

Research Document

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H a c k i n g

May 22 2023

How does being multilingual affect my positioning as an author and my development of stories or narrative structures?

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
A good story	2
Criteria.....	2
A good basic story.....	3
Characters, a key element for me.....	3
Take it slow bbygirl	5
Fernando Pessoa, a study of a multilingual author	7
Heteronyms, traduction en existence des soi multiples Translation : heteronyms, translation into existence of the multiple selves.....	7
Pessoa, a plurilingual author.....	8
“genèse bilingue” bilingual genesis; visual languages	10
Pillar 1.....	13
Pillar 2.....	19
Pillar 3.....	21
the exhibition.....	24
Borges, Pierre Menard The Writer of Don Quixote:	25
author as context, as time.....	26
anterior image of a book.....	27
Logbook, writing process	29
Conclusion	30
Appendices	31
Appendix A.	31
Appendix B.	31
Appendix C.	31
Bibliography	32

Introduction

First, I will define the terms of my research question.

The author is defined as “the writer of a book, article, play, etc” (Cambridge Dictionary). It is the person a work is attributed to. My practice as an author and an artist is focused on storytelling. Stories are defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as “the expression of a description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events”. A narrative is also defined as a “connected series of events” The fusion of narrative structure and stories lead me to Storytelling as a keyword, which I define as anything that has a hint of a narrative.

multilingual, which are my languages?

I grew up bilingual and lived in between Germany and France during my childhood until I moved to the Netherlands, where English became the language of my daily life.

Visual languages also count as such to me, I differentiate colours from textures and forms in my understanding of it.

my different languages:

- French
- German
- English
- Colours
- Textures

A good story

As I muttered reluctantly “I’m scared my story won’t be good.” I was confronted with the question “what does that mean, good?”.

“What is a good story to me?”

“Who do I want to be as author?”

It is necessary to define what storytelling I value. To research this, I will look at the stories of others and try to pinpoint the aspects that matter most to me.

These are subjective analyses. My goal wasn’t to find out an absolute notion of good/bad storytelling but my own. Only then could I understand my own expectations and start positioning myself as an author.

Criteria

I looked at the stories based on:

- emotional impact
- cohesion and coherence
- world building
- characters
- pacing
- narrative

I looked at stories from different media (see Appendix B) and wrote notes according to the criteria I had set up for 6 of them (see Appendix A). The stories that shaped my understanding of “a good story” most were Suzume, The Blue Caftan, Florence and Emanon.

a good basic story



Fig. 1. Screenshot Florence

Source: <https://www.gbhl.com/game-review-florence-mobile/>

Florence is a short narrative-based video game about a young woman who feels stuck in life as she meets a man named Krish, falls in and out of love, and grows into herself. It is short and makes use of background music and gameplay to convey the feelings of the characters. The narrative was clear, the relationship had helped them both grow and find a way back their passions, even if that meant to live separate lives. This felt to me like a basic example of good storytelling, it did not bring anything new in terms of story but also felt consistent and complete.

characters, a key element for me



Fig. 2. Promotional Poster of Suzume

Suzume became my example of bad storytelling. It is an animated film about a teenage girl who goes on an adventure around Japan trying to stop earthquakes from happening in a supernatural setting, in which a worm underneath the earth is responsible for them.

My biggest issue was the characters. They did not have clear motivations. Their behaviour was difficult to understand, they did not seem properly defined. Suzume's grief of losing her mother was supposedly thematized but as the figure of the mother lacked in characterisation, the main character lost in depth and authenticity. If her lack of memories of her mother had been the narrative, an inconsistent portrayal of her past mother would have supported, but as it was, it weakened the character. There are more examples of bad character building, but my point is that this story suffered from poorly defined characters.

When I watched *The Blue Caftan*, I realized character building was not just a flaw in *Suzume* but an important aspect of Storytelling for me personally.

The Blue Caftan is a film made by Maryam Touzani about a closeted tailor and his wife as they take in a new apprentice. This film had a big emotional impact on me and counts as an example of good storytelling. The pacing is slow and the story is quite uneventful, but the characters had so much depth that I was sucked in until the end. The characters were nuanced and complex. They behaved in contradicting ways. For example, the husband regularly went to have extra-marital sex in a bathhouse while showing genuine love and care for his wife. They are given the space to feel contradicting emotions while remaining consistent as characters. This made them feel real and relatable.

At the end of the film, the wife dies, and I shed a few tears.

Not all these tears were meant for the characters, a few of them were meant for me, for Maryam

Touzani. The story felt meticulously woven, in my head whispers:

Will I ever write a story as beautifully knitted as this one?

Will my characters ever come to life and become their own being like Halim and Mina did?



Fig. 3. Still from *The Blue Caftan*, Maryam Touzani

I realized my characters needed feelings that had depth and complexity to feel authentic. I can source these feelings from my own, but I also want to create characters that are separate from me. I too, want to get to know new characters and stories through writing.

take it slow bbygirl

Emanon is a manga adaptation of a novel in which we follow a young man who meets a girl, Emanon, on a ship while they travel together for one night. We follow their conversations and Emanon claims to remember her past lives since the creation of life itself. They chat until they fall asleep. The next morning Emanon has disappeared.

Emanon surprised me with its slow pace and long dialogues. The dialogues rely on imagery of the sea and landscapes that illustrate the conversations in between the two characters. The slow pace is a key element as it makes the night feel endless, which gives it a dreamlike sensation. This slow pace gives space and time to enjoy the story. It puts a focus on the feelings of the characters and the details of their interactions.



19

Fig. 4. Page 19 of “Omoide Emanon”, Kenji Tsuruta, 1983

This attention to feelings and sensations that both *The Blue Caftan* and *Emanon* offered through a slow pace was something I wanted in my stories too.

Looking back on my most recent work, Iris (see Appendix C) I now see my shortcomings. My story was slow-paced but lacked the narrative structure to support it. I avoided defining the main character clearly, to project myself onto her more easily, derailing her characterization. I was scared a clear framework would limit my writing. Now I see precise story building is necessary to reach the feeling of authenticity I seem to yearn for. This “authenticity”, “the quality of being real or true”, seems to be a goal as it is both what I praised and criticized in my analysis’. (Authenticity)

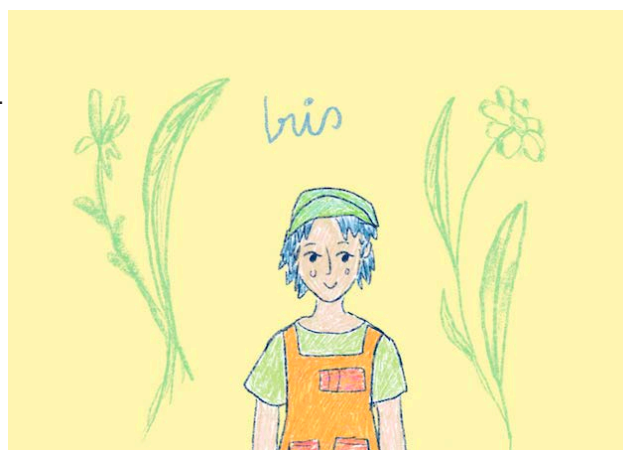


Fig. 5. Cover Iris, December 2022

conclusion : what matters to me

I have investigated other’s stories, pinpointed what kind of stories I want to tell, and started to position myself as an author.

What do I expect of my stories?

I want strong characters that feel clearly defined,

I want pacing that matches its narrative only then,
will I be able to let myself enjoy the slice of life, coming of age,

drinking tea in the garden,

slow depiction of the mundane

I do want an overarching narrative, but I saw it doesn’t have to be complex.

I read *The Book of Disquiet*, credited to Bernardo Soares one of Pessoa's Heteronyms, is a collection of notes found after Pessoa's death that read like autobiographical notes and poems.

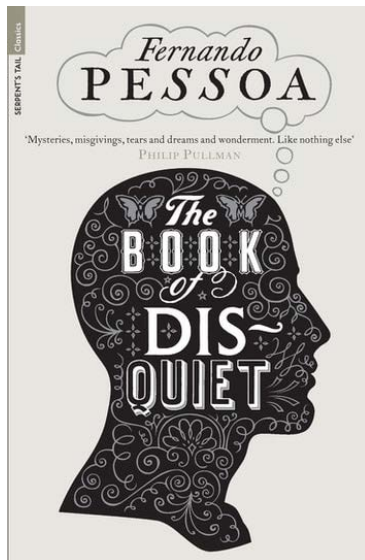


fig. 6. My edition of the Book of Disquiet

Fernando Pessoa, a study of a multilingual author

heteronyms,
traduction en existence
des soi multiples

translation : heteronyms,

translation into existence of the multiple selves

Heteronyms were invented by Pessoa, he published his works under different names but "...rather than alter egos [...] Pessoa's heteronyms were presented as distinct authors". They each had their own style, biography, and personality, sometimes even their own language as Pessoa wrote in Portuguese, English, and French. (Britannica, "Fernando Pessoa").

Zenith describes Pessoa's heteronyms as "a drama in people instead of in acts" (48), which I relate to. The image of a "dramatic ensemble" crafted by my different selves helps me see further than the separation of the different selves and languages. It frames a shared realm in which I can relate them to one another. (Zenith, 48).

The works which felt closest to me, and my intention were always composed of multiple languages, both visual and literal ones. Only in this multiplicity could I find a feeling that resembled authenticity. I struggled with authenticity when I tried to reduce myself to one author.

Pessoa illustrates this need for multiplicity well. Thurston wrote that "Being Pessoa [...] means being more than one Pessoa", he quotes Alvaro de Campos, one of Pessoa's heteronyms, "I multiplied myself so as to feel myself" and concludes that "the fragmentation of the self [...] allows the subject to feel himself, to experience an affective self-identity.". This idea of fragmenting the self to find a sense of it, relates to my quest of authenticity.

Every language I choose always misses a nuance without which I cannot express myself the way I need to, choosing one language and one self is excluding the others and feels like lying by omission. Giving space to distinct multiple selves seems to be the way to achieve authenticity for me. Pessoa heteronyms opened my eyes to the possibility of creating alter egos to embody different authors within me and to give my different languages their own artistic practice so to say.

Pessoa, a plurilingual author

Pessoa also relates to my questionings as a plurilingual author. His mother tongue was Portuguese, born in Lisbon he moved to South Africa as a child where he learnt English and French. He first wrote dominantly in English. Later in his life, he went back to writing more in Portuguese (Dionísio). As Soares, whom he considered more specifically as a semi-heteronym, an alter ego that is partly himself, he stated that his “fatherland is the Portuguese language” (Pessoa et al.).

I relate to this relationship of English versus Mother tongue. My mother tongue is German but as the years went by French took more space in my brain, then English followed, until both languages pushed German so far to the back, that today thinking in German feels strange.

*Ob die deutsche Sprache auch die (verlorene) Heimat (das Heim) ist,
nach der ich mich sehne?*

translation: could the German language be the (lost) fatherland (the home),
that I long for?

German is the language I spoke in my early childhood, the one in which I find myself intellectualising the least, remaining closer to emotions in a similar way than I do when I use colours. During my writing process, I made the conscious decision to switch to German. I may be fluent in it, but I find myself looking for words, my writing flow isn't smooth. To the contrary, it is frustrating, filled with pauses, foggy sighs and eyes desperately scratching the surface of the wall for the right word.

I was curious to see how this process would affect my writing, especially as I in that had misread my search for authenticity as one for emotions. It wasn't all wrong, genuine emotion is a part of honesty and vulnerability which relate to authenticity in my opinion, but it was an incomplete analysis.

Jeder Selbst ihre Sprache

translation: to each self their own language

I was curious about the specific ways Pessoa's related to his different languages. In his archives, they found a mix of languages, annotations of a text in a different language than the text itself, which shows that he didn't fundamentally keep his languages separate. There were recurrent English annotations to his Portuguese work, which seemed to work as instructions to guide himself through his writing process (Dionísio).

This use of English is one I know too, as it for me is the language of abstraction, when I plan out my projects no matter their language, it always happens in English, just like I have always conceptualised them in English. This interests me not because it is English itself, but as the language that was learned and studied. My art studies being in English, it has become the language that oversees my art practice, in the same way as Pessoa studied literature in English and had it become the language, he associated with it, even if he later went back to Portuguese as his main literary language. Noticing these patterns pushed me to go explore German and French more, to push English out of the position of being the default, when it comes to my art practice.

Brechon points out that English remained a more intellectual, sophisticated means of expression for Pessoa, which relates to what I have previously said about English as a language of abstraction. Filomena hypothesizes that English also allowed Pessoa to liberate himself from certain inhibitions, going as far as considering the English language as another possible heteronym (Filomena).

To separate myself from my characters as an author, I reached for French, making my character write in French as I was writing in German. English connected us through annotations which could belong to either of us. Even within one language, playing with registers and vocabulary makes it possible to separate different languages. As Pessoa's heteronyms have different literary styles, I consider these to be different languages too. I understand heteronyms through a change in language.

Multilingualism can also be a tool in the creative process. In "Remarques sur la création plurilingue chez Fernando Pessoa" Dionísio observes that Pessoa switched in between languages when he felt limited in one of them. He seemed to be using this switch, to spark inspiration, and start the process of creating. Dionísio calls it a driving force.

“genèse bilingue” bilingual genesis; visual languages

I too make use of switching languages as a driving force. When I still restricted myself to the use of English and I felt stuck, I started working on watercolours for an exhibition. I allowed myself more freedom in my material research with visual languages.

I started by painting multiple abstract watercolours without a framework.



Fig. 7. Watercolour 1, watercolours, April 2023



Fig. 8. Watercolour 2, watercolours, April 2023

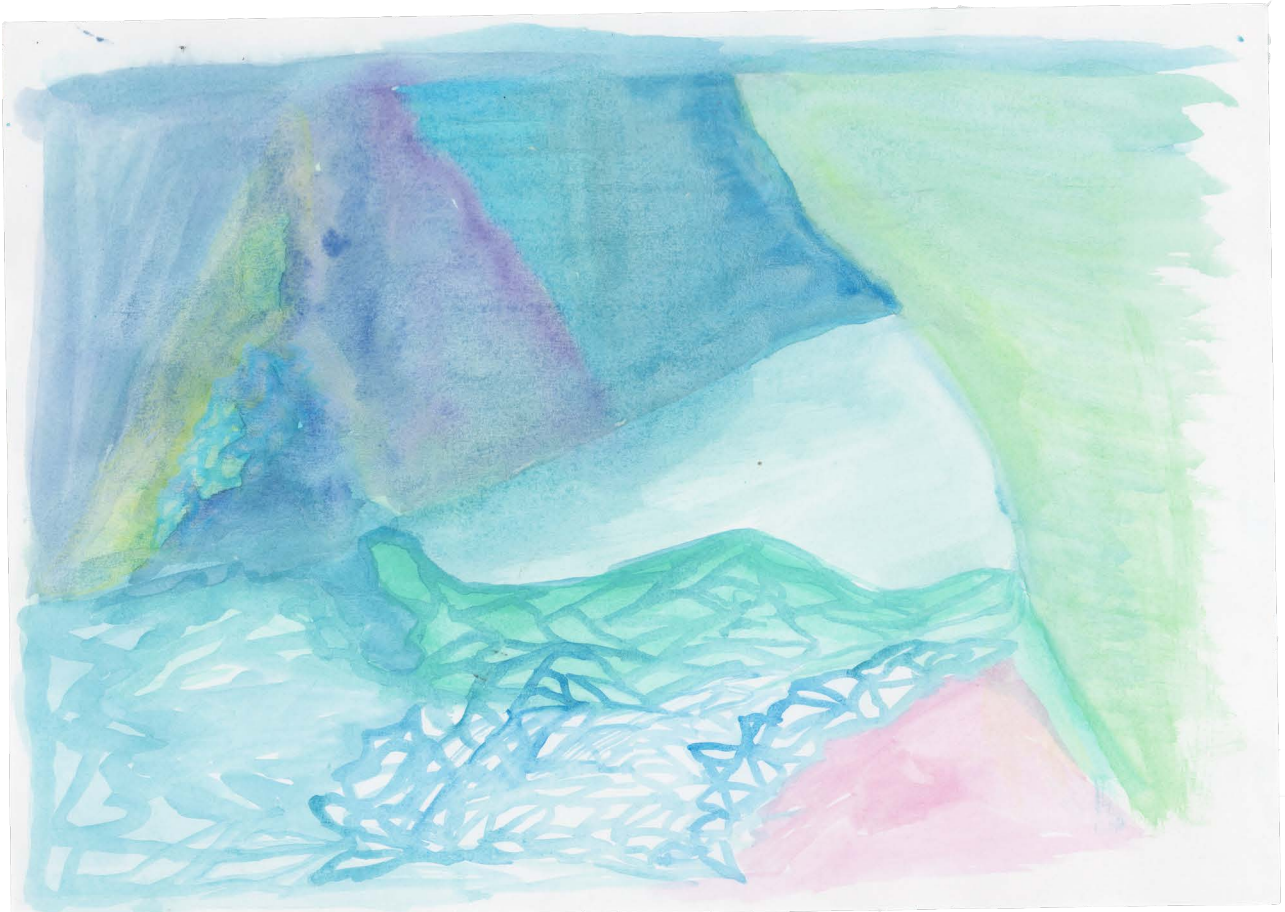


Fig. 9. Watercolour 3, watercolours, April 2023



Fig 10. Watercolour 4, watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 11. "Zwischen Berg und See 4", watercolours, March 2023

Pillar 1

This watercolour then sprung out to me as having a new character to it compared to my old work. I had never used such muted colours, the work both felt mine and that of another.



Fig. 12. “Zwischen Berg und See 1”, watercolours, March 2023

I kept my colour palette muted and played with texture. My methodology was to make again and again. Watercolours dry fast and you can't erase anything, everytime I wanted to change something I had to make a new one from scratch. I wanted to create a lot of material that I could build upon and use to create a narrative by associating a select few.



Fig. 13. “Zwischen Berg und See 2”, watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 14. Watercolour 5, watercolours, April 2023

The top one here had too much going on, it made me realize I needed more empty space and clearer lines. The bottom one was part of the Exhibition. Even though, it has a lot of different colors and textures it has more empty space and it felt clearer to me.



Fig. 15., Zwischen Berg und See 3, watercolours, April 2023

I realised to support the muted works avoid a muddled global image I need splashes of strong colours and started making multiples works with them.



Fig. 16., "Zwischen Berg und See 5", watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 17. Watercolour 6, watercolours, April 2023



Fig. 18., "Zwischen Berg und See 6", watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 19. Watercolour 7, watercolours, April 2023



Fig. 20. Watercolour 8, watercolours, April 2023

Cutouts allowed me to change my perspective and the works



Fig. 21., "Zwischen Berg und See 7", watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 22. Watercolour 9, watercolours, April 2023

This was my first time using gouache and watercolours together.

Pillar 2

After going back and forth in between the muted and very saturated colors, I made this piece which is the second pillar of the series as it combines elements from all other pieces.



Fig. 23., "Zwischen Berg und See 8", watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 24. watercolours 10, watercolours, May 2023

Pillar 3



Fig. 25. “Zwischen Berg und See 9”, watercolours, Mai 2023

This is the third pillar of the series. When I made it, it was just a try out for different textures but it ended up being the piece that tied all the others together visually.



Fig. 26. Watercolour 11, watercolours, April 2023

Here I had painted the paper yellow before painting on it to try and play with the colors.



Fig. 27., "Zwischen Berg und See 10", watercolours, March 2023



Fig. 28. Photo of first selection for Exhibition, May 2023

Eventually I had to make my selection. I looked at all the watercolours I made and had to pick a title. “Zwischen Berg und See” immediately came to mind. It means in between the mountain and the sea. I noticed a lot of organic forms and earthy tones in the watercolours. It was also the first time that I completely avoided painting faces or explicitly human figures. I chose the works that I felt related to that title and supported one another and then placed them. I asked a friend if they evoked the theme of nature, mountain and sea to him and he could see it both visually and from the colors and textures, the next step was the exhibition.



Fig. 29. Photo of Set up for Exhibition, May 2023

the exhibition

The curator gave me three pillars that faced each other and I rearranged the watercolours in the space. The space worked well as I had three key pieces.



Fig. 30. Picture of me at the Exhibition, May 2023



Fig. 31. Picture of the Exhibition space, May 2023



Fig. 32. “Zwischen Berg und See”, watercolour series, May 2023

borges

pierre menard

the writer of don quixote:

I read multiple short stories from Borges' Ficciones, the one that stuck with me most was "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote". It is narrated by a fictional friend of the fictional author Pierre Menard who recently passed away. The narrator reflects on his friend's work as a writer and on his attempt to become the author of Don Quixote. Without rereading the book, he questioned himself about the circumstances he needed to be in to become Don Quixote's author. He first thought about trying to become Miguel de Cervantes, but soon realized that would not only be impossible but also less interesting than to try to become its author as himself, Pierre Menard.

As Pierre Menard spent years working on his own Don Quixote, a relationship between him and the work must have formed. I am curious about the relationship between the work and the author. Maybe specifically in between the story and the author...

*...does the author nourish it, care for it,
make sure it gets enough light to grow like a plant?
Or does the author forcefully push and pull the story,
mould it until it resembles their vision of it?*

Could someone else than me have written the stories I have written?

No, that isn't my takeaway.

*Neither is the question whether I could have written someone else's work,
reading some passages of The Book of Disquiet, I felt frustration, almost anger,
as if Pessoa in 1982 had stolen these sentences from me.*

I also felt, that now that he had written them, I could not write them anymore.

author as context, as time

My effort here is not to understand Borges' message but to use this work as a starting point of a reflection on authorship. In that way, reading this work made me think of the fear of creating a work that has already been made and relieved me from it a little.

It made me consider the author as a person in a specific context and moment in time as these are used to differentiate Menard from De Cervantes. I am here referring to the instances in which the narrator analyses the differences in text of the two Don Quixotes and relates them to the authors' contexts but also to Menard's first idea to try and become De Cervantes in order to write Don Quixote.

Defining the author by context and time made me think that there could not be two identical authors, even within oneself. How could I as an author in this moment be the same even as my self who wrote on this very word document yesterday?

I shaved my head last night and the streets feel different, I am a new author.

(This sentence was written by another I)

I have changed my hair a numerous number of times, since I have started my project. I am now relating this change to a change of authorship in myself.

*just like the moment in which I went to write in Germany for a week
after deciding my work would be in German,
just like my changing the keyboard when I switch language,*

Just like when Pessoa switched languages or heteronyms,
I forcefully changed my context and my present to force out a new version of myself to
create a new author.

*When I left Germany, I cried like a child, in the train I hurried, writing down as many words
as I could, once the border passed, I couldn't be bothered anymore. I knew I was leaving
an author behind before she could finish her work and oh how frustrating to have to ask my
new self to take up the draft of another.*

anterior image of a book

“My general memory of Don Quixote, simplified by forgetfulness and indifference, is much the same as the imprecise, anterior image of a book not yet written. “(Borges, 51)

The “anterior image of a book not yet written” speaks to me, especially in the way its possibilities are endless (Borges, 51). With this blurry image endless versions of Don Quixotes could have been written, all belonging to their respective author.

In my writing I fear defining the story, at each choice I grieve the story it will not be. I relate this to my writing also because I make use of foggy memories, the gaps in these memories fill themselves with fiction changing the shape of the original memories until they’re barely recognizable.

Looking back on my writing process, I first approached my story with grounded feet, balled up hands, an angry stare.

*I will not let you get the best of me,
we will succeed, at what no one knows, but succeed we will. (it's graduation)
As I was tightening my grip around my stories, my insides were all running from me. Frustrated and close to despair, I let go, no idea where to go from here, she said.
“That’s when” whispers of the stories that had been begging to be told, they echoed through my pages. Maybe, I had not planned for it, or it was all intentional, who knows.*

To give these endless possibilities more space, I took my methodology from the watercolours over to writing. I would create new documents very often, rewriting the same stories from different perspectives, changing a few elements.

Logbook, writing process

Ina.docx

When I started, I was writing a script for visual novel, a narrative based video game, its working title was Ina.

It was set in a world in which magic exists in a casual way and is decisive professionally, it followed a young woman, Ina, who lost her magic and could not function in the world anymore and how she faced her struggles with her sense of self-worth. It was supposed to be a reflection on productivity, autonomy and self-acceptance in a world that equates productivity and worth.

I got stuck. I wasn't, still am not, able to write this story. I am unsure whether it is possible to solve this issue of self-worth as a not consistently functional person. I couldn't reflect on this issue while working on a graduation project that required me to be functional.

I did not want to utilize these feelings for a project, use the shame of not being productive, no. I set that project to the side and had to start from scratch.

Mermaid.docx

Still with the idea of making a visual novel, I wrote a short story about a mermaid who transfers her curse by a kiss that tries to lure the main character in the trap with multiple endings.

I was happy that I had managed to write something but when asked, why I had written it and what I meant to me, I had no answer. I had written it to have something to show, to be productive but it did not carry much meaning beyond that. I had to reflect on what meaning I wanted to convey.

jsp ecrit.docx

I got the advice of visualizing one person as my audience. The idea of showing my work at the graduation show, to an endless undefined audience made it difficult for me. I also wanted to invest more of myself in my writing again. I do not want to only convey theoretical musings but also my emotions. It wasn't formulated yet, but this already reflected my desire for authenticity.

I wrote a piece intended to remain private. I addressed it to a specific person, considering them like an audience and not the receiver of a letter. I wrote this piece in French and felt the shift as I changed my language, I decided to continue exploring the way different languages affected my writing.

wouldve couldve shouldve.docx

As I was on the search for my story, memories of past experiences kept plaguing me and I thought I should turn these feelings and images into my story. I tried writing it multiple times, in English, French and even turned to German but it didn't feel right.

I felt like I was performing writing, my emotions and thoughts seemed to become artificial, as if they separated themselves from my body and self to become material for writing.

I realized I was looking for a sense of honesty.

(authenticity?)

With Ina and the mermaid story I took the position of a narrator, the main character unrelated to myself, while with "j'esp ecrit" I wrote as me but in a way I could not imagine sharing with the world. I tried writing "wouldve couldve shouldve" in my own name as a public work. That's where I got stuck.

tomate.docx

I opened a new word document and started writing as an omniscient narrator. I took elements from Ina but allowed myself to project more of my own person onto the main character. I started out in French and turned to German half-way. As German is the language of my early childhood I thought it might be less intellectual than French or English. The character started feeling real, it had a piece of myself at its core but developed its own features that differed from me. As I had shared my writing struggles with them, they started telling their own stories too.

splish splosh.docx

I wanted to explore new perspectives, considered writing "tomate" in French and "splish splosh" in German, two characters' stories that parallel each other. The first sentence is in English, but I continued in German. I wrote as an omniscient narrator focusing on the perspective of the new character, Finn. Their life intersects with Tomate's main character. They work together at a Coffee Shop and Tomate's main character makes an appearance in it. Finn is also experiencing difficulties with creative endeavours as they are making a painting that they struggle with.

writing a script.docx

This is the building stone that links all the others. Decided to write in German, I picked up tomate's main character and followed them as they try to write a script. It starts with a conversation in between them and Finn. Having written from Finn's perspective it felt easier to write the characters reaction and behaviour, my short piece on them had unknowingly served me as a character-building exercise. This is written in the first-person, the main character as narrator. This led me to get confused in between the character and myself again. As I am continuing I am defining them more precisely, they have gotten a name : Lucie. Drawing a clear line in between them and me is helping me express my own emotions more freely while exploring new ones, Lucie's.

pustablume.docx

This is a short story that tomate's main characters tells the cat. It consists of the wind telling the story of the dandelion and how it spread. It is part of the idea that I have, that Lucie made a book of the stories they tell their cat. Finn maybe did the illustrations for it. It is part of me creating a context for Lucie and Finn.

Conclusion

I am still writing and figuring out where this story leads me, but my research has given me keys to position myself as an author, the keys to navigate storytelling as a multilingual author.

My research into Pessoa made me consider the concept of the author differently, it grew beyond the “writer of a written piece”, became the character from whom a story originates, whether that character be the real self or a fictional alter ego.

I have identified what I expect from my storytelling. Pessoa’s heteronyms inspired me to create a fictional author to tell the stories I can’t and to give space for my different languages. Borges’ Pierre Menard helped me perceive the different authors that exist within me and opened a jar of endless possibilities.

I have always felt split at least in two since I grew up in between two countries and cultures, never fully at home. Authenticity felt impossible, I could only share as much as the language I was stuck in allowed me. Multiplicity in authorship and in languages allows me to expand my creative realm. It gives me the possibility to create a space in which my different selves and languages share while existing separately. They can meet another and form an overarching story together without losing their own narratives.

Appendices

Appendix A.

Table of analysis of 6 Stories : Suzume, Florence, Emanon, Dans les Rapides, The Blue Caftan, Conversations with friends

<https://blauhime.notion.site/Analysis-e98b5cee3ee1404196e18c967cfcc996>

Story analysis table 1 : Suzume & The Blue Caftan

	Suzume	The Blue Caftan
Summary	<p>Suzume is an animated film directed by Makoto Shinkai, it tells the story of “a 17-year-old girl named Suzume [whom] helps a mysterious young man close doors from the other side that are releasing disasters all over in Japan”.</p> <p>It also worth mentioning that the critical response was positive, my opinion is specific to my expectations in storytelling.</p>	<p>It follows Halim a closeted gay man and his wife Mina who own a Caftan Shop in Salé, Morocco as well as the young apprentice Youssef they just hired</p>
Emotional Impact	<p>It felt flat for me; I was frustrated by the lack of empathy I had for the characters. This film relates to the 3/11 earthquakes that happened in March 2011 in Japan and had strong emotional reactions from the Japanese audience. I was missing this cultural context, which can partly explain why it felt flat for me but Suzume was meant to have an international success that went beyond Japan, it could have been contextualised better.</p> <p>A past earthquake is only mentioned late in the film and the other characters don't seem very affected by it, the impact of these earthquakes is unclear especially because the main character is willing to cause one to save her love interest.</p>	<p>I had tears in my eyes and I really do not tear up easily for films. It was really touching and I felt empathy towards all characters.</p>
Cohesion & Coherence	<p>The different storylines did not seem to relate to one another, multiples one did not seem to be pertinent to the story in any way, like the aunt's love interest or the way the Suzume's grief for her mother is never directly addressed.</p>	<p>It was well crafted, the film's beginning and ending related to one another and each scene had it's purpose.</p>

	Suzume	The Blue Caftan
World Building	The universe had a lot of potential, the lost spaces and it's memories being interesting, the supernatural element mostly made sense except the after world which ended up not relating to ghosts or death at all.	The worldbuilding was great, having never been to Morocco I was very much discovering Salé and the neighbourhood Mina and Halim live in. The culture of the space and the art of making Caftans helped create a realm around the three characters even if the story isolates them from the rest of the world a bit at times.
Characters	The motivations of the characters were unclear, most side characters seemed more complete than the main character, certain behaviours seemed to come out of nowhere like the aunt telling her niece she blames her for not finding a husband after worrying about her the entire film. The love interest also did not have a clear characterization. The character building was the main flaw, in my opinion.	The characters were nuanced and had depth. The relationship in between the wife and the husband especially as they both loved each other even if their marriage was a source of pain for Halim as a closeted gay man. Mina acknowledges his homosexuality in the end and tells him he is a good man and has done nothing wrong, even if she behaved jealous and resentful at times. They are given the space to feel contradicting emotions while remaining consistent as characters which made them feel very real and relatable.
Pacing	"The narrative structure was quite repetitive, which made the film seem longer than it is. The different adventures did not all add to the story if not to showcase Japan's beautiful landscapes. It was fast paced but the repetitiveness made it feel slow."	The pacing was quite slow but worked really well as it gave me time to immerse myself in their lives and their universe. It was quite monotone but that worked well as the focus was put on the interactions between the characters, not on how eventful the scenes were.
Narrative	A narrative was built but was unclear, a time loop was created, the film starting with a dream/memory of the main character meeting her future self, but the meaning of this time loop got lost on me.	"It starts with a setting that could have gone in the expected direction of the wrathful wife vs. the gay man liberating himself from an oppressive marriage but instead showed a partnership and led up to Mina also subverting society's expectations in her way by her corpse being dressed in a blue caftan instead of a white linnen sheet. It actually felt so complete and meaningful that my tears were not only due to the emotion of the film but also the recognition of a story well told and the fear of my storytelling never reaching that level."

Story analysis table 2 : Omoide Emanon & Florence

	Omoide Emanon	Florence
Summary	<p>“An adaptation of a novel, two volumes The first one, just follows a man who meets a girl emanon on a ship as they travel, We follow them and their discussions throughout this night they spend on the ship. Emanon claims being able to remember her past lifes since she came to be so since 3 billion years. Discussions about memories and stuff and science fiction”</p>	<p>“Florence Yeoh who feels a little stuck. Her life is an endless routine of work, sleep, and spending too much time on social media. Then one day, she meets a cello player named Krish who changes everything about how she sees the world.” At the beginning of the game Florence works an office job which bores her, which is shown to us through repetitive minigames, the music which plays a big role in this game as well as the drawings and the colours. Krish is a musician, and they bond over creativity as she enjoys drawing and she gets the motivation to become an illustrator after their breakup. They might not end up together but had a positive impact on each other’s lives, encouraging one another to go after their passions.</p>
Emotional Impact	<p>It made me feel sad in a nostalgic, nice way. Yay.</p>	<p>The gamification of the interactions as well as the music helped the story have a big emotional impact on me.</p>
Cohesion & Coherence	<p>Time loop done right sort of, no not really, main character meets Emanon years later after meeting her on that train she doesn’t recognize him but her young daughter does as the memories of the universe are passed through childbirth.</p>	<p>It works well, the ending is a clear parallel to the beginning and even though the player is sad they broke up, the ending makes sense and is satisfying.</p>
World Building	<p>Great, it is thoroughly explained through the conversations in between Emanon and the main character but doesn’t feel forced.</p>	<p>It situated itself in a modern day big city, and put it’s focus on the space around Florence, adding elements of soft world building that contributed to the immersion in the story like the furniture and decoration elements that Krish and Florence own as well as the appartement changing over time.</p>
Characters	<p>Basically the barbie ads, the MC is just ken, he’s just a bland man there to give us a perspective on Emanon, we relate to him in a way where we feel like we are just part of humanity while she feels like she belongs to another realm, like we aren’t supposed to even be able to perceive her. Anyhoe main character boring with a purpose, Emanon very mysterious and cool</p>	<p>The characters were simple but clearly designed. Florence can be summarized in a few words and the same goes for Krish but they felt consistent and although one does not have a lot of information about them, I still got attached.</p>

	Omoide Emanon	Florence
Pacing	Super slow and mostly dialogues but works well because the images of landscapes and the sea are pretty. Well managed slow pacing.	The game felt a bit short and could have been a bit slower. The meet-cute and beginning of the relationship took way more time than the breakup and the living together element of the story. Overall, the rhythm still worked for me, I was just left wanting a bit more.
Narrative	The story is intriguing and has these sf elements that leave you with questions and reflections after you're done, the story itself isn't what is interesting but more so the concept of Emanon herself.	The narrative was clear, it was about what a relationship can bring you, whether you stay together or not and about pursuing your passions and supporting one another to do so.

Story analysis table 3 : Dans les rapides & Conversations with friends

	Dans les rapides, Maylis de Kerangal	Conversations with friends
Summary	Le Havre, end of the 70s, beginning 80s three girls who are friends and row together discover rock music and explore the music scene	“Series adaptation of a book by Sally Roney You follow Frances a literature student as she and her best friend/ex-girlfriend Bobbi meet an older couple and Frances starts having an affair with the husband”
Emotional Impact	Immersive, did not stay impact me hugely but felt the sensory environment very strongly	I did not empathize with the character but still felt the sadness, the guilt and regret that she goes through. SO yes!!
Cohesion & Coherence	Both coherent and cohesive, the story of a marking friendship, nothing seemed out of place and all scenes served a purpose	Yes, overall coherent, some narrative elements did fit in very well, the transition in between Frances with her affair and her friends wasn't smooth.
World Building	Probably the strongest element of this book, the description both visual and sensory of The Havre in the end of the 70s were strong. It went through the characters as well as the space, the cafes in which they all smoke, the vinyl shop and the party. Each chapter being linked to a song also helped set up the inner world of the main characters.	The worldbuilding is quite good, through the bar, the bookstore and other recurring places I got a feel for the space the story happens in.
Characters	The characters were clearly defined, the three different girls have their own personality which is consistent and makes sense. The side characters also feel complete and real.	The character building is what got to me, Frances is not a character to be liked but in certain ways she is relatable all the while feeling like a completely different person. The characters all feel flawed but have their own story and perception.

	Dans les rapides, Maylis de Kerangal	Conversations with friends
Pacing	The pacing is interesting as the pacing feels slow but we end up covering quite a period of time. This comes from the fact that slight time skips occur, like the summer holidays or even just never following the characters to class only after school, in the weekends and on the rowing boats.	The pacing is slow but it works well because the slowness adds to the tension and discomfort.
Narrative	The story feels like a depiction of The Havre in the 60s, it really feels like someone invites you in their memories even if you know it's fictional. There is no overarching narrative except maybe that of coming of age and the slight changes of teenagehood in the main characters.	Worked well, no moral message but a story of characters evolving and making choices

Appendix B.

Archive of all the narrative based media I have encountered

<https://blauhime.notion.site/blauhime/all-media-i-encountered-9998116264944eefb65085fe-fa574959>

Appendix C.

Iris, visual novel, December 2022

<https://blauhime.itch.io/iris>

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