

Digital Landscapes: Rethinking Poetry Interpretation in Multimodal Texts

Hessa A. Alghadeer¹

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ABSTRACT

Regardless of the fact that a great deal of scholarly studies in the field of digital humanities have emphasized implementing various modes of digital literacy, critical perspectives considering the use of multimodal texts in literature, namely poetry, have received scant attention. Beyond the boundaries of printed texts and verbal means, the present study aims to cast some light on how meaning making in poetry into multimodal contexts becomes crucial to poetry interpretation in multimodal contexts. In particular, the study tackles the theory of multimodality in regard to the poetry genre and briefly reviews its significance in relevant studies. The paper then shifts to show how the multimodalities in question enhance the transformation of print-based poetic texts into creative multimodal poetry experiences. Ultimately, the study provides insight into how digital media have altered our perspectives on definitions, interpretations, and appreciation of poetry.

1. Introduction

The aesthetic value of poetry, along with the interaction among its semantic, syntactic, phonetic, and typographic components, distinguish this genre from other literary ones. There are numerous genres of poetry, including epics, elegies, sonnets, lyrics, and ballads. These poetic genres in turn deliver segments of beauty, valuable pieces of truth, and flashes of imagination. Therefore, it is essential to explore the shrouded mystery of poetry in regard to what it is supposed to convey to the reader in relation to the world of the imagination and the actual world. From this perspective, it is vital to ask what any given poem means to communicate or what impact the poem has in relation to our daily experience. More significantly, we need to ask how a poem can be interpreted so that it has a memorable effect while also generating sustainable appreciation of its meaning, imagery, and sensual or emotional aspects.

In recent years, several notable studies have discussed how literature, particularly poetry, is vital to our experience of living and knowledge of the world. Hughes (2007), among others, observes that poetry holds a central place in our lives, “not only for the aesthetic pleasure” but also for “its ability to awaken our senses, connect us with ourselves and others” (para.3). On tackling other crucial aspects of understanding literary discourse, Stockwell (2002), the author of the notable book, *Cognitive Poetics: An Introduction*, highlights the linkage between appreciation of the significance of literary subject matter and the analysis of a literary text itself when he observes, “[the] key to understanding issues of literary value and status and meaning lies in being able to have a clear view of text and context, circumstances and uses, knowledge and beliefs” (4). In fact, this rigorous blend of literary issues and their definitions, which Stockwell(2002)indicated earlier, is essential to the process of poetic meaning making.

By a similar token, according to ShiraWolosky (2001), poetry is perhaps an approach to figures of speech that conjures diverse meanings. In her book, *The Art of Poetry: How to Read a Poem*, she explains that poetry is “a language of figures, in which each component can potentially open toward new meanings, levels, dimensions, connections, or resonances” (p. 3). In his article, “From Concrete to Visual Poetry, with a Glance into the Electronic Future,” Dencker (2000) asserts that poetry “can enter creatively and innovatively into interactive communications models” (para. 46). This argument leads us to reconsider other theories of analysis that exist outside the margins of traditional printed poetic texts and that bring about more thorough modes of meaning making in poetry. The journey from traditional printed poetic texts to digital multimodal contexts thus leads to a fertile research area of interest to several scholars and theorists who delve into interactive meaning making in poetry and its remarkable impact.

¹ Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

2. Review of literature

In light of the previously mentioned complex elements associated with the poetry genre and the considerable impact this genre has on our lived experience, a number of theorists and scholars examine the ways in which poetry elements are meant to be manipulated in proper contexts—a subject that in itself negotiates the essence of poetry interpretation. In academic circles, for instance, numerous investigations have been launched into literary and cultural forms of creative writing—poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction—that embrace literary theories, specifically psychological, historical, mythological, and sociological ones. However, due to the interrelations of these texts with culture, people, and tradition, their meanings are multifaceted, and, fundamentally, none of the above-mentioned approaches proves adequate in our digital world. Only in recent years have a number of studies begun to introduce innovative theories on poetry interpretation in the digital age.

On reviewing a selection of these studies, one may encounter painstaking efforts that focus on how electronic technologies can be utilized to further linguistic, stylistic, aesthetic, and analytical aspects of meaning making. The act of transforming the printed poetic text into a digital text suggests that “exploring and experimenting with it in a new medium can offer insights into and shifts of meaning” (Tweddle, et al., 1997: 54). In this domain, a few influential studies, such as those by McVee, et al. (2008), and Kress (2001), describe a variety of modes and practices that have been implemented for interpreting print-based poetic texts while representing and appreciating their complex components. In regard to the challenges facing literature in the digital world, Koskimaa (2007) argues that a dual challenge stems from literature’s status as transcending the boundaries between books and the stage, in newspapers, as part of oral performances, and, more remarkably, in electronic media contexts. This dual challenge involves both acknowledging and maintaining the specificity of the literary discourse and undermining the overall media landscape, including various media forms (6).

Building on what Koskimaa (2007) indicates above, Block (2007), in his article titled “Digital Poetics or on the Evolution of Experimental Media Poetry,” attempts to bridge the gap between poetics and digital technology when he draws a thoughtful comparison between the two. He further posits that “digital texts as experimental poetry always lie somewhere in between. Literally, they are media poetry, open texts aimed at complex medial, communicative and cognitive processes” (242). In his article “Powered Words: Making Poetry with Words in a World of Images,” Marques (2012) identifies a fundamental issue when he suggests that “the abstract meanings composed and juxtaposed in the form of intricate vocabulary” of poetry must be “rendered into interesting alternatives to the old art of making written poetry” (4, 1). He further remarks that these alternations precisely reveal our “obsession for a more immediate, more precise, perhaps even more real, and definitely more global, visual knowledge” (1). Likewise, poetry, with its wide-ranging interdisciplinary nature, has been a particular focus of research on active meaning making. In his study “Power of Posting Poetry” (2007), McVerry indicates that the nature of the poetry genre, with its primary concentration on imagery, “offers a wonderful opportunity to develop awareness . . . about the role of multimedia in meaning-making” (53).

More significantly, in his influential book, *Literacy in the New Media Age*, Kress (2003) observes that literacy requires an understanding of how texts are initially composed. Since screens—those of TVs, computers, cell phones, and other such devices—are currently reshaping our communication practices, he asserts that these texts—along with a variety of other forms of representation, including linguistic, visual, aural, and spatial—must merge to convey to the reader the author’s idea, which lies beneath the lines and techniques he or she employs to represent it. Likewise, in considering the rapid technological and related societal changes we have witnessed in the last two decades, Kress believes that “the landscape is being remade and our need for a new theory of meaning is utterly significant” (Kress, 1998: 59).

3. Multimodality: theory into practice

On discussing recent influential theories on meaning making, multimodality has become a rapidly growing interdisciplinary field (Jewitt, 2005). This field of study is primarily concerned with a wide range of disciplines of semiotic modes that communicate meaning, “from folk costume to poetry, from traffic signs to classical music, from fashion to theatre” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001: 1). As such, multimodality has been conceived as “the experience of living; we experience everyday life in multimodal terms through sight, sound, movement” (Gibbons, 2012: 8). Notably, multimodality is also engaged with the study of texts that

usually “use an increasing variety of materials and to cross boundaries between the various art, design and performance disciplines,” as Kress and van Leeuwen state (1). From this perspective, literary texts are multimodal, as they incorporate multiple semiotic verbal and visual modes within the fabric of their narratives, a fact that calls for “urgent and even more relevant” academic research from multimodality perspectives (Gibbons, 2012: 8).

On exploring definitions of the term multimodality, Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) assert that it is “the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined” (20). Others, like Gibbons (2012), suggest that it is “the coexistence of more than one semiotic mode within a given context” (8). Other scholars have described multimodality in conjunction with digital technology, like O’Halloran (in press; 4), who suggests in her article, “Multimodal Analysis and Digital Technology,” that “[d]igital technology provides a common platform for semiotic resources to combine and unfold in new and innovative ways” (4). In fact, the ongoing emergence of new digital technologies and the breadth of available software applications not only nurture but also sustain our knowledge of the evolving expansion of digital contexts that the contemporary literary scene usually undermines (Hughes, 2007). Regardless of the great number of scholarly studies in the field of the digital humanities (O’Halloran, 2010; Royce, et al., 2006; Ventola, et al., 2004) that have emphasized multimodal analysis, especially the technique of multimodal discourse analysis, critical perspectives regarding multimodal texts in poetry have received inadequate attention.

The present paper aims to cast some light on how active meaning making, in engaging with poetry in multimodal contexts, becomes crucial to interpreting traditional poetic texts. In particular, it tackles the theory of multimodality in regard to poetry interpretation to demonstrate how active meaning making transforms printed poems into myriad vibrant patterns of meaning. More explicitly, the study focuses on certain visual representations in interpreting print-based poetic texts and draws several conclusions, showing how these multimodal texts create, interpret, and represent several layers of meaning in the traditional printed poetic form. The study therefore seeks to provide insight into how digital media have altered the way we define, analyze, and appreciate poetry.

4. Poetry interpretation and multimodal landscapes

Reflecting on poetry, Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) once wrote, “Poetry lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world, and makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar” (2002:642). Many poets highlight the roles of poems’ intricate elements, including language, figures of speech, sound, and how they illuminate this urgent sense of unfamiliarity, as Shelley (2002) claims. Numerous poets focus on the power of language and how it generates its emotional impact on the reader, among them Adrienne Rich (1929-2012), who suggests that “[p]oetry is above all a concentration of the power of language, which is the power of our ultimate relationship to everything in the universe” (as cited in Keyes, 2008: 162). Other poets describe the genre of poetry on the basis of its aesthetic qualities, like Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1568), who describes poetry as “a speaking picture” (as cited in Dundas, 1993:22). Similarly, several scholars attempt to examine and explore what these poets have described, among them Torres (2005) who attributes “this sense of vagueness” to “a blending of contrasts,” and continues to explain:

[I]n poetry, there is not a clear distinction between abstract and concrete, ideal and material, or general and particular Poetry is thus circumscribed only by indeterminacy, and it is this indeterminacy which makes of poetry an expressive medium to speak the unutterable. (1)

In so far as poetry interpretation is concerned, digital multimodal landscapes evoke potentially lifelong creative experiences in our dynamic digital world. The observations Dymoke and Hughes (2009) make regarding these modalities are worth mentioning here:

We only have to think of how poetry is embedded in the rhythms of everyday life through lyrics, tweets and text messages, through street talk, protest rallying calls, football songs and advertising jingles and to consider how it is performed at slams, open-mike events and broadcast on YouTube and accessed through websites like the Poetry Archive to be aware that poetry is a playful, multimodal living medium rather than one which should be stranded forever on the printed page. (93)

Hence, when interpreting digital multimodal poetry, several design elements—visual images, animation, sounds, movements, fonts, colors, and printed texts—contribute to the analysis of the abstract meanings of print-based poems. These elements require reliance on internal and external associations between verbal and visual entities to remake poetic texts. In this manner, diverse modes of “modalities—visual, aural, gestural, spatial, and linguistic—generate multiple aspects of meaning making. Significantly, visual modalities can display or illustrate the relationships between and among other digital text elements; according to Kress, “the visual is a vastly more efficient mode for carrying and processing great amounts of information” (1998: 55). More notably, Mitchell (1995) remarks that it has become quite inevitable not “to keep visuality and visual images out of the study of language and literature” (542). From these perspectives, theorists have often considered the integration of visual and print media a conspicuous or key feature of the multimodal landscape (Kress, 2003).

5. Exploring digital modalities: Poetic texts remade

In practice, I manipulate the poetic texts in this study considers, treating them not as dry, motionless, and ambivalent poetic bits and pieces, but rather as interactive, mobile texts in my attempt to uncover the hidden beauty of the lines, images, and words within an array of visually stimulating digital scenes. In the following section, I will focus on a selection of multimodal contexts in which poetry interpretation is articulated. I will bring to light how these digital landscapes are created through multiple actions, as illuminated by Kress: “stretch, change, adapt, modify the elements and thereby change the whole set of representational resources” (1998: 68). Here, it is important to note that I will place further emphasis on visual modes in multimodal contexts to explore how active meaning making in poetic texts contributes to poetry interpretation in digital landscapes.

From a multimodal perspective, the study seeks to examine the works of a number of famous poets, including Richard Wright (1908-1960), John Clare (1793-1844), Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), Robert Herrick (1591-1674), Langston Hughes (1902-1967), Amy Lowell (1874-1925), T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), and Adrienne Rich (1929-2012), who combine verbal and visual aspects in a way that transforms their poems into raw multimodal material. The selected extracts of poems maintain their visual integrity, creating interactive images that vividly deliver these poems’ meanings. I will highlight a number of proposed visual representations in interpreting the undertaken poetic texts. Among the most remarkable multimodal texts used in active meaning making are Twitter and haiku, Instagram and photograph poems, Prezi and virtual poetry, poetry with Movie Maker, poetry blogs, poetry prompts, digital collage poetry, and online poetry posters.

5.1 Twitter and haiku

It is only recently that Twitter has gained worldwide popularity as a creative literary milieu. Alongside the sharing of and responding to each other’s poems within instant clusters of tweets, Twitter can be used to compose as well as interpret a variety of micro poems. Brief tweets in the form of haiku, a type of poetic verse known for its brevity, can be created, posted, and exchanged. In *The Classic Tradition of Haiku: an Anthology*, Bowers (1996) notes that “haiku do tell a story and paint a vivid picture, leaving it up to the reader or listener to draw the meanings out and complete them in the mind’s eye” (viii-ix). This kind of poetry relies largely on imagery to convey layers of meanings to the reader, as it explicitly provokes sensual experiences. Many poets wrote haiku, among them Ezra Pound (1885- 1889), Richard Wright (1908-1960), and e. e. cummings(1894- 1962).

Through a chain of four thousands haiku, Wright captures not only the essence of the beauty of nature, one aspect of his haiku, but also the affinity between human beings and nature when he writes, “I am no body/A red sinking autumn sun/ Took my name away” (as cited in Zheng, 2011: 24, 1-3). The speaker, who presumably belongs to the Black American minority, reflects on his nameless identity and insignificant social status. This haiku depends on a series of images to disclose the theme of its three lines. The poetic text can be interpreted through interactive visual modalities, such as the appending of digital images like photos of a Black American community, abstract paintings conveying alienation, graphics suggesting the season of Autumn or that of a gloomy sunset, the verbal meanings of symbols like “the red sinking autumn sun” and their associations in regard to the ideas with which this poetic text grapples. In this manner, Twitter provides a fertile environment where a host of digital modalities are fused together, resolving the complexity of diction, technique-related aspects, and the abstract concepts of poetry.

Additionally, Twitter constitutes online communities that keenly develop a sense of collective identity, promote reflective discussion, and improve critical reading and creative writing in engagement with and exploration of traditional poetic texts. It is only currently that Twitter's delivery of a selection of topics related to poetry has gained traction through hash tags, as in the case of famous poems about politics and patriotism. These factors enhance Twitter's value as an ideal virtual locale and community where, for instance, poems are being made into interactive digital texts, such as "Written in March" by William Wordsworth (1770-1850), "The Sick Rose" by Robert Herrick (1591- 1674), and others.

5.2 Instagram and photograph poems

Besides Twitter, Instagram is a popular social media site on which users can create a web profile that includes personal photographs and biographical information. Notably, Instagram facilitates taking pictures and sharing them on other social networking services, including Twitter and Facebook. These features are more creative when implemented while interpreting or annotating original poems, engaging in active meaning making, and interweaving visual experiences to design stimulating digital poetic texts. In effect, the linkages between texts and digital photographs are diverse in relation to literary interpretation. The photograph, in a specific sense, reflects or rather mirrors reality (Roberts, 2011: 12). However, through aligning numerous digital snapshots to appropriate poetic texts, several meanings, intricate sorts of emotions, and overwhelming experiences can emerge that help us to explore the multiple identities we embrace.

Thus, through merging poetic text with digital image, we are likely to begin negotiating the semiotic possibilities that lie behind the act of interpreting text-image, essentially responding to the question, "what do we see when looking at a portrait of ourselves?" Or, perhaps we should instead ask, "how do we see and what might the act of looking also be?" While our image is "caught," what is it to be "captured" (Roberts, 2011: 14)? In this light, Instagram offers a fertile landscape for seeking compelling answers to these questions, present in various digital modes that construct and produce new digital modalities as they interpret target poetic texts. On remaking the poem "I am" by John Clare (2004), the speaker in this six-line stanza depicts melancholic emotions from loss of identity through loneliness and depression:

I am: yet what I am none cares or knows,
My friends forsake me like a memory lost;
I am the self-consumer of my woes,
They rise and vanish in oblivious host,
Like shades in love and death's oblivion lost;
And yet I am! and live with shadows tost (361, 1-6)

In terms of the thematic concerns of this poem, the poet describes the split of the self from different profiles: that of the poet, the other, and the work of art itself. In this context, the speaker/poet dissolves into his poetic creation through the collaboration of several semiotic modes. Since the poem addresses a communal experience that readers probably share with the poet, its sentiments can be expressed through personal photos, text files, information, visual images, graphics, and drawings. Beside what the visual images—including "oblivious host," "shades in love," and "shadows tost"—may evoke, the music and rhythm of the lines contribute to bringing the poem to real life. In this spirit, the final digital product becomes more engaging when it appears in correlation with relevant audio and video clips, sounds, and other musical works. Further reflections on the product—the digital text—may be utilized through relevant contents or materials, applications, and other interactive links. Mixing these numerous multimodal contexts together to (re-)create the text as a new digital one yields to layers of meaning through investigating, analyzing, criticizing, and modifying the original print-based text. Hence, using these visual modalities paves the way to "explore, interpret, critique, and reflect on both the words of the writer and the images selected to enhance the text" (Calo, 2009: 3).

5.3 Prezi and virtual poetics

Beyond the limits of paper books of poetry and literary criticism, multimedia resources incorporate abundant collections of literary manuscripts, rare primary resources, authentic printed works, out-of-print publications, and other forms of art. Prezi, a virtual canvas and set of tools for preparing fluid and dynamic presentations using multimedia resources, enables the navigation of different literary genres, images, fonts, colors, video clips, and other presentation media. In contrast to the static slides and linearity of Power Point, Prezi allows new poetic text makers to edit, rotate, zoom in and out, size and stretch their presentations using other media applications. The text movements offered by this cloud-based presentation software

generate multiple new paths of meanings for the source poem. Müller and Rubik (2005) agree with this portrayal when they claim that “in most cases the movement reinforces or ‘performs’ the meaning of a word or a phrase. Generally speaking, physical mobility of the text stresses the fluidity and instability of meaning” (310).

Interdisciplinary digital texts are viable experiences on Prezi. In the space of its multidimensional presentations, two different genres—for instance, poetry and fiction—can be juxtaposed from a number of perspectives, including setting, main idea, problem, climax, and resolution, among others. As this indicates, digital poetic texts enhance the wealth of multidisciplinary knowledge within a variety of academic disciplines; for instance, they might facilitate a comparison of two different literary periods, such as the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, with their different socio-cultural and artistic milieus, perhaps comparing the loss of religious faith and human misery in “Dover Beach” by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) to the destruction of war and human violence in “September 1, 1939” by W. H. Auden (1907-1973). In this spirit, Prezi indicates that eras, past, present, and future, can be rapidly crossed on a whim, bridging the gap between histories, religions, and cultures. A pair of well-known poems that benefit from this kind of comparison are “I Look into My Glass” and “To Daffodils.” The following lines are borrowed from the former poem, written by Thomas Hardy (1994):

I look into my glass,
And view my wasting skin,
And say, “Would God it came to pass
My heart had shrunk as thin!” (72, 1-4)

Robert Herrick (1823) wrote the second poem in which the speaker also meditates on the brevity of human life:

Faire Daffodils, We weep to see
You haste away so soon;
And yet the early rising sun
Has not attain’d his noone.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the even-song;
And, having pray’d together,
We will goe with you along. (174-175, 1-10)

Both poets articulate the theme of mortal beauty and brevity of life, treating their poems as visual units and artistic designs that configure the sensitivity of emotions and the solidarity of poetic expressions. The lines blend the verbal with the visual and the auditory with the graphic. In this manner, their poems work as innovative products that merge poetry with media and vice versa. In addition to this, readers can engage with new digital experiments via Prezi, which has the capability to show how poetic devices (simile, metaphor, paradox, and personification) add to the clarity and depth of these poems’ addressed theme. People and daffodils share a similar destiny, and the comparison of the brevity of the life of “daffodils” with that of human beings can be evoked inserting live YouTube clips via Prezi, along with the use of personal photos analogous to images of, for example, “the wasting skin.” In fact, the flexible functionality of Prezi nurtures awareness of how various digital modes complement one another over the course of recreating digital texts that support the integration of meaning and imagery.

5.4 Poetry movie maker

The dialogue between poetry and multimodality seems beyond dispute, specifically when we consider Movie Maker. The act of remaking a poem using a Movie Maker design may vividly correspond to the reflections of Robert (2011) on text and image:

[H]ow we associate one memory (of a person, event, feeling, piece of music, conversation, place, etc.) with another, are intricate and varied, and are used to “compose” our “life” and sense of self. Some forms of connection allow for more self-agency . . . The connections we make in joining our life-experience may be rhetorically summarized in metaphor or simile. (19)

In terms of visual culture, Movie Maker alters ambiguous phrases, complex allusions, and ambiguous figures of speech in the source poem by incorporating them into an inter-media experiment. Furthermore, it plays a considerable role in nurturing our understanding of what the poetics attempt to address and accomplish. It

is a visual segment that alters the poetic text into an appealing, hybrid critical experience. In this sense, we should bear in mind the fact that “poetry upholds the creation correspondences, opening up discourse of dynamic recreation of meanings” (Torres, 2005: 2).

Movie Maker becomes a stimulating, nonlinear representation of interpretations of obscure poetry. In practice, a poem like T.S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land” (2010), which is known for its complexity and allusiveness, can be broken down into smaller visual poetic scenes to inspire new possibilities for active meaning making within a multitude of digital explorations and applications:

After the torchlight red on sweaty faces
After the frosty silence in the gardens
After the agony in stony places
The shouting and the crying
Prison and palace and reverberation
Of thunder of spring over distant mountains
He who was living is now dead
We who were living are now dying
With a little patience. (78,1-9)

Composing an effective poetic movie that corresponds to the above lines, using video clips from political documentaries and sound effects resembling “shouting” and “crying,” not only captures the mood of the poem but also adapts the experience of the source poem to other social experiences, including those relevant to individuals and those involving certain significant events. The visual associations made through using personal digital photos or open-copyright photos from Flickr generate new semantic dimensions that bring to life the poem’s images, such as the “red torchlight” and “sweaty faces,” and even abstract ones, such as “frosty silence.” In effect, Movie Maker works not as a mere digital artifact but rather an aesthetical microcosm of portraits that highlights the conceptions of a literary text, its appropriate visual connotations, and their relevance to our concrete world. Moreover, Movie Maker serves as a sturdy bridge between the work of art, its author, and its audience, combining these three elements of the formula to produce a distinct visual creation.

5.5 Poetry blogs

Another multimodal context that provides rich means of active meaning making is that of poetry blogs, which permit and facilitate productive poetic analysis. Similar to other literary bloggers, poetry bloggers convene with poets, artists, writers, and critics in a virtual forum to exchange views on poetic craft and trends. Some poetry blogs provide links to a wide range of online resources, including audio archives of poetry readings, multimedia archives of illustrations and manuscripts, photos and video clips, anthologies, critical essays, interviews, and lectures. In this sense, these blogs serve as fine multimodal contexts where poems can be simultaneously and instantly redesigned through existing online resources and against a backdrop of thoughtful literary critiques on digital output. As an example, when dealing with a digital text on “Women in Poetry,” one might search poetry blogs and select some notable women poets, such as Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), Sylvia Plath (1932-1963), Anne Sexton (1928-1974), and Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979). Common features of these texts that bloggers might have manipulated or annotated include themes, imagery, and other poetic techniques; blogs might include audio-visual tips on how to extract elements from manuscripts; or post online lectures related to the poets.

More significantly, online discussion threads on Twitter, Facebook, and other engaging social media sites might offer several helpful views on meaning making in the printed poetic texts. The final digital text may be posted to elicit further interpretations in dissimilar cultural contexts as well as personal perspectives. Accordingly, the interpretations will differ according to bloggers’ ability to assemble a coherent analysis of the printed text using the appropriate digital modalities, argument, personal accounts, and so forth. In practice, a poem like “I, too, sing America” by Langston Hughes is a social critique of racism and issues of ethnicity that can constitute a viable digital creation:

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong. (Rampersad, 2001: 95, 1-6)

A hash tag can be created on Twitter to refer to the theme of discrimination and an excerpt from Hughes's poem, like this one, could be posted; followers of the tag could then reflect on this digital product and post their comments, ideas, and related links. The topic will become more tangible as followers share personal, real world experiences and explore, develop, and exchange new modalities to communicate the meanings they have already personally discovered.

5.6 Poetry prompts and digital collage poetry

Other digital landscapes offer innovative modalities in which to practice creative writing; for example, "poetry prompts" help to educate, inspire, and encourage beginners to generate ideas and compose original meanings for the sake of interpreting a poetic piece. In terms of suggesting abstract concepts and poetic diction, this multimodal medium enables the reader to better understand, foster, and project new styles of literary interpretation. Many free online poetry prompt websites exist, and, sometimes, prompts appear on screen as (digital) flashcards that help the text makers probe the meaning beneath the surface of the poetic text. Additionally, poetry prompts contribute to familiarizing the obscure parts of poems and activating other semantic configurations. Likewise, digital collage poetry, stimulated by the initial drafts of poems, may have great creative design potential.

A collage poem is another visual composition that transforms a source poem into a stimulating piece of art. "Autumn" is a poem by the well-known imagist poet Amy Lowell (2002) into which collage can be incorporated to transform its lines into an inspiring artistic representation:

All day I have watched the purple vine-leaves
Fall into the water.
And now in the moonlight they still fall,
But each leaf is fringed with silver. (28, 1-4)

The remarkable aspect of collage poetry is its fusion of the verbal and visual and the abstract and concrete materiality of the text itself. In this sense, it juxtaposes a selection of words, phrases, sketches, citations, and animations to evoke expressive meanings. The collage piece resulting from the above lines would probably function as a matrix or, rather, an experiment in what lies behind the conventions of theme and diction, let alone form. In regard to remaking the meaning of the above lines, the movement of "leaves," or what this action signifies, and how the relationship between the speaker and act of "falling" is meditated on in the collage text are actually key components. In this manner, the collage poem becomes a hypertext where word, image, and sound overlap and introduce immediate interpretations as a result.

5.7 Online poetry posters

Among the other effective modalities for digital poetry interpretation are free online poetry poster design programs. These digital contexts conjure up new paths for creative expression and enhance literary knowledge. Apart from their aesthetic possibilities, poetry posters may be utilized to define literary terms of art, such as personification, allegory, and parody or to identify poetic forms like ballads, sonnets, or elegies. Interactive posters hence yield subtle interpretations of poems, as they incorporate research methods, online conversation, and literary innovation. In her significant poem, "For the Record," Rich portrays the agonies of the Vietnam War and the destruction it perpetuated on humanity and nature:

The clouds and the stars didn't wage this war
the brooks gave no information
if the mountain spewed stones of fire into the river
it was not taking sides
the raindrop faintly swaying under the leaf
had no political opinions. (Williams, 1987: 375, 1-6)

The lines revolve around a cluster of figures of speech to illustrate the poem's gloomy theme. The speaker depicts the scene of war and uses multiple kinds of personification to portray how nature itself feels sorrowfully about the hostilities of irrational political conflicts. Through various layouts and colorful captions, the digital poster may alter the printed text by incorporating interactive pictures of myriad scenes; depicting elements of nature, including clouds, stars, and brooks; and showing how these elements are personified, treated as if they are people who detest wars and fatal confrontations. The interpreter may picture mountains as if they were people who "spewed stones of fire into the river" to dramatize the feeling of anguish associated with these shocking events. In this manner, the resulting multimodal poster design not only brings to bear the complex meanings of personification but also enables the text maker to tap into his or

her critical thinking abilities in identifying for the reader the layers of meaning underneath these figures of speech.

6. Conclusion

In our journey from traditional to digital landscapes, it is crucial that we maintain the poetry's spirit as a prominent literary genre while at the same time preserving its visual facets in relation to contemporary media and culture. Regardless of position as one of the oldest literary genres, its interdisciplinary nature effectively facilitates fluid multimodal analysis, enabling a modern vision of poetics in the age of new media and online communication. In conclusion, each digital mode discussed so far—Twitter, Instagram, Prezi, Movie Maker, poetry blogs, poetry prompts, poetry collage, and poetry posters—has been shown to provide several paths for active meaning making by stretching, changing, adapting, and modifying multiple modalities. These numerous digital texts hence recreate visual interpretations of poetry's semantic components and aesthetic features within hybrid digital landscapes.

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