving images. The art teacher demonstrated different ways of showing the changing of the seasons through digital images, or how to use other image elements instead of a burning fire to address the issues the students wanted to bring forth. The students were not convinced, but were at the same time struggling with the idea of photographing their own sketched images. Issues on the level of production, the actual work with the semiotic resources of moving images, were holding them back, and they were not proceeding in their work. The modal and material opportunities afforded by of

moving images were at this stage constraining rather than encouraging.

A breakthrough for the students in using the moving image and the video camera to represent their interpretation of the poem occurred when they came up with a storyline that fitted the mode of the moving image. In the excerpt below (Excerpt 9), the students have just recently found a way to meet the discourse on the level of design. The discursive issues, their thematic interpretation of showing one's true self, is designed as a storyline about a person who belongs to a group that does not support their true self; their sexual orientation. The person therefore decides to "break free", as the students say, and realises that one has to be true to oneself. The issues on a discursive level are crucial for the students, and they struggle to find the most suitable way of representing these issues. They do not abandon their thematic interpretation because of the challenges and demands of the modes and mediums in use, but acknowledge the need to adjust issues on the level of design and production to answer the issues at play according to the modal and material affordances of the kineikonic mode.

*Excerpt 9.*

- |    |         |  |
|----|---------|--|
| 1  | Catrin: | Hm, so, she is like (2.0) with a group but she can't, she, one |
| 2  |         | cannot be homosexual, that is like bad and therefore she is    |
| 3  |         | confined because it is like, well (1.0) uhm what have we       |
| 4  |         | (4.0)  |
| 5  | Linda:  | Here, here the fire is people.                                 |
| 6  | Catrin: | Yes they have given to understand that is bad to be            |
| 7  |         | homosexual and that one is stupid then (12.0) uhm, then        |
| 8  |         | (3.0) she can like break free (3.0) and then she can like      |
| 9  |         | (4.0)  |
| 10 |         | like (3.0) somehow realising that one has to be the way        |
| 11 |         | you are (4.0)  |
| 12 | Casper: | That is when she throws away the weapons.                      |
| 13 | Catrin: | Mm (7.0)   |
| 14 | Linda:  | Is it, can't she just like leave the group?                    |

15      Catrin:      Yeah, she can (2.0) but how do we do that in one picture?  
16                          (12.0)  
17      Linda:      I don't know  
18                          (45.0)  
19      Catrin:      How do we do the last picture?  
20      Casper:      Well she gets a friend.  
21      Catrin:      Yeah.  
22      Casper:      And they do something together.  
23      Catrin:      So they, so she (1.0) hey hey hey we ignore this picture and  
24                          then she sits like all alone  
25      Casper:      Could they also sit at the same table in the dining hall.  
26      Catrin:      Wait wait, may I present my idea (0.5) here she's sitting  
27                          alone crying, this is like the second picture, and then  
28                          someone approaches (12.0) someone who says that she  
29                          can be exactly what she likes and that then represents this  
30                          ( ) (1.0) and then they can sit together in the swing.  
(Lesson 3: 0:09.14–0:12.29)

The excerpt above (Excerpt 9) illustrates the modal and material affordances of the different modes by demonstrating how the students find other means to express the issue of exclusion. Previously, when sketching, the students have represented exclusion by a person surrounded by fire and a fog representing death (see Figure 3). But because of the difficulties of showing this with moving images, the students changed the representation of exclusion to a group of people surrounding the person, and compare the group of people with the symbol of fire (lines 1–5). This is an example of the semiotic principle, where different modes have different semiotic resources for producing meaning, in this case the notion of exclusion. Again, both medium and mode enable and constrain. However, while the different modes and mediums do not make the representation of their interpretation of the poem easier for these students, the modal and material affordances encourage and urge negotiation of the poetic text by challenging the students' thoughts of representation.



*Figure 3. Students' sketched symbolical representation of exclusion.*

The use of moving images challenges the students to create a new storyline for their interpretation of the poem. Again their ideas are reshaped, and the use of moving images also calls for a dramaturgy. In the excerpt above (Excerpt 9), the students develop a dramaturgy of the story in just a few minutes: problem, action, solution, and denouement. Instantly, issues on the level of production and modal affordances are prominent yet again. As mentioned earlier, the students' intention of sketching and photographing their sketches never evolved; they did not proceed with the actual production of the digital video. They always returned to the question: "How shall we do this, shall we sketch it?" but could not find a proper form for this to go further using the camera. When the students, ultimately, acknowledge using moving images, issues of modal affordances are again prominent.

*Excerpt 10.*

- 1        Catrin:     Hm okay, this is like (0.5) peer pressure, this fellow (0.5)  
2                    here is also a fellow (2.0) people I mean (4.0) and then this  
3                    poor character that doesn't dare to show, that wants to  
4                    show but doesn't dare to because then she is excluded and  
5                    frozen out and everything (2.0)  
6        Linda:     Mm but we don't have this many people  
7        Catrin:     But we can borrow, then, and that may symbolise that first  
8                    picture.  
9        Linda:     But this one has to somehow shine.  
10       Catrin:     Shine?  
11       Linda:     Yeah, or like (0.5) that it's not part of the crowd.  
12       Catrin:     Yes (0.5) but we can make all the others like monochrome  
13                    and then this fellow is in colour.  
14       Casper:     But couldn't we take the picture in school like that  
15                    everyone stands there and are really like dead serious  
16       Catrin:     Like glare at the person  
17       Casper:     Yes in school ( ) or something. It might be tricky but ...  
(Lesson 3: 0:07.52-0:08.44)

The excerpt above (Excerpt 10) illustrates how several issues on the level of production are elaborated. They bring out the setting of the story by locating the storyline to a school environment (lines 14–17), and they bring out the positioning and acting of the represented participants (lines 1–5 and 14–17). The students also elaborate on their wish to somehow distinguishing the exposed person from the crowd, which prompts several suggestions from the students. Lina brings up this issue by commenting that the person should shine (line 9), which Catrin follows up by suggesting the use of colour in contrast to monochrome (lines 12–13). Casper suggests distinguishing the exposed person through the acting of the participants (lines 14–17). They all address the issue with different suggestions on the production level; how, through actual semiotic work, to represent exclusion and rejection. All three suggestions are examples of how the students deal with salience; how attention is drawn to or realised by the use of colour, digital image processing, or

the acting of the represented participants. Ultimately, it is also an illustration of how modal and material affordances encourage and urge negotiation.

The students return to this matter a couple of minutes later, in a discussion with the art teacher. The students would like to digitally process the image by use of colour in contrast to monochrome, but the teacher guides them to solve the matter by other means, since they do not have access to that kind of digital image processing. The students suggest different clothing for the exposed person, but in the filming phase they go with Casper's earlier suggestion: the acting of the represented participants. This, again, is an example of how the students deal with the semiotic principle, how different modes have different resources to represent the same issue. And it is certainly, again, an example of how the modal and material affordances encourage and urge negotiation.

The available semiotic resources for meaning-making are further expanded in the final *editing* phase when the students organise the digital video into a coherent text by sequencing clips, using sound and visual effects, and applying possible elements that the editing tool offers. The students' working process during both filming and editing is characterised by finding their way as they are filming and editing by testing different settings, locations, and camera angles, as well as trying different sound and visual effects, sequencing clips, and testing different transitions, and is an essential finding of the analysis. Without dismissing the importance of the earlier phases of the process, the actual meaning potential of the video camera and editing tool is most apparent, understandably, when at hand. This will be further explored in Section 5.1.3.

#### A continuous matter of negotiation: the poetic voice

The presentation of the findings above demonstrates how the affordances of the various semiotic resources available during the different phases continuously encourage and urge negotiation. Throughout the whole process one particular issue was continuously

a matter of negotiation among the students: the gender of the poetic voice and the representation of the poetic voice through different modes and mediums. The analysis reveals how the process of transmediating from poem to digital video continuously encourages and urges these negotiations by challenging the students' thoughts of representation throughout the videomaking process. The process of transmediating the poem to video enabled opportunities – and need – for negotiating the poetic voice.

During the first phase, where the students are discussing the poem and also sketching some initial responses, they mention the gender of the poetic voice.

*Excerpt 11.*

- |   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | Linda:  | So, <u>she</u> slash <u>he</u> wants to crawl out into to world being |
| 2 |         | one's true self.  |
| 3 | Catrin: | Coming out of the closet.   |
| 4 | Linda:  | Exactly.  |
| 5 | Catrin: | Yes that might be ...   |
| 6 | Linda:  | Show one self, show its true self.                                    |
| 7 | Catrin: | There we have it! Really.   |
| 8 | Linda:  | Great!  |

(Lesson 1: 0:27.11–0:27.30)

Linda opens up for a negotiation of the gender of the poetic voice (Excerpt 11, lines 1–2) and follows up by talking of “it” (line 6). A few minutes later the students are explaining their initial ideas to the L1 teacher and once again the gender of the poetic voice is brought up. Again, Linda opens up the possibility of negotiating the gender of the poetic voice, and this time she gets support from both Philip and Casper, who are both using “it”. Later on, during the same lesson, the students go to the next phase, summing up their idea in the writing of a synopsis. Now Casper initiates the gender of the poetic voice and is interested in deciding whether it is a she or he.

*Excerpt 12.*

- 1 Casper: Then about the person, is the person a he or she? Is the  
2 person a he or she?  
3 Linda: It's a she.  
4 Philip: He.  
5 Linda: She, I'd say.  
6 Casper: It's an it. It has no sex.  
7 Philip: An it.  
8 Catrin: Hm, let me see ((*turns to the poem*)) Based on this, how  
9 this person is reasoning I'd say that it's a woman. But it  
10 doesn't have to be.  
11 Philip: Let me explain. Okay, it's a soldier at war. He is tired of  
12 explaining to people and therefore ...  
13 Casper: It can be a female soldier who has dressed like a man and  
14 therefore wants to drop the weapons and prove that she's  
15 a woman.  
16 Linda: So, a transvestite.  
17 Casper: Not necessarily.  
18 Catrin: I see it as simply a human being.  
19 Linda: I see it as a woman.  
20 Casper: Or then it is a female policewoman who is a soldier of the  
21 daily life.

(Lesson 1: 0:39.04 – 0:40.01)

Clearly, the students have different opinions on the gender of the poetic voice. Once again the issue of a neuter gender is raised, and Catrin is referring to a human being and to not deciding the gender of the poetic voice or the person their story is about (line 18). Her comment illustrates how, in the mode of written text, it is possible not to decide. During their initial responses to the poem and the writing of synopsis, using spoken and written language with the support of sketching, the students are able to use a neuter pronoun such as *it* and the term *human being*. The discussions show that they are intrigued by the issue and see a possibility of not determining a gender for the poetic self, discussing the idea of representing it as “simply a human being”.



When the students are faced with making a storyboard, they are once again impelled to deal with this issue. In making the storyboard the ideas that the students have discussed are now being transferred to a pictorial language. As demonstrated earlier (see earlier in the Section 5.1.2), even though the students have sketched during their initial responses, it is at this phase, the making of the storyboard, that they are definitely confronted with using images to represent their thoughts. This again brings forth the representation of the poetic voice. In the excerpt below (Excerpt 13), the students suggest representing a neuter gender for the poetic voice by depicting it without a face.

*Excerpt 13.*

- 1        Catrin:        Well, I think we have such a good storyboard and  
2                            everything, but we won't get it realised.  
3        Linda:        But we just sketch it. It will take quite a long time. And I  
4                            can't sketch.  
5        Philip:        It's just to get started.  
6        Casper:        But I think... This is not impossible. We will get this quite  
7                            simply, but I'm just wondering what this character should  
8                            look like, the face I mean?  
9        Catrin:        I'd say no face.  
10       Philip:        No face.  
11       Casper:        No face!? Okay, that sounds just great.  
12       Linda:        Ha ha ha ...  
13       Catrin:        It can be anyone; it doesn't have to have a face.

(Lesson 2: 0:00.11 – 0:00.44)

The mode of the sketched image enables the students to represent a gender-neutral person. However, Casper is not satisfied with leaving the matter open and raises it in discussion on several occasions. Catrin insists on her view that it does not matter what gender they ascribe to the poetic voice; she wants to keep it open and gender-neutral. During the storyboarding phase the students are confronted with the issue of the gender of the poetic voice on several occasions,

and are continuously negotiating how to interpret and represent it. However, their storyline involving homosexuality calls for a decision on whether it is a girl or a boy, and the students seem to consider the poetic voice more female. After a comment that the author of the poem is female, they finally settle on a female poetic voice and a female main character for their video.

At this stage the students are planning to photograph their sketched images, which they intend to edit digitally into a video of still images. As presented earlier (see earlier parts of Section 5.1.2), the teacher challenges the students to think of representing the issues they want to bring forward using moving images; the medium of the film camera and the mode of the moving image request other means of representation. With the students now being challenged to represent their ideas in moving images and to act in the digital video themselves, the issue of the poetic voice emerges once again. Even though the students have agreed on a female character, they are still intrigued to keep the issue of the gender of the poetic voice and the character open (see Excerpt 14 below). The students realise they need to make a decision on the gender of the poetic voice in their digital video, but they also emphasise the possibility of interpreting the issue otherwise.

*Excerpt 14.*

- |   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | Catrin: | Well, uhm, the person is (2.0) okay the person is                     |
| 2 |         | homosexual and like may not, or can not show who she                  |
| 3 |         | really is, or <u>he</u> and (1.0) well (1.0) and then she breaks free |
| 4 |         | anyway, or he (1.0) and (1.0) dares to show who she is.               |
| 5 | TOMAS:  | Hm  |
| 6 | Catrin: | Or he. (2.0) But we have here made it to a she.                       |
| 7 | TOMAS:  | Yes   |
| 8 | Linda:  | In both the film and the drawing.                                     |

(Lesson 5: 0:51.37–0:52.11 (Lesson 5(2))

From these examples it is noticeable how the students are continuously negotiating the gender of the poetic voice during the

process and how this negotiation is connected to the different modes and mediums in use. During their initial discussions and the writing of the synopsis, using spoken and written language with the support of sketching, the students are able to use the neuter pronoun *it* and the term *human being*. The negotiations show that they are intrigued by the issue see a possibility of not determining a gender for the poetic self, putting forth the idea of representing it as “simply a human being”. In the modes of spoken and written language they have the possibility of leaving the matter open; they do not have to decide, but they can raise and discuss the issue. When the students are confronted with visualising this in a storyboard, they are once again impelled to deal with this issue. At this point they suggest representing a neuter poetic voice, and propose drawing a person with no face. They have the option of representing a gender-neutral poetic voice or character. Finally, when the students are requested to use the kineikonic mode and the medium of the film camera, the representation of a neuter gender becomes much more challenging. Also, their thematic interpretation involving homosexuality requires a decision on whether it is a girl or a boy. The medium and mode both enable and constrain. Still, they are intrigued by the issue. Although the different modes and mediums, especially the use of moving images, did not make the representation of a neuter gender easier for these students, the process encouraged and urged negotiations of the poetic text by challenging the students’ thoughts of representation.

### 5.1.3 Semiotic tools impelling and expanding negotiation

The students’ videomaking was highly explorative overall. This is noticeable throughout the whole process, but particularly during the filming and editing phases. An essential finding is how these two phases are characterised by the students finding their way as they are filming and editing by testing different settings, locations, and camera angles, as well as experimenting with different sound and visual effects, sequencing of clips, and transitions. The explorative approach both enables and challenges the students to representational solutions that they necessarily did not necessarily think of beforehand; the film

camera and the editing software offer semiotic resources that the students could not imagine.

The students' working process during the filming phase is characterised by testing different settings, locations, and to some extent, camera angles. The work is mainly focused on the productional level, the actual physical work with the material resources. Firstly, they set out to film the first scene of their digital video. That is the scene where the main character is surrounded by a group of people as she reveals her true self, in this case her sexual orientation. The students begin by searching for a suitable location and setting for the filming of the scene. They try out two different locations, but none of them fit since they do not allow the students to film the scene from a higher angle. That is the criterion for the students; they want to film at a location that enables them to shoot with a high angle view and at a certain distance so that the placement of the represented participants is clearly visible. The use of high angle is often associated with power relations (see Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Iedema, 2001a; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), but the students do not seem to make a reference to power; their reflections on using a high angle are more concerned with how to make the acting of the group visible.

The students are filming five takes of the same shot. Between the takes they view the material and reflect on what succeeded as planned and what could be done differently. The digital video camera as a tool offers the students the possibility to move between the roles of producers and viewers during filming, which is of significance to their designing process. This is noticeable in the way the students view the filmed material and adjust and refine their intentions and filming between takes.

The students' discussions between shots are particularly concerned with the acting. The excerpt below (Excerpt 15) is an example of how they comment on the use of body language and gaze as a way of communicating the content. The students are using body language to communicate the vulnerable position of the main character by making her look small and miserable, as well as the reactions of the

dominant group by having them cross their arms and glower spitefully at the main character.

*Excerpt 15.*

- 1        Catrin:        What should I do?  
2        Linda:        You just look small and pitiful.  
3        Student:        And we just stare at you (1.0) or?  
4        Linda:        Okay, this is good, okay listen up  
5        Catrin:        Let us know when you start.  
6        Student:        So how should we behave that are surrounding, should we  
7                                just stare or should...  
8        Philip:        Like this (*folds his arms over his chest*)  
9        Catrin:        You don't like me.  
10       Student:        A bitchy look  
11       Linda:        Okay, now I start

(Lesson 3: 0:38.54–0:39.12 (Lesson 3(4)))

Between takes, as the students view the material, they call for “bigger reactions” from the participants. Linda, who at this point is handling the camera, calls for bodily reactions as well as facial reactions, since the latter are not as noticeable when filming at a distance. They use performative elements, instead of, for example, dialogue, to depict how the main character is revealing her secret by turning around to face the crowd; and by depicting the reactions of the crowd, who flinch backwards, form a closed group and whisper to represent exclusion and rejection. Although the students at this point are mostly engaged in image production on a representational level, especially the performative elements, they are at some point referring to the interactive function of zooming and close-up shot as a way of indicating important details and social intimacy. This, however, is just mentioned and not followed up by the students, but shows an awareness of camera movement and camera angle as potential communicative and meaning-making resources.

Understandably, the actual recording makes the setting and location apparent. Although there was some discussion of the video's setting

and location during the earlier phases, the suggestions and ideas were not brought to any conclusion. Just as they were about to record the first scene, the students walked around the school to find a suitable setting and location for recording the second scene. As with the first scene, the students filmed five takes of the same shot for the second. However, this time they did not view the recorded material between takes. They seem to have a clear vision of how to realise the scene, and the reason why they filmed five different takes was mainly because they could not restrain themselves from laughing and giggling. Again, the discussions particularly concerned the performative elements through the body language and acting of the participants.

The third and final scene came together as they filmed. During the phases prior to filming, the students had discussed the denouement of their storyline, and suggested situations where the persons are sitting together in a tree, as in the drawing presented earlier (see Figure 2), or on a swing. But just as they were about to film the last scene, they instead developed the idea of the two girls taking each other's hands and running off together. This highlights the significance of actually using the medium, in this case the video camera, not only planning for and imaging filming, as they had been earlier. The actual meaning potential of the video camera is most apparent, understandably, when at hand. It also highlights the significance of the process as explorative and not ready-made, although the planning for filming is an important and significant part of the process.

As in the filming of the two previous scenes, the performative elements were prominent during the shooting of the last scene. However, the students were now attending the interactive level to a greater extent than during the filming of the two previous scenes, testing different angles and solutions to performative elements. Interestingly, the students at this point started to reflect on the editing by discussing how to cut the clips, adding effects such as slow motion and the sound of heartbeat. Such discussions on editing were not noticeable during filming of the earlier scenes.

As demonstrated above, the work during the filming phase is highly explorative. However, during the filming phase the students often had an idea that they wanted to try out, and this led them to solutions or perspectives they had not thought of before. During the editing phase, however, the students were mostly testing and exploring the editing program, at the same time incorporating sounds, effects, and transitions that they found interesting. Not much of the editing work had been discussed earlier. Consequently, what is distinctive during the editing phase is how the students tested and explored different elements in their editing work. The explorative approach both enabled and challenged the students to communicative and representational solutions they had not necessarily thought of beforehand; the editing software offers semiotic resources that the students could not imagine. It is noteworthy that the teacher was most probably aware of the pedagogical potential of exploring, since immediately after giving some basic instructions about the editing programme, he said: “Now you may test your way forward.”

The students’ work during the editing phase is characterised by three main matters: the matching of the voice-over to the visual material; their use of sound effects to establish tone and mood, as well as social meaning and narrative effect; and their work with the “failed scenes”. The students transferred the recorded material from the digital camera to the computer under guidance from the teacher. They worked with the application iMovie on a stationary Macintosh computer. The programme offers basic functions that allow the user to edit a video quite easily, and does not demand expertise in editing. It enables users to cut and adjust the recorded material; to arrange clips in the order they prefer; to add text and sound elements; and to add different transitions between clips. Thus the editing phase affords even more choices of semiotic resources for meaning-making, representation and communication, a “multimodal mixing-desk” (Burn & Parker, 2003, p. 23) that offers different modes and semiotic resources separately in the interface of the programme.

The matching of the voice-over to the visual is the part of editing that took up most of the students’ time and effort. The students were meticulous about the pace and rhythm of the edits in order to match

the reading of the poem, matching the voice-over with the visual. They tested different alternatives, and Casper re-read the poem aloud several times to sync the stanzas with the different scenes to get the accentuation the way they wanted, as well as to achieve the right sound quality on the recording of the reading. They also adjusted the length of the clips to match the reading of the poem.

The second main matter that engaged the students was the use of sound effects. Going through the sound effects offered by iMovie, they found the ringing of church bells. Catrin ascribed meaning potential to this effect in relation to their interpretation of the poem by commenting: "We are getting married". This was followed up later in the same lesson when the students were working on the "failed scenes". In the excerpt below (Excerpt 13), Casper suggests the use of the church bells as the students choose between the "failed" shots from the third scene.

*Excerpt 16.*

- 1       Catrin:     We should circle her, Casper's sister. How does one do  
2                   that?  
3       Linda:     But first we make "boing" on all of these, it is very funny if  
4                   we have like "boing", " boing"  
5       Casper:    I think, I think that we should have the church bells  
6       Linda:     "Tam tam tam tam"  
7       Catrin:    Yeah, that would also work (1.0) but I think that it's too,  
8                   it's too  
9       Casper:    They happily run out of church.  
10      Catrin:    But it's the same thing twice over if we have "boing" on all  
11                 of them.  
12      Linda:     Okay.  
13      Casper:    We put the church bells on one of them.  
14      Catrin:    Mmhm  
15      Casper:    Then it looks like they are running out of church  
16      Catrin:    Yeah.  
17      Casper:    Newly and happily married.

(Lesson 5: 0:12:08-0:12:36.0 (Lesson 5(1))



The sound effect used in the first scene is also a result of the students testing different elements. When Casper hears the intimidating and threatening sound he instantly relates to the first scene portraying the rise of action. The students' comments on the sound effects and how they refer to using them show the students' awareness of how auditory elements can establish tone and mood. But their comments on marriage in the excerpt above (Excerpt 16), and furthermore a church marriage, and their use of the sound of church bells in their digital video, is also an example of their awareness of how sound effects and music offer narrative elements and carry particular social meanings.

The third main matter that engaged the students was the part of the video they referred to as "failed scenes". Already at the beginning of the editing phase, when the students were transferring the recorded material from the video camera to the computer, Linda suggested that they could use the unsuccessful shots in a section of deleted scenes. But the clips of "failed scenes" were not chosen or placed unintentionally; rather the students were conscious in their choice and sequencing of the failed clips, adjusting their length to establish a section of "failed scenes". As illustrated above by the use of the sound effect of church bells, sound effects are also central to the editing of the "failed scenes". This shows that the "failed scenes" are a central part of the students' digital video, not just supplementary or subsidiary.

To conclude their video, the students chose to express their acknowledgement. This takes the form of a coda with the text, *Thanks to Karin Boye (who was homosexual)* complemented by the sound effect of applause and cheers. In the discussion during the making of this coda, the students mainly viewed the comment as a reference to their interpretation of the poem being about the struggle of a homosexual person in revealing their sexual orientation. They did not actually discuss the sexual orientation of the author, although they clearly believed it to be central. This, and their discussions in general during the working process, indicates that they were more engaged in a thematic reading of the poem than a biographical reading of it. They also realised that the viewer of their video might not necessarily

interpret their video as being about a homosexual, and wished with this concluding comment to make this clear. Nevertheless, the acknowledgment in the coda is not only an element to understand the narrative thread or storyline of their video; it is also a clear standpoint on an issue of topical interest and engagement for the students. This is noticeable in the students' discussions throughout the process, in the storyline of their video, and in the sound effects of applause and cheers that conclude the video (which will be further elaborated in Section 5.2).

#### 5.1.4 Résumé of the videomaking process

The analytical approach used for “tracing” the videomaking process focused on what characterised the students' work with negotiating and representing the poem by applying the strata of text production. By recognising interpretation as a meaning-making process that is highly contingent on the circumstances, people, and semiotic resources available at that particular moment, it follows the understanding that interpretation of the poetic text is *performed* in line with the available resources. In the following, I will briefly revisit and summarise the findings of the analysis of the students' transmediation process in order to answer the first research question of the study:

*What characterises the students' transmediation process regarding their use of semiotic resources as a means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem?*

The analysis demonstrates how the intertwining of the levels of text production encompasses negotiation; *what* to represent is closely and continuously connected to *how*. The results of this study demonstrate that what characterises the students' transmediation process regarding their use of semiotic resources as means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem can be understood as a multifaceted process that continuously requests, encourages, and urges negotiation through three interrelated dimensions:

- (a) symbolic responses requesting and providing negotiation;
- (b) modal affordances encouraging and urging negotiation; and
- (c) semiotic tools impelling and expanding negotiation.

The analyses illuminate how the different dimensions both enable and challenge the students in their interpretive and representational work. The process of transmediating poetry to digital video is thus not always a straightforward walk facilitated by a multiplicity of available semiotic resources. However, the resistances and potentials are what offer and accommodate spaces for negotiation; negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources.

### *Symbolic responses requesting and providing negotiation*

The students represent their interpretations symbolically using pictorial images both as a way of co-constructing and to communicate their understanding of the poem, which continuously challenges them to negotiate their interpretation of it. The sketching requests, and provides, negotiation as the students communicate their thoughts through their symbolic representation and respond to each other's visual representations, and thus juxtapose or confirm them in relation to their own thoughts; a process of negotiating their interpretations. The sketching functions as a means to communicate and negotiate, not to present a fully settled idea, and the sketching prompts the students to represent symbolically. By examining and testing different symbols and metaphors that best express the issues they wish to bring forth, the students are working on the levels of discourse, design, and production intertwinedly.

As the students made their collaborative sketches, they worked tentatively, pondered, revised, and revisited the poem. In these situations, their focus was not on the sketches as products, but as means for negotiating responses and interpretations. The analysis illustrates how the students' sketching of symbolic representations featured socially negotiated literary interpretations, visual symbols

were reviewed and expounded upon, and visual revisions were justified both by turning to the literary text and their joint understanding, as well as to the semiotic resources available and in use.

While the students' work with symbolic responses was most prominent in the earlier phases of the transmediation process, it was noticeable throughout the process. The students revisited and renegotiated the symbols according to the semiotic resources available, as demonstrated in the analysis of their different means for representing exclusion in pictorial and moving images (see Section 5.1.2). In fact, the digital video as such might be considered as a symbolic representation of the students' interpretation of the poem.

### ***Modal affordances encouraging and urging negotiation***

The findings substantiate how the different phases of the videomaking process are characterised by different modes and mediums, and a large set of available semiotic resources for meaning-making. This is not remarkable as such, but what is an essential finding is how this process, incorporating a great variety of semiotic resources, leads to a continuous negotiation of both the poem and the representation of the poem among the students. The findings demonstrates how the different phases of the videomaking process leads to a continuous negotiation of both the poem and the digital video, and how this continuous negotiation is connected to the different semiotic resources in use. The transmediation process from poem to digital video encourages and urges negotiation from the beginning of the first responses to the final editing features, and is connected to the semiotic resources in play.

In the two first phases of the videomaking process, *initial responses and writing of synopsis* and *making of the storyboard*, the negotiation is particularly noticeable in the students' work on symbolically representing their interpretation of the poem in pictorial images. The students are representing their interpretations symbolically using pictorial images as a way of both co-constructing and communicating

their reading of the poem, which continuously challenges them to negotiate their interpretation of the poem. These two phases also demonstrate the shift from using a time-based logic for expressing thought through talk and writing (as in the synopsis), to a spatial-based logic of sketching and pictorial representation (in storyboard frames). First, the students are to summarise their interpretations in writing a short synopsis for the digital video. In the next phase, the *making of the storyboard*, the students use pictorial representation through sketching. In the following phase, *filming*, a considerable number of semiotic resources are included: the use of video camera enables the possibility to record moving image, still images, and sound with the surrounding setting, actors, and lightning. The available semiotic resources for meaning-making are further expanded in the final *editing* phase when the students organise the digital video into a coherent text by sequencing clips, using sound and visual effects, and applying the narrative voice. Thus, there is a continuous negotiation – and re-negotiation – of both the poem and the ways to represent it from the beginning of the first responses to the final editing features.

How the modal affordances encourage and urge negotiation is particularly noticeable in the analysis of the students' negotiations of the poetic voice. With reference to the analysis of the students' work with representing the poetic voice, it is noticeable how the process of transmediation offers them opportunities to engage in interpretive acts. The analysis illustrates how the students negotiate the gender of the poetic voice continuously during the process and how the different modes and mediums afford and request them to negotiate their views continuously. While the different modes and mediums, especially the use of moving images, did not make the representation of a neutral gender easier for these students, the transmediation process enabled negotiations of the poetic text by challenging their thoughts about representation. Surely, the medium and mode both enable and constrain. The transmediation process from poem to digital video, with a variety of semiotic resources involved, enabled the negotiations that led to an in-depth exploration of the text; the process of transmediation enabled opportunities – and a need – for

negotiating the poetic voice. In this respect, their process was reflective and dialogic, with the students discussing possible ways to depict the poetic voice, negotiating their different views, and constructing a collective representation to further represent their interpretation of the poem.

The same issue is found in the students' work to find means to express the issue of exclusion. At first, when sketching, the students depicted exclusion by a person surrounded by fire, fog, and death (see Figure 3) but faced with difficulties of depicting this with moving images using a video camera, they changed the representation of exclusion to a group of people surrounding the individual, and compare this group to the symbol of fire. This finding is an example of Kress's (2003; 2010) emphasis on the interest and intent of the designer; the agentive role of the designer. It is also an example of the semiotic principle (Jewitt, Bezemer & O'Halloran, 2016, p. 62) where modes have different resources for producing meaning, in this case the notion of exclusion.

### ***Semiotic tools impelling and expanding negotiation***

The students' transmediation process was overall highly explorative; however, the filming and editing work was even more explorative than the previous phases. These phases were characterised by the students finding their way as they were filming and editing by testing different settings, locations, and camera angles, as well as different sound and visual effects, sequencing clips, and different transitions. This explorative approach is connected to the film camera and the editing software program in use. Although the students discussed the setting and location of their filming to some extent during the earlier phases, these suggestions and ideas were not brought to any conclusion. Also, acting elements became prominent in the students' discussions during filming; they used the body language and acting of the participants to narrate the story. What is distinctive during the editing phase is how the students tested and explored different elements the software program, finding sound and visual effects that substantiated or challenged their ideas. The students' work during the

editing phase is characterised by three main matters: the matching of the voice-over with the visual material; their use of sound effects to establish tone and mood, as well as social meaning and narrative effect; and their work with the “failed scenes”.

The explorative approach of the semiotic tools, the film camera and the editing software, both enabled and challenged the students to find representational solutions that they had not necessarily thought of beforehand; the film camera and the editing software offer semiotic resources that the students could not have imagined. This highlights the significance of actually using the medium, not only planning for and imagining filming and editing. The digital video camera as a tool offered the students the possibility to move between the roles of producers and viewers during filming, which was of significance to their designing process (see also Burn et al, 2001; Lindstrand, 2006) and, as demonstrated above, assisted them in adjusting and refining their intentions between takes during filming. Also, it highlights the significance of the process as explorative and not ready-made, in order to be open to a negotiation of the text(s). The findings also call attention to the deliberate and meticulous nature of the students’ use of semiotic resources; it was not arbitrary or random, but carefully thought through and utilised, again encouraging and urging negotiation.

The findings illuminate how the different levels of text production during a videomaking process continuously affect each other; they do not merely precede one another, demonstrating that the videomaking process is a highly complex process with much potential for negotiating the literary text. Thinking not only on what the poem is about, but also on how to transmediate its “meaning(s)” through for example sketched images or a digital video, urges an exploration and negotiation of the text.

## 5.2 Unwrapping the digital video

The presentation of findings of the analysis of the students' digital video is structured around the three metafunctions that served as an analytical lens. The digital video is a highly complex text that works on several levels simultaneously, and by structuring the presentation in line with the different metafunctions the complexity of the digital video can be "unwrapped". However, this means that the presentation of findings must sometimes return to certain issues, which may be perceived as unintentional recurrence. It is not unintentional; I choose to present the findings this way to thoroughly illuminate the analysis, both to provide a detailed account of the students' digital video and to meet the trustworthiness of the study by giving a detailed insight into the process of analysis.

The analysis reveals that the students represent their interpretation of the poem by utilising a multiplicity of modes and semiotic resources in:

- (a) delineating identity exploration by presenting their thematic interpretation of showing one's true self represented by a storyline of a homosexual revealing her sexual orientation.
- (b) the use of frame shots, camera angles, and particularly sound effects, in creating contact, distance, and point of view.
- (c) the narrative structure to establish rhythm and the use of coda and sound effects in creating salience.

### 5.2.1 Delineating identity exploration

On a representational level the analysis focused on what is represented regarding participants, things, and locations through different modes and semiotic resources; in other words, how different modes are used to represent aspects and interpretations of the poem. The persons represented in the digital video are referred to as



*represented participants.* The students develop their thematic interpretation of the poem as showing one's true self by creating a storyline about a homosexual who reveals her sexual orientation. The digital video delineates identity explorations, exemplified as but not limited to, revealing one's sexual orientation.

The video opens with a clip of a black screen on which the white text "I want to meet..." suddenly fades in from left to right. The written text is the title of the poem by Karin Boye that the students are working with. The text remains on the screen for a few seconds before it tones out from left to right. There is no sound on the audio track; total silence. The silence is broken abruptly by the transition to the first scene<sup>35</sup> both by a change in audio and by hard-cut clip. The first scene (see Figure 4 for a screen shot of the scene), which includes both exposition and rise of action, starts with a loud sound that could be characterised as intimidating or threatening, and continues through the whole scene. Shortly after the sound, a male voice starts the recitation of the poem: "*Armed, erect and closed in armour*". Simultaneously with the loud sound the image trace shows, using full shot from a slightly high angle view, a group of six youngsters gathered around a teenage girl. The setting is a staircase in a school environment. The school itself holds meaning potential (see Lindstrand, 2006, p. 83) because it represents a social setting in youth culture where constructions, explorations, and expressions of identities are exposed. Also, the staircase indicates a public and social space or arena within the school environment. The girl is standing with her back to the group, with slightly lowered eyes. The intimidating sound, together with the placement of the youngsters around the girl, implies that the girl in the middle is exposed in some way. The male voice continues: "*forth I came –*" and at the same time the girl turns around to face the group of people surrounding her. The male voice continues: "*but of terror was the mail-coat cast / and*

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<sup>35</sup> I consider this a scene, although by handbook definition it could be considered a shot since it is filmed in one shot. But scene is a more applicable description, because the students have edited the shot, although not the visual material, so it can be considered a scene that establishes location and continuity.

of shame” at the same time as the people in the group flinch backwards as if reacting strongly to something the girl says.

One of the youngsters pulls his hoodie over his head and three others cross their arms; two explicit gestures that signify turning away and dissociating oneself from something. The girl looks at the youngsters for a while, and then turns around and runs off while the group watch her closely. At the same time the male voice continues: “*I want to drop my weapons, / sword and shield. / All that hard hostility / made me cold.*” The combination of these three aspects – the intimidating sound effect, the voice reciting the poem aloud, and the acting of the represented participants – together create a representation of a serious situation marked by disapproval and rejection.



Figure 4. Screen shot of the students’ digital video, scene one.

This way of portraying exclusion, by the disapproval and rejection shown by the girl’s peers, arose when the students recognised that they were to use moving images and would be acting in the video themselves. In the beginning of the videomaking process, they had not yet settled on appearing in the video themselves, but were also considering animation and still pictures as a film format. But in a

discussion with the art teacher, he encouraged them to use moving images and to act in the film. The representation of exclusion, represented above, is achieved by the acting of the youngsters together with the intimidating sound effect and the voice-over reciting particular stanzas from the poem. As presented before (see Section 5.1.2), earlier in the videomaking process the students had represented exclusion by sketching a person surrounded by fire and a fog representing death, but in their digital video, using the available modes and semiotic resources, they expressed this issue by other means.

The image fades to the following scene, scene two, where the setting is somewhat different (see Figure 5 for screen shot of the second scene). The environment is still a school, but now a corridor with lockers in the background, a more withdrawn space than the public arena of the staircase. The frame depicts the girl sitting huddled up on a bench with her head down. The intimidating sound used in the previous scene still plays on the soundtrack, at high volume. The body position of the girl, together with the intimidating sound effect, portrays exposure and vulnerability. Suddenly, the sound effect fades out and another teenage girl approaches the girl on the bench from behind. The newcomer places her arm around the shoulders of the huddled girl, who looks up and smiles. The other girl leans against her as in a gesture like an embrace, and the voice-over recites the poem: *“Mightier than iron / is life’s tenderness, / driven forth from the earth’s heart / without defence. / The spring dawns in winter’s regions, / where I froze.”* The acting of the girls and the fading of intimidating sound, together with the recitation of the poem, create a mood of care and considerateness.

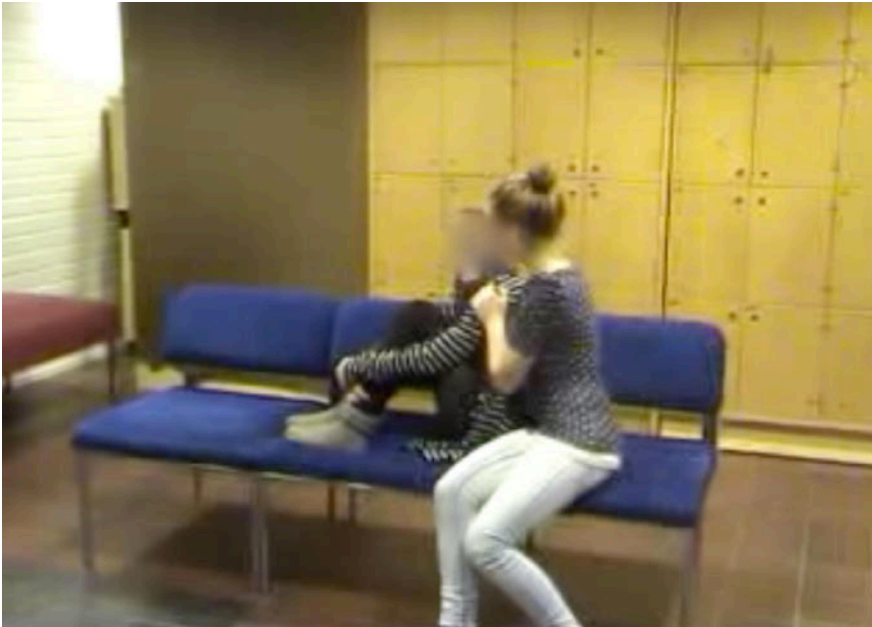


Figure 5. Screen shot of the students' digital video, scene two.

The image fades to the third- and final - scene of the two girls standing facing each other. The setting is a school corridor. From this point on the scene is played in slow motion. As the voice-over recites: "*I want to meet life's powers / weaponless.*" the girls reach out, grasp each other's hands, turn their backs to the camera and run off hand in hand down the corridor. After a couple of steps they jump up in the air, and while they are still airborne the clip is cut, a black frame appears and the credits start to roll. At the moment the girls grasp each other's hands, after the voice-over has finished the recitation, the sound of a pounding heart - present since the beginning of the scene - becomes audible as all other sounds are silenced. The girl's acting, the sound of the heartbeat and the lines of the poem combine to create a sense of hope and change.



Figure 6. Screen shot of the students' digital video, scene three.

The relationship between the two girls can at this point be seen as friendship. The beating-heart sound effect in the third scene can be considered as indicating care and feeling in a non-romantic sense. The sequence of “failed scenes”, however, makes clear that the relationship between the two girls is more than friendship. This thematic choice for the students' interpretation becomes very clear when listening to their discussions during the videomaking (see Section 5.1.1 and 5.1.2), but is more ambiguous in the digital video. In the first sequence of the “failed scenes”, the reference to marriage is already apparent in the use of the sound effect of church bells. In the recording of the videomaking process, the students comment on the relation between the church bells, marriage, and Finnish marriage law, which does not allow people of the same sex to wed. The issue is a matter of debate in both the media and politics at the time being, so in this way the students are commenting on an issue of topical interest. The most explicit reference to – and also standpoint on – homosexuality occurs in the last clip of the video, a frame of white written text on a black background: “*Thanks to Karin Boye (who was*

homosexual)” (see Figure 7) accompanied by the sound effect of applause and cheers.



Figure 7. Screen shot of the students' digital video, final clip.

In short, the digital video presents a girl confronting her peers, being rejected, getting support from another girl, and running off with this girl. With different semiotic resources the students create their thematic interpretation of the poem as showing one's true self by creating a storyline about a homosexual who reveals her sexual orientation. The students use different semiotic resources in their digital video for different purposes but throughout the video the students use the acting of the represented participants, sound and visual effects, and the reciting of the poem to represent the storyline of a person revealing their true self. They also use written text, particularly to substantiate and clarify their thematic interpretation. The use of voice-over in reciting the poem is a central part of the digital video and, together with the other modes used, serves the purpose of narrating the story. The analysis illustrates how the students in the video represent their interpretation by the actions of the participants; by the choice of locations and settings that

constitutes a context for the represented participants; by the use of sound and visual effects; and by the use of written text to substantiate and clarify their intentions and interpretations.

The relationship between the two girls can be seen as friendship, just as the storyline can be regarded as about being accepted or finding friendship. The digital video is thus open for interpretation and can in this sense be referred to as poetic. However, as illustrated in the analysis, there are signs in the coda that the issue at stake is homosexuality, with the most explicit reference in the written comment “*Thanks to Karin Boye (who was homosexual)*” accompanied by the sound effect of applause and cheers. The represented participants, the setting, and the students’ references to homosexuality refer to explorations and reflections regarding identity that are characteristic of adolescents. Thus, the digital video brings up identity explorations, exemplified as, but not limited to, revealing one’s sexual orientation, among adolescents.

### 5.2.2 Creating contact, distance, and point of view

The interactive analysis of the students’ digital video focused on how the relation between the digital video and the viewer is created. Emphasis was on what resources were used and how; on camera angles, camera movement, shot types as well as sound, music and other resources, and in what way they were used to create contact, distance, and point of view.

In the students’ digital video, the contact created with the viewer is mostly “an offer of information” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 146) where the viewer generally is an observer. The viewer’s role is that of an invisible bystander and the represented participants are not seeking contact with the viewer by gaze or body language. But there are two situations where the viewer is addressed more directly. Images – or moving images – that show people who look directly at the viewer are referred to by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) as “demanding”. The images symbolically demand something of the viewer and this way interact and create a relation to them. An

example of this is the use of direct eye contact in the students' video. In the first scene, just as the girl has turned around to face the group of people and witnessed their reactions, she turns and looks directly into the camera before she runs out of the frame. This direct eye contact certainly "demands" something of the viewer and creates a relation to the viewer of being present, but as a distant observer.

The other situation in which the students are clearly addressing a viewer is in the last clip. After the sequence of "failed scenes", the students have placed a comment that rounds off the video: "*Thank you to Karin Boye (who was homosexual)*". This functions as a metacomment to the viewer on a matter the students are eager to emphasise, which is also referred to as "imaginary contact" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). It serves as a comment on their interpretation of the poem as dealing with the issue of showing one's true self regarding sexual orientation. The comment in written text, in combination with the sound effects of applause and cheers, suggests both an attitude the viewer should take towards the issue and the students' own standpoint.

The sense of distance in the students' video is maintained by the use of camera movement, or in this case the non-movement. The stand-steady camera might create a distance, as compared to a camera that moves with the represented participants to create an urgency and immediacy in the relation to the viewer. The creation of distance, or actually closeness, is also noticeable in the use of frame shots and angles. The viewer moves closer the further on the digital video goes, creating a notion of "getting closer" by the use of frame shots. The distance to the viewer often follows the norms of social relations when it comes to determining the distance we keep from each other. Regarding (moving) images, this translates into size of frame; where close-ups suggests an intimate or personal relationship, a medium shot suggests a social one, and a long shot suggests an impersonal one (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 148; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001, p. 146). In the students' video, the first scene is filmed using a full shot, as if observing the situation at a distance. The feeling of distance and detachment is also supported by the use of a slightly higher angle since the camera is placed further up the stairs. The use of high angle



is often associated with power relations (see Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; Iedema, 2001a; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009), although in this case it is more likely to support the feeling of distance. The distance and detachment between the represented participants and the viewer is further established in the students' choice of horizontal perspective (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006); the body of the represented participant is often angled away from the viewer either in profile or in a back view.

In the second scene, where the girl is sitting on the bench while the other approaches, the distance to the viewer is not as great as in the first scene. The scene is filmed in a full shot; the represented participants are closer, but still at a clear distance from the viewer. In addition, they are shot in an oblique angle from behind, which enhances the notion of detachment and distance (see Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 148); in the students' digital video, the sense of distance is often maintained by filming from an oblique angle or from behind.

The last scene, where the two girls are standing facing each other, is framed in mid-shot. This creates a feeling of getting closer to the represented participants, and although the girls are filmed in profile their facial expressions are clearly noticeable. The girls are also filmed at eye-level, which indicates equality (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 148) and by this inviting the viewer closer. The frame shots used portray a clear distance from the beginning of digital video but as it goes along the distance is reduced.

Sound is also used in creating distance, or actually closeness. The use of the sound effect of the pounding heart creates intimacy, both physically and emotionally, a sense of "being so close I can hear your hear beat". By other means, distance is further reduced in the "failed scenes". By including these deleted scenes, involving laughter and frustration and including glimpses of the work in progress, it creates a more personal relation between the represented participants and the viewer. The students also use sound effects in the digital video to suggest a certain viewpoint, such as the use of applause and cheers that greet the last clip with the text "*Thanks to Karin Boye (who was*

*homosexual*)”. The students, thus, use sound effects as a means of creating both a certain viewpoint and perspective on how the viewer is positioned in relation to what is viewed in the students’ digital video, as well as in creating closeness and contact to the viewer.

The analytical concepts of contact, distance, and point of view are, as illustrated, intertwined. The use of camera angle is used both to suggest a certain perspective on what is represented, and as a resource to create distance and closeness. Consequently, point of view holds meaning potential since, as a resource, it allows the students to offer certain viewpoints on the issue. However, point of view as meaning potential does not mean that it is possible to say what different points of view will mean exactly, but it is possible to describe the meanings they will allow image producers and viewers to create; what kinds of relations between viewers and the digital video. The sequencing of clips and scenes also holds meaning potential regarding point of view, since the way of sequencing the clips and scenes also narrates a certain perspective, creating a narrative structure to be viewed in a certain way. This temporal aspect is one of the central analytical concepts regarding the compositional level, and will be elaborated in the next section.

In short, the analysis on the interactive level shows that the students’ digital video is addressing the viewer from a certain point of view with a variety of resources. This is noticeable in the students’ use of horizontal and oblique camera angles to create but also reduce the distance to the represented participants; by addressing the viewer as well as commenting on their thematic interpretation in written text; and by the use of sound effects, such as applause and cheers to emphasise a certain viewpoint and standpoint. By these means they are explicitly taking stand on an issue, expressing a clear standpoint and opinion. A prominent finding is also the students’ use of different semiotic resources to create contact and distance. They use variation in frame shots to create and reduce distance; they use the sound effect of a pounding heart, which creates intimacy and closeness; and they include failed scenes that serve as a meta comment to both the video but also to their own working process, which reduces the distance from the viewer.

### 5.2.3 Establishing rhythm and creating salience

The compositional analysis focused on the composition of the video as a whole; how written text, sound, scenes, and clips are structured to compose a cohesive ensemble. The analytical approach emphasises two aspects: the structure and composition of temporal aspects and the structure and composition of spatial aspects. The analysis of the composition of temporal, or time-ordered, aspects focused on the semiotic rhythm: how the video is structured into a coherent ensemble and how different clips and the use of different modes are organised and utilised to structure the digital video as a whole. The analysis of the spatial aspects focused on two central principles for composition: information value and salience. The principle of information value deals with the placement of elements or participants in various zones of the image: left or right, top or bottom, centre or margin. The principle of salience deals with how attention is drawn to or realised by the use of colour, sound, light, or zooming.

The digital video has a clear narrative structure and follows the typical conventions with exposition, conflict, rise of action, denouement, and coda. The coda is placed in something the students call “failed scenes”, which appears after the credits. These failed scenes are recorded but unsuccessful clips from the filming phase and the students use some of these clips as a metacomment partly on the videomaking process, partly on the poem and their interpretation of the poem. Thus, the “failed scenes” are included in the analysis and are considered as an essential part of the video as a whole.

Three different scenes move the video ahead in narration and time and create a narrative structure: exposition, conflict, rise of action, denouement, and coda. In the first scene the viewer is confronted with the conflict, and the students express this by staging an intense, confrontational situation where the girl is – literally – facing her peers and gets rejected. The intensity is created by the disapproving and rejecting action of the represented participants together with the intimidating sound effect throughout the scene, as well as the recitation of the poem by a narrative voice. In the second scene a

solution to the conflict is presented for the viewer where the girl gets support and comfort from another girl, and the third scene stages the “happy”, open ending where the two girls are grabbing each other’s hands and in slow motion running away together to the sound of a pounding heart.

The structure of the video is also supported by typical components of a filmic composition such as title page and credits. The deleted scenes, which the students called “failed scenes”, play a central part of the video, particularly when it comes to establishing the thematic line – and, indeed, the students’ thematic interpretation of the poem. The deleted scenes function as a metacomment to the video, and the students use them to contextualise their interpretation of the poem within a larger frame of reference to a topical issue of interest to them. Without the deleted scenes the video can be viewed on a thematic level as finding and showing one’s true self, but in the “failed scenes”, the students establish their interpretation of revealing one’s true self regarding sexuality. By this they are also commenting on the official debate in Finland, current at the time of data production, regarding homosexuals’ right to get married. As demonstrated earlier, the students use several semiotic resources to address the issue of homosexuality in the video, but the most obvious and direct comment to establish their interpretation is the last clip of the video, following the deleted scenes: the written text “*Thanks to Karin Boye (who was homosexual)*” accompanied by the sound effects of cheers and applause.

Transitions play an important role in weaving the scenes and clips in the digital video together as a whole. The transitions establish movement in both time and place. The most visible transition is in space, since the location and setting are different in all the three scenes. But there is also a transition in time, even though the length is not specified. The time that passes between the first two scenes, between the girl’s announcement of her “secret” (first scene) and the contact created between the two girls (second scene), is open for interpretation. The transition in time can be considered as minutes or weeks. Technically the transitions are mostly hard-cuts between the scenes and clips, but sound on the audio track between the different

scenes and clips, weaves the video into a cohesive “text”. This cohesion is further established by the voice-over reciting the poem throughout the three scenes, establishing a semiotic rhythm. This matching of the voice-over is an essential part of the students’ editing work and is further presented in Section 5.1.3.

Semiotic rhythm is established by the use of the narrative structure; filmic compositions as title page and credits; transitions in time and space; and the voice-over reciting the poem, holding the digital video together as a cohesive “text”. The coda is placed outside this semiotic rhythm, which indicates its function as a metacomment that should be viewed on a different level than the earlier part.

Regarding spatial aspects, the digital video uses a small variety of different ways to establish information value; the placement of the represented participants is mostly in the middle of the camera frame. In the first scene the notions of centre and margin are also applied in the positions of the represented participants, as the group of youngsters gather around the girl, indicating that the focus is on her exposed position. However, the students use different semiotic resources in creating salience. The principle of salience deals with how attention is drawn to or realised by the use of colour, sound, light, or zooming. The students particularly use sound effects to draw attention to certain issues, like the use of the intimidating sound to establish an intense and confrontational situation in the first scene; the use of the sound effect of a pounding heart to indicate intimacy, closeness and, possibly, love; the use of church bells to indicate the connection to marriage; as well as the sound effects of applause and cheers as a standpoint regarding the issue of homosexuality. The students also use the special effect of slow motion as a means to draw attention to the two girls as they reach out for each other’s hands and run off together in the third scene. The issue of creating salience is a recurrent matter during the students’ working process and is especially noticeable in their meticulous editing work, which is further elaborated in analysis of the students’ videomaking process (see section 5.1.3).

In short, the analysis on the compositional level illustrates how several different semiotic resources are combined to create the structure of the video as a whole. The narrative is based on a commonly used structure: exposition, conflict, rise of action, denouement, and coda. Three different scenes move the video forward in narration and time. An essential finding is the students' use of the coda, as a metacomment on the digital video, to deepen possible interpretations and to substantiate and clarify their intentions. By the use of the coda, the students further substantiate their interpretation of the poem and relate this to a larger frame of reference by commenting on an issue of topical interest at that particular time. The analysis also shows that transitions play an important role in weaving the digital video to a cohesive "text", and that this is realised by the use of sound and voice-over as well as movement in both time and space.

#### 5.2.4 Résumé of the digital video

The analytical approach used for "unwrapping" the digital video acknowledges that the students' work is based not only on the content but also on *how* they choose to represent. With the analytical approach of metafunctions, the video is communicating on three different levels simultaneously. These different levels, and the semiotic resources utilised on these different levels, create the dynamics of the video in terms of structure, viewpoint, and content. In this section, I will briefly revisit and summarise the findings of the analysis of the students' digital video in order to answer the second research question of the study:

*How do the students', in their digital video, use semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem?*

The analysis of the students' digital video reveals that the students use a multiplicity of semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem. They represent their interpretation of the poem by utilising a multiplicity of semiotic resources in:

- (a) delineating identity explorations by presenting their thematic interpretation of showing one's true self represented by a storyline of a homosexual revealing her sexual orientation
- (b) the use of frame shots, camera angles, and particularly sound effects in creating contact, distance, and point of view
- (c) the narrative structure to establish rhythm and the use of coda and sound effects in creating salience.

The digital video delineates identity explorations, exemplified as but not limited to revealing one's sexual orientation by presenting a storyline of a girl confronting her peers, being rejected, getting support from another girl, and running off with this girl. The analysis illustrates how the students in the video represent their interpretation by the actions of the represented participants; by the choice of locations and settings that constitute a context for the represented participants; by the use of sound and visual effects; and by the use of written text to substantiate and clarify their intentions and interpretations. The students employ different semiotic resources in their digital video for different purposes, but throughout the video they use the acting of the represented participants, sound and visual effects, and the reciting of the poem to represent the storyline of a person revealing their true self. They also use written text, particularly to substantiate and clarify their thematic interpretation. The use of voice-over in reciting the poem is a central part of the digital video and, together with the other modes used, serves the purpose of narrating the story.

The relationship between the two girls can be considered as friendship, and the storyline as being about becoming accepted or finding friendship. The video is, thus, ambiguous and open for interpretation, and can in this sense be referred to as poetic. However, as illustrated in the analysis, there are signs in the coda indicating that the issue at stake is homosexuality, with the explicit reference in the written comment "*Thanks to Karin Boye (who was*

*homosexual)*” accompanied by the sound effect of applause and cheers. Thus, the students’ use of a coda is remarkable in several ways. By the use of the coda they further substantiate their interpretation of the poem and relate this to a larger frame of reference by commenting on an issue of topical interest at the time. The represented participants, the setting, and the students’ references to homosexuality refer to explorations and reflections regarding identity that are characteristic of adolescents. Thus, as mentioned before, the digital video brings up identity explorations, exemplified as but not limited to revealing one’s sexual orientation.

The findings illuminate how the students use a multiplicity of semiotic resources in their digital video. What is particularly remarkable is their use of sound. Sound effects play a central part in the video as a means of reducing distance to the viewer, establishing tone, mood and social meaning, narrating the story, and indicating how the central relationship might develop; the intimidating sound in the first scene; the pounding heart in the second; the church bells in the third; and the cheers and applause in the coda. Interestingly, the use of the pounding heart is actually doing all of these things. It reduces the distance to the viewer by creating a sense of intimacy and closeness; it serves as a narrative device since it starts beating louder as the girls grab each other’s hands and run off together; and it ascribes social meaning, as it can be interpreted as indicating love between two persons of same sex.

The students’ digital video addresses the viewer from a certain point of view with a variety of resources, which is noticeable in the students’ use of horizontal and oblique camera angles to create but also reduce the distance to the represented participants; by addressing the viewer as well as commenting on their thematic interpretation in written text; and by the use of sound effects, such as applause and cheers to emphasise a certain viewpoint and standpoint. By these means they are taking a clear standpoint and opinion on an issue. A prominent finding is also the students’ use of different semiotic resources in creating contact and distance, which is noticeable in variation in frame shots to create and reduce distance; in the use of sound effects of a pounding heart to create intimacy and closeness;



and by including “failed scenes” that, besides serving as a meta comment to the digital video, also comment on their own working process, which reduces the distance to the viewer.

The narrative of the video is based on a commonly used structure: exposition, conflict, rise of action, denouement, and coda. Three different scenes move the video ahead in narration and time. An essential finding is the students’ use of the coda. The coda is used as a meta-comment to the digital video and further deepens possible interpretations. By the use of coda the students substantiate and clarify their interpretation of the poem and relate this to a larger frame of reference by commenting on an issue of topical interest at that particular time. The analysis also shows that transitions play an important role in weaving the digital video to a cohesive “text”, and that this is realised by the use of sound and voice-over as well as movement in both time and space. Another essential finding is the use of sound effects in creating salience. The students use sound effects to draw attention to several issues, such as the use of an intimidating sound to establish an intense confrontational situation; the use of the heartbeat to indicate intimacy, closeness and, possibly, love; the use of church bells to indicate the connection to marriage; and the use of applause and cheers as a standpoint regarding the issue of homosexuality.



## 6 DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to contribute to furthering the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature by studying how a transmediation process of digital videomaking in response to a poetic text influences the interpretive work among a group of students in lower secondary education. In the quest to address this issue, attention is focused on both the process of students' collective work and the digital video they produced; meaning-making is considered both in the multimodal digital video and in the negotiations during the process of videomaking. To understand how a digital videomaking process influences the students' negotiations of the literary text, the following research questions were posed: (1) What characterises the students' multimodal designing process regarding their use of semiotic resources as means to negotiate their interpretation of the poem? and (2) How do the students, in their digital video, use semiotic resources to represent their interpretation of the poem? These questions have been addressed and discussed in Chapter 5, and in this chapter the analyses are interpreted and discussed from a wider angle, coming back to the main theoretical ideas that have been emphasised in the study. Initially, I discuss multimodal designing in response to literature through the lens of transmediation and offer a furthering of the understanding of transmediation as combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations (6.1). Following this, I discuss video poetry as exploring and establishing social agency (6.2) and discuss how such a transmediation process exemplified in this study

can be seen as offering performative spaces for negotiating literary interpretations (6.3). Finally, I critically discuss the advantages and limitations of the methods used (6.4).

## 6.1 Transmediation as combining, juxtaposing and emphasising different interpretations

In understanding how the process of digital videomaking in response to poetry influences the students' interpretive work with the literary text, I have suggested *transmediation* as a lens to consider how the literary text is explored, reviewed and negotiated throughout the process. Transmediation, referring to the recasting of meaning across sign systems, is always multidimensional, and impels both the exploration of the original text and the creation of a suitable representation in another sign system (McCormick, 2011, p. 580). The findings of this study demonstrate how the transmediation process from poem to digital video offers possibilities to explore the poem as an aesthetic expression where interpretation and aesthetic features of the poem are acknowledged; the findings demonstrate a deliberate exploration of the original text. They also show how the students were meticulous in their multimodal designing work and made deliberated decisions regarding, for example, use of sound, acting of the represented participants, and linking of voice-over with image sequencing. The students showed awareness of how resources such as sequencing, framing, colour, angle, transitions, and sound affected the meaning; a detailed exploration of their own created text.

Several researchers (e.g. Carey, 2012; McCormick, 2011; Siegel, 1995; Suhor, 1984; Whitin, 2002; 2005; Zoss, 2009) consider transmediation to offer opportunities to expand the interpretive potential of the text under examination or, as Semali and Fueyo (2001, n.p) advocate: "transmediation has the potential to capture the postmodern reality of multiple texts, multiple meanings, and multiple interpretations". The findings of this study illuminate how the videomaking process offered interpretive potential throughout the process for the participating students. This is particularly noticeable in the students'

symbolic responses through sketching and in their editing work. The actual sketching had a significant role in negotiating the thematic interpretation of the poem. By sketching the students needed to both articulate and reshape their thoughts, leading to a negotiation of the poetic text. They even encouraged and requested each other to substantiate their ideas by sketching them, indicating visual responses as a “tool for thinking” (see Whitin, 2005). Previous research on transmediation of literature through visual representation has emphasised the role of visual representation as “a tool for thinking” (Whitin, 2005). Whitin found, in her study on the interplay of text, talk, and visual representation, how occasions when students collaboratively discussed their sketched responses to literature offered fresh perspectives on the literary text, expanded and revised their interpretations, and revisited the written text with new insights.

Mills’s (2011a) description of three key principles of transmediation regarding children’s multimodal and digital meaning-making highlights the discrete sign-making system inherent in software interfaces and the significance this has for digital text production. In this study, the editing programme played a crucial role in the students’ use of sound, providing them with a large set of different sound effects that expanded their digital video in terms of depth, ambiguousness, and possible interpretations. The recognition of semiotic resources in editing practices is also demonstrated in previous research, Gilje (2011) demonstrates how editing software becomes a “tool for thinking” that enables students to articulate and rephrase their ideas by making them observable in the interface of the editing programme, and argues that the feedback from the editing programme becomes a crucial phase in the students’ further reasoning about how to produce a particular scene.

The findings of this study illustrate the specific affordances, and possibly limitations, of working with a particular composing tool, as shown in previous studies. Jocius (2013) finds that the particular affordances of each composing tool (Power Point presentation and digital video software) influence the type of content the students present, and the tone and mood of their presentations, which led to a vast difference in use of and main emphasis on modes. That brings

forth how the choice of compositional tools highly influences the semiotic resources the students use for meaning-making. Ranker (2008) called for further research on the different multimedia composing programmes or environments and their role in the multimodal (or multimedial, as Ranker uses) composing process. An understanding of these processes could lead to a metalanguage about multimodal and multimedial composing, which would be of importance for educators intending to address and incorporate these kinds of composing processes in a pedagogical context.

As mentioned earlier, not only do the different levels of text production influence each other, so do the different phases of the videomaking process. The students were instructed in a linear designing process; based on their initial responses they were to write a synopsis, which they were to develop into a storyboard that would serve as a base for their filming and eventually editing. The temporal steps in the designing process: writing a synopsis, making a storyboard, filming, and editing, might seem – and also to some extent are – sequential and following one another. But the findings also demonstrate how issues are recurring, for example how the synopsis is rewritten when the students redesign their ideas in regard to the use of moving image, and how to depict exclusion using moving images instead of pictorial sketching. Thus, there is reason to review the designing process as linear and, instead of considering the designing process as a sequential series of steps, to view it as a simultaneous, recursive process involving repeated adjustments of ideas contingent on which semiotic resources are at hand and in use.

These findings also reflect previous research on how a digital designing process is nonlinear. Ranker (2008) observed how two students in their digital video composing process constantly were changing visual representation, which gave them insight into what needed to be modified next. By interacting with, acquiring new information, and rewriting their video, the students in Ranker's study became engaged in changing and shaping their video across time, based on the visual feedback they received from the video in progress. Similarly, the analysis in this study shows how the different phases of

the videomaking process make the designing process a complex and nonlinear trajectory, and not at all fixed and ready-made.

Studies demonstrate how transmediation from one sign system to another expands the interpretive potential of the text under examination (see e.g. Carey, 2012; Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2014; McCormick, 2011; Semali, 2002; Siegel, 1995; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998; Whitin, 2005). The analyses and findings of this study extend previous studies by pointing out in detail how the different modes and mediums influence the possibilities to engage in interpretive acts during the complex process of transmediating from poem to digital video. Based on an interpretation of the analyses, I propose that the transmediation process offers opportunities to respond to the literary text by *combining*, *juxtaposing*, and *emphasising different interpretations* of the text. In the next section I will elaborate on such instances and practices in the students' transmediation process.

### ***Combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations***

The *combining* of different interpretations is noticeable in the students collaborative sketching in response to the poem. As the students discuss the poem, they sketch exploratory pictorial images on paper and this sketching is characterised by the students representing their interpretations symbolically through the use of symbols as helmet, fog, façade, and blanket. The work with imagery, the sketching of symbols, serves both as a way of co-constructing and as a way of communicating their reading of the poem; by sketching they are *combining* their own thought with the others' thoughts and jointly building collective interpretations of the poem. Yet, the sketching requests negotiation as the students through their symbolic representation respond to each other's visual representations and, thus, *juxtapose* or confirm them to their own thoughts. The sketching functions as a mean to communicate and negotiate, not as a means to

present a fully settled idea, and the sketching prompts the students *combining* and *juxtaposing* their interpretations.

The students' work with interpreting and representing the poetic voice is an illustration of transmediation as *emphasising* different interpretations. The findings show how the students throughout the whole transmediation process emphasise different interpretations of the poetic voice as both male and female, and also gender-neutral. The process of transmediating during all the different phases of the process prompts a continuous negotiation and is related to the different semiotic resources in use. Surely the mediums and modes both enabled and constrained the students and while the different modes and mediums, especially the use of moving images, did not make the representation of the poetic voice as neutral-gendered easier for these students, it did not obstructed them from *emphasising* different interpretations. Even at the very end of the process, presenting and summing up their work for the art teacher, the students *emphasise* the possibility of different interpretations of the poetic voice. As Catrin explains:

The person is homosexual [...] cannot show who she really is, or he, and well then she breaks free anyway, or he, and dares to show who she is. [...] Or he. But we have made it to be a she. [...] in both the film and the drawing." (see excerpt 14 for intact excerpt).

Although the modes and mediums both enable and constrain the students in their work, in this particular matter it does not seem to close the possibility for different interpretation.

The emphasising of different interpretations is also visible in the students' interpretation of theme and motif as the students thematic interpretation of showing one's true self brings up identity explorations, exemplified as but not limited to, revealing one's sexual orientation. The theme of showing one's true self could appear in several ways and the students' digital video with its openness and ambiguousness is an example of emphasising different interpretations.



The use of the poem in voice-over, as well as the students' meticulous work with matching the voice-over with the visual material, indicate that the poem is of importance to the overall meaning of the digital video, not just a prompt or a point of departure to be inspired by. Noticeable is also how the students substantiate their responses by referring to the poem, particularly during the first phases of *initial responses and writing of synopsis* and *making the storyboard*. They are continuously reading and re-reading the poem in their attempt to co-construct meaning for the literary text. This way of substantiating their interpretations does not, using Faust's (2000) terms, reflect the courtroom metaphor with consistent reference to textual evidence as an end in itself, a procedure aligning with the notion that literary texts bear witness to hidden meanings that can be revealed through questioning and cross-examination. Rather, it illuminates the social spaces where they "*speak up* to account for their own reading and *listen up* to what others have to say about their experiences with literature (Faust, 2000, p. 29; italics in original); an approach of emphasising different interpretations.

## 6.2 Video poetry as exploring and establishing social agency

The semiotic resources of the designing practices in a video poetry project as the one in focus here, are of particular importance as demonstrated with support in the analyses of this study. However, designing practices are about tools and materials but also about the social actions and "agents" that use them (see also Burn, 2009; Burn & Parker, 2001). So far, I have discussed how the findings of the study illuminate how the transmediation process requests, encourages, and urges negotiation of the poem and the digital video. I have also set forth an interpretation of how the transmediation process offers potentials for combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretation. Besides all this, the transmediation process also involves the negotiation of a voice of one's own – the students' *social agency*. Multimodal designing in response to literature is thus to be

viewed as not just technology-related activities or extra-curricula activities (made if time and interest emerge), but as potentially meaningful learning experiences (see also Shanahan, McVee & Bailey, 2014).

The students in this study develop their thematic interpretation of the poem as being about showing one's true self by creating a storyline about a homosexual who reveals her sexual orientation. By these choices of theme and motif the students address and make a statement of a social matter that is of importance to them at the particular time. This refers to the students' *social agency* (Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2009b); students are active meaning makers who act from their interests in a specific situation and to their situated use of semiotic resources. Besides being an issue commonly related to identity explorations among adolescents, the theme of finding and showing one's true self and the motif of homosexuality is in this case also related to a topical interest at that particular time; a debate on same sex marriages in Finland. For the students, the video poetry project serves as means to bring forward and explore matters that are of importance to them. They are explicitly taking stand in an issue, with a clear standpoint and attitude in the actual matter; acknowledging their social agency. They are eager to inform the viewer about their reading of the poem, indicating their agentive role in the video poetry project by their creation of a symbolic and metaphoric messages that point to their understanding and interpretation of the poem and what they want the viewer to know about their reading of the text.

These findings are supported by several previous studies on youths' film and videomaking related to identity (see e.g. Bruce, 2009; Gibbons, 2010; Halverson, 2010; Lindstrand, 2006; Öhman-Gullberg, 2009). The possibility of expressing subjective attitudes is an important issue, but as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stress, the subjectivity does not necessarily exist in the sense of individual or unique attitudes, but often socially determined attitudes and values. The students' choice of theme and motif for their digital video is their collective standpoint in a matter, but that matter is at the time being a topical interest on a societal level. Thus, the students' choice of motif

reflects socially contested attitudes and values. The students' thematic interpretation of the poem as being about showing one's true self and performed as a storyline about a homosexual revealing her sexual orientation, suggests a more societal ideology of how sexual identity is viewed and implies that a larger discourse is at play and in need for consideration.

The collaborative work of filming a poem, with all the different phases it involves, is itself an act of literary interpretation. The students went beyond literal meanings and co-constructed and negotiated the poem – and their digital video – as complex texts. The students negotiated imagery found in the poem and constructed their own symbols by sketching and drawing; they interpreted the poem in terms of intended and unintended decisions about use of sound, acting of the represented participants and linking of voice-over with image sequencing, and they showed awareness of how resources such as sequencing, framing, colour, angle, transitions, and sound affected the meaning. The interpretive acts became a continuous negotiation and follows similar findings from previous studies that shows how digital videos go beyond illustration and move towards close reading and interpretation of new meaning (see e.g. Schwartz, 2009; Jocius, 2013).

Previous studies show how a multimodal approach to literature instruction increase students' agency to support them in interpreting literary works and addressing social issues (see e.g. Ajayi, 2015; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell, 1998). With reference to this study, the students' social agency was clearly noticeable both in the digital videomaking process as well as in the final digital video itself and is an example on how a video poetry project can acknowledge and encourage students' social agency. Besides serving as means in positioning themselves, the findings also indicate negotiations as a means in becoming and being human, or as Gibbons (2010, p. 12) notes: "(t)he youths' modal choices in their video often reveal as much about their own sense of themselves as youth as they do about them as youth filmmakers".

Turning to dictionaries, *agency* is described as “action or intervention producing a particular effect; a thing or person that acts to produce a particular result: action or intervention producing a particular effect”<sup>36</sup> and is described with synonyms as action, activity, effect, influence, force, and power. Following the theoretical framework of social semiotic theory, social agency refers to the connection between meaning-making and the social interest of the individual (Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Jewitt, 2009b). Agency could be defined as a “willingness to act”, as individuals recognise, resist, or change the values, ideologies, or discourses they are a part of and in accordance to their own interest and semiotic resources available. According to the dictionary, agency derives from agent and “doing”, emphasising the active role of individuals, coinciding with a performative approach to meaning-making.

### 6.3 Performative spaces in literature education

The starting point for this study was an interest in how students use semiotic resources in interpreting literary texts. This section discusses the findings in terms of understanding and recognising the multimodal designing process as identifiable practices that students use to actively negotiate and perform interpretations. The examples discussed above are strong arguments for how multimodal designing in response to literature, in the example of transmediating poetry to digital video, can be a valuable approach in promoting negotiations of multiple and different interpretations of a literary text. This study suggests, that a transmediation process from poetry to digital video can promote multiple meanings, multiple stances, and multiple interpretations of the poetic text and can, thus, be a valuable approach in literature classrooms. Based on the instances discussed above, I argue that transmediation offers *performative spaces for negotiating interpretations*.

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<sup>36</sup> The examples used here are from English Oxford Dictionaries, retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com>.

It should be noted that a performative approach does not automatically mean that “anything goes” when it comes to interpreting literary texts. Many educators and scholars hold it problematic to attend the matter of interpretation too openly in an educational context. In this study, attention is focused on how multimodal designing influences and allows for *negotiating* interpretations. It follows the understanding of literary interpretation as something one *does* and actively *negotiates*, emphasising the use of semiotic resources and how this influences, challenges, and supports the interpretive work. This emphasises a culture of recognition (Kress & Selander, 2012) of literary interpretation not as a final stage or level to achieve, but as means for describing what principles that contribute to the interpretive work of students<sup>37</sup>. As Kress and Selander (2012, p. 268) point out, this recognition is “at the same time a culture of valuation – a valuing of the agency of all learners.”

In an article on the subject and importance of “bildung” (*bildning*, in Swedish) Dencik (2016) emphasises the significance of “bildung” as an ability to nuance, reflect on, and act to changes around you. In contemporary society, people are continuously facing ambiguity, complexity, and divergence in relation to previous understandings. Although Dencik does not argue primarily for “bildung” in relation to literary reading, I find these thought aligning with a performative approach to literary interpretation. The ability to negotiating different stances, perspectives, positions, and views is crucial in order to live with ambivalent situations and perspectives. The ability to negotiate one’s interpretations, views, and understandings, is essential to be able to make space for conflicting perspectives in contrasting one’s own. However, in order to develop such abilities there need to be such *spaces for negotiating*, resembling Faust’s (2000) metaphor of the reconstructed marketplace. In such understanding, literary reading activities would not strive for arriving at consensus. Instead, students would be encouraged to reflect on differences, contrasting understandings, and develop awareness of multiple views.

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<sup>37</sup> See Kress and Selander (2012) for a discussion on cultures of recognition regarding learning and meaning-making.

With support in the findings of this study, such spaces can be offered in the literature classroom. However, ideas and values presented in the literary text do not necessarily need to be “good”, and the values that need to be fought or resisted are *outside* the text, whereas the literary text provides “suitable” contrasting pictures and is per se “good” (see Persson, 2012, p. 20). Such an insight further substantiates the importance of an ability to negotiate the text and one’s interpretations critically.

With reference to Bakhtin, Smidt (2007, p. 224) argues that there is a close connection between *response* and *responsibility*; by positioning yourself in the world, responding to the world and voices around you and making your own voice heard you are taking a responsibility for your own utterances. Students’ multimodal responses to the poetic text, their interpretive work during their transmediation process, is a demonstration of how they are *positioning* themselves with their interpretation of the poem. They are responding to both the text as well as the surrounding world making their voices heard and also taking responsibility for their own standpoints. In this respect, their process of transmediation was reflective and dialogic, with the students discussing possible ways of representing the poem, negotiating their different views and constructing a collective representation to represent their interpretation of the poem; by negotiating the poem they were also negotiating the voice of their own. Hence, with a performative approach to literary interpretation and with support from the results of the analyses, the multimodal designing process in response to literature explored in this study can be viewed as a way of negotiating the text, the self, and the world.

The findings of the study reveal that the semiotic resources available and in use can be a key factor in students’ interpretive work of literary texts. The study illuminates how the negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources. The students’ process of transmediating poetry to digital video was not always a straightforward walk facilitated by a multiplicity of available semiotic resources. Neither was it a wholly rational, controlled process; rather it indeed involved accidental and unexpected discoveries. However, the analyses demonstrate that the

resistances and potentials are what offer and accommodate *spaces for negotiation*. Thus, this study argues that negotiations of the poetic text are interrelated with the negotiations of semiotic resources in representational practices, suggesting a performative approach to literary interpretation as spaces for negotiations. With reference to the findings of this study, negotiating interpretation encompasses ways of combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations. If literary reading and interpretation is promoted through the ability of negotiation, then the process of creating spaces for negotiation, and extending the means through which students represent their understanding, should be among the main concerns of educators – and researchers.

## 6.4 Methodological evaluation

The presuppositions of interpretive research influenced the methodological considerations with an approach that views meanings as constructed, socially embedded, and plural. These presuppositions influenced the study both methodologically, in the view of the students' interpretation and representation of the poem, as well as epistemologically, in the view of my interpretations as a researcher. Methodologically, the interest was not pointed at a more-or-less appropriate interpretation of the poem; rather, focus was on how the students, with the semiotic resources available, multimodally co-constructed and negotiated meaning with the literary work in designing a digital video. Epistemologically, the researcher's own worldview and frames of references will influence the whole research process, from its initial motives and purposes to selection of data, theoretical frameworks, and methods of analysis (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). Interpretive research studies are not designed for establishing one timeless, fixed "truth". Different perspectives and interpretations expound the overall understanding of phenomena. The interpretations made by a researcher are always bound by the researcher herself/himself. In interpretive research this is not viewed as a problem; however, the researcher needs to explicate the

preunderstanding and acknowledge the limitations regarding the choices made. Reflexivity is understood as researchers' recognition of their precedence in the interpretations made (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). Such awareness extended throughout the research process, by reflecting on the research design, research methods, considerations in selection of critical incidents for analysis, presuppositions for transcription, and analytical tools for understanding the empirical material.

I do realise that this approach is open to certain objections concerning the trustworthiness of the analyses of the students' meaning-making. Importantly, in this study I do not make the claim that the analysis of the students' meaning-making and use of semiotic resources makes it possible to say what it means exactly, but it is possible to describe the meanings they will allow me as a researcher to make. This is not only an epistemological grounding but also a theoretical grounding; in social semiotic theory of multimodality all modes are considered to have been shaped through their cultural, historical and social use, and are not fixed but articulated and situated. Consequently, what it is possible to say something about is not what the semiotic resources used actually mean, but to describe the meaning they, in this particular case, allow the students to create; the focus is on their *meaning potential*. Also, by studying both the students' process and final product, a certain "triangulation" is met; providing a more nuanced understanding of the students' negotiations of interpretations. In methodological handbooks, triangulation refers to the involvement of different methods, data collection strategies, or a wide range of informants in order to verify individual viewpoints and experiences against others to provide a rich picture (Shenton, 2004). In interpretive research, triangulation is understood as the question of engaging with data from a number of different sources, to account for possible inconsistencies, or even contradictions, and to generate substantiation that can convey a more complex picture than a single source might have provided (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012, p. 88). Instead of triangulation, Schwartz-Shea



and Yanow (2012, pp. 84–89) suggest *intertextuality*<sup>38</sup> as the procedure of analysing across evidentiary sources and they consider it to be an indication of research quality in interpretive studies.

To my knowledge, this study is rare regarding its ambition in developing a research design and a systematic analysis method for students' multimodal designing process in response to literature focusing both the process and the product. The study builds on prominent scholars in social semiotic theory of multimodality, but is developed to analyse students' meaning-making with literature not commonly studied within social semiotic theory of multimodality. In that connection, this study can be viewed as a strong effort on developing the theoretical and methodological approach to research on literature education, more specifically students' negotiations of interpretations and meaning-making with literature.

The research design was highly explorative since there to my knowledge were no previous studies that had addressed students' interpretations of literary texts with such a research design. The research design was explicitly designed to recognise students' possibilities to represent and explore their interpretations using a variety of modes and mediums, with a focus on visual responses. Multimodality was thus methodologically applied as a central part of the research design to give recognition to and acknowledge students' meaning-making using a multiplicity of semiotic resources. The pilot study provided me with several crucial insights for further development of the research design, and in Section 4.3 I describe the considerations regarding this. The section also includes considerations regarding data analysis and video recordings as research method as well as my role as a researcher. My presence as a researcher, and that of the video camera, might influence the students in their work, leading to the possibility that they were acting differently or acting and performing in accordance to what they imagined I expected. In general, I did not perceive that the student

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<sup>38</sup> See Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012, pp. 84–89) for a definition and rationale of their use of intertextuality as a crucial procedure in interpretive research studies.

were uncomfortable with the situation. At some points they glanced at the recording equipment or at me, but that was mostly when they were not actively working; when they were engaged with their work they did not seem to take much notice of the recording equipment or me. The use of the wireless microphone did cause the students most concern, so they decided to share the “task” of wearing the microphone. This did not cause any problems for the group of students that has been in focus in this study, but in one of the other groups participating during the data-production phase this was a stronger concern, and I needed to persuade, without forcing of course, the students to come up with a solution that they felt comfortable with. The reluctant attitude towards the “task” of wearing the microphone did surprise me, and is from an ethical perspective a crucial experience. Although everyone in the group was recorded, the actual wearing of the wireless microphone was a concern.

The technical equipment is an issue to consider in future similar research designs. The data for this study was produced in 2010 and during the recent years the technological development has brought about a great deal of digital tools. This brings up a methodological discussion on the possibilities for other programs and technological devices for use in educational settings, but it also brings up epistemological issues on how we value and research meaning-making and how researchers can “capture” this.

Social semiotic theory of multimodality focuses the person(s) and the process of meaning-making, the social agency, where emphasis is on the sign-makers and their situated use of semiotic resources (Jewitt, 2009b; Jewitt, Bezemer & O’Halloran, 2016; Kress & Jewitt, 2003). Considering the interest and prominence it acknowledges individuals’ meaning-making with a wide range of semiotic resources, it seemed yielding as a theoretical framework for the purposes of this particular research project. Multimodal studies are, however, a wide-ranging field in different disciplines and there are numerous of different analytical principles and courses of action. In this study, I chose to focus on the students’ use of semiotic resources during a digital videomaking process as means for negotiating and co-

constructing a joint interpretation of a poetic text. Studies applying social semiotic theory of multimodality have been criticised for only attending the product, the final text, not the process of text production. This was also an empirically grounded insight I received during the pilot study; insight into the process of multimodal designing was indispensable. As mentioned above, this also provided a certain “triangulation” offering a more nuanced understanding of the students’ negotiations of interpretations.

Finding a suitable analytical framework for the working process was, however, not a clear-cut decision, which led to a puzzling with theoretical literature and research handbooks earlier described in Section 4.4. Looking back at the whole process of this study, the analytical principles and procedures were, no doubt, the most challenging of the whole research project. I am aware of that the coding system of the video recordings, based on thematic analysis procedures (see e.g. Braun & Clarke, 2008; Guest, 2012) and the theoretical framework of strata of text production (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), do not maintain sharp dividing lines between the codes *discourse*, *design* and *production*. However, this resulted in one of the main findings of the study: how the designing process was characterised by an intertwining of the levels of text production, leading to an understanding of how *what* to represent was closely and continuously connected to *how*. In an interview a decade after they second edition of the book *Multimodal Discourse*, Kress (as cited in Hestbæk Andersen, Boeriis, Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2015) describes the use of strata as an issue not resolved. In fact, he does consider them to some extent insufficient but has not a better way of labelling them either. Kress notes, with a reference to the metafunctions, that the strata probably are coinciding: “they [strata] are simultaneous, and maybe that’s the way of thinking about it. These are simultaneous semiotic domains.” (Interview with Gunter Kress in Hestbæk Andersen et al., 2015, p. 83). Based on the findings of this study, the strata of text production are shown to be simultaneous and intertwining, furthering the understanding not only of the students designing process but also the theoretic understanding of the strata of text production.

Social semiotic theory of multimodality has received criticism for the application of a theory from linguistics in trying to explain visual communication or any other communicative mode (see e.g. Machin, 2009). Taking its starting point in Halliday's theories of social semiotics and system functional grammar and developing and extending it to a range of modes, has resulted in critical voices (Jewitt, 2009b). Kress' and van Leeuwen's (2006) work on the analysis of visual design has provided researchers with an analytical approach to describe how meaning is made with multimodal texts, especially highly visual texts. Their impact on the field of research is far-reaching, however, some researchers point out that the theorisation developed by Kress and van Leeuwen mostly deals with still image, photographs or advertisements and call for a development in relation to the special features of moving images (see e.g. Halverson, 2010; Halverson, Bass & Woods, 2012; Burn & Parker, 2003, Burn, 2013). In the process of analysis, this study has taken into account the special features of the moving image both on the level of transcription and on the level of analysis of the students' digital video. The analytical framework developed in this study takes the features of a social semiotics analysis of a multimodal text, particularly the metafunctions of text, and focuses the specific affordances of the kineikonic mode for meaning-making. Issues of contact, distance, and point of view, prominent in the interactive level of analysis, might be established by other modes than visual, such as sound, written text, or other resources of the kineikonic mode as shown in the analysis of this particular study. Similarly, the analysis on the compositional level certainly applies to the kineikonic mode with the focus on sequencing for rhythm by the organisations of clips and use of transitions, as well as how salience is created by the use of sound. This way the metafunctions can be considered reasonably sufficient also regarding micro level analysis of digital videos.

The analytical framework of the metafunctions might be considered as a deductive analytical approach to the students' digital video, as a way of locating predetermined parts in the students' digital video. However, the possibly predetermined lies in the theoretical assumption that all "texts" communicate on three levels:

representational, interactive, and compositional level. The content, the students' choice of semiotic resources and how they utilise them, are not predetermined. Rather, the metafunctions allow an analytical angle to distinguish different levels of the "text". Following an abductive approach, the combination of the analyses of the empirical material with theory was not to transfer theoretical principles directly to the empirical material, but to apply a lens to discover patterns and understand the qualitative distinctiveness of the data.

The study going on for several years, with two longer breaks, also provided a distance in the analytical process.<sup>39</sup> The analytical process was done in several steps, following the procedures of thematic analysis identifying and examining patterns, or themes, within data and I returned to previously made analyses on several occasions. This made it possible for me to critically evaluate, review, and refine the analyses made and the interpretation developed and expanded, also in support of theoretical readings.

A limitation of this study could be that it relies heavily on the work of one group of students. With emphasis on an in-depth analysis of both the students' process and final digital video, the focus on one group seemed reasonably sufficient. As discussed earlier, this decision was mainly empirically grounded and grew during the process of analysis. The first intention was to analyse three groups' collective work, but during the process of analysis the decision to focus on an in-depth analysis of one group evolved. The choice of this particular group of students, out of the three possible, was based mainly on the fact that the students in this group had granted their permission for the empirical material to be used as examples at research conferences, in teacher education, or in teacher in-service training. Also, this group of students worked mainly with the assignment they had been given, which was not the case with the students in the second group. The second group (group B) had trouble focusing on the assignment and their negotiations around the interpretive and representational work remained to some extent concealed. Without a deeper analysis I

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<sup>39</sup> The research project started in 2009, but was on hold for personal reasons during 2012 and 2015.

cannot establish elaborated reasons for this, but based on the initial analysis I noticed that this group would have benefitted from more strict assignment guidelines. In the scope of another study and as a suggestion for further research, it could be valuable to study the group that was not focused on and engaged in the assignment they had been given. But in this study, that was not the focus and the group of students would not have provided me with sufficient basis for analysis and interpretation for the interest of this particular study. I do however recognise that the results from other groups of students would provide further and maybe even contrasting understandings, which I also acknowledge and bring up in suggestions for further research (see Section 7.2).

In understanding how the process of digital videomaking of poetry may influence the students' interpretive work with the literary text, I used transmediation as a lens to interpret how the literary text was explored, reviewed, and negotiated throughout the process. Similar theoretical concepts could have been used instead, such as redesign or transduction (see Section 2.5). The choice of transmediation was grounded in its use in relation to literature reading in previous studies (see e.g. Albers, 2009; Carey, 2012; Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2014; McCormick, 2011; McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008; Mills, 2011a; Siegel, 1995; Oldakowski, 2011; Whitin, 2002; 2005), but I do acknowledge the potentials in applying other theoretical approaches and do not consider transmediation as the only approach.

In order to acknowledge students' agency, their views and experiences must be valued and part of forming the basis of both educational practices and research. The focus on the students' agency, provided by the theoretical framings of social semiotic theory of multimodality, offers a theoretical basis for a acknowledging and recognising the students active role in meaning-making and forming the educational practices based on their own interests and experiences. As demonstrated, the students' interpretations are connected to the semiotic resources available and in use, indicating that the social and semiotic environment play a crucial part in the meaning-making process.

However, there is also a need to recognise the frames provided by the educational context; what do the students feel is possible to address and express in an educational context in relation to the frames and power relations provided by the educational context? A limitation of this study could be that it because of its analytical focus does not provide insight into the frames surrounding the students' interpretive and representational work. I recognise the limitations of this analytical choice. However, turning to previous research there is a large amount of ethnographical studies on students' literary reading in classrooms, teachers' ambitions and work with literary texts, and studies on literature teaching materials as well as curricula and policy documents. I recognise the significance of the frames provided by teachers, teaching objectives, and policy documents. Addressing such perspectives or conducting a similar research design with a wider scope, would most likely provide additional insights and further the understanding.





## 7 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In this final chapter, the study is viewed and discussed in a wider perspective. Initially, I consider its contributions and implications (7.1). I discuss how the study contributes to a furthering of the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature and its contributions theoretically and methodologically. Following this, I discuss the study's contributions regarding pedagogical and educational implications. This study has also given rise to further questions that other perspectives and approaches could advance, which I discuss under suggestions for further research (7.2). Ultimately, the chapter concludes with some final comments on the understandings and insights generated in this study and some central issues to consider in its implications (7.3).

### 7.1 Contributions and implications of the study

The study contributes to a furthering of the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature by providing an understanding of how the negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources. By close examination of a transmediation process from poem to digital video, the study explores how students make use of multimodal designing to negotiate and co-construct their interpretation of a literary text. By following the process of the videomaking it is striking how much

work lies behind the final video. Even the seemingly simple credit – with the names in white on a black background – involves a series of choices: the placement of the written text on the screen, choices of font and size, movement of the written text on the screen and sequencing of the names. By providing a detailed insight into the transmediation process from poetry to digital video, the study contributes an understanding of the multifaceted process as continuously requesting, encouraging, and urging negotiation. The students co-constructed and negotiated the poem and digital video as complex texts, for example, by negotiating imagery found in the poem and constructing their own symbols by sketching and drawing; by interpreting the poem in terms of intentional and unintentional decisions about use of sound, acting of the represented participants and linking of voice-over with image sequencing; and by showing awareness of how resources such as sequencing, framing, colour, angle, transitions, and sound affected the meaning. These insights are discussed in a larger perspective and interpreted as combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations of the text, which in turn offer performative spaces for negotiating interpretations.

Methodologically, the study contributes the development of a research design and a systematic analysis method for students' multimodal designing in response to literature, focusing on both the process and the product. A strong contribution is the attempt to further the methodological approaches to studying students' literary reading, since empirical research on this topic has mainly focused on students' verbal and/or written statements; other representative modes are not being fully engaged in the methodological approaches to the study of literature reading (see also e.g. Arfwedson, 2006; Vasudevan, 2008). A methodology based in the paradigm of interpretive research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006) was designed to recognise students' possibilities to represent and explore their interpretations using a variety of modes and mediums – especially visual responses – drawing on methodological principles of multimodality and visual methodology. The analytical framework

was based in previous prominent work on youth digital videomaking and multimodal designing (composing), and developed and adapted for the purpose of this study. A contribution is the development of the analytical approach in understanding the videomaking process as a multifaceted meaning-making process in general, but particularly as a multifaceted meaning-making process in interpreting literature. In addition, the research design demonstrates how multimodal designing, here exemplified as a videomaking process, can be successfully applied in studies of students' literary reading.

The study's contributions to the theoretical development of literature education include a furthering of the knowledge and understanding of transmediation as a process for making meaning with literature. Also, the study contributes to the theoretical development of literature education with an elaboration on a performative approach to literary interpretation as *negotiating* interpretations. In this understanding, the study contributes by illustrating how literary interpretation is closely connected to the use of semiotic resources in representing one's interpretation; negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources. Emphasising literary interpretation as negotiating, constructing, and exploring meaning(s), the study contributes an understanding of transmediation as a process of combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations and arguing for a view of literature education as offering *spaces for negotiations*. The ability to negotiate one's interpretations, views, and understandings needs to include conflicting perspectives in contrasting one's own, otherwise it runs the risk of being only a mirror reflecting already familiar, uncontested views, instead of a window offering new perspectives and understandings (see Årheim 2011 on the metaphors of mirror and window for literary reading). Literary reading practices in school should therefore promote students to reflect on differences, offer contrasting understandings, and foster awareness of multiple views.

The study also contributes to the understanding, acknowledging, and furthering of the knowledge of students' *multiliteracies*. The concept of multiliteracies has had a profound influence on the perception of literacy, on what it means to be literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as

discussed in the introductory chapter. Multiliteracy is also a core concept in the National Core Curriculum for Finnish schools and one of seven main competencies emphasised to span all the curricula (see Finnish National Board of Education, 2014). This study supports and emphasises the importance of teaching young people to analyse and produce – or rather, design – visual and multimodal text not just so they can reproduce according to mainstream standards, but so that they can approach them critically, and as Fisherkeller (2008) points out, so that they can create changes where necessary. The concept of multiliteracies in the National Core Curriculum runs the risk of becoming only a “label” to patch on to already familiar ways of doing things or becoming empty of content without ongoing conversations and research on students’ actual multimodal designing and meaning-making on a micro level. By a detailed analysis of the process of multimodal designing as well as the multimodal text produced by the students, this study contributes to furthering the knowledge of students’ multimodal designing, and thus expanding the understanding of students’ multiliteracies.

Also, there is a necessity for students and teachers to develop a metalanguage of multimodal text production and critique, particularly regarding film and moving images, because of the fundamental role they play in the everyday literacy practices of children and adolescents around the world (see also Bazalgette & Buckingham, 2013; Gilje, 2013; Mills, 2011b). Otherwise, the kind of multimodal designing exemplified in this study runs the risk of not being included in the assessment and given recognition to be a significant part of school work, as identified in previous studies (see e.g. Burgess, 2015; Godhe, 2014).

The intention of the study was not to examine the extent to which the students were able to transmit or convey the poem to a digital video. Instead, the focus was on what possibilities this offered to negotiate both the original literary work as well as the students’ own design. By approaching the representations made by the students, acknowledging the variety of semiotic resources they use in making meaning, it is possible to recognise and further the knowledge on *how*

students represent what they know; also furthering the debate on what counts as “knowing”. Instead of focusing on what might count as an interpretation or not, this study highlights and illustrates the complex process of meaning-making and negotiating, the width of representational resources the students show in their videomaking process, and the meticulous and deliberate choices that lie behind their work. In other words, the study distinguishes and recognises the students’ use of a variety of semiotic resources and the careful and intentional work – their representation of knowledge. Hence, this study can be seen as an attempt to contribute to the conversation of what counts as “knowing” by offering insights into *how* students negotiate and represent their interpretations and, consequently, knowing.

Understanding how a digital videomaking process influences the students’ negotiations of the literary text can help us in the effort to develop a literature education that engages in positive and critical literature explorations. It can help us understand students’ critical awareness of how different modes shape and reshape what is represented, with attention to specific changes across modes, and how this transmediation process influences ways of interpreting and representing. Continued experience with multimodal-based work in literature education would, besides broadening students’ repertoire of semiotic resources for multimodal meaning-making, also enable them to develop a sound voice in their knowledge constructions and representations, as well as acknowledging literature in many forms and mediums. Literature does not exist solely in written, print form, and printed literature is not solely bound to written text; literary elements are included in graphic literature, picture books, dramatic plays, computer games, and in online fan fiction forums – all highly multimodal texts.

Scholars (e.g. McVee, Bailey & Shanahan, 2008; Mills, 2011a) have previously pointed out that focused instruction on the use of technology as an end in itself using a print-based perspective, not understanding the affordances of multiple signs and the diverse communicative possibilities afforded through digital technologies, is sidestepping the educational possibilities. From an educational point

of view, content knowledge on multimodal communication and designing must be developed, otherwise teachers and educators may unintentionally miss the opportunities of multimodal representation and designing because they – like students – can only acknowledge the potential of modes and mediums when they have developed the knowledge to recognise them.

Using multiple modes to respond to literature thus necessitates new instructional approaches. In order to include multimodal designing in literature instruction – and by all means, in instruction at large – I argue with support from this study that there are at least two important issues to consider. First, meaning-making using a multiplicity of modes needs to be acknowledged, recognised, and valued as significant and meaningful. Educators need to pay attention to, and value, the multiple ways students communicate and represent meaning, the complex, multifaceted, multimodal text they create in both nondigital and digital environments. Second, the view of literary interpretation must be revised to include the possibility of multiple meanings and multiple constructions of the text. In such an attempt, this study suggests that a performative approach to literary interpretation can be a valuable approach to literature education and recognition, and development of students' variety of means for representation can contribute to this approach.

The results generated in this study illustrate that the Video Poetry project supported students to reflect on their understanding of the poem as well as on multimodal designing to explore new ways of representing and negotiating through their own modal arrangements, prompting reflection about the pedagogies for multimodal designing development. When educators expand their understanding of what constitutes interpretive work – both for the viewer and the designer – new learning and interpretation opportunities and spaces emerge.

## 7.2 Suggestions for further research

An essential insight from this study is that students' multimodal designing in response to literature is a highly complex, multifaceted process continuously requesting, encouraging, and urging negotiation. Although this study has provided insights into this complex, multifaceted process, there is much more to explore. Although there is a large amount of research on students' multimodal designing, empirical research on students' readings of literature has mainly focused on their verbal and/or written statements. Other representative modes are not being fully engaged in the methodological approaches to the study of literature reading; researchers continue to conduct interviews and collect reading and writing artefacts. Furthering the methodological approaches to include a variety of semiotic resources to respond to literature would help to build a professional, research-based knowledge base for understanding practices and instructional approaches in literature education. The perspectives and participants in this study are only a selection of possible approaches to multimodal designing in response to literature.

The study has given rise to further questions that other perspectives and approaches could advance. The analytical process as well as the findings of the study made me aware of the significance and potential of the collective process; in other words the potential and strength of the group. While not the primary focus in this study, the group was a significant factor in the students' negotiations of the literary text. It would be of interest to study more closely negotiations of interpretations in relation to how the group of students confirm, juxtapose, and advance their interpretations in relation to each other.

Other methodological approaches than the ones taken in this project may also prove useful. This study lacks insight into the surrounding factors framing the students' work, such as teachers' intention, students' previous experience with poetry and/or videomaking, and frames provided by objectives and curricula. By including such factors, the understanding of the students' meaning-making and negotiations of interpretations could be even more profound, or

could at least provide additional and possibly different understandings and insights. Other theoretical approaches could also provide additional understandings than the ones in this study, focusing on other aspects than the students' meaning-making with semiotic resources during a videomaking process. Other theoretical approaches could shed light upon the practices, structures, and discourses at play on a more general level than that of a few individuals.

As already mentioned, assessment is a key factor in including multimodal designing in literature instruction. Otherwise multimodal designing runs the risk of not receiving sufficient recognition to become a significant part of schoolwork. Further research on theoretical, methodological, and practice-related issues regarding assessment of multimodal designing in response to literature are of great urgency and importance.

Inspired and intrigued by the performative approach, I recognise a need to theoretically develop the approach regarding literary interpretation and reading, and am excited to follow and further this perspective. I claim that the performative approach could provide insights beyond the perspectives started here, into how students negotiate literary texts in relation to factors such as values, power relations, and identity issues. Youth literary reading, or actually their lack of literary reading, is often discussed in current conversations as reliant on attitudes, values, and the socialisation of reading. The performative approach could provide further understandings of these issues from the students' perspective.

Finally, I recognise that it is unlikely that we will run out of questions and perspectives on the issue and legitimisation of literary education. Insights, practices, and values develop and change, and as the media, cultural, social, and educational landscapes are continuously changing, so are the questions related to literary reading. Therefore, questions such as "Why read literature?" or "What is considered literature?" should be a continuous matter of discussion. These questions are, it appears, incentive or provocative rather than inviting a unified and fixed answer.



### 7.3 Concluding comments

This study has generated an empirically grounded understanding of multimodal designing in response to literature as a process continuously requesting, encouraging, and urging negotiation, demonstrating that the transmediation process from poem to digital video is a highly complex one with much potential for negotiating the literary text. The study reveals how the negotiations of the poetic text are connected to the negotiations of semiotic resources, suggesting that the semiotic resources available and in use can be a key factor in students' interpretive work on literary texts. The students' process of transmediating poetry to digital video was not always a straightforward walk facilitated by a multiplicity of available semiotic resources. Neither was it a wholly rational, controlled process; rather, it involved accidental and unexpected discoveries. However, the analyses demonstrate that the resistances and potentials are what offer and accommodate spaces for negotiations.

Based on these understandings, this study suggests and argues for an approach to literature education that creates *spaces for negotiating interpretations*. Such an understanding is grounded in a performative approach to literary interpretation, which is understood as combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations. The approach emphasises the ability to negotiate different stances, perspectives, positions, and views in order to handle ambivalent and ambiguous situations and perspectives. The ability to negotiate one's interpretations, views, and understandings, is essential if we are to make space for conflicting perspectives. However, in order to develop such abilities there needs to be such *spaces for negotiating interpretations*. In such spaces, students are offered contrasting understandings, and encouraged to develop awareness of multiple views and reflect on differences. Interpretation is thus not limited to the literary text but also extends to an interpretation of the values, conditions, and people surrounding the reader – the surrounding world. If literary reading and interpretation are promoted through the ability to negotiate, then the process of creating such spaces for negotiations, including extending the means through which students

represent their understanding, should be among the primary concerns of educators and researchers.

My wish is that the understandings and perspectives brought forward in this study can support researchers, educators, and policy makers to develop and pose insightful questions regarding both literature education and students' multimodal designing – and particularly students' multimodal designing within literature education.

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Østern, A-L, Kaihovirta-Rosvik, H., Rantala, B. & Heilä-Ylikallio, R. (2010). *Tusen trollformler. Lärarhandledning till Trolltrumman* [Thousands of magic formulas. Teacher's manual for Trolltrumman]. Helsingfors: Söderströms.



## APPENDICES

Appendix 1a. Request of research permission

Heidi Sunabacka  
doktorand i modersmålets didaktik  
Pedagogiska fakulteten  
PB 311  
65101 Vasa  
06-  
heidi.sunabacka@abo.fi

### ANHÅLLAN OM FORSKNINGSTILLSTÅND

Till [redacted] rektor [redacted] vid [redacted]

Jag anhåller om forskningstillstånd vid [redacted] för insamlande av empiri för min doktorsavhandling *Elevers tolkningar och representationer av skönlitteratur*. Jag är intresserad av att studera hur unga tolkar den skönlitterära texten och hur de väljer att representera tolkningarna när de har tillgång till olika representationsmodaliteter, t.ex. bild, skrift och ljud. Som vetenskaplig handledare fungerar docent Ria Heilä-Ylikallio vid Åbo Akademi pedagogiska fakultet.

Datainsamlingen sker genom videoobservation av verksamheten i klassrummet och empirin för doktorsavhandlingen består av (1) videoobservationer i klass och (2) det material som eleverna producerar under projektets gång (stillbildsfilmer och övriga texter). Materialet samlas in under höstterminen 2010. Datainsamlingen sker under lektioner i modersmål och litteratur samt bildkonst och är en naturlig del av undervisningen. Modersmåls lärare [redacted] och

bildkonstlärare [REDACTED] är vidtalade och är intresserade av att delta i projektet.

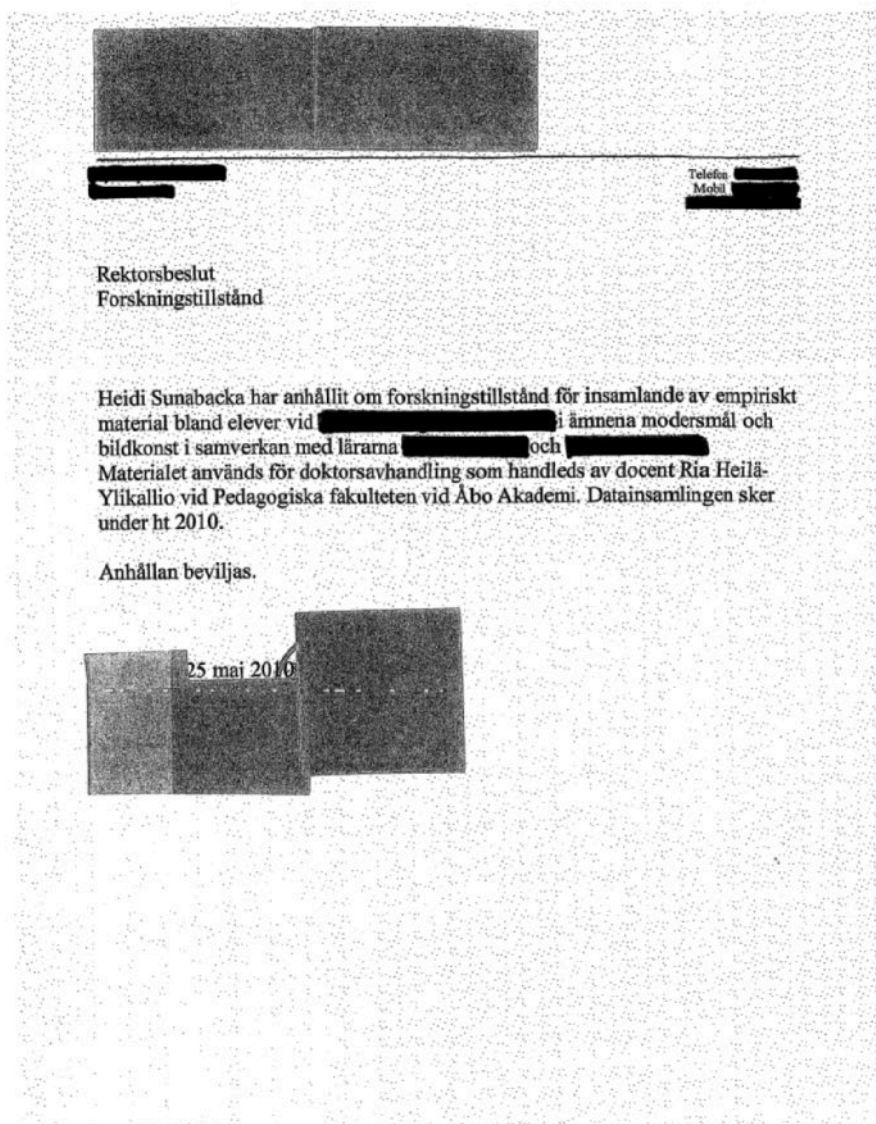
Det insamlade materialet – inspelade observationer och elevernas arbeten – försäkras jag att behandlas enligt forskningsetiska regler vilket betyder att inga namn framgår av varken elever, lärare eller skola i rapporteringen och ingenting av det insamlade materialet ges vidare. Elevernas föräldrar begärs om skriftligt godkännande.

Tag gärna kontakt om ni har frågor.

Vänligen,

Heidi Sunabacka

## Appendix 1b. Principal's grant of research permission



Appendix 2a. Information form sent to parents of students in focus groups

**Heidi Höglund**  
**doktorand i modersmålets didaktik**  
**Pedagogiska fakulteten**  
**Åbo Akademi**  
06- [redacted], [redacted]  
heidi.hoglund@abo.fi

Bästa förälder/vårdnadshavare

Ert barn går i en klass vid [redacted] som under hösten 2010 deltar i ett forskningsprojekt. Forskningsprojektet är en del av min doktorsavhandling med arbetsnamnet *Elevers tolkningar och representationer av skönlitteratur*. Jag är intresserad av att studera hur elever tolkar skönlitteratur och hur de väljer att representera tolkningarna när de har tillgång till olika kommunikationsformer, t.ex. bild, skrift och ljud.

Datainsamlingen pågår under höstterminen 2010 (veckorna 39, 40, 41, 42, 43 och eventuellt 44). [redacted] rektor vid [redacted] har gett sitt tillstånd till forskningsprojektet och [redacted] och [redacted] deltar från lärarhåll. Materialet som samlas in består av (1) elevernas producerade material och (2) videospelningar av arbetet i klassrummet. Datainsamlingen sker under lektioner i modersmål och litteratur samt bildkonst. Undervisningsförloppet är en naturlig del av den ordinarie undervisningen. I fokus för analysen är elevernas producerade arbeten och videospelningarna fungerar som stöd för att bättre förstå hur de har resonerat under processens gång.

Det insamlade materialet - elevernas arbeten och videospelningarna - försäkrar jag att behandlas enligt forskningsetiska regler vilket betyder att inga namn framgår av

varken elever, lärare eller skola i rapporteringen och inget material ges vidare eller missbrukas. Med ert tillstånd kan även delar av det insamlade materialet användas som exempel inom forskningssammanhang, lärarutbildning och lärarfortbildning.

Med detta brev önskar jag informera er om forskningsprojektet och be om ert tillstånd att ert barn deltar i forskningsprojektet. Ni ger ert tillstånd genom att fylla i och underteckna den medföljande blanketten till modersmåslärare [REDACTED] senast fredagen den 17 september. Ifall ni har frågor svarar jag gärna och ni är välkomna att ta kontakt antingen per telefon eller per e-post (se kontaktuppgifter upp till höger).

Vänliga hälsningar,

Heidi Höglund

Appendix 2b. Parents' consent form.

Tillstånd till Heidi Höglunds doktorsavhandlingsprojekt *Elevens tolkningar och representationer av skönlitteratur*

- Ja, jag ger mitt tillstånd för mitt barn att delta i studien. Det insamlade materialet får endast användas i forskningsprojektet.
- Ja, jag ger mitt tillstånd för mitt barn att delta i studien. Det insamlade materialet får användas i forskningsprojektet och i utbildning, fortbildning och vid forskningskonferenser.
- Nej, jag vill inte att mitt barn deltar i forskningen.

Mitt barn heter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ 2010

\_\_\_\_\_  
Förälder/vårdnadshavares underskrift

\_\_\_\_\_  
Namnförtydligande

Returnera denna blankett till [redacted] på [redacted] senast den 17 september 2010.

Appendix 3. Information form sent to parents of students NOT in focus groups.

**Heidi Höglund**  
**doktorand i modersmålets didaktik**  
**Pedagogiska fakulteten**  
**Åbo Akademi**  
06-██████████/██████████  
**heidi.hoglund** ██████████

Bästa förälder/vårdnadshavare

Det här brevet innehåller information om forskningsprojektet *Elevers tolkningar och representationer av skönlitteratur*. Forskningsprojektet är en del av min doktorsavhandling där jag studerar elevernas tolkningar av skönlitteratur och hur de väljer att representera denna tolkning när de har tillgång till olika kommunikationsformer som t.ex. bild, skrift och ljud. Forskningsprojektet berör elever som går i ██████ och ██████ som har valt bildkonst som tillvalsämne men eftersom ditt barn ingår i samma bildkonstgrupp som dessa elever berörs ditt barn indirekt av projektet.

██████████ rektor ██████████ har gett sitt tillstånd till forskningsprojektet och ██████████ och ██████████ deltar från lärarhåll.

Under forskningsprojektets gång dokumenteras arbetsprocessen i klassrummet genom videoobservation. Videoinspelningar görs under lektioner i bildkonst under veckorna 40, 41, 42, 43 och eventuellt vecka 44 beroende på hur länge temaprojektet som de jobbar med sträcker sig. Eleverna jobbar mestadels gruppvis och ert barn ingår inte i någon grupp som är i fokus under inspelningen. Ert barn kan dock vid vissa tillfällen figurera i bild, t.ex. i bakgrunden eller om de interagerar med elever som ingår i forskningen.

Ifall ni av någon anledning önskar att ert barn absolut inte figurerar i videoinspelningarna ber jag er personligen ta kontakt med mig. Ifall ni har frågor så svarar jag gärna och ni är välkomna att ta kontakt per telefon eller e-post (se kontaktuppgifter upp till höger

Vänliga hälsningar,

Heidi Höglund

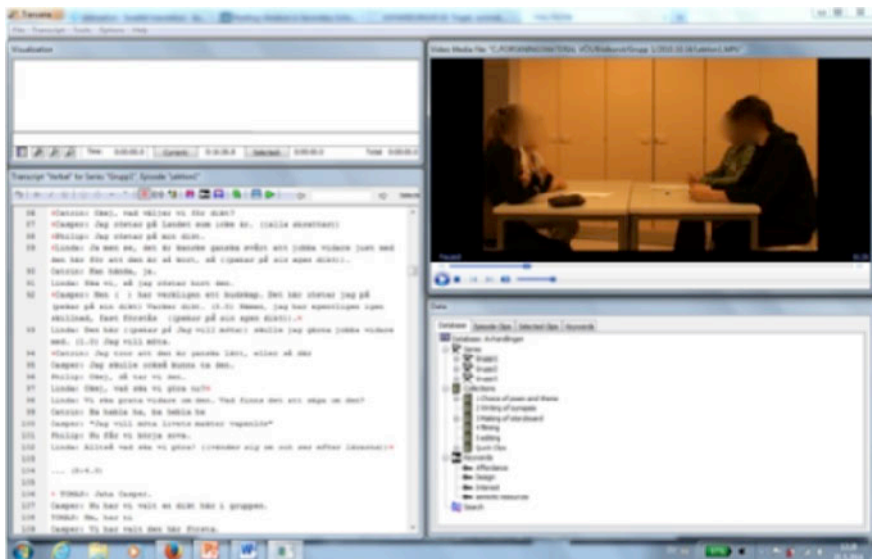
## Appendix 4. Transcription symbols

### TRANSCRIPTION SYMBOLS

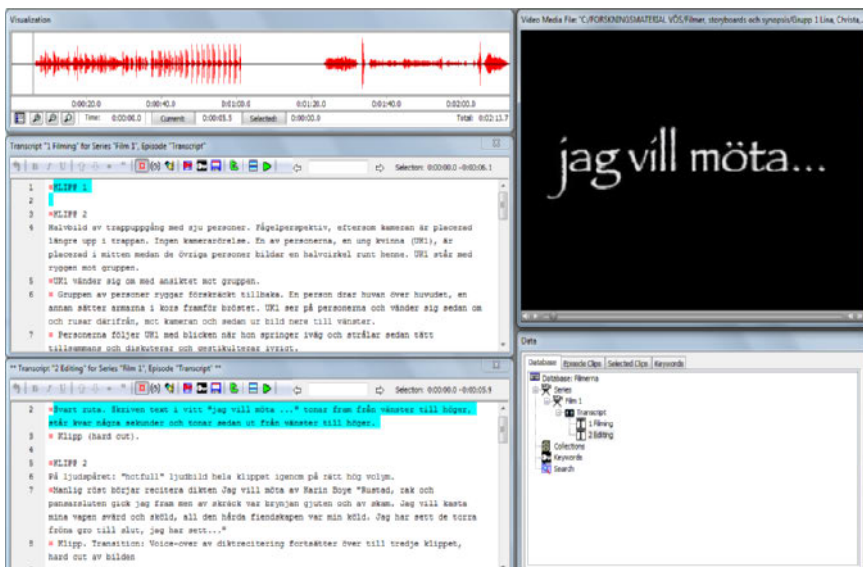
(0.5), (2.5)	pause and examples of timed pauses
A: word [word B: [word	overlapping talk
wor-	a dash shows a unfinished word, a cut-off
Person	Student, all names are fictive. The word <i>student (elev)</i> means a student in the class that is not known to me by name and is therefore not any of the students in the s.
PERSON	Person with capital letters is a teacher or another adult
<u>word</u>	emphasised word
( )	unclear talk
(word)	unclear talk, but a qualified guess
((word))	transcriber's explanation of students use of semiotic resources or of what is going on, e.g. important gesture or event
... (16.0)	marks a longer section in the video clip that is not transcribed
“word”	transcriber's effort at representing something hard, or impossible, to write phonetically



Appendix 5a. Screen shot of Transana, transcription of the video documentation



Appendix 5b. Screen shot of Transana, transcription of the students' digital video



## Appendix 6. Poem in the original language Swedish

Jag vill möta...

Rustad, rak och pansarsluten  
gick jag fram --  
men av skräck var brynjan gjuten  
och av skam.

Jag vill kasta mina vapen,  
svärd och sköld.  
All den hårda fiendskapen  
var min köld.

Jag har sett de torra fröna  
gro till slut.  
Jag har sett det ljusa gröna  
vecklas ut.

Mäktigt är det späda livet  
mer än järn,  
fram ur jordens hjärta drivet  
utan värn.

Våren gryr i vinterns trakter,  
där jag frös.  
Jag vill möta livets makter  
vapenlös.

Karin Boye, *Härdarna* (1927)

Heidi Höglund

# Video Poetry: Negotiating Literary Interpretations

Students' Multimodal Designing in  
Response to Literature

How does a transmediation process of digital video-making in response to a poetic text influence the interpretive work among a group of students, and what implications can this have for contemporary literature education?

This thesis contributes to a furthering of the knowledge of students' multimodal designing in response to literature by providing an understanding of how negotiations of the poetic text are closely connected to negotiations of the semiotic resources available for and in use by the students. Based on a performative approach to literary interpretation, and by close examination of video recordings of a transmediation process from poem to digital video, as well as the digital video produced by the students, the study explores how students make use of semiotic resources to negotiate and co-construct their interpretation of a literary text.

The study introduces a research design for a systematic analysis of students' multimodal designing in response to literature. It presents an understanding of literary interpretation as negotiation, referring to ways of combining, juxtaposing, and emphasising different interpretations, and establishes an approach to literature education as offering performative spaces for negotiating literary interpretations.



9 789517 658645 >