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David Beagley, editor

Children's Responses to *Hoodwinked, the movie*

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Children nowadays live in a digital multi-media age and are exposed to new and cross media children's literature with integrated experiences such as films, video, DVDs, Internet, cable TV or video games. Some educators argue that new media is harmful for children while others praise the benefits. This paper attempts to examine the effect of cross media on children's understanding of stories. The study shows that exposing children to cross media is favourable as long as these children are equipped with the adequate learning approaches which cater for our new digital hypermedia world.

Three types of narratives circulate in children's literature: oral, written and hypermedia and we have to acknowledge them all. New media should not take over reading the actual stories or listening to stories told by parents or teachers. Reading to children has several benefits and should not be given up. Storytelling and reading stories to children plays an important role in the child's development; moreover, reading to children teaches them to concentrate and exercise their imagination. Hunt argues that "traditional linear narratives...offer fixed outcomes but imaginative opportunities" (Hunt 2000, p.116). He further contends that "we are in a transitional phase towards widespread hypermedia thinking and we have to accept that the MUDs (multi-user domains) which allow for multiple authorship, the annotated texts, the web sites and magazines that elaborate on narratives old or new, are all now part of narrative" (Hunt, 2000, p.116). In the past students were asked to read the printed version first and then they were exposed to the multi-media version; however, this is not always the case in this new media age. Children might be bombarded by multiple versions of stories everywhere, whether on the Internet, TV, radio, films or even videogames. "Many children and adolescents come to school already used to making cross-media comparisons and judgments whether the characters are Thomas the Tank Engine, Harry Potter or Romeo and Juliet" (Unsworth, 2003, p.6). Reynolds (2007), in her book *Radical Children's Literature: Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction*, acknowledges that "although print-based children's literature is only beginning to feel its way towards creating transliterary texts, a major transformation of children's literature itself is taking place in cyberspace"

(Reynolds, 2007, p. 180). Mackey predicted this eighteen years ago: "To talk about children's literature, in the normal restricted sense of children's novels, poems and picture-books, is to ignore the multi-media expertise of our children" (Mackey, 1994, p.17). In fact, cross-media or transmedia are used in education and can be used to generate interactive enriching learning experiences.

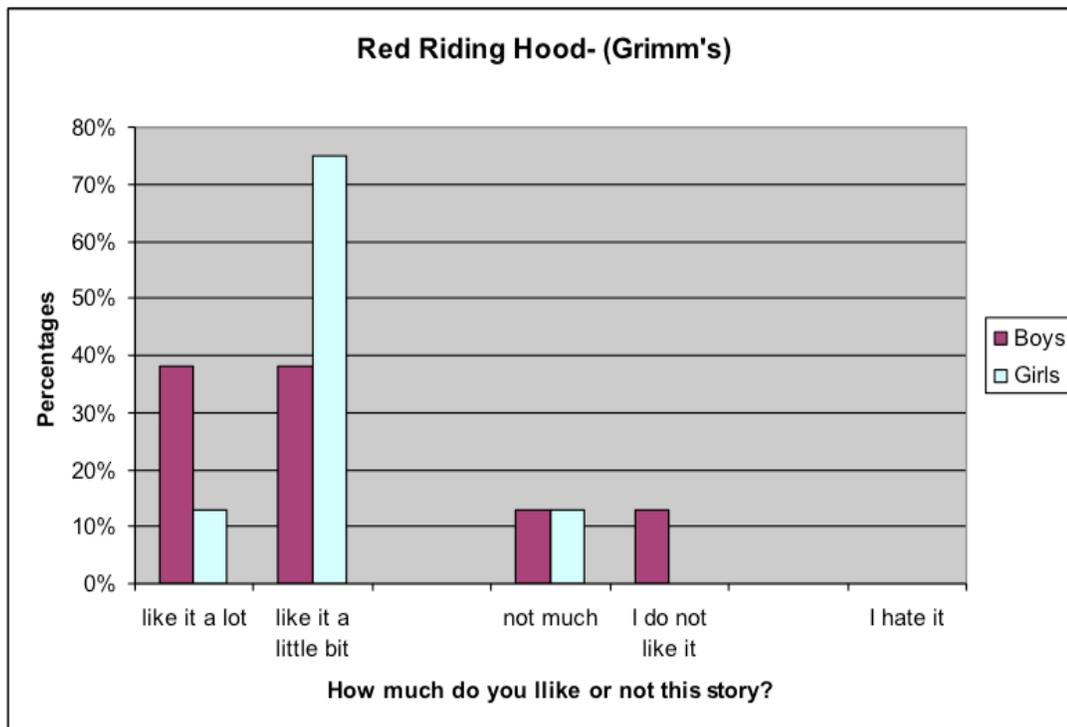
Moreover, though the theory of reading has not changed, it has evolved because "the process has shifted from the serial cognitive processing of linear print text to parallel processing of multimodal text-image information sources" (Luke 2003, p.399). Luke explains that children are no longer learning vertically (deductively or inductively) but "connectivity and hypertext environments demand horizontal or lateral cognitive mobility across disciplines, genres, modalities and, indeed, cultural zones" (Luke, 2003, p. 401). Learning is no longer limited to one place such as, classroom, library or one person coaching such as parent or teacher. However, being exposed to hypertext media is not sufficient for learning to take place. The social constructivist view of knowledge and learning "implies that learning occurs in situated sociocultural contexts and that knowledge is apprehended and appropriated in and through social interaction dialogue, negotiation, and contestation" (Luke, 2003 ,p. 398).

This research focuses on how 18 Lebanese boys and girls interpret the animated film *Hoodwinked*, a multi-media revision of Little Red Riding Hood. It focuses on the effect of cross media on children and analyzes their integrated experiences because these children were first told a story orally and then shown a film. To test out the integration of both linear print text and multi-media in classrooms, two versions of the story of Red Riding Hood, Grimm's *Little Red Cap* and the *Hoodwinked* movie, were employed with Grade 4 Lebanese students. Listening to story 1 and watching story 2 were not passive activities because students were engaged afterwards by answering questions. These students were from an American school in Beirut where students learn English, Arabic and French. Methods of collecting data included one-to-one interviews and questionnaires. Many questions come to mind: Do the assertive heroines appeal to both boys and girls? Are there any culture clashes when Lebanese children watch US pop culture? What is the difference in the reader response when children watch a film as opposed to listening to a story? Do the children understand the feminist messages embedded in the movie *Hoodwinked*?

In Grimm's story *Little Red Cap*, Red is asked to visit her ill grandmother in the forest and to take her some food. Her mother warns her not to talk to strangers. The wolf meets her and finds out where she is going. He distracts her with the flowers and makes her take the long road. Because Red does not listen to her mother, she is punished. The wolf takes the short cut and devours Red Cap's mother. Before Red arrives, he dresses up as the Grandmother. When Red arrives, the wolf eats her up. A hunter passing by cuts open the stomach of the wolf and saves Red and Grandmother. The wolf dies in the end. There is an additional episode to the Grimm tale where Red Cap meets a second wolf but this is not dealt with here. In the plot of *Hoodwinked*, the Police have been called upon to investigate what had happened at Granny's house. The candy recipes were stolen and many shops are out of business. Apparently, Red and Granny get attacked by the Wolf. The police interview Red, Wolf, Woodcutter and Granny and each one of them tells his/her version of the story. Eventually, the Rabbit turns out to be the one stealing the recipes and he gets arrested along with his team. *Hoodwinked* deconstructs the story in multiple ways by changing the encoded power relations, portraying intelligent, strong, assertive female characters, as the heroines, Red and her Grandma, are in a position of powerful active agents. Red is daring, adventurous, intelligent, assertive and ambitious. She is an audacious delivery girl who delivers cookies through the forest on her own. Overall Red is brave; she knows Karate and can defend herself when the wolf approaches her in the woods. Grandma is not like other traditional grandmas; she is a Superheroine. She has a tattoo on her neck and likes to live life to the extreme. She does extreme sports, bakes the best cakes and is able to depend on herself; she is the one who saves Red when the Rabbit captures her. The Woodcutter is not the saviour and only happens to be there when the Wolf attacks Grandma. Grandma trains three months for a snow sports competition; she wins a medal for the battle of the iron cage gladiators. The reason she does not tell Red about her activities is because she does not want her family to worry.

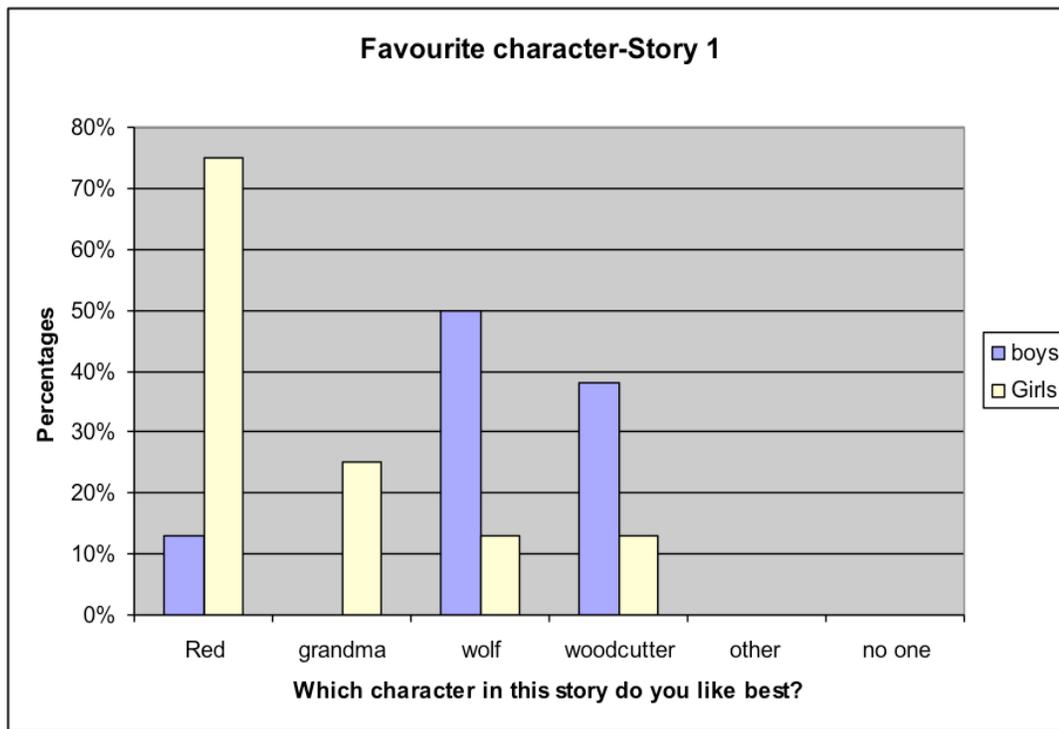
Results

Table 1 - Response to Story



In general, both girls and boys did not like Grimm’s classical story a lot. Only 38% of boys said they liked Grimm’s *Little Red Cap* a lot and only 12% of girls liked it a lot. With Grimm’s *Little Red Cap*, gender of the characters seems to influence the children’s choice of their favourite characters as boys and girls tend to choose characters with the same sex. Perhaps the text is offering a dominant reading or it encourages this male-female dualism. A majority of girls liked Red 1 and a majority of boys liked Wolf 1 and Woodcutter 1 because 75% of the girls chose Red 1 as their favourite character whereas the boys’ choices focussed on Wolf 1 (50%), and Woodcutter 1 (38%). Only 13% of boys chose Red 1 and 13% of girls chose Wolf 1. No boys chose Grandma 1 while 25% of girls did. To reinforce the gender duality phenomenon, when asked which character they liked best: Red 1 or Woodcutter 1, the majority of the girls (88%) chose Red 1 (the victim) and the majority of the boys (63%) chose Woodcutter 1 (the saviour). A minority of girls chose Wolf 1 (11%) and Woodcutter 1 (11%). 25% of girls chose Grandma 1 as their favourite character as opposed to none of the boys (Please see Table 2 below).

Table 2 - Favourite Character In Story



Response to *Hoodwinked*

However, this study shows that even though the Lebanese boys and girls have been exposed to US popular culture and are studying in an American School, they suffered from a culture clash when watching the movie *Hoodwinked*. Both boys and girls show ambivalence in their reactions; they both like and dislike the characters at the same time. Though boys and girls seem to like the movie *Hoodwinked*, in general the majority of both did not choose Red 2 as their favourite character. Nevertheless, when asked which Red they like more the one in the first or in the second, (94%) of both girls and boys claimed they liked Red 2. When asked which character the children liked best in *Hoodwinked*, 25% of girls liked Red 2, 13% of girls liked Grandma 2, 12% of girls like the Squirrel but a significant 50% of girls like the Singing Goat in story 2. More girls (25%) than boys (10%) choose Red 2 as their favourite character. However, boys' choices were scattered equally (30% of each) between the Wolf, Grandma 2 and the Goat with only 10% of boys liking Red 2. Furthermore, none of both girls and boys liked Woodcutter 2. None of the boys chose the Squirrel whereas 12% of girls chose him. The girls did not automatically choose Red 2 as their favourite character just because she is a girl as only 25% of girls chose her. Moreover, not many chose Grandma2 and half of the girls liked the funny Singing Goat the best. As for the boys, gender seems to affect their favourite choices even with feminist texts. Only a small percentage of 10% chose Red 2 as their favourite character. A large percentage of 30% of boys preferred the Wolf and the Goat.

When asked details about what they liked in the film, boys liked the action, mystery and teamwork. Girls seem to like the creativity, the re-vision and the ending. Both boys and girls focussed on the funny aspects, different perspectives, Grandma racing, Singing Goat, and Grandma saving Red. Furthermore, girls did not seem to like the ending of the first story and only 38% of boys liked it a lot. In the interviews some of the children say that they did not like the fact that in Story 1, Grandma 1 and Red 1 get eaten up by Wolf 1 and that Woodcutter 1 has to open up the stomach of Wolf 1 to save Grandma 1 and Red 1. However, both boys and girls seem to like the ending of the film. The main reason both girls and boys gave is that the Rabbit gets punished and goes to jail. Some girls and boys say they liked the film because it is a happy story and Grandma saves Red 2. Children said that they have learned various lessons from *Hoodwinked* such as not talking to strangers, listening to mother's advice and listening to different perspectives. Both boys and girls highlighted the lesson of not talking to strangers but girls seem to highlight more that a girl should obey her parents and listen to the different perspectives.

Also, the data shows that girls are more inhibited in expressing their ideas than boys. Some boys felt more free to talk about what they do not like and have the courage to change aspects of the story or film. When asked about what they would like to change in the first story the majority do not want to change anything; however, 25% of the boys suggested changing the ending to make it a sad ending

while another boy did not like the wolf eating up Grandma and Red. None of the girls suggested anything, though they also did not seem to like the first story much. This might suggest that more boys have the courage to say what they think. A similar question was asked in the second questionnaire enquiring about what they hate in the film. When asked what they hate about this movie, an almost equal number of boys 40% and (38%) of the girls say they hate nothing. Both boys and girls seemed to hate the Rabbit in that he was the villain. The boys hated when they catch Red 2, that the Rabbit went to jail, the happy ending, that Bunny is the suspect or the villain or thief. The girls hated when the guy with the axe comes through the window, that the Rabbit ties Red 2 up and that the Rabbit was a bad guy. Both boys and girls are accustomed to the Rabbit being cute, innocent and cuddly whether in real life or in stories, and this mirrors the process of connectivity and how children are linking texts to previous versions or information.

Moreover, not all children understood the feminist encoded messages in the movie *Hoodwinked*. For example, not all girls thought that Red 2 is 'braver' than Red 1, even though she plays karate and is able to defend herself against the Wolf. Red 2 is shown as scared in a number of instances but she gets over her fear and defends herself. For girls Red 2 is as good as Red 1, a lot cleverer and no necessarily that much braver than Red 1, whereas for boys Red 2 is a lot braver than Red 1, slightly more 'good' and a little cleverer than Red 1. On the one hand, girls do not perceive Red 2 as that much braver (60%) than Red 1 (43%) whereas all boys do. On the other hand, to boys Red 2 is not that much cleverer (60%) than Red 1 (28%) whereas all girls think so. Moreover, not many boys and girls describe Red 2 as beautiful and the same for Red 1. Only 12% of girls think Red 1 is beautiful but none of the boys think so. This could be interpreted in a positive way which is that they are not focusing on beauty which is one of the stereotypical attributes of the classical female heroines.

By offering multiple subject positions, this text allows both girls and boys to learn to position themselves from a different perspective, but when probed they take sides. None of the boys believed the wolf's story but the girls who are female seem to trust the males' perspective more, which to a certain extent shows domination of male authority and power. The stereotype of bad wolf is carried to Wolf 2. Even though the wolf is not bad in the revision, he is still perceived as so by many girls and boys. Initially, when asked to describe the character of the wolf, the majority of both boys and girls (61%) think that the wolf in this film is good. What is interesting is more boys (50%) than girls (38%) at the same time think that he is bad. This is significant because, as mentioned in the other findings, the stereotype of the bad wolf cannot be easily erased. Also from the interviews and data analysis, it turns out some boys confused Wolf 1 with Wolf 2 and at times think that Wolf 2 does try to eat Grandma 2 and Red 2. Boy 3 in the interviews confused story 1 with story 2 and thought that initially the wolf attempted to eat up Grandma but later on changes his mind: 'First his attitude was not good because he tried to eat the grandma but then when they all worked together he became very good.' (B3) These confusions between Wolf 1 and Wolf 2 illustrate the power of intertextuality and how the image of the big bad wolf cannot be erased.

Discussion

Though the majority of the children were not seeing *Hoodwinked* for the first time, they had also been exposed to several versions of Red Riding Hood before coming to class. Furthermore, these versions could have come from print based texts, television, DVDs, and the big screen or hypertexts from the internet as games, stories, video games, and animations. Therefore, the students show that they have access to 'multimodal text-image information sources'. At the same time, these children cannot but be affected by their socio-cultural background perceptions. These children have grown up with culturally defined gender-related values and norms and specific definitions of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'. At the same time, they have been exposed to the West and to western values and norms through the media, Internet and education. Even though Lebanese women are not as oppressed as other Arab women, the Lebanese society is patriarchal.

"While Lebanon's constitution guarantees equality to all citizens, the country's laws are multifaceted and tend to discriminate against women in practice. General patriarchal attitudes in Lebanese society also make it difficult for women to obtain upper-level positions in the public and private sectors and challenge women's efforts to advance their overall status. Nevertheless, women are active in most – including the economic, political, and social – aspects of Lebanese life" (Zaatari, 2005, p. 3)

Therefore, it is no surprise that the children have ambivalent positions. Lebanese girls seem to be

exposed to two conflicting messages: traditional and liberated; exposure to cross media reinforces this. Dabbous argues that "Lebanese viewers are exposed to dual messages as far as women portrayed in the media are concerned" (Dabbous, 2001, p. 26). She summarizes these messages as one coming from the west where "women are beautiful ornaments (a la James Bond Girls), threatening femmes fatales, but also and increasingly modern, assertive, liberated, and especially in control of their bodies and sexuality" (Dabbous, 2001, p. 26). The second message is coming from the conservative Arab Media with stereotypical traditional representations of women such as loving mothers and obedient daughters. She adds that "[e]ven when an Arab woman is portrayed as emancipated and assertive, with a career of her own, she is never so without staying virtuous and keeping her hymen intact" (Dabbous, 2000, p. 26). The western messages are mainly coming from the media but the traditional ones are coming from media and culture. These dual messages coming from cross media are causing Lebanese girls to suffer from conflicts because on the one hand the culture is telling them to behave in a certain way; at the same time the western media is dragging them into another. The boys as well seem to suffer from these dual messages because the messages coming from the west embody different definitions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'.

Children in this study showed that they suffer from a conflict when they are exposed to an American Popular Culture movie. This conflict is envisaged in their ambivalent responses to the movie *Hoodwinked*. To interpret the results, the children might consciously say they like Red 2 but unconsciously both girls and boys do not, or they might only admire her and cannot relate to her because she does not fit their cultural expectations and experiences. There are various explanations to this and if we focus on the boys' responses first, we can say that because she is female they cannot and 'should' not, according to the 'gender order', relate to her because she is a 'girl'. In the Lebanese culture, a girl is not expected to be that brave, assertive and powerful. To add, from the boy's point of view, "[i]ndependent princesses, [in this case females], might be a risk, even a threat, and get in the way of the hero continuing to do as he liked" (Westland, 1993, p.5). As for the girls, possible reasons why these girls do not admire Red 2 include that they cannot relate to her personally and they do not approve of her strong character. Girls are conditioned to perceive power as "fundamentally contradictory to the *idea* and the idealization of the idea of being female" (Davies 1989, p. 71). Furthermore, they are not used to seeing assertive females and especially athletic grandmas. The assertive female characters seem to threaten their status quo; a conflict is aroused because, though from the responses they claim they like them, when it comes to choosing their favourite character, they do not pick them. So though they might really like Red 2, they do not like her to the extent of publicly choosing her as their favourite. They may have been shown assertive women before, given the fact that they were going to be shown this movie anyway but maybe this exposure is not enough. This contradiction is saying at times they like Red 2 as their favourite character and at times they do not; this might be reflecting what poststructuralist theory suggests that our subject positions are changing and not constant, for instance they might like certain aspects about Red 2 but dislike other aspects such as the way she treats her grandmother.

The way some girls position themselves towards Red 2 is similar in a way to how boys position themselves towards Oliver in *Oliver is a Sissy*. Davies and Kasama (2004) argue that because Oliver is a sissy and it is not acceptable for Japanese boys to be one, the subject position of relating to him or 'identifying' with him is not available for them. To a certain extent, because Red 2 is assertive is the reason the girls cannot relate to her. The boys would not bluntly admit that they like her because they would be trying to 'occupy a subjection position' that is not meant to be for them or 'not available' to them. At first Japanese children in Davies' and Kasama's research rejected Oliver but later on they grew to approve of him once he is accepted by his parents, teachers and friends. In this study we cannot tell if the boys' and girls' attitudes towards Red 2 changed because the children were interviewed and questioned at the end of the film; however, they can have mixed feelings towards Red 2. These findings are reinforced in the interviews when some of the girls being interviewed expressed their like for Red 2 and did realize her strengths in character, but they did not seem *to identify* with her. To illustrate, some girls preferred Red 2 to Red 1; for example, Girl 1 thought that Red 2 was clever and she preferred her to Red 1; 'She is clever because she found out that the wolf is not her real grandmother and she is very nice because she forgave her grandmother'. She chose Red 2 along with the Squirrel as her favourite characters in this movie and would like to act the role of Red 2 in a school play. However, this does not mean that she fully identified with her. She did not want to be like Red 2 or Grandma 2 in real life because 'I would like to be like my own way'; she is self-confident and does not want to copy any role model. In the interviews Girl 2 also thought Red 2 was clever and brave. However, she did not like her when she got angry with her Grandma. This is a culture clash because it would not be acceptable in Lebanese society to behave this way; children are brought up to respect the elderly.

However, when asked what they thought of the way Red 2 talks to Wolf 2 in the second version, half of the children thought that she is brave, kind and respectful but the others thought she is 'mean' and 'rude' because 'he is not a bad person'. If we compare the boys' to the girls' responses, we find that 60% of the boys found her behavior acceptable and brave whereas only 50% of the girls did. This shows that though Red 2 was defending herself, a large number of both girls and boys did not approve of the self-defensive behavior. The reason they gave is because wolf 2 is good and not bad but Red 2 does not know this until the end. This might be viewed as a cultural clash because of the girls' disapproval of Red's behavior.

Another example of this ambivalence in their reaction is how girls and boys view Grandma 2. At times they say they prefer Grandma 2 to Grandma 1 and at other times they object to Grandma 2. There certainly are a number of grandmas in Lebanon who are in good health and might be practising sports, but the majority stay at home and are not very active. Overall boys like Grandma 2 more than Grandma 1; when asked it as a direct question, all boys and girls prefer Grandma 2 to Grandma 1. The majority of both boys and girls highlight how she is athletic, more active, does extreme sports and skis. The other reasons why children like her are: 'she is cool', 'she isn't eaten by the wolf', 'she is shown more in the movie', 'she knows how to fight', 'has yummy cookies', 'funny', 'clever', and 'opposite of other grandmas'. In the interviews the boys highlight liking the athletic side of the grandma. However data shows that 30% of boys choose Grandma 2 as their favorite character and only 13% of girls like Grandma 2. Again the cultural and gender aspects play a role in how boys relate to the characters because only 30% of boys choose the active Grandma 2. Boys would have related more to the grandma superheroine if she were a male. It seems the girls tend to prefer a traditional, more realistic grandma who bakes cakes and is passive rather than being athletic. Or another explanation as to why some girls and boys do not want to be like Grandma 2 when they grow old is because they do not approve of her behavior. When asked if they approve of the grandma skiing and riding bikes, 80% of boys and 75% of girls approved. The reasons some girls give to objecting are that "because a grandma is not active" and "they're old and it's kind of weird". So they do not think it is realistic because at their age, old grandmas would not be able to perform these actions, or it is unacceptable in the Arab society that they do so. This may be influenced by the fact that 44% of these children's grandmothers are above 60. They might be either really unhealthy, and certainly are not encouraged by the society to do such activities. The Grandma in the first version of the story is portrayed as weak, sick, passive, and hardly plays a role in this story other than being a victim; nevertheless, some girls like her.

The boys' positive response to 'athletic' Grandma could be conditioned by the superhero ethos that dominates films and anime/manga style animations. In Lebanon children are exposed to superheroes in mainly films and animations such as *Batman*, *Spiderman* or *Superman* and superheroines such as *WonderWoman*, *Catwoman* and *Bat Girl*. Japanese animations are not as popular in Lebanon as in other countries but to a certain extent children are also exposed to them such in *DragonBallz* and *Pokemon*. It is generally accepted that boys prefer these movies more than girls do. If we consider Grandma 2 as a superheroine because she saves Red and the world from the bad guys and she seems to have superhuman powers, this might suggest that boys seem to like superheroines more than girls. Grandma is good at skiing, skate boarding, water skiing and jumping from planes. She has won many medals. However, there needs to be more research done as to whether boys like superheroes more than girls and to find out how children relate to superheroes and superheroines. According to Bongco, "superheroes embody the two types of hero ... since they are usually endowed with a dual identity being simultaneously a super-power while also being 'one of us'" (Bongco, 2000, p. 91). The Grandmother in *Hoodwinked* embodies these two characteristics and this might be the reason why the responses are ambiguous. The children are thinking that she is 'one of them' but yet she is not like them, so they cannot identify with her. When children relate to the superhero, they relate to both the superhuman qualities and to the human side. Grandma 2 has a human side which is being passionate and caring for her grand-daughter. She loves baking cookies and telling stories. The girls seem to relate more to the human side than the heroic part. The girls do not seem to dream of having supernatural power to be able to rebel against society or fix the world; whereas boys do. People are looking for superheroes to save them and fight the bad guys. Martin in his article on "Children's attitudes toward superheroes as a potential indicator of their moral understanding" argues that "students' personal attitudes are positively related to their attitudes about superheroes" (Martin, 2007, p.11). Martin contends that "children may be drawn to superheroes not just because of their powers, but also because of the behaviour they promote." (Martin, 2007, p. 11) But the grandmother is much older than the girls and they do not see their grandmothers as like her. They cannot see themselves doing so at her age nor would approve of the behavior she is promoting. Red who is closer to their age is not a superheroine in this version because she does not possess superhuman powers, though she is assertive and strong. With the boys,

they seem to like Grandma 2 more because the boys are drawn to the activities and the sports that the athletic Grandma is practising. Furthermore, there is the additional possibility that the boys like playing video games which involve such activities more than the girls. They might just like this style of adventure more than the girls.

This study shows that children actually prefer watching a film to listening to a story and that being exposed to cross media literature is an enjoyable process. Finch in his Ph.D thesis *Children's Film Viewing Practices: A Qualitative Investigation into Engagement with a Feature Film* argues that "films embody practice and that children can learn from them" (Finch, 2008, p. 238). He adds that school teachers should acknowledge that "to appreciate that learning from and pleasure in televisual texts are closely related" (Finch, 2008, p. 239). Not only is exposure to cross media children's literature enjoyable, it is educative and enlightening. Luke contends that "media(ted) texts constitute children's first curriculum, often their initial entries into texts and textuality, and provide them with a common stock of cultural stories about social relations, power, gender and ethnic identities, and the worlds beyond immediate neighborhoods and communities" (Luke, 2003, p. 298). Reynolds sees children's literature as having a radical potential because it contributes to "the social and aesthetic transformation of the culture by, for instance, encouraging readers to approach ideas, issues, and objects from new perspectives and so prepare the way for change" (Reynold, 2007, p.1). Therefore, what stories we present our children will play a large role in building their identities and in changing their ways of thinking.

As a start the children under study were presented with a feminist revision of the tale. Cranny-Francis (1990) argues that feminist revisions of traditional fairy tales work as metafiction. "It is only by comparing these revisions with the traditional texts that a feminist reading position is constructed and gender ideologies encoded within the older tales made visible (94)" (cited in Crew, 2002, p. 92). Though the focus of this study is on Grimm's version and *Hoodwinked*, other versions of little Red Riding Hood will come into play here. *Hoodwinked* (2006) is an animated feminist film addressed to children, deconstructing Grimm's version and all the other versions of Little Red Riding Hood. It deals with "issues of subjectivity, agency, voice, autonomy, and power" (Parsons, 2004, p. 139). De Vos & Altman (1999) would classify this film as a parody and not a folktale because the main goal "is to upset the readers' previously formed expectations, and in the process challenge the inevitability of those expectations. That is, parody looks back, plays with a particular genre or narrative form to comment on that form and on the meaning that has already been made with it" (De Vos & Altmann, 1999, p. 27). This story expands the subject positions available for both boys and girls. It subverts the omniscient narrator of the classical story in order to show other perspectives where all characters get to tell their own perspectives and the children can choose to believe the version they want. Even if the children do not approve of certain behaviors of Red 2 or Grandma 2, they are at least exposed to more assertive protagonists, new perceptions, different cultures, traditions and they can compare and contrast, thus enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

Having said this, we have also to be aware that "the global cross-cultural information flow on the Internet and the global composition of many virtual communities (whether chat, gaming, special interest, or classroom communities) require new ways of thinking about transcultural communication in our 'readings' of and interaction with others from culturally diverse backgrounds" (Luke, 2003, p. 401). Just exposing our children to cross media on their own is not sufficient and teachers should play a major role in this process. "Computers and connectivity are but one resource among a platform of knowledge and communication sources that support, rather than drive, a critical learner-centered constructivist pedagogy, and teachers remain an indispensable component in this mix" (Luke, 2003, p. 399). Adequate teaching approaches should be utilized to supervise this exposure especially if this new text is coming with foreign ideologies.

Thinking laterally across associations, developing a meta-awareness of the links of paths taken and those passed over, backtracking along paths, reading and viewing hybridised old and new media genres and forms, and using a comprehensible meta-language to describe and discuss such practical reasoning with others ... these are the very rhizomatic conceptual and cognitive maps required to read through and think through localized branchings of larger global knowledge/ edge units. (Luke, 2003, p. 400/401)

For example, after watching the film together, adults should engage children with conversations to make sure that the children understand the film and the messages in it. The child is taught to think laterally across associations and compare/contrast messages in different stories. Finch (2008) finds out

that children learn a lot from multiple viewing and parents' guidance. Gordon Wells (1999) calls for dialogic inquiry, an educational approach based on a dialogue in teaching, which acknowledges the dialectic connection between the individual and society. He divides knowledge into four kinds of knowing: experience, information, knowledge building and understanding. Finch states that "[i]f viewers, after a first viewing or conversation about a viewing, actively integrate aspects of the film experience into their model of the world, then that 'knowledge building' and /or' understanding' will contribute to the interpretive framework they use to make sense of new experiences" (Finch, 2008, p. 47). "By contrast, in digitalized knowledge and networked environments, critical understandings of the *relations* among ideas, their sources and histories, intertextual referents and consequences, are as important if not more so than mastery, reproduction, and recombination of discrete facts or units of information" (Luke, 2003, p. 400). This can tell us that, in order for the Lebanese children to understand the feminist messages better and cope with the culture clash, multiple viewings and the mediation of an adult, whether it is the class teacher or parent, to explain and discuss issues is recommended. Further approaches to engagement with books can be done through the use of internet and the activities associated with it such as chat rooms, reviews, games, fan fiction and commentaries.

Conclusion

This study shows that even though the Lebanese boys and girls have been exposed to US popular culture and are studying in an American School, they suffered from a culture clash when watching the movie *Hoodwinked*. Both boys and girls show ambivalence in their reactions because some stereotypes and traditional aspects still influence their way of thinking, despite the exposure to western media and culture. As a result, more disruptive versions should be shown to these children, especially if change is required. To emphasise these effects, these versions should be shown multiple times and, if possible, with a presence of an adult to discuss the films at the end of the viewing. This study recommends that because children enjoy and are exposed to cross media everywhere, be it on the Internet, films or DVDs, parents and teachers should be cautious and try to employ appropriate teaching approaches. Teachers should train children to think "across associations, accessing and integrating knowledge laterally" (Luk, 2003, p. 401) to cope with this hypermedia age and the challenges of the 21st century with its digital multimedia aspects. So that educators can give adequate guidance and support to this evolving generation of new media and cross media readers, we need to explore the whole variety of ways that these readers interact with those media.

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