Teaching digital writing through digital literature

Case studies in schools, universities
and Digital Public Spaces

BTH, 06/ 15 / 2011

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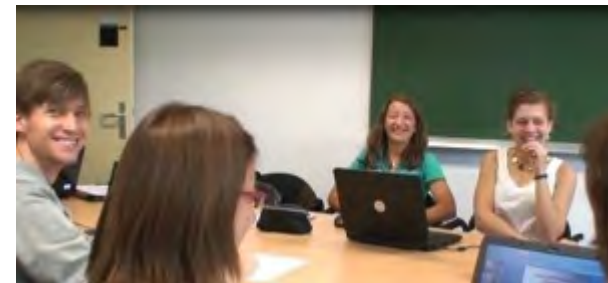University of Technology of Compiegne, France

1 – The Project

1- The PRECIP Project

PRECIP (PRatiques d'ECriture Interactive en Picardie)
 precip.fr

=> teaching digital writing…
(notably) through digital literature

15 researchers, 4 labs

The PRECIP Project

Goals of the project

analysing and supporting the development of digital writing practices (whether hypertextual, multimedia, collaborative…).

Scientific goal

unveiling the specificities of digital writing as well as the skills that need to be taught to master it.

Operational goal

developing innovative digital writing practices in Education and lifelong learning.

Postulates

• Digital writing is a specific form of writing.

• Its specificity lies in the properties of the theoretical level of the digital, namely discretisation and manipulation (Bachimont, 2007).

•These properties can be taught.
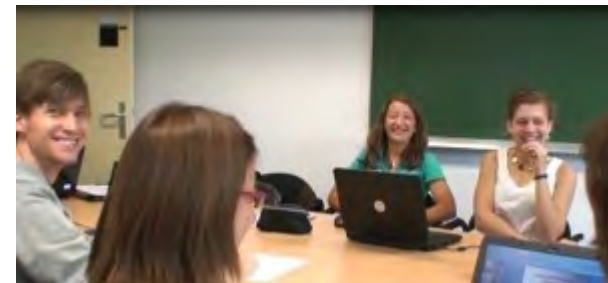
Research question

Can an understanding of the theoretical level of the digital and the analysis of creative practices – both requiring reflexivity – have an impact on the quality of digital writing practices?

Hypotheses

On the theoretical level of the digital:
The understanding of the theoretical level of the digital provides the reflexivity needed to develop digital writing practices and to build meaning on them.

On creative practices:
The analysis and practice of **digital literary works** provides reflexivity on digital writing practices.

Stages of the project

- **Stage 1: Unveiling the specificities of digital writing**
  - Conception of a three-level model

- **Stage 2:
  Proposing modalities to teach these specificities**
  - Conception of teaching modules
  - Experimentation through teaching
  - Observation, collection and analysis of data

- **Stage 3: Making recommendations to the institutions**

2 – Theoretical stage

A three-level model of the Digital

Theoretical, applicative and interpretative levels

- Level 1: " What can be theorized about the Digital?"
- Level 2: " What purpose can be served by the applications?"
- Level 3: " What can be expressed by the contents?"
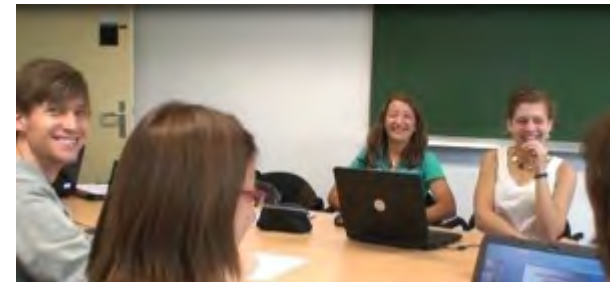
The 3 levels of the Digital

- Digital writing practices bring into play:
  - the theoretical possibilities of the Digital (theoretical level)
  - the applicative potential (applicative level)
  - the expressive potential of the contents (interpretative level)

- Example :
  Collaborative writing (level 3) relates to the visible **transformation** of contents on the screen (level 2), which presumes that any digital content is **manipulatable** (level 1).

Map of level 2 : http://precip.fr/map
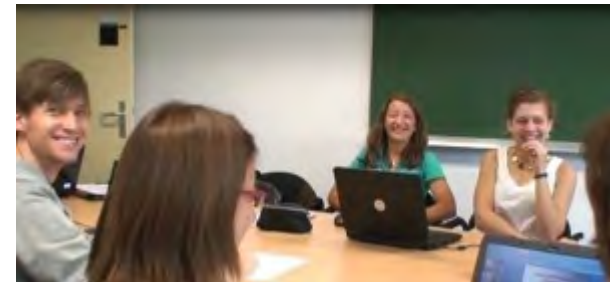
The 3 levels and digital literature

- Digital literature can *reveal* the tensions between the different levels of the Digital.

3 –Experimentation

Teaching Modules

Six modules:

- Hypertextual writing
- Multimedia writing
- Interactive writing
- Collaborative writing
- Writing with templates
- (social) Network writing

Écriture collaborative

A. Venus Poetry

> **Objectifs**
>
> - Visualiser comment la propriété de transformation permet d'écrire une œuvre littéraire collaborative
> - Appréhender l'enjeu sur le plan de la création (notamment par comparaison avec les œuvres étudiées en classe).

Tout comme le **savoir encyclopédique**, la **création poétique** est souvent **sacralisée**. Ici un simple clic permet à tout un chacun de transformer un poème.

http://www.venuspoetry.com/

L'interface du site est constituée par le tableau La Naissance de Vénus de Botticelli (1485, Galerie des Offices, Florence). L'image présente de nombreuses **zones réactives**. Quand on clique sur une zone, un poème apparaît (souvent en rapport

Targeted audience

- Secondary schools
- Universities
- Digital Public Spaces *(cyberbases)*

A Junior High School in Crépy-en-Valois
Experimentation in French classes

At the University of Paris 8
The PRECIP modules have been integrated
in a Bachelor course on Digital Culture

At the University of Amiens
Master MIAGE (computers and management)
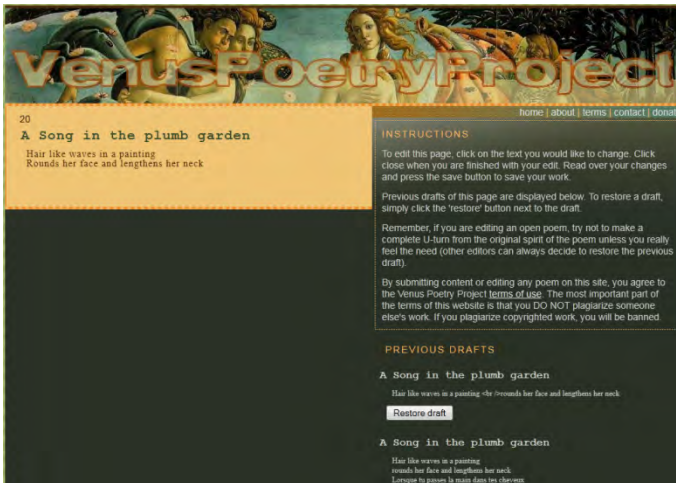
An experimentation in a Digital Public Space

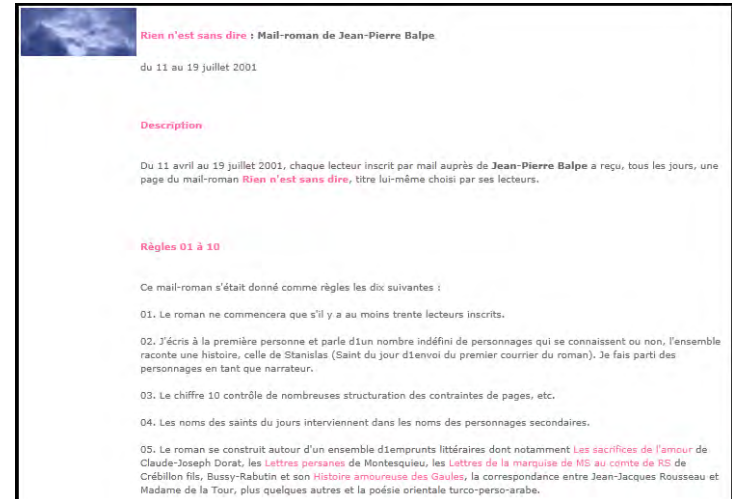An experimentation with a group of seniors in a Digital Public Space

4 – An example: collaborative writing

An example: collaborative writing

Fueled by digital literature pieces

An example: collaborative writing

Venus Poetry Project

Online collaborative poems:
 http://www.venuspoetry.com/

VenusPoetryProjec

Click anywhere on Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* above to read, write or edit a poem. There are 388 pages hidden on the painting. Older versions of each
will be saved in order to prevent vandalism. Poems are indefinitely editable, though a method for closing each poem will probably be figured out. Sugge
are welcome. Please read our terms of service.

20

A Song in the plumb garden

Hair like waves in a painting
Rounds her face and lengthens her neck

INSTRUCTIONS

To edit this page, click on the text you would like to change. Click
close when you are finished with your edit. Read over your chang
and press the save button to save your work.

Previous drafts of this page are displayed below. To restore a dra
simply click the 'restore' button next to the draft.

Remember, if you are editing an open poem, try not to make a
complete U-turn from the original spirit of the poem unless you re
feel the need (other editors can always decide to restore the prev
draft).

By submitting content or editing any poem on this site, you agree
the Venus Poetry Project terms of use. The most important part o
the terms of this website is that you DO NOT plagiarize someone
else's work. If you plagiarize copyrighted work, you will be banne

PREVIOUS DRAFTS

A Song in the plumb garden

Hair like waves in a painting
rounds her face and lengthens her neck

Restore draft

A Song in the plumb garden

Hair like waves in a painting
rounds her face and lengthens her neck
Lorsque tu passes la main dans tes cheveux

20

A Song in the plumb garden

Hair like waves in a painting
Rounds her face and lengthens her neck

Close

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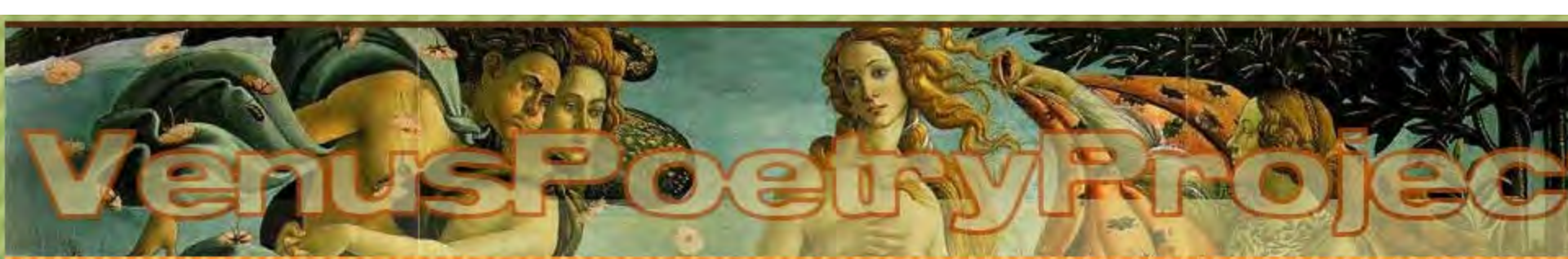else's work. If you plagiarize copyrighted work, you will be banne

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An example: collaborative writing

Rien n'est sans dire, by Jean-Pierre Balpe, 2001
collaborative narrative through e-mails (Mail-roman)

Rien n'est sans dire : Mail-roman de Jean-Pierre Balpe

du 11 au 19 juillet 2001

Description

Du 11 avril au 19 juillet 2001, chaque lecteur inscrit par mail auprès de **Jean-Pierre Balpe** a reçu, tous les jours, une page du mail-roman **Rien n'est sans dire**, titre lui-même choisi par ses lecteurs.

Règles 01 à 10

Ce mail-roman s'était donné comme règles les dix suivantes :

01. Le roman ne commencera que s'il y a au moins trente lecteurs inscrits.

02. J'écris à la première personne et parle d1un nombre indéfini de personnages qui se connaissent ou non, l'ensemble raconte une histoire, celle de Stanislas (Saint du jour d1envoi du premier courrier du roman). Je fais parti des personnages en tant que narrateur.

03. Le chiffre 10 contrôle de nombreuses structuration des contraintes de pages, etc.

04. Les noms des saints du jours interviennent dans les noms des personnages secondaires.

05. Le roman se construit autour d'un ensemble d1emprunts littéraires dont notamment Les sacrifices de l'amour de Claude-Joseph Dorat, les Lettres persanes de Montesquieu, les Lettres de la marquise de MS au comte de RS de

Mail-roman 8 (envoi du 18 avril) Fait

Début commun (1-10)

X-Sender: jbalpe@mail.away.fr

Date: Wed, 18 Apr 2001 23:01:10 +0200

To: jbalpe@away.fr

From: Jean-Pierre Balpe <jbalpe@away.fr>

Subject: Mail-roman "Rien n'est sans dire", courrier N° 8

Version 1 (1-5)

Nous y voilà enfin, entre de[ux]
moi, négligeant femme et e[nfants]
l'installer. Ce que je dis i[ci]
première impression car j[e]
contenu de la première disc[...]
qui emplissent mon écran
certainement, mais aussi
d'imagettes qu'il me faudra

Mercredi 11 avril

Début commun

Date: Wed 11 Apr 2001 15:28:44 +0100

To: Balpe Jean-Pierre <jbalpe@away.fr>

From: Jean-Pierre BALPE <jbalpe@away.fr>

Subject: Mail-roman "Rien n'est sans dire", courrier N° 1

Suite 1 (1-5)

Quelques uns naissent, quelques uns meurent, certains disparaissent d'autres reviennent ; tout se commence et rien jamais n'est fini : comme s'il voulait indiquer la sympathie que déjà il éprouve à mon égard, Clément est né aujourd'hui à quinze heures pourtant si je vous envoie ce mail ce soir, ce n'est en rien pour cette naissance mais davantage parce que ce matin, par le plus grand des hasards, à la station de métro de l'Alexanderplatz, alors que j'étais pour deux jours en mission à Berlin, j'ai revu Stanislas.

Sale, mal vêtu, il semblait perdu, fatigué, épuisé même… et n'étaient le ton de sa voix si étrangement traînant, son accent guttural si inhabituel, mélange de turc et d'écossais, je ne l'aurais peut-être jamais reconnu. Je ne sais si vous-même vous le connaissez, si vous ne le connaissez pas ou si vous l'avez oublié, mais son histoire est exemplaire. L'ayant invité à venir manger une salade dans le café le plus proche, il a tenu à me la raconter dans son intégralité.

[...]un lecteur Zip et, rentré chez
[...]ans mon bureau pour aussitôt
[...] une description brute, une
[...]ème temps je découvre. Le
[...] chaos de fichiers numérotés
[...]s autres, des fichiers texte
[...] je vois un certain nombre
[...]être même des fichiers son...

An example: collaborative writing

These 2 creations raise various questions:

• Role and status of the authors
Should anonymity be resorted to ?
Should a leader be designated ?

• Rules of collaborative writing
Should writing rules be stated ?

•Variants
Should variant forms of expression and content be proposed ?
If the answer is yes, how can these variants be saved and displayed ?

An example: collaborative writing

- A collaborative writing exercise with ***Etherpad***
  A production: http://piratepad.net/SyvId2C3Nv
  Collaborative writing process (video capture of the *Time Slider*)

- Several inputs
  Any evolution of writing practices during the training?
  What has evolved after the analysis of digital literary works?
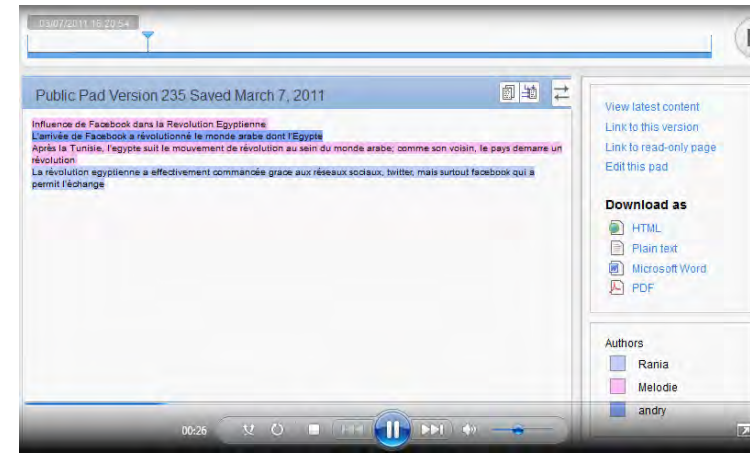
Methodologies

We articulate various approaches:

• Semiotic analysis of the device and of the productions

• Analysis of the activity traces

• Sociological analysis of the students
(*a priori* questionnaires, *in situ* observation, *a posteriori* interviews)

Conclusion

1 - PRECIP : an ongoing project
both a research and a teaching project

2 – Based on the heuristic value of digital literature

Instrumentalisation of DL?

3 – Double operational goal : the development of teaching
on digital writing for all levels
… and the promotion of digital literature