



The Centre for Research on Children's and Young Adult Literature at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Wrocław has the honor to invite you to the 12th lecture in the series "International Voices in Children's Literature Studies"

Prof. Virginie Iché

From Metaphorical to Literal Door-openings in Children's Literature



Children's literature has famously been described as "windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange," and sometimes also "sliding glass doors" that readers have to "walk through in imagination" (Bishop ix). In other words, children's literature is often depicted as potentially metaphorically opening doors for their readers, i.e., opening up vistas and broadening horizons. For this lecture, I will pay attention to picturebooks with literal door-openings: *Haunted House* by Jan Pieńkowski, Jane Walmsley and Tor Lokvig (1979), *Knock Knock Who's There?* (1985) by Sally Grindley and

Anthony Browne, *Shhh!* by Sally Grindley and Peter Utton (1991), *Postman Bear* (2000) by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, *Doors* by Roxie Munro (2004) and *What's Next Door?* by Nicola O'Byrne (2017). I will examine the various strategies implemented to get child readers to open (paper) doors—whether by focusing on the book-as-object with its flaps, door-like pages and cut-out pages, or by working on the book-as-discourse with, in particular, the use of direct addresses to the flesh-and-blood reader. I will contend that door-openings in picturebooks help child readers achieve three main goals: (1) to become an experienced *liseur*, to take up French scholar Michel Picard's terminology, who finds pleasure in the page-turning event, (2) to discover how accessible and enjoyable the world of fiction can be and thereby become *lu*, and (3) to become a *lectant*, aware, namely, of the key-role of the page break in the economy of the picturebook. Literal door-openings in children's books thus open up large metaphorical horizons for their child readers, that include emergent literacy, pleasure reading and forms of agency.

Virginie Iché is Associate Professor of Linguistics at University Paul-Valéry Montpellier. She is the author of *L'esthétique du jeu dans les Alice de Lewis Carroll* (L'Harmattan, 2015), has edited the 92nd issue of the French journal *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens*, "'Dear Child': Talking to Children in Victorian and Edwardian Children's Literature" (Fall 2020) and has co-edited with Sandrine Sorlin *The Rhetoric of Literary Communication from Classical English Novels to Contemporary Print and Digital Fiction* (Routledge, 2022).

DATE: 24 October 2022

TIME: 18.00 (CET)

VENUE: MS Teams: If you are interested in taking part in the lecture, please contact us by email by 22 October at the following address: justyna.deszcz-tryhubczak@uwr.edu.pl