Chapter 9
Transmedia and the Vagueness of Narrative Structure

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the types of transformations that transmedia applications cause on the narrative structure of motion pictures and television series. Since different methods are used to construct the story as a transmedia narrative in different films or series, as many works as possible are included in the study to make more accurate determinations. In this context, examples of Star Trek, The Godfather, The Matrix, Star Wars, Harry Potter, The Hunger Games, Shrek, Madagascar, Lost, Game of Thrones, Medcezir, and Vatanım Sensin have been examined in terms of their narrative structure. In these works, the condition of the parts constituting the story universe compared to the main narrative, the elements that enable the construction of new narratives related to the main narrative in different media, fictionalization of the elements such as story lines, characters, spaces, atmosphere, and sound, the methods that are used for the transition among stories, etc. have been examined.

INTRODUCTION

Digitalization is at the center of the period of change that has allowed the media to reshape itself in the past thirty years. The transformation that takes place based on digitalization includes many aspects such as production processes, the ways broadcasts are delivered to the viewer, the viewer's profile, and the relationship between the viewer and the broadcaster. In this process, new media such as sharing sites (Hulu, YouTube etc.), social media environments, blogs, wikis are emerging while concepts such as interactivity and mobility gain importance. The traditional means of communication are also undergoing a transformation in accordance with the new conditions and the boundaries between different media platforms have become uncertain.

It can be said that this transformation in the field of media is a part of the process Henry Jenkins calls the convergence culture. In his work "*Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*" (2006), Jenkins uses convergence so as to describe the flow of content between multiple media platforms, cooperation between different media industries, a process of social, cultural and technological transformation that has appearances like migratory behaviors of media buyers who will go almost everywhere to capture the kind of entertainment experience they desire.

Toschi refers to convergence as the disappearance of the differences among the mass media (Toschi, 2009, p. 4). For instance, mobile phones, are not just communication devices. They can perform many functions such as forwarding messages, playing games, accessing networked applications and social networks, downloading data from the internet, taking and sharing pictures, reading e-books. It has also become possible to connect to the internet via televisions and perform many things which are be able to be done on the internet via computer.

The convergence process has also transformed the structure of media texts and storytelling patterns. Instead of narrative forms built in a single media environment, new narrative strategies called transmedia storytelling are emerging and becoming widespread in which users can participate in the production process in a multiple, spreading and fragmented media. The concept of "transmedia" was first used by Professor Marsha Kinder of the University of California, in 1991, in his work titled *Playing with Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games: From Muppet Babies to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Kinder, who is involved in the narrative elements of new media contents and the audience's interest, has introduced the term "transmedia intertextuality" at a time when the transmedia concept has just begun to emerge. Henry Jenkins, who introduced the concept of "Transmedia Storytelling" to the literature, used it in a 2003 article and in his book "*Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*" published in 2006. According to Jenkins, transmedia storytelling, which emerges due to media convergence, represents a modern narrative strategy that is used more interactively with multiple media platforms and more preferred day to day. As Jenkins states, "a transmedia story unfolds across multiple media platforms, with each new text making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole. In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best—so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics; its world might be explored through game play or experienced as an amusement park attraction" (2006, pp. 95-96). As stated here, the transmedia story consists of pieces spread out in different media environments, and every media organ is involved with its own language and ability.

This study focuses on the question how transmedia practices, which draw attention with properties such as the multiplicity of media environments and decisiveness of the interaction formed with the audience, transform the narrative structure of motion pictures and television series. As it is known, storytelling in cinema and television series describes a certain structure depending on the characteristics of the media circle in which the narrative takes place. These narratives, in which story lines are created in the form of traditional events, are complete structures, which are shaped by the creators of the work, and in which there is no direct intervention of the viewer to the construction process of the narrative. Along with the widespread use of digital technology, different versions of cinema or television narratives have begun to be produced in order to reach audiences seeking different communication environments. Sometimes it appears that a narrative expands to encompass many different environments such as literature, movie, television series, comic book, animation, webisode, fan videos. The narrative is reproduced with different aspects of the story in different media environments, while remaining loyal to the main story.

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