



VILNIUS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY

Philomena Ieva Marmion

Programme of English Studies (Literature, Linguistics, Culture)

**Exploring Multimodal Storytelling in Contemporary Award-Winning Picture
Books: A Stylistic Study**

MA Thesis

Academic Supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr Davide Castiglione

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Abstract

This study examines the multimodal storytelling techniques in Randolph Caldecott Medal-winning picture books from 2001 to 2025. Children's picture books, which combine text and image for narrative storytelling, pose unique challenges for stylistic analysis. The multimodality of these books requires consideration of the visual and verbal modes through which the books communicate with readers. This thesis aims to provide a critical overview of the multimodal narrative strategies in Caldecott Medal-winning books and to refine existing methodologies for picture book analysis. Firstly, a dataset of 377 picture book spreads was coded according to a modified taxonomy, which draws on the types of word-image relationships identified by Nikolajeva and Scott (2006). Then, a qualitative analysis of the spreads was carried out to identify multimodal narrative strategies employed in the picture books. This was achieved by applying the theoretical frameworks of systemic functional grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014) and visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). A supplementary framework was used to analyse cases of multimodal metaphors (Forceville, 2009; 2016). The study found a prevalence of cooperative visual-verbal interactions, which allow for clear communication of narratives and support the exploration of complex themes featuring in Caldecott titles. Counterpointing and sylleptic narratives were found to be scarce, instead serving marked narrative functions. These findings contribute to picture book scholarship by offering a refined, spread-based analytical approach to multimodal storytelling and by demonstrating how verbal and visual processes work together to construct meaning in contemporary children's literature.

Keywords: multimodality, picture books, children's literature, Caldecott Medal, stylistics, systemic functional grammar, visual grammar

1. Introduction

Children's books are an integral part of our lives, from the books of our own childhood years to the books we may read to our children now. As such, this genre has attracted the attention of scholars employing a range of approaches, such as educational (Arizpe, Noble, and Styles, 2023), historical (Grenby, 2009; Hunt, 2009), and cultural perspectives (Paul, 2009b; Reynolds, 2009). However, stylistic analyses of children's literature have been sparse. Burke and Coats (2022) indicate the existing research gap and express the need for more research on children's literature in the field of stylistics. Moreover, Giovanelli identifies the late 1980s as the emergence point of stylistic studies of children's literature (2023, p. 544). This shows that stylistic research into children's literature is not only rare but also relatively new. Yet stylistics can offer a distinctive perspective by closely attending to how language and other meaning-making resources shape narrative communication in children's literature. The systemic analysis enabled by a range of stylistic methodologies can help uncover implicit meanings that might be overlooked by broader critical approaches.

When it comes to children's picture books—a subcategory of children's literature—this kind of research is inevitably even more limited. Children's picture books, that is, books recognised by their “particular use of sequential imagery, usually in tandem with a small number of words, to convey meaning” (Salisbury and Styles, 2012, p. 7), pose a unique challenge to researchers in stylistics. The multimodality of picture books requires consideration of the visual and verbal modes in which the books communicate with their young readers. An additional challenge for stylistic analysis is the need to account for the cognitive and interpretative abilities of young readers, from whom many established literary theories modelled on the adult reader, for example, the concept of ‘the implied reader’, may not be applicable. Furthermore, stylisticians cannot rely solely on their own introspection to pinpoint literary effects, as they are not part of the intended audience. However, given these challenges, this thesis employs a combination of systemic methodologies to explore how picture books convey meaning through the interaction of words and images, aiming to offer insights that traditional literary theories may not account for. This study draws on Nikolajeva and Scott's taxonomy of word-image interaction (2006, p. 12), Halliday's *systemic functional grammar* (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), Kress and van Leeuwen's *visual grammar* (2006), and Forceville's concept of multimodal metaphor (2009; 2016) to analyse the way pictures and words construe a fictional reality through both action representation and metaphorical meaning-making.

Building on these frameworks, the thesis will examine the multimodal strategies in the Randolph Caldecott Medal-winning picture books from the past twenty-five years. The Caldecott Medal, first awarded in 1938, is one of the most prestigious picture book awards, annually granted to the most distinguished American picture books (American Library Association, 2025). In examining

a sample of the award-winning books, the aims of this thesis are: 1) to provide a critical overview of how the visual and the verbal modes interact in 21st-century Caldecott Medal-winning picture books; 2) to analyse the multimodal narrative strategies in these works, with a focus on how representational meaning shapes storytelling; 3) to build on and refine existing frameworks of picture book analysis by modifying and applying Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) framework to contemporary Caldecott Medal-winning works. By performing a stylistic analysis of recent Caldecott Medal-winning books, the study will help expand stylistic research in the field of children's literature.

This thesis is organised as follows. Firstly, a review of the literature relevant to this study is provided, focusing on prior research into children's literature, picture books, multimodality, and children's literature prizes, including the Caldecott Medal. Then, in the Data and methods section, the data for the study is presented and the theoretical and methodological frameworks for quantitative and qualitative analysis are outlined. In the Analysis section, the quantitative findings are presented, followed by the qualitative analysis in four sections, one for each category of visual-verbal interaction identified in the study. Finally, the Conclusion section provides a summary of results, addresses limitations, and discusses possibilities for future research.

1.1. Perspectives on Children's Literature

The world of children's literature is incredibly diverse and thus any attempt to provide an overview of children's literature or the academic discourse that surrounds it comes with certain challenges. As M. O. Grenby and Andrea Immel—the editors of *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature* (2009)—explain:

Children's literature is now almost as large and varied a field as 'adult literature', encompassing not only prose, verse and drama, but fact as well as fiction, and 'texts' that are composed solely of pictures or digital images. It cuts across almost all genres, from myths to manga, humour to horror, science to self-help and religion to romance. It has its own canon of classics, its own radical and controversial experiments, and genres for which there are no precise equivalents for adults (2009, p. xiii).

Mirroring such diversity, *The Cambridge Companion to Children's Literature* brings together essays from a range of critical approaches, such as historical perspectives (Grenby, 2009), educational studies on literacy and reading (Paul, 2009a), and gender studies (Simons, 2009). In fact, there are a number of handbooks and general readers covering the topic of children's literature (for example, Hunt, 1991; Maybin and Watson, 2009; Hintz, 2020). This variety of scholarly perspectives demonstrates the interdisciplinarity of children's literature criticism.

One key issue that scholars of children's literature face is defining the child reader. Jacqueline Rose (1984) argues that children's literature fails to account for the real child reader and instead relies on a concept of the child constructed by adult writers. This idea has been expanded by Perry Nodelman, who highlights the underlying adult presence in children's literature (2008). The notion

of ‘dual address’—a widely accepted theory, initially proposed by Wall (1991), which suggests that texts for children may simultaneously address adult audiences—ties in with this line of reasoning as it stresses the aspect of adult mediation in children’s literature. However, Marah Gubar has critiqued this perspective by suggesting that portraying children as powerless in the shaping of children’s culture risks reinforcing such marginalisation (2013, p. 452). Gubar goes on to argue for ‘the kinship model’ of childhood, which emphasises the similarity between adults and children and enforces the idea that children have agency as all people do (2013, p. 453). These divergent perspectives underscore the complexity of defining the child reader and provide important context for further discussions of children’s literature.

Although identifying the audience of children’s literature can be complicated, texts for children often employ distinctive language, form, and narrative techniques. These unique features make texts for children a particularly rewarding subject for stylistic analysis, which is an emerging approach in the field of children’s literature. In an issue of *Language and Literature*, a leading journal of stylistics, Burke and Coats (2022) highlight the sparsity of research on children’s literature in the field of stylistics. The article names two significant stylistic studies: a study on language in poetry for children conducted by Jeffries (2009) and Giovanelli’s (2018) cognitive stylistic analysis of the construction of the child reader in a young adult novel. In the same issue of *Language and Literature*, Burke (2022) conducts an analysis of *The Gruffalo* (1999)—a popular children’s book written by Julia Donaldson and illustrated by Axel Scheffler. Burke’s study offers an excellent analysis of the linguistic elements (such as lexical repetition, rhythm, rhyme and meter) and their connection to the rhetoric of the story. Giovanelli (2023) also provides a thorough and up-to-date overview of the stylistic approaches to children’s literature and goes on to highlight the importance of multiple avenues of research in the field, including multimodal studies, which consider more than the verbal dimension of children’s books. This is especially relevant when addressing a prominent type of children’s literature—children’s picture books, which are the focus of this study.

1.2. Approaching Picture Books

Although much of children’s culture is visually dominated and many children’s books contain strong visual elements, picture books possess a distinct visual-verbal interaction. Unlike the illustrated children’s book, where illustrations decorate or enhance the written narrative, the picture book has the unique position of the visual text carrying most of the narrative responsibility, and meaning often emerges only through the interplay of both visual and verbal dimensions (Salisbury and Styles, 2012, p. 7). This complex relationship of words and images has inspired some fascinating scholarly work. The seminal works by Nodelman (1988), Moebius (1986), and Doonan (1993) provide tools to analyse the images in picture books by focusing on aspects such as colour, shape,

illustration style, and composition. Nodelman, in particular, recognises that meaning in picture books arises through the interaction of words and images. However, as Nikolajeva and Scott point out, his primary focus—like that of Moebius and Doonan—remains on the visual mode, often examining individual images rather than how they function together with words (2006, p. 4). Therefore, a more systematic approach, focusing on the interplay of words and images, can provide a fuller understanding of how picture books construct meaning.

One way to further the understanding of picture books is to utilise a taxonomy which would help identify certain patterns and account for the different types of word-image interactions. Nikolajeva and Scott provide a spectrum of word-image relationships (Figure 1), which reveals the five categories of picture books they focus on: symmetrical, complementary, “expanding” or “enhancing”, “counterpointing”, and “sylleptic” picture books (2006, p. 12). Nikolajeva and Scott’s taxonomy accounts for a variety of visual-verbal interactions, focusing on the effect different word-image relationships have on the overall narrative of a picture book. Notably, Nikolajeva and Scott introduce the notion of “sylleptic” picture books. These are works that feature two or more parallel narratives, often visual, which are connected to the main story through spatial or thematic links, rather than through temporal relations (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006, p. 25, 168). Such secondary storylines, like independent actions of background characters, enrich the narrative by inviting the reader to make connections across multiple layers of meaning. Overall, Nikolajeva and Scott’s intuitively plausible classification is highly important to the current study as it serves as the foundation of the taxonomy used to categorise pages of Caldecott Medal-winning books. However, Lewis critiques the notion of “symmetrical” picture books, explaining that words and images can only offer the same information in a very loose sense (2001, p. 39). Lewis goes on to suggest that the picture book is “a particularly flexible form of text” and as such is difficult to classify into a few neat categories (2001, p. 43). Lewis also claims that picture books may exhibit several types of word-image interaction, and therefore an entire book is too broad a unit of analysis to categorise (2001, p. 41). Building on this view, I apply a modified version of Nikolajeva and Scott’s taxonomy to individual spreads rather than whole books, allowing for a more precise account of how word-image relations shift across a single narrative.

WORD	
narrative text	nonnarrative text
narrative text with occasional illustrations	plate book (ABC book, illustrated poetry, nonfiction illustrated book)
narrative text with at least one picture on every spread (not dependent on image)	
symmetrical picturebook (two mutually redundant narratives)	
complementary picturebook (words and pictures filling each other's gaps)	
"expanding" or "enhancing" picturebook (visual narrative supports verbal narrative, verbal narrative depends on visual narrative)	
"counterpointing" picturebook (two mutually dependent narratives)	
"sylleptic" picturebook (with or without words) (two or more narratives independent of each other)	
picture narrative with words (sequential)	exhibit book with words (nonnarrative, nonsequential)
picture narrative without words (sequential)	
wordless picturebook	exhibit book (nonnarrative, nonsequential)
IMAGE	

Figure 1. Spectrum of word-image relationships and picture book categories (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006, p. 12).

However, the classification process may also be hindered by the diversity of picture books, not only in the types of stories they tell—their narratives ranging from humorous tales to non-fiction—but also in their formal structure. For example, wordless picture books eschew the verbal narration completely and convey narratives entirely through pictures. Although, as Serafini rightly points out, wordless picture books often do contain some text: the title, the author-illustrator's name, other peritextual elements, and, sometimes, textual elements within the images, such as labels (2014, p. 24). Although at first glance these picture books may seem simple, their open-endedness and richness of visual information require readers to pay close attention to details and actively participate in the construction of narrative (Salisbury and Styles, 2012, p. 97; Serafini, 2014, p. 26). The variety of picture books is further compounded by the emergence of postmodern picture books, which experiment with traditional narrative and form and highlight the artifice of fiction, thus encouraging new ways of reading and interpreting (Goldstone, 2008). Picture books may also include interactive elements such as flaps to lift, tabs to pull, as well as 'pop-up' elements, which require children to physically interact with the book (Flewitt, 2009, p. 360). Moreover, digital picture book apps are

becoming increasingly prominent and require an entirely different type of engagement (Sargeant, 2015). This diversity presents a challenge to researchers and highlights the need for nuanced and flexible frameworks to account for the narrative building processes in picture books.

1.3. Multimodality

To fully understand how picture books communicate meaning, it is important to address their multimodal nature. Different modes of communication—such as, pictures, words, and design—come together in picture books to shape stories. The concept of multimodality offers a framework for examining the complex interaction of these elements and how they affect the readers of picture books.

In *The Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis*, Carey Jewitt defines multimodality as an approach which understands communication and representation to be about more than language and which encompasses a whole range of human communication forms, such as image, gesture, gaze, and more, as well as the interaction between them (2009, p. 14). More technically, *multimodality* can be defined as “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” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001, p. 20). A *mode*, in turn, is “a socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning” (Kress, 2009, p. 54). Kress and van Leeuwen's conceptions of multimodality and visual grammar are central to this study as they offer a systematic framework for uncovering narrative meanings in picture books through structured analysis of the semiotic resources of meaning-making.

While Kress and van Leeuwen provide a useful social semiotic approach to analysing multimodal texts (2001) and compositional structures used in images to produce meaning (1996/2006), their models largely overlook the cognitive aspects of reading multimodal texts. Charles Forceville, who has critiqued the work of Kress and van Leeuwen (1999) and Jewitt (2010), favours a cognitivist approach and provides a different lens for studying multimodality. Drawing on Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which highlights the human tendency to think in metaphorical terms, Forceville suggests that research on multimodal metaphors—that is, metaphors rendered across different modes (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009, p. 3)—is vital for the development of metaphor studies and the field of multimodality (2009, p. 34). This focus on cognitive interpretation is relevant to this study as children's picture books often rely on metaphors, symbolism, and visual inference to construct narrative meaning.

There has been some excellent research discussing the multimodality of children's literature, and more specifically, of picture books, albeit not always labelled as such. Serafini, Kachorsky and Reid (2018), for instance, discuss the increasing complexity of the multimodality of children's literature, looking at experimental forms of picture books, multimodal novels, and comics, which all exemplify complex multimodal relationships and a blurring of genres. In an earlier article, Serafini

(2010) draws on a variety of fields of inquiry to build a tripartite framework to analyse the multimodality of picture books. Meanwhile, Nikolajeva and Scott's seminal volume *How Picturebooks Work* (2006) focuses on analysing the unique verbal-visual relationship in picture books and how it shapes storytelling, especially through fascinating instances of counterpoint. Although they do not frame this interaction between words and images explicitly as multimodal, their exploration of how meaning is conveyed through the interplay of both modes aligns closely with multimodal analysis. Nevertheless, grounding the research in multimodal theory is instrumental for a systematic approach. For an investigation of the visual modes of picture books, the current study follows the work of scholars such as Lewis (2001), Unsworth and Wheeler (2002), and Serafini (2009), who all draw on Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar (1996/2006).

Overall, the concepts of mode and multimodality, as defined above, provide a valuable lens through which picture books can be critically examined. The work of Kress and van Leeuwen provides a systematic framework for identifying structural patterns in multimodal texts and understanding how meaning is made through the interplay of semiotic resources. In contrast, Forceville's cognitively oriented perspective highlights the interpretative processes involved in reading multimodal texts, which can be useful for analysing non-literal elements of picture book narratives. Scholars such as Lewis, Unsworth and Wheeler, and Serafini have demonstrated the applicability of multimodal theories in the analysis of picture books and thus serve as a foundation and departure point for the present study.

1.4. Children's Literature Awards and the Randolph Caldecott Medal

This thesis focuses on picture books that have received the Randolph Caldecott Medal, so it is important to consider the wider context of literary awards and how they impact children's literature. Following this, I also discuss the Caldecott Medal, including an overview of its history and selection criteria, and the academic research that has focused on it. In providing this outline, my aim is to exemplify how the picture books included in this study reflect the general trends within children's publishing and multimodal storytelling.

Kenneth Kidd (2009) provides a case study of the Newbery Medal—the most prestigious of the American Library Association awards—to investigate the value and effect of awards on children's literature. Kidd notes that the award significantly increases book sales and keeps winning books in print for decades—a rare occurrence for children's books (2009, p. 157). Cockcroft (2018) has also noted the boost in sales granted by the Newbery and Caldecott Medals, whereas Smith (2013) discusses what she terms the “Caldecott Effect”, that is, the distinctly positive effect the Caldecott Medal has had on the appreciation of innovative picture books amongst children and parents, publishers and librarians. Unfortunately, the increased sales and visibility that follow often

disproportionately benefit white authors and protagonists, due to a selective bias of children's literature award committees (Cummins, 2017; Kidd, 2009). Moreover, there are serious doubts about whether a surge of prizes, of which there are now around 300 for English-language texts alone, has not diminished the usefulness of prizes as a means to identify examples of excellence (Kidd and Thomas Jr., 2017, pp. 2–3). Paradoxically, this proliferation of awards might nevertheless continue to uphold elitist values and social privilege (Kidd and Thomas Jr., 2017, pp. 2–3). Since there are no clear-cut answers to the issues that come with prizing, it is necessary to maintain a critical attitude towards the winning picture books, invariably proclaimed to be the most distinguished examples of children's literature. At the same time, the positive effects these awards have on the sales and prestige of the genre as a whole cannot be overlooked.

From the plethora of existing children's literature awards, the American Newbery and Caldecott Medals and their British counterparts of the Carnegie Medal and the Kate Greenaway Medal stand out as the most prestigious prizes (Kidd and Thomas Jr., 2017, p. 2). This thesis focuses on the contemporary winners of the Caldecott Medal—an award annually given by the American Library Association (ALA) to the artist of “the most distinguished American picture book for children” published in the previous year (American Library Association, 2025). The Medal, named after the nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott and established in 1938, has a few eligibility criteria. The illustrations must be original, previously unpublished work by an artist who is a citizen or resident of the United States of America, and the book must be published by an American publisher in the U.S. in English during the previous year. The ALA defines a picture book as a work that “essentially provides the child with a visual experience” and the audience of children as “persons of ages up to and including fourteen” (American Library Association, 2025). Committee members consider the quality of artistic technique, pictorial interpretation, appropriateness of style, as well as how the plot, characters, and information are conveyed through pictures, alongside the overall presentation for a child audience (American Library Association, 2025). Bearing in mind the context behind and the criteria of the Caldecott Medal is vital for analysing the winning books.

Lastly, I would like to note some of the scholarly work that has been done on Caldecott Medal-winning books. Martin (2004) writes about the use of multiple narrative strands in books that have been awarded the Caldecott Medal, including David Wiesner's *The Three Pigs* (2001), which is part of the corpus for this study. Hammond and Nordstrom (2014) provide a guide to the illustrations of a selection of Caldecott Medal and Honor books, combining visual analysis with insights into why these titles may have met the award criteria, informed by their experience of serving on a Caldecott Award Committee. There have also been studies on the representation of race (Husband and Lee, 2018), gender (Crisp and Hiller, 2011), and body size (Wedwick and Latham, 2013) in Caldecott

Medal-winning picture books. These studies raise important questions about inclusion and bias in award-winning texts, however, they tend to focus on thematic content or visual style in broad terms, rather than systematically analysing the grammar of the illustrations or the nuanced relationships between words and images. The current study, which employs a stylistic multimodal approach, will contribute to the growing body of research on the topic of the Caldecott Medal and children's literature more generally. By applying quantitative and qualitative research methods and drawing on multiple analytical frameworks, this thesis offers distinctive, systematic analysis of the visual-verbal interaction and its role in meaning-making across a broad range of Caldecott Medal-winning books.

2. Data and methods

2.1. Data

The data selected for the study comes from the Randolph Caldecott Medal-winning picture books, which were awarded from 2001 to 2025. The chosen time span ensures that the corpus is large enough to represent a variety of books and that the examples are recent enough to be relevant to contemporary discussions of picture books. Although the Caldecott Medal is awarded annually, five titles were excluded, meaning a total of 20 books were analysed in this study. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* (2007) by Brian Selznick was excluded due to its highly experimental form, which diverges from the general notion of picture books. It is considered to be the first novel to have won the Caldecott Medal as Selznick combines the forms of prose novel, picture book, and graphic novel, thus pushing the boundaries of what is considered to be a picture book (Serafini, Kachorsky and Reid, 2018; Trumpener, 2009, p. 74). While this experimental picture book raises interesting research questions, its innovative format differs significantly from the other works in the corpus and was thus excluded from the study—the focus of which is on prototypical picture books. Four wordless pictures books—*Wolf in the Snow* (2017) by Matthew Cordell, *A Ball for Daisy* (2011) by Chris Raschka, *The Lion and the Mouse* (2009) by Jerry Pinkney, and *Flotsam* (2006) by David Wiesner—were also excluded from the corpus as their monomodal nature is at odds with the overall aim of the study, which is to analyse the interaction of verbal and visual modes in picture books.

The dataset for the quantitative and qualitative analysis consists of the double-page spreads (also referred to as openings, doublespreads, or spreads) that present the narrative content of each picture book. In accordance with standard picture book conventions, the double-page spread, rather than an individual page, is treated as the basic unit of storytelling. Only the illustrated story sequences were included in the study, while the covers, title pages, endpapers, and other paratextual materials were excluded. Based on these criteria, the final dataset consists of 377 spreads extracted from 20 picture books, which are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Picture books included in the data set.

Year	Title	Authors	Double-page spreads
2024	<i>Chooch Helped</i>	Andrea L. Rogers (writer), Rebecca Lee Kunz (illustrator)	18
2023	<i>Big</i>	Vashti Harrison	28
2022	<i>Hot Dog</i>	Doug Salati	20
2021	<i>Watercress</i>	Andrea Wang (writer), Jason Chin (illustrator)	14
2020	<i>We Are Water Protectors</i>	Carole Lindstrom (writer), Michaela Goade (illustrator)	17

2019	<i>The Undefeated</i>	Kwame Alexander (writer), Kadir Nelson (illustrator)	16
2018	<i>Hello Lighthouse</i>	Sophie Blackall	21
2016	<i>Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat</i>	Javaka Steptoe	18
2015	<i>Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear</i>	Lindsay Mattick (writer), Sophie Blackall (illustrator)	22
2014	<i>The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend</i>	Dan Santat	19
2013	<i>Locomotive</i>	Brian Floca	27
2012	<i>This Is Not My Hat</i>	Jon Klassen	16
2010	<i>A Sick Day for Amos McGee</i>	Philip C. Stead (writer), Erin E. Stead (illustrator)	16
2008	<i>The House in the Night</i>	Susan Marie Swanson (writer), Beth Krommes (illustrator)	18
2005	<i>The Hello, Goodbye Window</i>	Norton Juster (writer), Chris Raschka (illustrator)	15
2004	<i>Kitten's First Full Moon</i>	Kevin Henkes	15
2003	<i>The Man Who Walked Between the Towers</i>	Mordicai Gerstein	20
2002	<i>My Friend Rabbit</i>	Eric Rohmann	16
2001	<i>The Three Pigs</i>	David Wiesner	20
2000	<i>So You Want to Be President?</i>	Judith St. George (writer), David Small (illustrator)	21
Total number of double-page spreads			377

2.2. Quantitative methods

The first stage of analysis involved quantitative coding of the double-page spreads to determine the occurrence and distribution of visual-verbal interaction types. To begin with, the spreads were manually categorised according to a typology (Table 2), derived from Nikolajeva and Scott (2006, p. 12). Nikolajeva and Scott introduce five categories of picture books: symmetrical, complementary, “expanding” or “enhancing”, “counterpointing”, and “sylleptic” picture books. For this study, the categories of symmetrical and complementary visual-verbal relationship were merged into a single category, under the umbrella term of *cooperative* word-image interaction. This decision follows Lewis’s criticism of the notion of symmetry between words and images, as they can only offer the same information in a loose sense (2001, p. 39). As a result, the boundary between symmetrical and complementary visual-verbal interaction types is blurred, as words and images invariably fill each other’s gaps. Moreover, both symmetrical and complementary picture books produce a relatively passive reading experience (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006, p. 17), as the cooperative relationship between words and does not require active negotiation on the reader’s part. The following category in the taxonomy is that of *expanding* visual-verbal interactions. Here, the image provides significantly

more narrative content than the verbal text, often depicting actions, characters, or settings that are not mentioned in the accompanying words. The verbal component in such spreads tends to be minimal, while the illustration carries the primary storytelling function by expanding on the scene or advancing the plot. In the category of *counterpointing* interaction, the verbal and visual modes present divergent or even contradictory information, creating a dissonance between what is written and what is shown. Meanwhile, the spreads in the *syллеptic* category involve two or more parallel storylines that are linked to one another not by sequence or chronology, but through spatial or thematic links, and may be conveyed with or without the verbal mode. Finally, the category of *wordless* picture books spreads was included in the taxonomy for this study as spreads without verbal narration are a common feature even of otherwise multimodal picture books.

Table 2. Taxonomy for categorising picture book spreads, according to visual-verbal interactions.

Category	Definition
Cooperative	Words and images refer to the same situation, each contributing supportive or complementary details.
Expanding	Images convey additional visual information that expands on the written story.
Counterpointing	Words and images present contrasting or divergent perspectives on the same situation.
Sylleptic	Images depict two or more parallel narratives (with or without words) that are thematically or spatially linked.
Wordless	The narrative is communicated entirely through images.

The manual coding of double-page spreads was carried out in Microsoft Excel. The determined type of visual-verbal interaction was recorded next to the spread number of each book (Figure 2). Excel was also used to calculate the total number of spreads and the number of each spread type. To examine the distribution of spread types within books, each spread was assigned a position label—beginning, middle, or end—based on its location in the spread sequence of each book. Using Excel, the books were divided into equal thirds, with each section corresponding to one of the position categories. In instances where the total number of spreads could not be divided by three evenly, the additional spread was assigned to the middle category. Then, the percentage of each spread type occurring in each position was calculated. This process was also completed using Excel. The full coding of the dataset, along with the resulting calculations, is provided in the Appendices 1 and 2. While the assigned positions may not directly align with the narrative progression of each book, this method ensured consistency for comparison across the dataset. Exploring the distribution of spread types within the narrative sequence allows for insights into how different visual-verbal interactions contribute to the storytelling process at various points in the book. For example, one might expect that counterpointing spreads, which require readers to negotiate between conflicting information, would be less prominent at the beginning, where the storyline is being introduced, or end of the book,

where the reader expects narrative resolution. Therefore, this approach introduces an additional layer to the exploration of multimodal strategies in picture books.

1	Book title	Spread number	Total spreads	Spread type	Position label
2	So You Want To Be President?	1	21	COP	Beginning
3	So You Want To Be President?	2	21	EXP	Beginning
4	So You Want To Be President?	3	21	COP	Beginning

Figure 2. Example of coding process in Excel.

2.3. Qualitative methods

Following the quantitative coding of double-page spreads, a qualitative analysis was conducted on selected spreads classified as cooperative, expanding, counterpointing, and sylleptic. Examples for the analysis were chosen to ensure diversity and representativeness. It is also important to note that although the analysis was performed on individual spreads, the wider context of the picture book was addressed when relevant. This stems from Lewis's (2001, p. 122) reasoning on analysing pictures in picture books:

Analyses of the pictures in picturebooks always need to be fed into an understanding of the book as a whole, and if our fine dissections of structure do not help us understand more about the story to which they are contributing then they are of limited use to us.

Attending to how individual spreads help shape the overall narrative of a picture book also ties in with the stylistic approach of this study, which focuses on formal features of language and image to gain insight into how the interaction between words and images impacts narrative construction. To achieve a thorough interpretative qualitative analysis, this thesis combines three frameworks: systemic functional grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), and a supplementary framework of multimodal metaphor theory (Forceville, 2009; 2016). Systemic functional grammar and visual grammar were applied to examine narrative structures through material processes (verbs denoting actions and events) in the verbal mode and image vectors (lines of sight or movement indicating direction and action) in the visual mode. A secondary framework of multimodal metaphor theory, which explores how metaphors operate across different semiotic modes, was used to investigate cases of non-literal meaning in picture books, when these occurred. While Forceville's framework emerges from a different theoretical tradition than that of Kress and van Leeuwen, this thesis treats them as complementary rather than competing methodologies. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to apply both visual frameworks to the same dataset.

According to Halliday's systemic functional grammar, language can be said to perform three metafunctions: the ideational metafunction, through which language constructs the human experience (subdivided into the experiential and logical metafunctions); the interpersonal metafunction, which enacts social relationships; and the textual metafunction, which guides the organisation of language

into coherent text (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, pp. 30–31). These metafunctions correspond to three strands of meaning at the clause level: clause as message (textual metafunction), clause as exchange (interpersonal metafunction), and clause as representation (experiential metafunction) (2014, p. 83). This study focuses on the experiential metafunction, which is realised through the grammatical system of transitivity, expressed through processes. The structure which underlies the clause as representation consists of the experiential elements of process, participant(s), and, optionally, circumstances (2014, p. 220). In systemic functional grammar, processes are construed into a set of process types, which correspond to a particular domain of experience (2014, p. 213). These are identified as material, behavioural, mental, verbal, relational, and existential process types (2014, pp. 213–216). However, Halliday and Matthiessen emphasise that these are not rigid categories (2014, p. 215–216), illustrating their interconnectivity through a circular diagram (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Types of process in English (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014, p. 216).

The material process type is central to the analysis of the verbal mode in picture book spreads. Material processes represent tangible actions and events, which are an integral part of narrative structures in children’s stories. The analysis of material processes in picture book spreads allows for the examination of action sequences and character agency, facilitated by the identification of the structural elements of Actor (the entity that performs the action), Process, and Goal (the entity affected by the action). However, other process types were analysed when salient. The material verbs analysed using Halliday’s functional grammar were then mapped against action vectors, following Kress and van Leeuwen’s *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (2006).

The starting point of Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar framework lies in Halliday's systemic functional grammar, therefore, like Halliday, Kress and van Leeuwen argue that all semiotic modes, including visual design, fulfil the same metafunctions as language: the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual (2006, p. 15, 42). As with the framework of systemic functional grammar, this study centres on the ideational metafunction. In the visual mode, this metafunction is expressed through representation of actions, events, and participants—that is, representations of experiences in the world (2006, p. 42). Kress and van Leeuwen distinguish between narrative and conceptual structures. Where conceptual patterns, which reflect relational processes in systemic functional grammar, represent the class, structure, or meaning of participants, narrative structures represent unfolding actions, events, and processes (2006, p. 59). Narrative structures are visually realised by vectors—oblique lines, formed by depicted elements, such as bodies, limbs, or tools (2006, p. 59). A vector represents a Process, while represented participants take on the roles of Actor (the entity from which the vector projects) and Goal (the entity at which the vector points) (2006, p. 50). Therefore, vectors and participants visually correspond to the material processes and participants found in the verbal mode, according to the categories of systemic functional grammar. The use of these parallel and mutually compatible frameworks for the analysis of picture book spreads enables then a systematic multimodal comparison of how narrative action is distributed across the verbal and visual modes.

In conjunction with the frameworks of systemic functional grammar and visual grammar, this study also draws on Forceville's theory of pictorial and multimodal metaphors (2009; 2016) to analyse non-literal meaning constructed by visual-verbal interactions in picture books. Forceville distinguishes between monomodal metaphors, “whose target and source are exclusively or predominantly rendered in one mode” (2009, p. 23), and multimodal metaphors, in which “target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes” (2009, p. 24). As with verbal metaphors, the interpretation of metaphors involves identifying the target and source domains and mapping at least one feature (although more often a set of features) of the source onto the target (Forceville, 2016, p. 244). Given that picture books are complex multimodal artefacts, multimodal metaphors can play a significant role in the construction of narrative meaning. First, metaphors are to be expected in a genre that aims at stimulating the imagination of young readers. Second, metaphors serve as an important tool for communicating difficult or abstract concepts to children by mapping the features of a familiar source domain onto a less accessible target domain. This is exemplified in Figure 4, which shows a multimodal metaphor from *We Are Water Protectors* (2020) by Lindstrom and Goade. Here, features of the source domain SNAKE, expressed verbally, are mapped onto the target domain OIL PIPELINE, rendered visually. Physical characteristics of the source domain—such as a curved form and a snake-like head—are visually integrated into the depiction of the pipeline. This

visual mapping invites further conceptual associations, such as danger or threat. Thus, the metaphor helps children understand the unfamiliar concept of an oil pipeline to young readers through the more familiar concept of a snake.



Figure 4. Multimodal metaphor in the seventh spread from Lindstrom, C. and Goade, M. (2020) *We Are Water Protectors*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

In this study, multimodal metaphors are identified using a dual coding system. Firstly, it is determined whether the image-word relationship is literal or metaphorical, following contextual cues from both the visual and the verbal modes. According to Forceville, "for an identity-relationship to qualify as a metaphor, it should be possible to formulate a "conceptual" A IS B—however awkward this formulation may be" (2016, p. 245). Secondly, metaphors are identified as either monomodal or multimodal. A metaphor is deemed monomodal when both domains appear in the same mode. Conversely, a metaphor is flagged as multimodal when the source and target domains are cued by different modes. This study also includes instances where metaphorical meanings emerge in both modes, sharing a common source or target domain, as the two modes then interact to create a complex multimodal metaphor. Following Forceville, the similarity between source and target in multimodal metaphors is guided by co-referentiality or co-occurrence (2016, p. 244), which assists in identifying source and target domains. Metaphoricity is established when there is a meaningful connection between two domains that goes beyond a direct or literal description, prompting the reader to interpret one thing in terms of another. Incorporating this dimension of analysis facilitates a deeper exploration of how picture books communicate through the interplay of visual and verbal modes.

The qualitative analysis was conducted by systematically applying the frameworks of systemic functional grammar and visual grammar to the selected double-page spreads. Material processes and

participants were identified in verbal clauses and then mapped against vectors and participants realised in the visual mode. The supplementary framework for the analysis of multimodal metaphors was applied in spreads where multimodal metaphors were found.

3. Analysis

3.1. Quantitative analysis

This section presents the quantitative analysis of picture book spread types across the dataset. Spread types, categorised according to their visual-verbal interaction, offer insight into how multimodal strategies contribute to the narratives of picture books. The categories of visual-verbal interaction are: cooperative, expanding, counterpointing, sylleptic, and wordless. The analysis focuses on both the overall distribution of spread types and their placement across the beginning, middle, and end sections of the books.

Firstly, 377 double-page spreads from 20 picture books were coded for visual-verbal interaction types (Figure 5). The results revealed that more than half of the picture book spreads had a cooperative word-image relationship, with 222 spreads classified in this category. The second largest category was shown to be the expanding visual-verbal interaction type, with 81 spreads coded as such. Meanwhile, the categories of wordless, counterpointing, and sylleptic picture book spreads were the least prominent as the coding revealed 33 wordless, 26 counterpointing, and only 15 sylleptic spreads across the dataset. It is also important to note that while 10 picture books contained at least one wordless spread, only 5 books had counterpointing spreads and 3 books—sylleptic. 13 books did not have any counterpointing or sylleptic spreads.

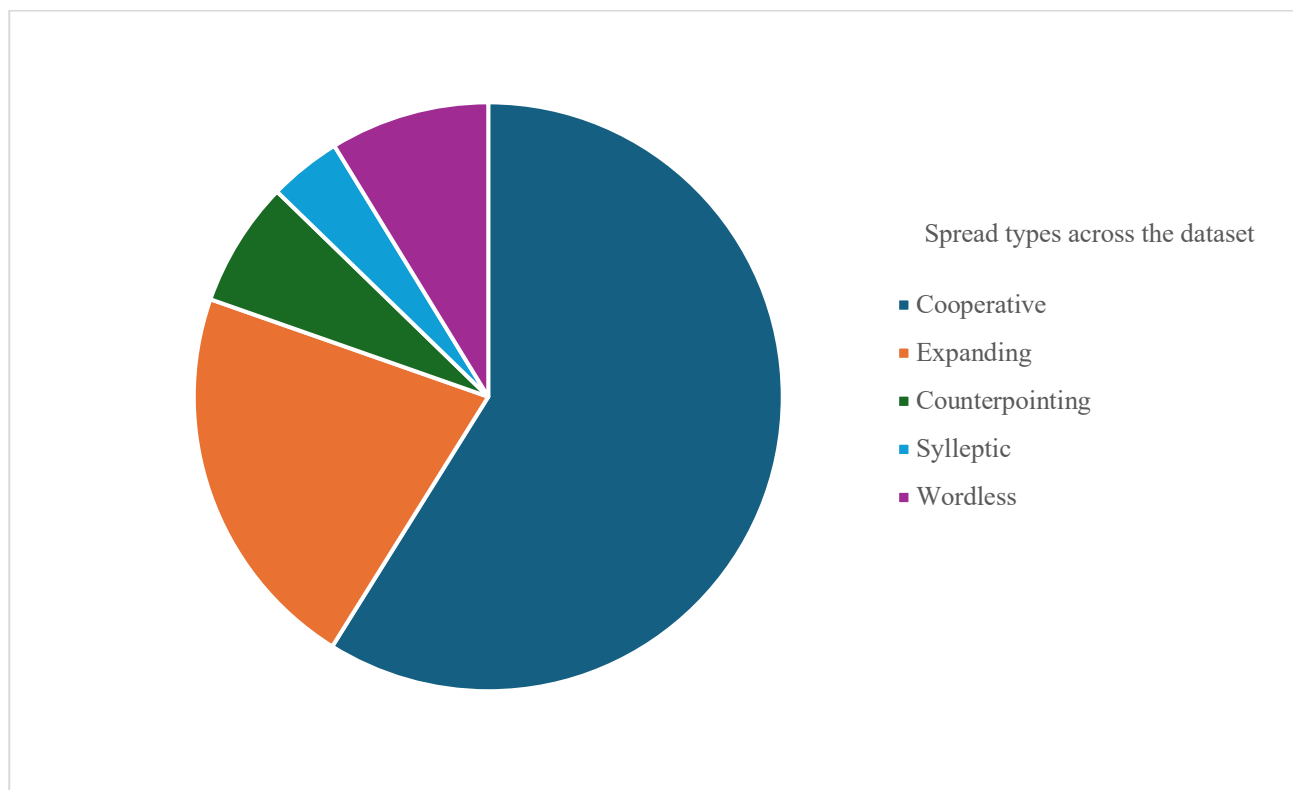


Figure 5. Spread type count across the dataset.

The results are not entirely surprising. As Nikolajeva and Scott observe, most picture books rely on mutually redundant visual-verbal interactions (referred to as cooperative in the current study) with only occasional instances of counterpointing details (2006, p. 14). This tendency may be particularly evident in the Caldecott Medal-winning picture books that address challenging or sensitive topics, such as racial injustice (like *The Undefeated* (2019) by Alexander and Nelson), environmental issues (*We Are Water Protectors* (2020) by Lindstrom and Goade), or historical and political subjects (*Locomotive* (2013) by Folca, *So You Want to Be President?* (2000) by St. George and Small). In such cases, creators may intentionally favour more straightforward visual-verbal interactions to ensure that complex messages are conveyed more clearly. In contrast, counterpointing word-image relationships or sylleptic narratives pose a challenge to readers by requiring them to negotiate between contrasting perspectives or parallel narrative strands. Nikolajeva and Scott suggest that such picture books invite many possible interpretations and engage the reader's imagination (2006, p. 24). Similarly, Salisbury and Styles argue that counterpointing elements provoke readers to be actively involved in the meaning-making process and may also introduce children to irony in literature (2012, p. 94). Wordless picture book spreads, while challenging in their own right due to their openness to a variety of visual readings (Serafini, 2014, p. 26), do not demand a negotiation between modes. As such, they are less likely to obscure complex messages, which might explain their greater prominence over counterpointing or sylleptic spreads within the dataset.

Spread types were then examined for their distribution across narrative stages—beginning, middle, and end (Figure 6). The analysis showed that cooperative spreads had an even distribution across different sections of picture books, which was to be expected due to the category's overall prominence in the dataset. Meanwhile, expanding spreads featured more prominently in the final third. This could suggest that picture books gradually allow images to contribute more actively to narrative communication as the storyline progresses. Counterpointing spreads appeared the least at the end of the picture books, which indicates that the picture books in the corpus are not likely to ask readers to negotiate between the words and images as the narrative resolves, instead opting for more straightforward conclusions. Sylleptic spreads, on the other hand, were least likely to occur in the middle of the narrative. This could suggest that it is more likely for a single narrative strand to take over during the most narratively intense part of the story, leaving less space for the layered perspectives that syllepsis typically involves. Wordless picture book spreads could mostly be found in the middle narrative stage and the least at the beginning, which hints that such spreads are used to convey climactic moments (as exemplified by the spread in Figure 7) or to evoke a sense of calm during narrative resolution (as shown in Figure 8). Their relative absence at the beginning may reflect a reliance on verbal text for world-building, as starting a picture book with wordless spreads could

risk confusing young readers by affording too many possible interpretations before the narrative context has been established.

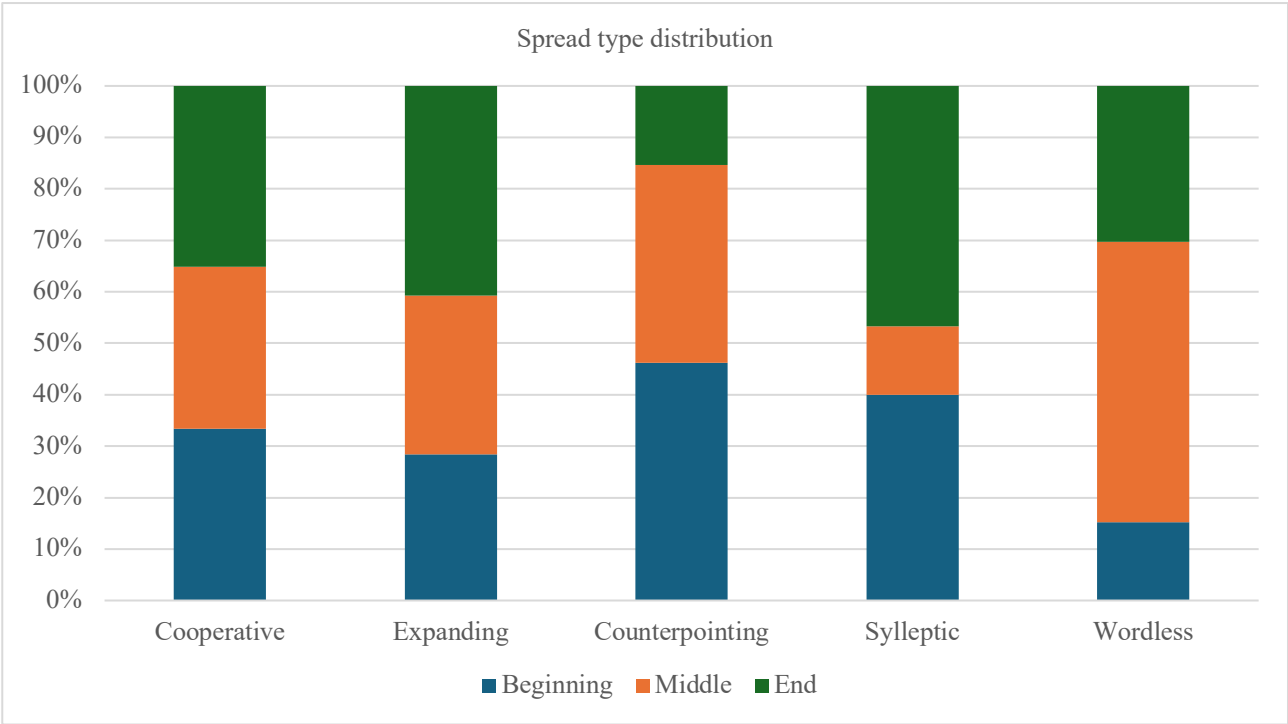


Figure 6. Distribution of each spread type throughout the beginning, middle, and end of picture books.

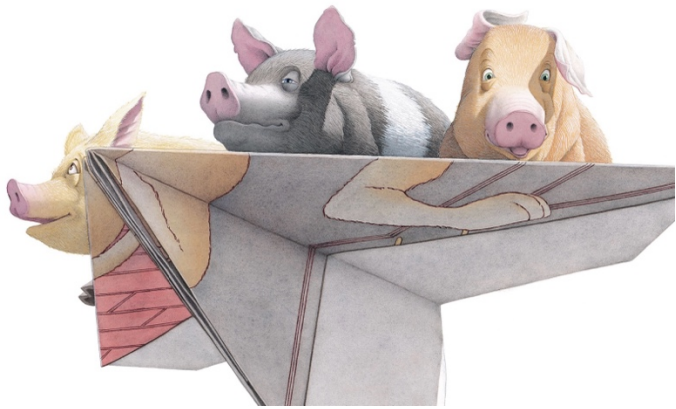


Figure 7. The seventh spread from Wiesner, D. (2001) *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion Books.



Figure 8. The twenty-first spread from Blackall, S. (2018) *Hello Lighthouse*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

The qualification of narrative stages in this study may seem rather rudimentary, with the beginning, middle, and end only corresponding to thirds of the narratives, instead of narratologically established stages. For example, the findings do not account for the fact that sylleptic spreads were never the first or last spread of a picture book. Nevertheless, the analysis does provide a general understanding of how different picture book spread types are distributed throughout narratives and provides deeper insight into the specific functions of each spread type.

3.2. Qualitative analysis

The qualitative analysis identifies material processes in the verbal mode, narrative representations in the visual mode (via vectors), and multimodal metaphors where they occur across selected picture book spreads, organised by interaction type: cooperative (Section 3.2.1.), expanding (Section 3.2.2.), counterpointing (Section 3.2.3.), and sylleptic (Section 3.2.4.). The impact of these visual-verbal relationships on the narrative is also discussed.

3.2.1. Cooperative visual-verbal interaction

This sub-section presents a qualitative analysis of ten picture book spreads that fall under the cooperative category of visual-verbal interaction, which combines both symmetrical and complementary relationships between words and images. These two types were merged into a single category due to the fuzzy boundary between them, as discussed in the Data and methods section. The cooperative interaction type is characterised by words and images that provide supportive or complementary information. The following analysis examines how both modes work in tandem to construct narrative meaning in this visual-verbal interaction type.



Figure 9. The fifth spread from Wang, A. and Chin, J. (2021) *Watercress*. New York: Neal Porter Books.

The spread from *Watercress* (2021), presented in Figure 9, displays two written sentences, containing four clauses. These include three instances of material processes with their associated participants: “a car” (Actor) + “passes” (Process); “I” (Actor) + “duck” (Process) + “my head” (Goal), and “my parents” (Actor) + “cut” (Process) + “bunches of the small plant” (Goal). The written text is accompanied by one illustration across the entire double-page spread. However, the two sentences are placed on opposite sides of the spread, mirroring the visual placement of the participants. On the left side, we see the girl—the narrator and protagonist of the story—along with the car, while on the right are her parents, holding the plants they are gathering. This separate grouping of clauses and participants reflects the central friction of the narrative: the girl, concerned about fitting in with her peers, is disconnected from her family, who embrace their cultural heritage.

The material processes are also expressed visually through vectors. The car moves along a diagonal vector line, expressing the process *pass by*. Meanwhile, the girl’s body forms an oblique vector, facing sharply away from the car vector, communicating the process of ducking her head. The opposite direction of these narrative vectors complements the protagonist’s verbally stated wish not to be recognized. The vectors produced by the bodies of the girl’s family represent them collecting the plant (the material process *cut* is made clear by the depiction of scissors). However, the vectors of the parents’ bodies are more upright compared to the girl’s pronounced diagonal posture, signalling a lack of shame. This difference is accentuated by the girl’s facial expression, which is shown more clearly than her parents’ faces, which adds to the depiction of shame and psychological centring of the protagonist. Moreover, the vectors of the girl’s family converge, visually forming a cohesive group, which further contrasts with the girl’s isolated stance and individual experience. Although the brother and the parked car are not mentioned in the written text, they are verbally referred to in previous pages, so the images fill in those gaps here. Beyond that, the pictures support the verbal narration, each reinforcing the other’s meaning, making this a cooperative visual-verbal relationship.



Figure 10. The third spread from Lindstrom, C. and Goade, M. (2020) *We Are Water Protectors*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

The spread from *We Are Water Protectors* (2020), as shown in Figure 10, consists of two distinct pages. The first page presents a visual and a phrase that function as a refrain in the narrative, emphasising the strength of the Water Protectors. This combination of words and image appears three times throughout the picture book, with slight variations to the illustration. The written text contains two clauses with the relational processes *stand* and *be*. Rather than simply conveying physical posture or existence, these processes communicate the characteristics of strength and resilience. In the visual mode, this is accompanied by the radial arrangement of vectors formed by the figures. As the vectors extend in five directions from a central point, the image symbolises unity and the protection of the surrounding environment.

On the second page, there are two clauses with a repeated structure: “the river’s rhythm” (Actor) + “runs” (Process) + “through [...] veins” (Scope). The first clause communicates the individual experience, while the second clause extends it to the communal, highlighting the protagonist’s position as a metonymic representation for her people. Indeed, the image only portrays the girl, who functions as a stand-in for the community. The material process *run* is visually depicted by dynamic vectors, formed by the hair/river. In addition, the written text and the image communicate in metaphorical terms. Verbally, the source domain BLOOD is mapped onto the target domain RIVER. Visually, the target RIVER takes on the quality of the source HAIR. In conjunction, the two modes give rise to the multimodal metaphor RIVER IS BODY, which exemplifies the interdependence of people and water—a prominent message in the picture book.



Figure 11. The eight spread from Blackall, S. (2018) *Hello Lighthouse*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

In the verbal narration of the double-page spread from *Hello Lighthouse* (2018) (Figure 11), there are multiple clauses with material processes: “strikes”, “is wrecked”, “rows out”, “pulls”, “tends”, “writes”, and “wraps”. The multitude of processes reflects the heightened intensity at this point in the narrative. The first clause “disaster strikes” describes an abstract concept without concrete referents that can be easily translated into the visual mode. However, the waves in the picture form many conflicting diagonal vectors creating a strong sense of chaotic movement, which complements the tone set by the first clause in the written text. Furthermore, the second clause elaborates on what the disaster is. In the visual mode, the participant “boat” creates an oblique vector that clashes with the immobile figure of the rocks, mirroring the written text. The material processes in the two following clauses are also represented in the picture. The lighthouse keeper’s outstretched arm creates a vector line towards the sailors, while the vector line of his boat points away from the wreck, towards the edge of the page, indicating an escape to safety. The circular frame at the bottom right corner of the spread visually presents the clause “[h]e [...] wraps the sailors in blankets.” The oblique line of the keeper’s body, pointing towards the sailor, forms an arch together with the blanket, which iconically indicates his care and attention towards the sailors. Meanwhile, the clauses “[h]e tends the light” and “[h]e [...] writes in the logbook” correspond to the duties the character continuously carries out, as the clauses are repeated throughout the book, signalling the calm of routine, which juxtaposes against the volatility of the storm. Visually, the difference is underscored by the circular border, which separates the scene of the boat wreck from the scene in the safety of the lighthouse and iconically

suggests protection, as well as the colour contrast between both scenes. The words and images support one another while filling each other's gaps, resulting in a cooperative visual-verbal relationship.



Figure 12. The second spread from Steptoe, J. (2016) *Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

The spread shown in Figure 12 from *Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat* (2018) presents the material processes *draw* and *create*. These closely related processes are visually represented through the oblique vectors of the protagonist's body, as he leans over his drawings, as well as through the diagonal vectors formed by his arm and the pencil in his hand. In addition, the character's concentration as he creates is reinforced by the vector of his gaze, which is directed at the drawings. The verbally described circumstances of time ("from morning until night"), manner ("with a serious face"), and place ("amid a storm of papers") are simultaneously realised in the visual mode, strengthening the visual-verbal relationship of the spread. The written text offers glimpses into the character's internal state ("He refuses to sleep until he has created a masterpiece"), while the illustration complements this by providing visual details of the external setting, such as the protagonist's appearance, his environment, and the volume of his artwork, creating a cohesive scene in the narrative.

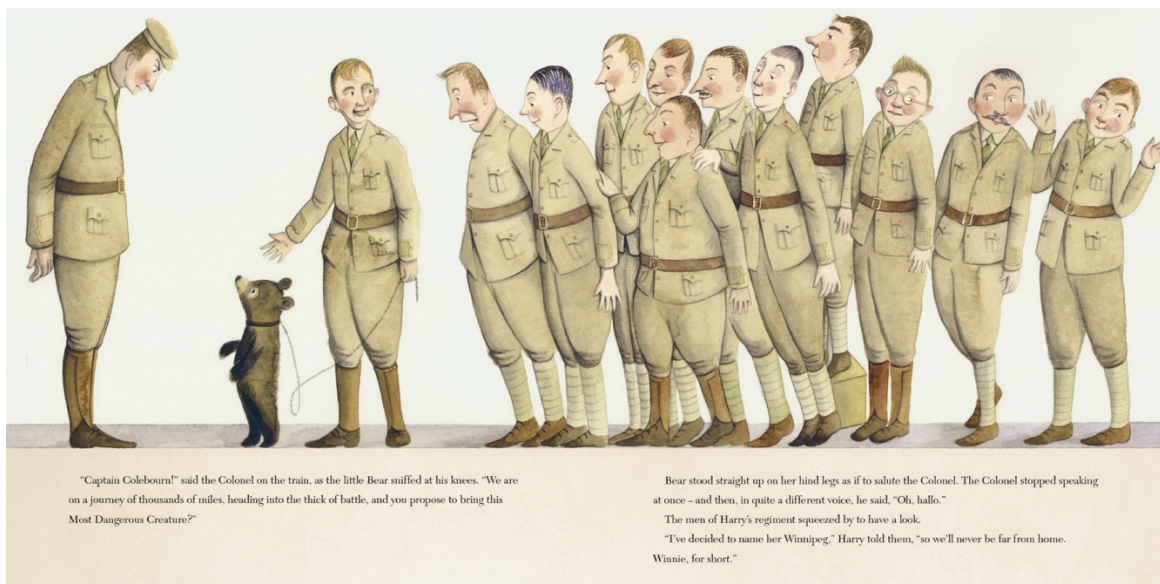


Figure 13. The seventh spread from Mattick, L. and Blackall, S. (2015) *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

The spread from *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear* (2015), shown in Figure 13, also exemplifies a cooperative interaction between the verbal and visual modes in which the written text provides narrative progression and dialogue, while the illustration represents key processes and helps convey the emotion of the scene. Reading the image from left to right, the illustration begins by showing the inclined head of the Colonel, which creates an oblique vector that signals his consideration of the bear. His pointed gaze reinforces the process of scrutinising and visually underscores the judgement, which is played out through dialogue in the verbal mode. Following this, the bear is shown standing up on its hind legs, stretched out in a vertical vector, while its snout points diagonally at the Colonel. Visually, this depiction corresponds with the verbally expressed material processes *stand* and *salute*, indicating the bear's interest in the Colonel. Next to the bear, the oblique vector formed by Harry's outstretched arm visually expresses the verbal process *name*, thus complementing the dialogue presented in the verbal mode, while drawing further attention to the bear. Finally, the tightly arranged vectors, formed by the bodies of the other soldiers, visually realise the material process *squeeze by*. The slight incline of the vectors formed by the soldiers closer to the bear indicates the men's interest in the creature. Therefore, the visual vectors cooperate with the verbal narration to create a cohesive scene, with the bear as a focal point.



Figure 14. The ninth spread from Floci, B. (2013) *Locomotive*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

In the spread from *Locomotive* (2013), shown in Figure 14, the verbal narration describes a wide range of material processes, which highlight the dynamic nature of the scene: the sounds of the engine (Actor) surround (Process) the engineer (Goal); pistons (Actor) pound (Process); the drivers (Actor) drum (Process) the rail (Goal); the smoke and steam (Actors) rush up (Process); the wheels (Actor) turn (Process); the country (Actor) runs by (Process); the train (Actor) runs (Process) through the prairies, to the Great Plains, on to the frontier (Scope). Additionally, the hypothetical material processes—*setting* the bars and levers, *slowing down*, *speeding up*, and *running* the engine wide open—are embedded within the engineer’s mental process of *knowing*, which contributes to the overall sense of action in the scene. Visually, the strong diagonal vector formed by the railway line and the train, along with the train’s slightly tilted vertical axis, reinforces the feeling of movement. While only a few of the material processes are represented visually, the illustration nevertheless replicates and amplifies the dynamic atmosphere conveyed by the written text.

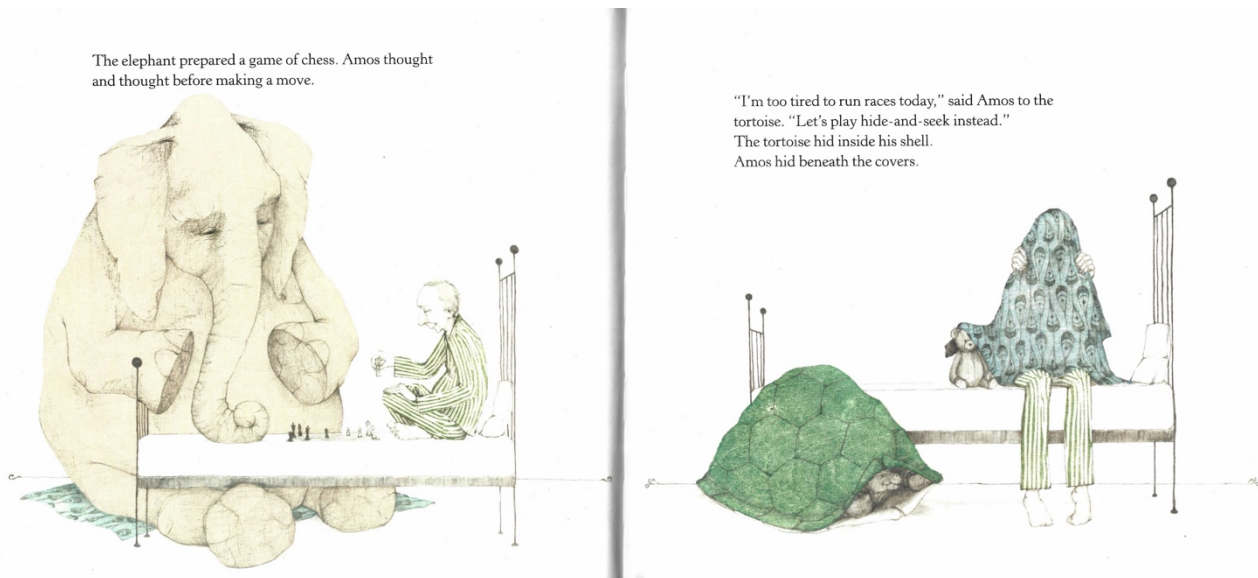


Figure 15. The twelfth spread from Stead, P. C. and Stead, E. E. (2010) *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

The spread in *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* (2010), presented in Figure 15, shows the protagonist, Amos, in bed as he is visited by his friends—animals from the zoo where he works. The two images on the double-page spread depict a sequence of events, as Amos spends time with the elephant, and then interacts with the tortoise, while the setting remains the same. The written narration above the first image includes two material processes: the elephant (Actor) + prepares (Process) + a game of chess (Goal), and Amos (Actor) makes (Process) a move (Goal). In the visual mode, the result of the material process *prepare* is shown, as the characters play chess. The action of *making a move* is visually realised by Amos's outstretched arm and gaze, which together form a vector that points the chess piece towards the board.

On the second page of the spread, the material processes *run* (lexically expressed but propositionally negated), *play* (also expressed through dialogue), and *hide* are verbally enacted. In the visual mode, the resulting game of hide-and-seek is depicted, with both characters shown hiding. As *hide* is a more static material process, no dynamic action vectors emerge in the illustration. Instead, the vertical and horizontal lines create a static environment, thus mirroring Amos's utterance that he is too tired to run. Although the bodies of the participants are visually represented, their identities (residing in Amos's face and in the tortoise's snout) are covered by a blanket and a shell, respectively—also mentioned as circumstances in the verbal mode. Moreover, the verbal parallelism in the second page ("The tortoise hid inside his shell./ Amos hid beneath the covers") is realised by the shape similarity of the tortoise and Amos, who both form triangular shapes. In both illustrations on the spread, each frame depicts one key material process from the verbal text (*play* and *hide*). Also, the second frame mirrors the verbal negation of the material process *run* through static vertical and horizontal lines. This results in a cooperative relationship between the two modes.



Figure 16. The tenth spread from Juster, N. and Raschka, C. (2005) *The Hello, Goodbye Window*. New York: Michael di Capua Books.

In *The Hello, Goodbye Window* (2005) the first-person narration from a child's perspective is paired with simple, childlike illustrations. It is then fitting that the visual-verbal relationship in the picture book is straightforward, with most of the double-page spreads falling under the cooperative category. In the spread shown in Figure 16 the material processes described in the verbal mode are: "I" (Actor) + "ride" (Process) + "my bike" (Goal); "I" (implied Actor) + "collect" (Process) + "sticks and acorns" (Goal); "I" (implied Actor) + "kick" (Process) + "my ball" (Goal); "Poppy" (Actor) + "chases" (Process) + "me" (Goal) + "with the hose" (Circumstances); "he" (Actor) + *stops* (implied Process). Most of the material processes are grouped alongside corresponding illustrations. The protagonist is shown riding her bike, the line beneath the wheels and her body leaning forward creating a vector that emphasises motion. In the second illustration, the protagonist holds buckets of acorns and sticks, visually realising the result of the collection process. The hose in the third forms a horizontal vector between the protagonist and Poppy, which visually reinforces the material process *chase*. Notably, the speakers of the dialogue lines ("Not in the street, please"; "Not in the house, please") are indicated visually (the images show Poppy and Nanna's heads, facing the protagonist) but are not mentioned in the written text. Therefore, the spread exemplifies a cooperative visual-verbal relationship, where the written text and illustrations not only mirror one another, but also fill each other's gaps.



Figure 17. The fifteenth spread from Gerstein, M. (2003) *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

In the spread from *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers* (2003) (Figure 17), the high-intensity scene is conveyed through the presence of multiple material processes, verbally described alongside two horizontally elongated illustrations. The police officers *rush* (material process) to the roof and *shout* (verbal process) at Philippe. In the visual mode, the officers' outstretched arms and diagonally positioned bodies form oblique vectors, which indicate the officers' urgency to reach Philippe. The process *shout* is visually realised by the bullhorns and the officers' open mouths. The question "Who would come and get him?" introduces two hypothetical material processes—*come* and *get*—highlighting the officers' intentions. Meanwhile, Philippe's actions are rendered through a series of dynamic material processes: *turn*, *walk*, *dance*, *run*, and *kneel*. These processes are visually summarised through the strong diagonal vector formed by the tightrope that Philippe walks. Only the material processes *walk* (because of the protagonist's increasing distance from the officers) and *kneel* are explicitly depicted. Moreover, in the second illustration, Philippe's body and the balancing pole together create an arrow-like shape, emphasising his movement away from the police officers, thus signalling his carefree nature. Lastly, the diagonal lines that border the top of the first and the bottom of the second illustration reflect the tension of the tightrope and heighten the scene's suspense. The visual and verbal modes work together in a cooperative interaction to underscore both action and emotion in the narrative.

Though the Constitution says you'll have to wait until you're thirty-five, young, old, and in between have become President. Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt at forty-two was the youngest. He had pillow fights with his children and played football on the White House lawn. "You must always remember that the President is about six," a friend said. Ronald Reagan was the oldest. When he first ran for President, he was sixty-nine. He joked that it was the thirtieth anniversary of his thirty-ninth birthday.



18



Some Presidents joked and some didn't—Presidents' personalities have all been different. William McKinley was so nice that he tried to stop a mob from attacking the man who had just shot him. Benjamin Harrison was so cold that one senator said talking to Harrison was like talking to a hitching post. Calvin Coolidge was so shy and quiet that a dinner guest once made a bet that she could get him to say more than two words. "You lose," he told her. Andrew Jackson certainly wasn't shy. When he ran for President, his opponents printed a list of his duels, fights, shootings, and brawls. Fourteen in all!

19

Figure 18. The seventh spread from St. George, J. and Small, D. (2000) *So You Want to Be President?* New York: Philomel Books.

The picture book *So You Want to Be President?* (2000) is heavily reliant on verbal narration, as the narrative recounts various entertaining facts and anecdotes about past presidents of the United States. This information-forward approach is paired with humorous illustrations that help boost the comedic tone of the picture book. In the spread shown in Figure 18, the verbal mode describes a variety of processes: verbal processes such as *say* or *tell*; behavioural processes like *wait*; and a range of material processes, including *have pillow fights*, *play football*, *run for president*, *stop*, *attack*, *shoot*, *make a bet*, *get* (in the causative sense), and *print*. The two accompanying illustrations highlight selected moments from the verbal narration. The first image depicts Roosevelt playing with toys—his head is enlarged, and he is positioned on all fours, evoking a baby-like stance. While this does not directly correspond to any material process named in the verbal text, it visually reinforces the quotation: "You must always remember that the President is about six." As the narration has previously stated the president's age as forty-two, it is clear that this line is not meant to be taken literally. Instead, the quote and the exaggerated childlike portrayal of Roosevelt encourage a metaphorical reading. Together, they give rise to the multimodal metaphor ROOSEVELT IS CHILD, in which attributes of the source domain CHILD are mapped onto the target, PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT.

The second illustration provides a visual rendering of the "duels, fights, shootings, and brawls", that is, nominalised material processes, mentioned in the verbal narration. The use of the plural inflection is visually rendered by the number of beaten men, thus reinforcing the cooperative relationship between the visual and verbal modes. Furthermore, a motion line follows Andrew

Jackson's fist, forming a vector that implies a punch being thrown. Meanwhile, the extended leg of his opponent creates an oblique vector, indicating the process of falling. Unlike in the picture of Roosevelt, the portrayal of Jackson's head as big follows caricatural conventions, reinforcing the comedic tone of the book. The big head also focalises Jackson's facial expressions, which communicate anger and thus parody the president's violent temper. Overall, the visual mode serves to highlight selected passages from the rich verbal narration, emphasising the humorous tone of the picture book. This is achieved through a cooperative visual-verbal interaction.

Within the analysis of spreads with cooperative visual-verbal interaction, several key strategies emerge. In some spreads, rich verbal narration is complemented by images that depict key events and underscore the narrative's tone and emotion, as in *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear* (2015) and *So You Want to Be President?* (2000). In others, the visual and verbal modes convey similar information and therefore closely mirror one another, exemplified in the spread from *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* (2010). Another strategy shows words and images working together to fill informational gaps and support each other's meanings, as seen in *Watercress* (2021) and *Hello Lighthouse* (2018). Lastly, the cooperative mode also accommodates multimodal metaphors, shown in *We Are Water Protectors* (2020) and *So You Want to Be President?* (2000). These tendencies suggest a continuum of cooperative relationships between modes, ranging from near-symmetry to strong complementarity.

3.2.2. Expanding visual-verbal interaction

The following analyses examine how expanding visual-verbal interactions influence meaning-making in picture book narratives. This category of word-image interaction is made distinctive by sparse verbal narration, coupled with detailed illustrations that introduce actions, characters, and settings and drive the narrative forward.



Figure 19. The third spread from Salati, D. (2022) *Hot Dog*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The spread from *Hot Dog* (2022) (Figure 19) contains five verbal clauses (“so hot!”, “can’t sit”, “sniff”, “wait”, “crowds close in”), grouped alongside four images. The first clause, “so hot!”, which could be paraphrased as “It is so hot!”, denotes a relational process type, attributing the quality of heat to the setting. The following clauses present material (*sit*, *sniff*, *close in*) and behavioural (*wait*) processes, each paired with an illustration in a complementary manner. These clauses elaborate on the heat by revealing the impact it has on the protagonist, resulting in the material and behavioural processes he performs (or cannot perform). Notably, the text omits the participant role of Actor (and Behaver). Instead, this information is supplied visually as we observe the recurring figure of the dog, who emerges as the protagonist. In addition, the verbal narration is sparse and concise, thus the surrounding material processes and participants are included visually. Even though the protagonist’s owner is present in three of the four images, she is represented only in the visual mode. This suggests that the visual-verbal interaction in the spread belongs to the expanding category.

The accompanying images visualise the material and behavioural processes. The clause “can’t sit” is visualised through the dog’s elongated, upward-angled body, forming an oblique vector that suggests tension and movement. This position contrasts with the compact posture of another dog sitting in a pram, thus reinforcing the negation of the material process. In the second image, the dog’s body forms a horizontal vector, which indicates passivity. The vector is placed above the rubbish and below the other dogs, which we would usually associate with the Goal of the *sniffing* process. As the vector fails to meet these Goals, the material process is visually disrupted. For the behavioural process of *waiting*, the oblique vector line created by the dog’s forward-leaning posture and the tension in the leash communicate restlessness rather than stillness, undermining the expected behavioural process. Moreover, the clash between the oblique vectors of the dog’s body and those of the woman’s body

and the leash further exemplifies the protagonist's impatience. Finally, in the last image, the crowd forms an oblique vector, which points in the opposite direction to the dog's vector, illustrating the process of the crowd (Actor) closing in (Process) on the dog (Goal).



Figure 20. The fourth spread from Lindstrom, C. and Goade, M. (2020) *We Are Water Protectors*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

In the verbal mode of another spread from *We Are Water Protectors* (2020) (Figure 20), the sentence “My people talk of a black snake that will destroy the land” presents the verbal process *talk* and the material process *destroy*. In the visual mode, the represented participants are the girl on the left, who functions as a stand in for her people, as in the spread discussed previously (Figure 10), and the oil pipeline on the right. The diagonal line of the hill forms a vector that guides the gaze of the girl towards the pipeline. Here, the oblique vector of the pipeline intersects the vector of the landscape, suggesting a clash of values—the environmental thinking of Native Americans is in opposition to the interests of oil companies. The collision of vector lines also hints at the verbally described material process *destroy*.

Moreover, the pairing of written text and image implies that the “black snake” refers to the oil pipeline, which it visually resembles. Therefore, the verbally expressed source domain SNAKE is mapped onto the visual target domain OIL PIPELINE, creating the multimodal metaphor PIPELINE IS SNAKE. This metaphor communicates the belief that oil pipelines are dangerous and insidious, and helps young readers understand the more difficult concept of an oil pipeline by comparing it to the simpler concept of a snake. Overall, the visual mode expands the written narration by providing concrete participants (the girl as a stand in for a wider community and the pipeline as the target domain of the verbal source indicated by “a black snake” verbally) and visually representing the threat of the pipeline through clashing vectors.



Figure 21. The eleventh spread from Alexander, K. and Nelson, K. (2019) *The Undefeated*. Boston: Versify.

The picture book *The Undefeated* (2019) features a poetic verbal text that commemorates key African American figures and significant historical events. Each spread features a line of written text, beginning with the phrase “This is for”, with ‘this’ metonymically referring to the book itself as an act of remembrance and homage. At the end of the book, a glossary offers contextual information about each depicted historical figure and event. The picture book primarily communicates through cooperative visual-verbal interactions, with the notable exception of three consecutive spreads featuring the same line of written text: “This is for the unspeakable.” The first of these spreads visually represents the Atlantic slave trade. The second—shattered picture frames with photographs of four girls killed in a racially motivated bombing of a Baptist church in Alabama, in 1963. The third spread, presented in Figure 21, depicts a memorial for victims of police brutality and gun violence. While there are no material processes represented in the verbal or visual modes, a diagonal vector, formed by the shape of the memorial, guides the eye from the face of one victim to the next, thus prompting a dynamic perceptual scanning of the illustration. This spread is an interesting case of expanding visual-verbal interaction as that which is verbally declared “unspeakable” is instead communicated through images.



Figure 22. The fifth spread from Santat, D. (2014) *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

The spread from *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend* (2014) (Figure 22), features a single clause paired with a full-spread illustration. The verbal narration is realised by the clause “he” (Actor) + “did” (Process) + “the unimaginable” (Goal). However, the described material process remains vague as the Goal is abstract and unspecified, making the action open to interpretation and dependent on the visual mode for clarification. In the illustration, the protagonist Beekle is shown sailing. The prow of his boat, together with its triangular sail, forms an oblique vector that points towards the edge of the page and away from the previously introduced characters. This narrative vector visually communicates the material process of travelling. Through this directional vector and the visual inclusion of relevant participants and circumstantial elements, such as the waves, the dragon, and the other imaginary friends, staying behind, the visual mode expands upon the verbal narration. Here, the visual mode becomes essential in guiding the reader’s understanding of what “the unimaginable” entails and building the narrative arc of the picture book.

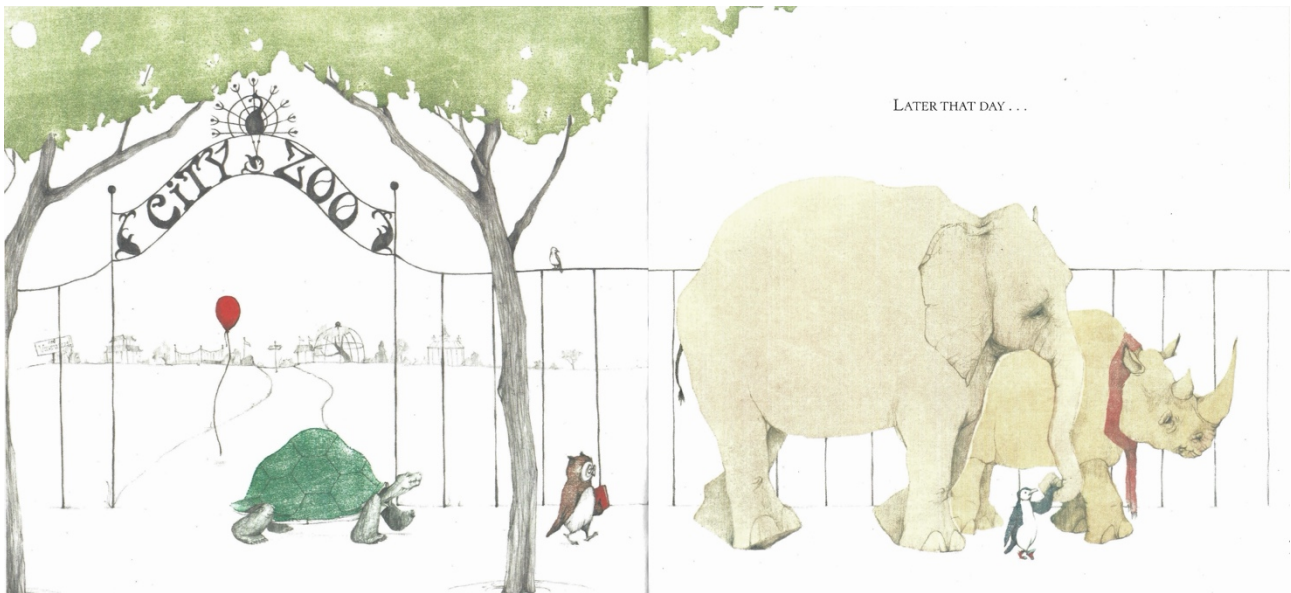


Figure 23. The eight spread from Stead, P. C. and Stead, E. E. (2010) *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

Figure 23 shows a spread from *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* (2010), in which the verbal narration is secondary to the visual storytelling. The written text simply introduces the temporal circumstances and allows the pictures to convey the processes that shape the narrative. Spatial circumstances are instead supplied by the words “City Zoo”, incorporated into the illustration. In the visual mode, the animals are shown leaving the zoo, their bodies arranged in a horizontal vector that emphasises their direction of movement. Moreover, the dominance of horizontal and vertical lines (especially those supplied by the railing) imply very slow movement, as the oblique vectors drawn by the animal’s legs are minimal. This spread is followed by two more spreads that are entirely wordless, thus the phrase “Later that day...” can be read as an introduction to the sequence of illustrations that expand upon the written narration.

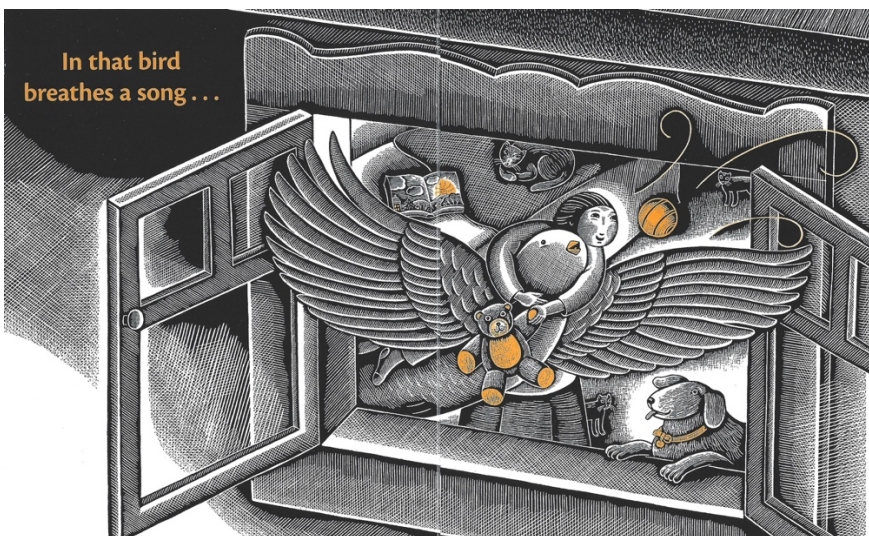


Figure 24. The seventh spread from Swanson, S. M. and Krommes, B. (2008) *The House in the Night*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

The spread from *The House in the Night* (2008) (Figure 24) showcases the picture book's poetic language. The act of a bird singing a song is reimagined as the clause “in that bird breathes a song”, where “a song” functions as the Behavior of the behavioural process “breathes”, and “in that bird” is expressed as a circumstance of space. The use of the behavioural process suggests that singing is as natural and vital as breathing. Moreover, agency is shifted from the bird to the song through animation, positioning the song as alive. The blurring of boundaries between the bird and the song communicates that the two are intrinsically linked.

In the visual mode, the narrative is expanded beyond the written text. The child (who is absent in the verbal mode) and the bird form a strong oblique vector that leads the participants out the window, signifying flight and movement. The secondary participants, the dog and the cats, look at the child and the bird, further emphasising the importance of the material process of flight. The curved lines projecting away from the bird may evoke the sense of song, tying the image back to the verbal narration. Overall, the visual mode significantly expands upon the written text, thus taking on the primary narrative position.



Figure 25. The second spread from Rohmann, E. (2002) *My Friend Rabbit*. New York: Roaring Brook Press.

In the spread from *My Friend Rabbit* (2002) (Figure 25), the written narration continues the sentence from the previous page: “My friend Rabbit means well. But whatever he does, wherever he goes, trouble follows.” In the final clause, “trouble follows”, featured in the current spread, the notion of trouble is personified as the Actor performing the material process *follow*. While the metaphorical phrase is conventional in English, it is abstract and therefore invites elaboration. Here, the full-spread illustration expands on the written narration by visualising what “trouble” entails. A dashed line traces the course of the toy plane and indicates continuous and tortuous movement. On the right side of the spread, the end of the dashed line and the plane itself form an oblique vector, which is intersected by the diagonal vectors of the tree branches. This clash of vectors suggests an abrupt interruption of

motion. Below, the rabbit gazes towards the accident while the mouse—the first-person narrator—covers his eyes as the rabbit cradles him in his arms. This centres the image of the plane caught in the branches as the manifestation of “trouble”. Although both the verbal and visual modes remain minimalist, the illustration extends the abstract verbal clause “trouble follows” and drives the narrative forward through visual clarification.



Figure 26. The twentieth spread from Wiesner, D. (2001) *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion Books.

The picture book *The Three Pigs* (2001) deconstructs the traditional fairytale narrative by granting the main characters agency to break out of the original story and construct their own. This metafictional strategy gives rise to counterpointing and sylleptic spreads, examples of which will be analysed later in the thesis. The final spread of the picture book, shown in Figure 26, marks a return to traditional storytelling, as the verbal mode presents the familiar closing phrase: “And they lived happily ever after.” However, the spread maintains the book’s metafictional playfulness. The written text appears incomplete, with the two last letters of “after” missing, while the illustration depicts one of the pigs repositioning the missing letters, therefore explicitly framing the narration as a constructed and manipulable element. The visual mode also expands the verbally conveyed information by representing the participants of the existential process “lived”—namely, the three pigs, the cat, and the dragon. It also reveals the variety of material actions that visually realise the notion of “happily ever after”. Diagonal vectors are prominent throughout the illustration, indicating the abundance of material processes. Vectors formed by the cat’s front leg and his violin convey the material process of playing music, while the oblique vectors of the middle pig’s front leg and ladle relay the material process of pouring soup. In the top left, another pig stretches his front leg, creating a vector that draws

attention to the process of repositioning the letters. The focus is reinforced further through the participants' gazes, all directed towards the process. Thus, the visual mode playfully interacts with the verbal mode to expand the narrative and provide a metafictional layer of commentary.

In analysing the expanding category of visual-verbal interaction, a few main strategies can be identified. First, the visual mode often assumes the primary narrative position, propelling the story forward, while the verbal mode remains minimal. This is especially clear in the spreads from *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* (2010) and *The House in the Night* (2008). Second, visuals may serve to elaborate on vague or abstract concepts offered by the verbal narration. For example, in *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend* (2014), the pictures expand on the concept of “the unimaginable”, and in *My Friend Rabbit* (2002), the words clarify what is implied by the phrase “trouble follows”. Moreover, the expanding visual-verbal interaction may involve images that supply important details and context to the verbal narration, as in *Hot Dog* (2022) or *We Are Water Protectors* (2020). In addition, the visual-verbal interaction in this category is cohesive as the modes do not contradict each other, which allows for multimodal metaphors to emerge. Lastly, in the case of postmodern picture books, like *The Three Pigs* (2001), images can provide metafictional commentary on the narrative.

3.2.3. Counterpointing visual-verbal interaction

The analyses in this sub-section focus on spreads identified as having a counterpointing visual-verbal interaction. In this type of word-image interaction, the verbal and visual modes convey divergent or even contradictory information, encouraging the reader to reconcile the two to fully understand the story.

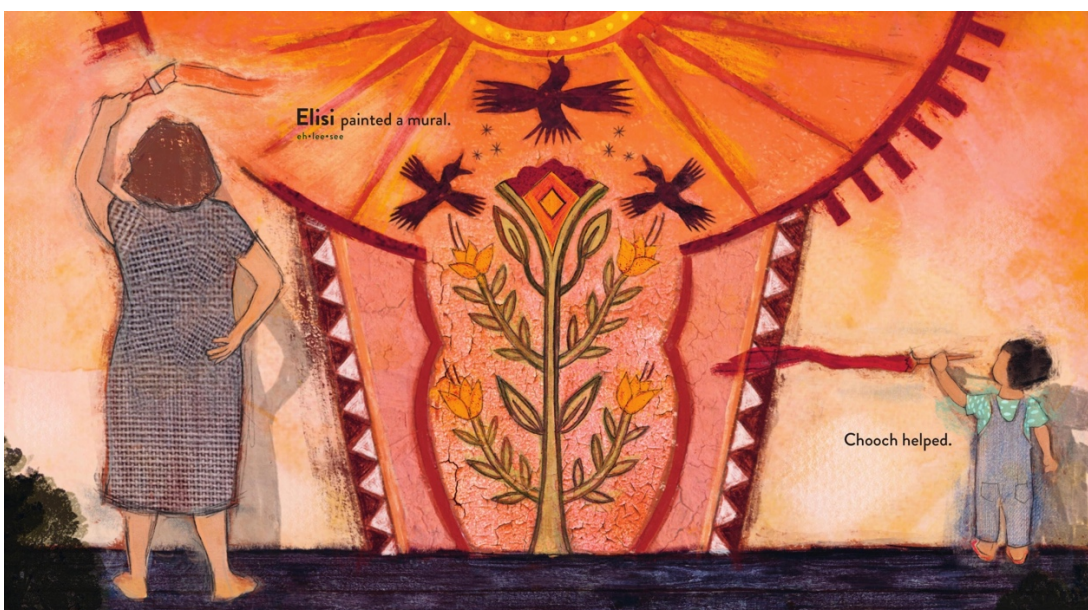


Figure 27. The third spread from Rogers, A. L. and Kunz, R. L. (2024) *Chooch Helped*. Hoboken, NJ: Levine Querido.

In the picture book *Chooch Helped* (2024), the titular clause “Chooch helped” is repeated throughout the picture book. It is visually undercut in each instance, creating irony in the narration and reinforcing the narrator’s growing frustration with her younger brother. In the spread given in Figure 27 the verbal narration is comprised of two clauses, which are positioned alongside the corresponding visually realised Actors—Elisi and Chooch. The material process *paint*, found in the clause “Elisi painted a mural”, is visually complemented: the paintbrush stroke forms a vector that clearly communicates the action. In contrast, the clause “Chooch helped” is counterpointed by the illustration. Here, the horizontal vector formed by Chooch’s brushstroke disrupts the mural in both pattern and colour. Moreover, the directions of the vectors formed by Elisi’s and Chooch’s paintbrushes diverge. This visually contrasts the processes, thus humorously reframing the idea of ‘help’ by anchoring it in the child’s deviant perspective.



Figure 28. The sixth spread from Rogers, A. L. and Kunz, R. L. (2024) *Chooch Helped*. Hoboken, NJ: Levine Querido.

A similar interaction occurs in another spread from the book (Figure 28). The clause “Edudu played the guitar” is complemented by the illustration as the Actor, Edudu, and the Goal, the guitar, are both visually represented, while the placement of Edudu’s hands on the guitar visually enacts the material process. Meanwhile, the clause “Chooch helped” is once again visually contradicted. Chooch’s body, rising on tiptoes, and outstretched arm form a slightly diagonal vector that collides with the vector of the guitar, undermining the verbal claim. Furthermore, the girl on the right of the spread—the picture book’s narrator—is shown observing the scene with crossed arms and a furrowed brow, visually encoding disapproval and further emphasising the clash of the girl and her brother’s perspectives.

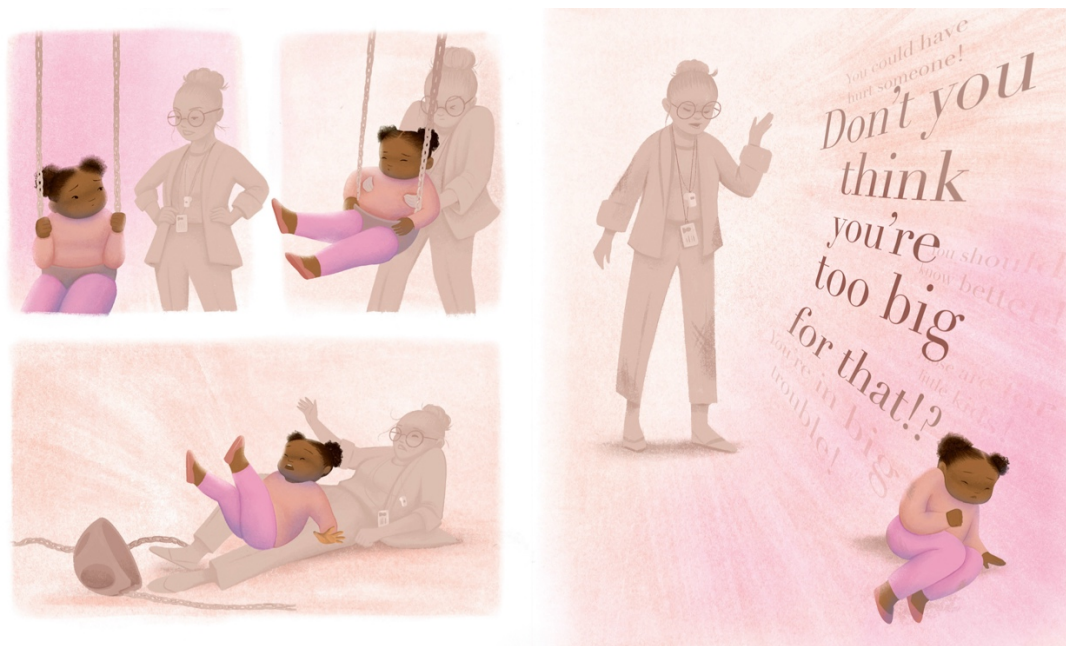


Figure 29. The sixth spread from Harrison, V. (2023) *Big*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

In *Big* (2023), the spread shown in Figure 29 also exemplifies a counterpointing visual-verbal interaction, in which the words and images present conflicting perspectives that the reader must reconcile. The central conflict in *Big* (2023)—where the protagonist, the girl depicted in pink, is judged and bullied for her size—is articulated here through the contrast between verbal and visual modes. The narrative in this spread is primarily communicated through illustration, as the written text consists solely of direct speech and lacks material processes that would otherwise advance the narrative. Instead, the scene is relayed through a sequence of vignettes in the visual mode. Following the events depicted in the previous spread, the girl is shown stuck in a swing. Here, a teacher tries to remove her—the oblique vector in the second vignette, formed by the girl’s body and the teacher’s arms, conveys the strain of the process. The next image shows the characters falling to the ground as a result, the teacher’s outstretched arm and the girl’s legs creating diagonal vectors that indicate the sudden and uncontrolled motion.

On the right side of the spread, the illustration shows the teacher scolding the girl. The composition of the scene, with the teacher positioned above the girl, communicates a hierarchical relationship. Moreover, the teacher stands tall while the girl crouches, visually reinforcing the girl’s vulnerability. The verbal mode serves to articulate the teacher’s criticism: “Don’t you think you’re too big for that!?” This dominant verbal message is coupled with faint written text, expressing other disapproving comments, emphasising that the teacher sees the girl’s actions as inappropriate because of her size. The visual mode underscores the emotional impact of the scene: the girl appears small and overwhelmed by the oppressively positioned typography that suggests a raised voice. The use of colour in the spread further juxtaposes the perspective of the protagonist with the judgement of her

teacher. The girl is portrayed in pink shades, evoking joy, youth, and innocence, while her surroundings and the teacher are shown in grey tones, accentuating the negativity and indifference the protagonist faces in the world. Together, these visual and verbal elements construct a counterpointing interaction that highlights the contrast between the protagonist's point of view and the judgement imposed on her.



Figure 30. The fourth spread from Klassen, J. (2012) *This Is Not My Hat*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

The narration in *This Is Not My Hat* (2012) is presented from the first-person perspective of a small fish who has stolen a hat from a much larger sleeping fish. Figure 30 exemplifies a spread which communicates through a counterpointing visual-verbal interaction, which is prominent across the picture book as a whole. The subjective verbal narration is juxtaposed with the impartial third-person visual perspective. In this spread, the verbal clauses centre the behavioural process *wake up* and the mental process *notice*. However, the visual mode challenges the narrator's reasoning: the big fish is depicted with one eye open, clearly awake. This sequentially follows from the previous spread, where the narrator confidently claims, "And he probably won't wake up for a long time", which is visually contradicted. Moreover, in this spread, the fish's upward gaze, directed toward the space where the hat should be, communicates the mental process of *noticing* and therefore alerts the reader to the discrepancy between word and image.

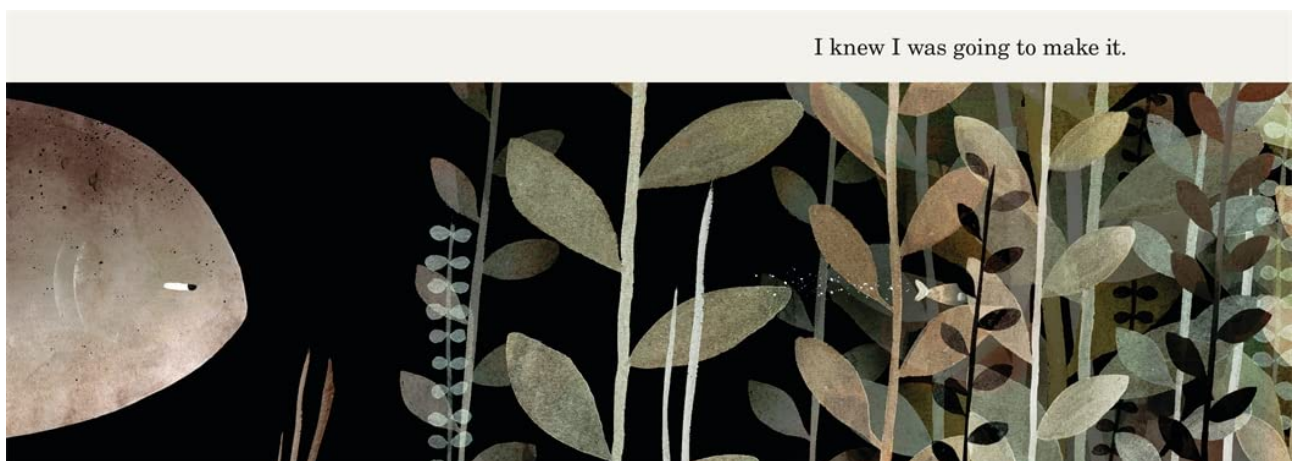


Figure 31. The twelfth spread from Klassen, J. (2012) *This Is Not My Hat*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press.

In another spread (Figure 31) from *This Is Not My Hat* (2012), the narration is also counterpointed by the illustration. The material process expressed in the narration is “make it”, which can be reworded as “escape”. Indeed, the accompanying illustration shows the small fish—the protagonist—swim into dense reeds. The horizontal vector created by the form of the fish and trail of bubbles signals movement. However, the image expands on the verbal narrative: the figure of the large fish introduces a second horizontal vector, which follows the trajectory of the small fish. This reveals that the large fish has pursued the protagonist, undermining the material process of *escaping*. Its imposing size appears menacing, further contradicting the verbal assertion. Lastly, the vertical lines of the reeds create a barrier to the horizontal vector of the protagonist, visually blocking the escape and obscuring the viewer’s sight of the outcome. Clearly, the visual narrative contradicts the verbal description. The clash between the first-person narration and the impartial visual narrative throughout the picture book frames the fish as an unreliable narrator and produces a humorous effect through dramatic irony.

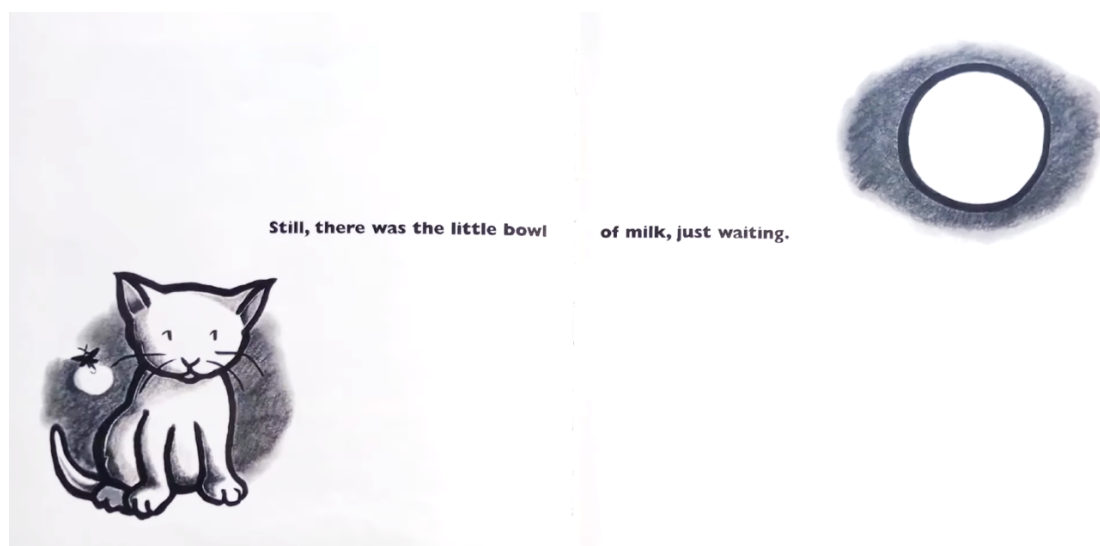


Figure 32. The third spread from Henkes, K. (2004) *Kitten's First Full Moon*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

The picture book *Kittens's First Full Moon* (2004) tells the story of a kitten who mistakenly identifies the full moon as a bowl of milk. Most of the picture book (11 of 15 spreads) employs cooperative visual-verbal interactions, in which the images mirror the verbal narration, presented in a third-person voice. Nevertheless, a few spreads include visual-verbal counterpointing. In the spread shown in Figure 32, the verbal narration adopts a perspective closely aligned with the kitten’s internal reasoning: the full moon is referred to as “the little bowl of milk”. Visually, however, the circle is positioned in the top right corner, indicating that it is the moon rather than an actual bowl of milk as it is clearly positioned in the sky. In addition, the text omits reference to the material process of looking, which is visually realised through the direction of the kitten’s gaze. This suggests a shift

from an objective narrator to the kitten's perspective, while the visual mode maintains an external viewpoint. As a result, the spread exemplifies counterpointing by perspective, with the verbal and visual modes offering different perspectives that the reader must navigate.

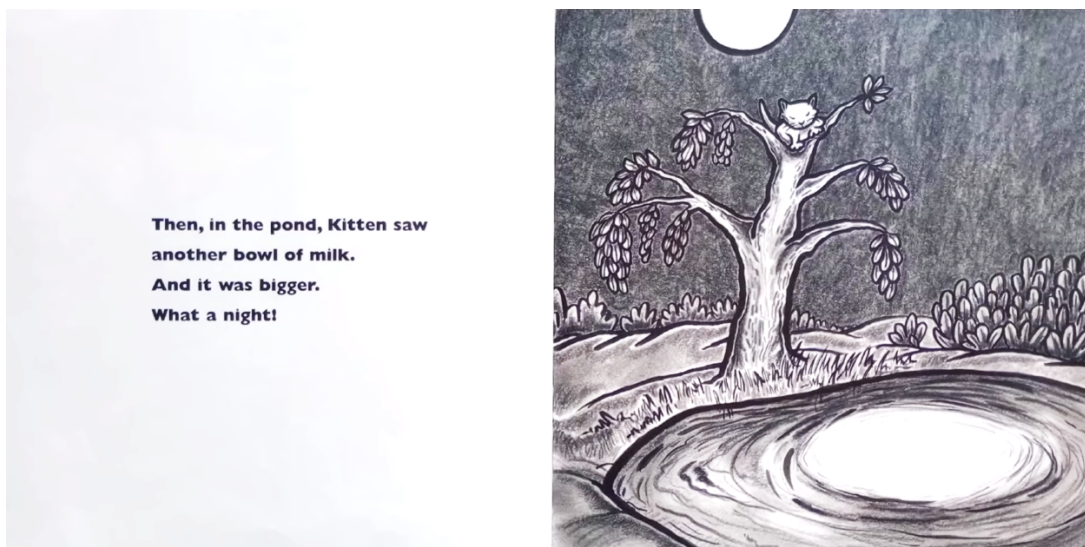


Figure 33. The ninth spread from Henkes, K. (2004) *Kitten's First Full Moon*. New York: Greenwillow Books.

In another spread (Figure 33), the narration once more aligns with the kitten's mistaken belief that what she sees is a bowl of milk rather than the moon. Here, the counterpointing arises from the visual realisation of a material process that is not acknowledged in the verbal narration. The illustration shows the pond (Actor) reflecting (Process) the moon (Goal), with the moon and its reflection positioned in a diagonal vector that visually expresses this process. The reader is able to recognise the visually expressed process and infer the kitten's misperception, whereas the kitten remains unaware. This counterpointing visual-verbal interaction reinforces the humour in the narrative while simultaneously inviting empathy for the protagonist's naivety and innocence.



Figure 34. The second spread from Wiesner, D. (2001) *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion Books.

The spread from *The Three Pigs* (2001) (Figure 34) is structured into four sequential panels. The first two closely follow the traditional tale of the three pigs and the wolf. Here, the verbal mode

includes the material processes: *come*, *knock*, *huff*, *puff*, and *blow*. In the visual mode, the process of *knocking* is represented by the wolf's raised front leg poised against the door. The second panel shows the wolf preparing to blow the house in, his snout and paws creating an oblique vector that communicates effort. Although the processes *huff*, *puff*, and *blow* are not directly represented, this partial visual realisation mirrors the verbal mode's expression of intention rather than action, as the visual mode encodes the wolf's preparation of these acts. The pig's anxious gaze towards the wolf amplifies the sense of imminent danger. The two panels convey the expected traditional narrative and present a cooperative visual-verbal relationship.

In contrast, the third and fourth panels subvert narrative expectations through counterpointing. The third panel narrates the material processes *huff*, *puff*, and *blow* performed by the wolf. Visually, the action is shown through the wolf's puckered lips and the scattered straw blown in diagonal vectors across the panel, signalling the resulting destruction of the house. However, the pig unexpectedly bursts through the boundaries of the panel, his legs forming oblique vectors that depict the process of falling. The accompanying speech bubble—"He blew me right out of the story!"—reveals a metafictional twist, as the pig becomes aware of the story's boundaries and his departure from them. The final panel verbally expresses the material process *eat*, but the visual mode contradicts this entirely, as the confused wolf is shown searching for the missing pig. Thus, in the series of panels, the traditional narrative is subverted and ends in a counterpoint of words and images, where the visual mode asserts narrative authority over the verbal mode.

The use of counterpointing visual-verbal interaction results in several possible effects on the narrative of picture books. The mismatch of information between modes can produce a humorous effect, as clearly seen in the spreads from *This Is Not My Hat* (2012). However, counterpointing can also promote empathy, as evident in the spreads from *Big* (2023) and *Kitten's First Full Moon* (2004). Additionally, this multimodal strategy highlights different perspectives present in picture book narratives, which allows the communication of more complex themes, such as bullying (seen in *Big* (2023)) or disagreement (as in *Chooch Helped* (2024)). Counterpointing can also be used to subvert narrative expectations, as shown in the spread from *The Three Pigs* (2001). Noticeably, most spreads with this type of word-image interaction tend to establish pictures as the more 'truthful' mode. Nevertheless, this interaction type requires readers to reconcile both modes in their interpretation of the narrative, making the multimodal strategy especially engaging.

3.2.4. Sylleptic picture book spreads

The following analyses focus on sylleptic narratives in the dataset. In this category, two or more parallel storylines are presented simultaneously, connected not by sequential or chronological order,

but through spatial or thematic links. These narratives may be conveyed visually or through the interplay of both visual and verbal modes.



Figure 35. The eight spread from Mattick, L. and Blackall, S. (2015) *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear*. New York: Little, Brown and Company.

In *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear* (2015), the narrative sets up the dual storyline that unfolds throughout the picture book. One strand follows a mother telling her son a bedtime story. Embedded within this is the historical tale of the bear that inspired Winnie the Pooh. In spreads where both storylines appear, the contemporary narrative is distinguished by italicised text and a small, corresponding circular illustration, as shown in Figure 35. The contemporary story is typically presented as dialogue between the mother and child, and as such, the written text is richer than the accompanying image. Because the narration is dialogue-driven, in Figure 35, only verbal processes occur in the verbal mode and no action vectors appear in the visual mode, reflecting the conversational nature of the scene.

In the same spread, the written narration recounting the story of the bear, Winnie, contains several material processes: *travel*, *go*, *bring*, *hold up*, *take*, *lay*, and *hum*. In the visual mode, the illustration on the left depicts a group of men bringing food to Winnie, visually realised by the curved path composed of multiple oblique vectors, which guide the eye through the scene. The illustration on the right side of the spread shows Winnie lying on her back and holding the bottle—outcomes of the material processes *take* and *lay* described in the verbal mode. The men's gazes and a pointing hand function as vectors that direct attention towards Winnie, further underscoring her role in the scene. While the visuals do not represent all the material processes mentioned in the verbal narration, they elaborate on specific moments and enrich them with visual detail.

The layering of contemporary and historical narratives within the spread signals a sylleptic visual-verbal interaction. While each narrative strand is visually and verbally differentiated through typography and illustrative framing, they interact spatially within the same spread and are thematically interwoven. The contemporary narrative frames and reflect on the historical timeline, positioning the mother and child as both narrators and interpreters, while drawing parallels between the mother-son relationship and the bond between Winnie and Harry.

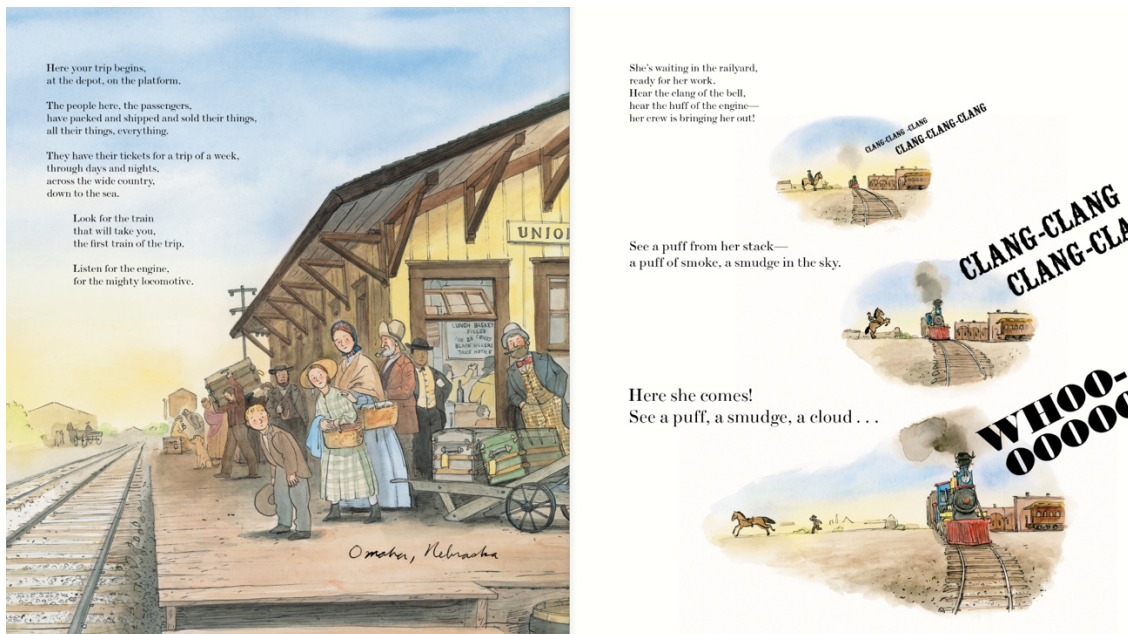


Figure 36. The third spread from Floca, B. (2013) *Locomotive*. New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.

In the spread from *Locomotive* (2013) (Figure 36), the rich verbal narration provides important context to the illustrations. The first clause declares: “Here your trip begins, at the depot, on the platform.” The material processes *pack*, *ship*, and *sold* describe past actions, the results of which are seen in the visually depicted passengers and their luggage. The processes *look for* and *listen for* (which can be interpreted as either material or behavioural) are accompanied by the diagonal vectors of the passengers in the image, showing their anticipation and effort to see the train. The oblique vector of the railway corresponds to the verbally communicated promise of a journey: “Look for the train that will take you.” The clauses “her crew is bringing her out” and “Here she comes!” are visually complemented by the vignettes that show the arrival of the locomotive along the vector line of the railway.

However, the sequence of three images also includes a visual subplot. The first picture shows a horse and rider standing as the train approaches. In the second image, the horse rears in alarm—the horse’s body forms a distinct oblique vector, illustrating this process. The final image depicts the rider chasing the bolting horse, their movement reinforced as they form a horizontal vector that points away from the train. These images convey a complete narrative arc, which is absent from the verbal

mode, but which unfolds in parallel to the primary storyline, therefore introducing a sylleptic narrative to the spread.

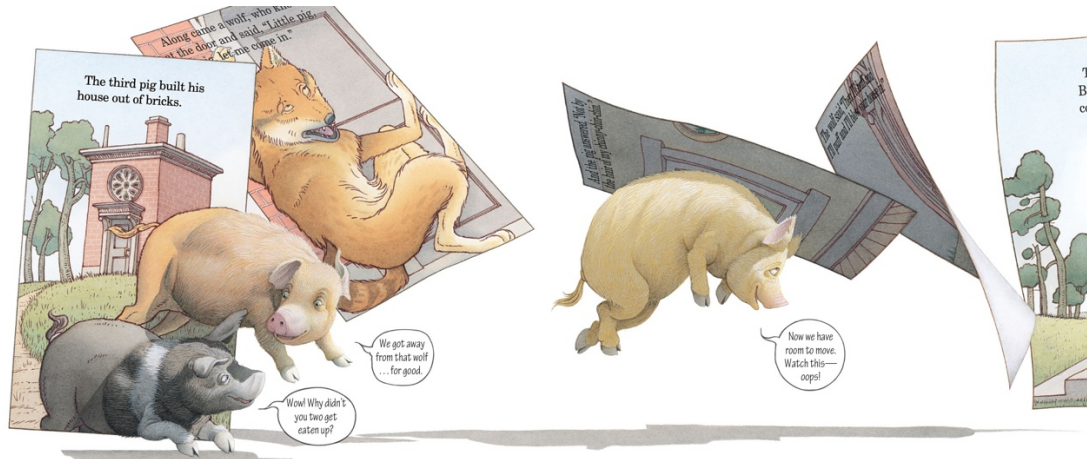


Figure 37. The fourth spread from Wiesner, D. (2001) *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion Books.

In *The Three Pigs* (2001), the pigs break out of the traditional tale. This leaves them free to roam across a white space, interact with the story frames, presented as physical pages, and step in and out of other stories. These elements highlight the metafictional nature of the picture book. The spread shown in Figure 37 exemplifies the sylleptic narratives that emerge throughout the picture book. The central narrative depicts the pigs escaping the confines of the traditional storyline. The two pigs on the left form horizontal vectors, indicating their movement away from the story frame. As they emerge from the panel, the illustration style becomes more detailed, further emphasising the divergence of narrative strands and the ontological transition between illustration and reality. The verbal mode in this narrative strand is conveyed entirely through speech bubbles and thus always takes the form of direct speech, with no external narrator. This foregrounds the characters' agency and further subverts the traditional picture book structure. The text in the speech bubbles complements the visual mode: the material process *get away* is articulated as the two pigs leave the original storyline, while the process *move* is coupled with the oblique vector formed by the pig on the right, suggesting the action of jumping. Meanwhile, the original story appears on scattered pages, signifying that it has been left behind. Within these pages, the verbal narration continues, but the visual mode counterpoints the written text: in the second panel, the wolf is shown to be frightened, pushing his limbs up against the frame, while the narration proceeds to tell the traditional story.



Figure 38. The twelfth spread from Wiesner, D. (2001) *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion Books.

The spread presented in Figure 38 offers another example of the sylleptic narrative in *The Three Pigs* (2001). On the left side of the spread, the pigs are shown stepping into another story, transitioning into a new illustrative style. The verbal narration within this story world is the nursery rhyme “Hey Diddle Diddle”, which remains unchanged despite the visual interruption. The participants—cat, fiddle, cow, moon, dog, dish, and spoon—are all visually represented, along with the material processes *jump* (the cow’s body forms oblique vectors that signal this dynamic action) and *run* (the legs of the dish and the spoon indicate movement along a diagonal vector). In contrast, the pigs’ entrance and exit from the nursery rhyme story is communicated visually through the diagonal vectors created by their bodies and by the already mentioned transition from a cartoonish to a realistic illustration style, but is verbally narrated only through the speech bubble, which expresses the material process *get out*. Moreover, the cat is depicted as leaving the nursery rhyme as well—its leg forms a diagonal vector that pierces the border of the story world, adopting the more detailed illustration style, but the process is not mentioned in the verbal narration. Overall, both spreads showcase the layered sylleptic narrative of *The Three Pigs* (2001), where multiple narrative strands spatially interact on the double-page spread, creating simultaneous but distinct actions and perspectives that break conventional narrative boundaries.

The analysis of different sylleptic interactions in the dataset reveals the versatility of this storytelling strategy. In *Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear* (2015), one storyline frames another, which helps emphasise the thematic connections between the two. In *Locomotive* (2013), the secondary visual narrative adds detail to the primary narrative, enriching the storytelling and heightening engagement by encouraging readers to pay close attention to the visual mode. This instance of sylleptic narratives most closely aligns with the examples explored by Nikolajeva and Scott (2006, p. 168–171). Finally, *The Three Pigs* (2001) uses simultaneous narrative strands to foreground a postmodern disruption of conventional storytelling, inviting readers to reflect

on the act of narration itself. Overall, the use of sylleptic interaction demonstrates the narrative complexity that picture books can achieve through multilayered visual-verbal relationships.

3.3. General discussion

The findings of both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses highlight the range and narrative significance of multimodal strategies used across the picture books of the study's corpus. Cooperative visual-verbal relationships, which encompass a continuum of symmetrical and complementary word-image interactions and function as the unmarked or default strategy of visual-verbal storytelling, were found to be the most prevalent in contemporary Caldecott Medal-winning books. Their prevalence suggests a baseline narrative strategy, which offers cohesion and straightforward communication through mutual reinforcement between words and images. Nikolajeva and Scott note that in such visual-verbal interaction, the images largely serve a decorative rather than a narrative function (2006, p. 16). Nevertheless, cooperative word-image relationships help focalise important or challenging information and are therefore crucial for communicating picture book narratives. Expanding spreads, while less dominant, showcase instances of increased narrative weight placed on visuals, particularly in texts with sparse verbal narration. This type of visual-verbal interaction is a continuation of the cooperative strategy, meaning that the information conveyed in the verbal and visual modes is non-contradictory and therefore remains accessible. Qualitative analysis revealed that this multimodal strategy plays a part in elaborating on abstract verbal concepts and supplying important narrative details to minimal verbal narrations.

Across both interaction types, multimodal metaphors can emerge, illustrating the function of figurative meaning-making in children's picture books. However, only a limited number multimodal metaphors were identified across the dataset. This relative scarcity can be explained by the narrative demands of the picture book form. Typically, multimodal metaphors are analysed in genres such as advertisements or cartoons, where complex meanings can be squeezed into a single frame. An abundance of metaphors in narrative picture books, however, would hinder the very construction of a plot. In this context, multimodal metaphors appear as carefully placed narrative or emotional highlights rather than as pervasive meaning-making devices. Nevertheless, given their distinct rhetorical and affective function, it may be worth considering *metaphoricity* as a foregrounded narrative strategy in its own right—perhaps as a future addition to the typology of visual-verbal interactions.

This possibility aligns with how other marked interaction types function within picture book narratives. Counterpointing and sylleptic interactions, though less frequent than cooperative or expanding spread types, serve distinctive narrative functions. In traditional narrative structures, these multimodal strategies often stand out as foregrounded moments, disrupting cohesion to invite critical

reflection or emotional engagement. In contrast, postmodern texts, represented by Wiesner's *The Three Pigs* (2001) in the corpus for this study, tend to normalise such strategies, embedding them as unmarked elements of layered or metafictional storytelling. Collectively, all the strategies analysed demonstrate that contemporary picture books are not only richly multimodal but also structurally and thematically nuanced, inviting active interpretation and engagement from young readers.

4. Conclusion

This study examined different visual-verbal interactions in 21st-century Randolph Caldecott Medal-winning picture books. The findings show an overall prominence of cooperative word-image relationships across the dataset. These straightforward interactions support a clear communication of narratives, which is especially important when addressing complex or sensitive themes—a common feature in recent Caldecott Medal-winning titles. Moreover, the analysis revealed that non-contradictory word-image interactions—exemplified by the cooperative and expanding categories—support the creation of multimodal metaphors. More cognitively demanding multimodal strategies, that is, counterpointing and syllepsis, though used sparingly, were found to enhance humour or evoke empathy. The analysis also reveals that across picture book narratives words and images are in continuous negotiation, with narrative weight shifting from one mode to another. The findings support and expand upon previous research on visual-verbal interaction in children's picture books.

This thesis aimed to explore how words and images interact in contemporary Caldecott Medal-winning titles by focusing on the visual-verbal representation of processes that shape narratives. The study combined several theoretical frameworks, namely, systemic functional grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2014), visual grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006), and a supplementary framework to identify instances of multimodal metaphor (Forceville, 2009; 2016). Close analyses were conducted at the spread level, avoiding broad generalisations and instead examining the nuanced interplay of words and images within individual narrative moments. This allowed to identify several storytelling strategies within each type of visual-verbal interaction, showing how they contribute to the meaning-making process. The thesis also builds on Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) taxonomy of word-image relationships in picture books, proposing a modified, spread-based approach to classifying image-word relations that is better suited to the complex multimodality of picture book narratives. As part of this refinement, the categories of symmetrical and complementary visual-verbal relationships were merged into a single category—cooperative word-image interaction—to better account for the functional overlap and fluidity often observed in these interactions. Through this, the study achieves its aim of offering both a critical overview and a methodological contribution to picture book scholarship.

Nevertheless, certain limitations should be noted. The coding of spreads was conducted by a single researcher, and as such, inter-coder reliability was not established. While care was taken to apply the coding framework consistently, the absence of independent verification may limit the objectivity and replicability of the analysis. Additionally, the study focused on material processes, represented in the verbal and visual modes, therefore other types of processes, as well as visual elements of composition and colour may have been underexplored.

Despite these limitations, the thesis demonstrates how represented processes in both verbal and visual modes can be systematically analysed and meaningfully situated within the broader narrative structure of the picture book. The study also incorporates tools from distinct theoretical traditions—Kress and van Leeuwen’s semiotic approach and Forceville’s cognitivist model of multimodal metaphors—to illustrate how the application of frameworks from different disciplines can deepen the analysis of multimodal texts. Future research could expand on this study by investigating additional communicative elements such as composition, salience, and gaze; examining reader engagement through empirical response studies to verify the interpretive findings; or applying this methodology to broader or more diverse corpora, for example, analysing a selection of earlier 20th-century Caldecott-Medal winning books would provide precious information on diachronic changes in the aesthetics of this genre.

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Summary in Lithuanian

Šiame tyrime nagrinėjami multimodaliniai pasakojimo būdai paveikslėlių knygoje, apdovanotose Randolpho Kaldekoto medaliu nuo 2001 m. iki 2025 m.. Šio darbo tikslai yra kritiškai apžvelgti multimodalines pasakojimo strategijas naudojamas Kaldekoto medaliu apdovanotose knygoje bei patobulinti esamas paveikslėlių knygų analizės metodikas. Tai buvo siekiama atlikti kiekybinės ir kokybinės analizės būdais.

Pirmiausia, 377 paveikslėlių knygų atvartų buvo sukatégorizuoti pagal modifikuotą taksonomiją, paremtą Nikolajeva ir Scott (2006) nustatytais žodžio ir vaizdo sąveikos tipais. Ši taksonomija buvo sudaryta iš šių multimodalinių pasakojimo strategijų: „bendradarbiaujantis“ vaizdo ir teksto ryšys, „išplėčiantis“ vaizdo ir teksto sąveika, „priešpriešinga“ sąveika, „paraleliniai“ pasakojimai bei bežodžiai pasakojimai. „Bendradarbiaujanti“ kategorija apjungia Nikolajeva ir Scott (2006) siūlomas kategorijas – „simetrinį“ vaizdo ir teksto ryšį ir „papildančią“ vaizdo ir teksto sąveiką, kadangi buvo nustatyta, jog šios kategorijos apibūdina spektrą viena kitą paremiančių vaizdo ir teksto sąveikų. Tuomet buvo atlikta kokybinė paveikslėlių knygų atvartų analizė, siekiant nustatyti šiose knygoje naudojamas multimodalinio pasakojimo strategijas. Šiai analizei buvo taikomos sisteminės funkcinės gramatikos (Halliday ir Matthiessen, 2014) ir vizualinės gramatikos (Kress ir van Leeuwen, 2006) metodologijos. Prie šių pagrindinių metodų, buvo priderinta papildoma metodologija, kuri buvo pritaikoma analizuoti atvartams, kuriose buvo multimodalinių metaforų (Forceville, 2009; 2016).

Tyrimo metu buvo nustatyta, kad šiose paveikslėlių knygoje vyrauja „bendradarbiaujanti“ vaizdo ir žodžio sąveika. Šis vaizdo ir teksto ryšys leidžia knygoms aiškiai perteikti pasakojimą bei padeda nagrinėti sudėtingas temas, kaip patyčios ar vandens tarša, kurios atsiskleidžia kai kuriose Kaldekoto medalį laimėjusiose knygoje. Atvartų su „priešpriešingu“ ar „paraleliniu“ pasakojimo tipu buvo rasta nedaug. Tačiau, šios pasakojimo strategijos turėjo ryškią paskirtį paveikslėlių knygų istorijose, pavyzdžiui, ragino humoristines interpretacijas arba skatino empatiją knygų veikėjams.

Šios išvados praturtina paveikslėlių knygų tyrimus, nes siūlo patobulintą, analitinį požiūrį, kuriame analizuojami multimodalinio pasakojimo ypatumai individualiuose atvartuose. Šis tyrimas taip pat atskleidžia, kaip žodžiais ir vaizdais išreikšti procesai sąveikauja, kad sukonstruotų prasmingas istorijas šiuolaikinėje vaikų literatūroje.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Data coding

COP – cooperative visual-verbal interaction

EXP – expanding visual-verbal interaction

CTP – counterpointing visual-verbal interaction

SLP – sylleptic narratives

WDL – wordless picture book spreads

Book title	Spread number	Total spreads	Spread type	Position label
So You Want To Be President?	1	21	COP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	2	21	EXP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	3	21	COP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	4	21	COP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	5	21	COP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	6	21	EXP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	7	21	COP	Beginning
So You Want To Be President?	8	21	EXP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	9	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	10	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	11	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	12	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	13	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	14	21	COP	Middle
So You Want To Be President?	15	21	COP	End
So You Want To Be President?	16	21	COP	End
So You Want To Be President?	17	21	EXP	End
So You Want To Be President?	18	21	COP	End
So You Want To Be President?	19	21	EXP	End
So You Want To Be President?	20	21	COP	End
So You Want To Be President?	21	21	COP	End
The Three Pigs	1	20	EXP	Beginning
The Three Pigs	2	20	CTP	Beginning
The Three Pigs	3	20	CTP	Beginning
The Three Pigs	4	20	SLP	Beginning
The Three Pigs	5	20	EXP	Beginning
The Three Pigs	6	20	WDL	Beginning
The Three Pigs	7	20	WDL	Middle
The Three Pigs	8	20	WDL	Middle
The Three Pigs	9	20	WDL	Middle
The Three Pigs	10	20	EXP	Middle
The Three Pigs	11	20	EXP	Middle

The Three Pigs	12	20	SLP	Middle
The Three Pigs	13	20	EXP	Middle
The Three Pigs	14	20	SLP	End
The Three Pigs	15	20	SLP	End
The Three Pigs	16	20	EXP	End
The Three Pigs	17	20	SLP	End
The Three Pigs	18	20	SLP	End
The Three Pigs	19	20	EXP	End
The Three Pigs	20	20	EXP	End
My Friend Rabbit	1	16	EXP	Beginning
My Friend Rabbit	2	16	EXP	Beginning
My Friend Rabbit	3	16	COP	Beginning
My Friend Rabbit	4	16	WDL	Beginning
My Friend Rabbit	5	16	WDL	Beginning
My Friend Rabbit	6	16	WDL	Middle
My Friend Rabbit	7	16	WDL	Middle
My Friend Rabbit	8	16	WDL	Middle
My Friend Rabbit	9	16	EXP	Middle
My Friend Rabbit	10	16	COP	Middle
My Friend Rabbit	11	16	WDL	End
My Friend Rabbit	12	16	WDL	End
My Friend Rabbit	13	16	COP	End
My Friend Rabbit	14	16	EXP	End
My Friend Rabbit	15	16	EXP	End
My Friend Rabbit	16	16	EXP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	1	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	2	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	3	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	4	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	5	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	6	20	COP	Beginning
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	7	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	8	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	9	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	10	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	11	20	WDL	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	12	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	13	20	COP	Middle
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	14	20	COP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	15	20	COP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	16	20	COP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	17	20	COP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	18	20	COP	End
The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	19	20	COP	End

The Man Who Walked Between the Towers	20	20	COP	End
Kitten's First Full Moon	1	15	COP	Beginning
Kitten's First Full Moon	2	15	COP	Beginning
Kitten's First Full Moon	3	15	CTP	Beginning
Kitten's First Full Moon	4	15	COP	Beginning
Kitten's First Full Moon	5	15	CTP	Beginning
Kitten's First Full Moon	6	15	COP	Middle
Kitten's First Full Moon	7	15	CTP	Middle
Kitten's First Full Moon	8	15	COP	Middle
Kitten's First Full Moon	9	15	CTP	Middle
Kitten's First Full Moon	10	15	COP	Middle
Kitten's First Full Moon	11	15	COP	End
Kitten's First Full Moon	12	15	COP	End
Kitten's First Full Moon	13	15	COP	End
Kitten's First Full Moon	14	15	COP	End
Kitten's First Full Moon	15	15	COP	End
The Hello, Goodbye Window	1	15	COP	Beginning
The Hello, Goodbye Window	2	15	COP	Beginning
The Hello, Goodbye Window	3	15	COP	Beginning
The Hello, Goodbye Window	4	15	COP	Beginning
The Hello, Goodbye Window	5	15	COP	Beginning
The Hello, Goodbye Window	6	15	COP	Middle
The Hello, Goodbye Window	7	15	COP	Middle
The Hello, Goodbye Window	8	15	COP	Middle
The Hello, Goodbye Window	9	15	COP	Middle
The Hello, Goodbye Window	10	15	COP	Middle
The Hello, Goodbye Window	11	15	COP	End
The Hello, Goodbye Window	12	15	COP	End
The Hello, Goodbye Window	13	15	COP	End
The Hello, Goodbye Window	14	15	EXP	End
The Hello, Goodbye Window	15	15	COP	End
The House in the Night	1	18	EXP	Beginning
The House in the Night	2	18	EXP	Beginning
The House in the Night	3	18	EXP	Beginning
The House in the Night	4	18	EXP	Beginning
The House in the Night	5	18	EXP	Beginning
The House in the Night	6	18	WDL	Beginning
The House in the Night	7	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	8	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	9	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	10	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	11	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	12	18	EXP	Middle
The House in the Night	13	18	EXP	End

The House in the Night	14	18	EXP	End
The House in the Night	15	18	EXP	End
The House in the Night	16	18	EXP	End
The House in the Night	17	18	EXP	End
The House in the Night	18	18	EXP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	1	16	COP	Beginning
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	2	16	COP	Beginning
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	3	16	COP	Beginning
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	4	16	COP	Beginning
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	5	16	COP	Beginning
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	6	16	COP	Middle
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	7	16	COP	Middle
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	8	16	EXP	Middle
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	9	16	WDL	Middle
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	10	16	WDL	Middle
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	11	16	EXP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	12	16	COP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	13	16	COP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	14	16	EXP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	15	16	COP	End
A Sick Day for Amos McGee	16	16	WDL	End
This Is Not My Hat	1	16	EXP	Beginning
This Is Not My Hat	2	16	COP	Beginning
This Is Not My Hat	3	16	CTP	Beginning
This Is Not My Hat	4	16	CTP	Beginning
This Is Not My Hat	5	16	CTP	Beginning
This Is Not My Hat	6	16	CTP	Middle
This Is Not My Hat	7	16	COP	Middle
This Is Not My Hat	8	16	EXP	Middle
This Is Not My Hat	9	16	CTP	Middle
This Is Not My Hat	10	16	COP	Middle
This Is Not My Hat	11	16	COP	End
This Is Not My Hat	12	16	CTP	End
This Is Not My Hat	13	16	CTP	End
This Is Not My Hat	14	16	WDL	End
This Is Not My Hat	15	16	WDL	End
This Is Not My Hat	16	16	WDL	End
Locomotive	1	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	2	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	3	27	SLP	Beginning
Locomotive	4	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	5	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	6	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	7	27	COP	Beginning

Locomotive	8	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	9	27	COP	Beginning
Locomotive	10	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	11	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	12	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	13	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	14	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	15	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	16	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	17	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	18	27	COP	Middle
Locomotive	19	27	COP	End
Locomotive	20	27	COP	End
Locomotive	21	27	COP	End
Locomotive	22	27	COP	End
Locomotive	23	27	COP	End
Locomotive	24	27	COP	End
Locomotive	25	27	COP	End
Locomotive	26	27	EXP	End
Locomotive	27	27	COP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	1	19	COP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	2	19	EXP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	3	19	COP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	4	19	COP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	5	19	EXP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	6	19	COP	Beginning
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	7	19	COP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	8	19	COP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	9	19	COP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	10	19	EXP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	11	19	EXP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	12	19	COP	Middle
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	13	19	COP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	14	19	WDL	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	15	19	EXP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	16	19	EXP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	17	19	EXP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	18	19	EXP	End
The Adventures of Beekle, the Unimaginary Friend	19	19	EXP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	1	22	COP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	2	22	SLP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	3	22	COP	Beginning

Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	4	22	SLP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	5	22	SLP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	6	22	SLP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	7	22	COP	Beginning
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	8	22	SLP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	9	22	COP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	10	22	COP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	11	22	EXP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	12	22	COP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	13	22	EXP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	14	22	COP	Middle
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	15	22	COP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	16	22	COP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	17	22	EXP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	18	22	COP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	19	22	SLP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	20	22	SLP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	21	22	SLP	End
Finding Winnie: The True Story of the World's Most Famous Bear	22	22	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	1	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	2	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	3	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	4	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	5	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	6	18	COP	Beginning
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	7	18	COP	Middle
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	8	18	COP	Middle
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	9	18	COP	Middle
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	10	18	COP	Middle
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	11	18	COP	Middle

Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	12	18	COP	Middle
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	13	18	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	14	18	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	15	18	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	16	18	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	17	18	COP	End
Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat	18	18	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	1	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	2	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	3	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	4	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	5	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	6	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	7	21	COP	Beginning
Hello Lighthouse	8	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	9	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	10	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	11	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	12	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	13	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	14	21	COP	Middle
Hello Lighthouse	15	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	16	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	17	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	18	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	19	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	20	21	COP	End
Hello Lighthouse	21	21	WDL	End
The Undefeated	1	16	COP	Beginning
The Undefeated	2	16	COP	Beginning
The Undefeated	3	16	COP	Beginning
The Undefeated	4	16	COP	Beginning
The Undefeated	5	16	COP	Beginning
The Undefeated	6	16	COP	Middle
The Undefeated	7	16	COP	Middle
The Undefeated	8	16	COP	Middle
The Undefeated	9	16	EXP	Middle
The Undefeated	10	16	EXP	Middle
The Undefeated	11	16	EXP	End
The Undefeated	12	16	COP	End
The Undefeated	13	16	COP	End

The Undeclared	14	16	COP	End
The Undeclared	15	16	COP	End
The Undeclared	16	16	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	1	17	EXP	Beginning
We Are Water Protectors	2	17	COP	Beginning
We Are Water Protectors	3	17	COP	Beginning
We Are Water Protectors	4	17	EXP	Beginning
We Are Water Protectors	5	17	COP	Beginning
We Are Water Protectors	6	17	COP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	7	17	COP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	8	17	COP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	9	17	COP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	10	17	EXP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	11	17	COP	Middle
We Are Water Protectors	12	17	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	13	17	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	14	17	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	15	17	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	16	17	COP	End
We Are Water Protectors	17	17	COP	End
Watercress	1	14	COP	Beginning
Watercress	2	14	COP	Beginning
Watercress	3	14	COP	Beginning
Watercress	4	14	COP	Beginning
Watercress	5	14	COP	Middle
Watercress	6	14	COP	Middle
Watercress	7	14	COP	Middle
Watercress	8	14	COP	Middle
Watercress	9	14	EXP	Middle
Watercress	10	14	COP	End
Watercress	11	14	COP	End
Watercress	12	14	COP	End
Watercress	13	14	COP	End
Watercress	14	14	COP	End
Hot Dog	1	20	EXP	Beginning
Hot Dog	2	20	EXP	Beginning
Hot Dog	3	20	EXP	Beginning
Hot Dog	4	20	EXP	Beginning
Hot Dog	5	20	EXP	Beginning
Hot Dog	6	20	WDL	Beginning
Hot Dog	7	20	EXP	Middle
Hot Dog	8	20	EXP	Middle
Hot Dog	9	20	EXP	Middle
Hot Dog	10	20	COP	Middle

Hot Dog	11	20	WDL	Middle
Hot Dog	12	20	WDL	Middle
Hot Dog	13	20	WDL	Middle
Hot Dog	14	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	15	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	16	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	17	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	18	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	19	20	EXP	End
Hot Dog	20	20	WDL	End
Big	1	28	COP	Beginning
Big	2	28	COP	Beginning
Big	3	28	COP	Beginning
Big	4	28	EXP	Beginning
Big	5	28	EXP	Beginning
Big	6	28	CTP	Beginning
Big	7	28	COP	Beginning
Big	8	28	COP	Beginning
Big	9	28	COP	Beginning
Big	10	28	EXP	Middle
Big	11	28	CTP	Middle
Big	12	28	CTP	Middle
Big	13	28	WDL	Middle
Big	14	28	WDL	Middle
Big	15	28	WDL	Middle
Big	16	28	WDL	Middle
Big	17	28	WDL	Middle
Big	18	28	WDL	Middle
Big	19	28	WDL	End
Big	20	28	CTP	End
Big	21	28	EXP	End
Big	22	28	EXP	End
Big	23	28	COP	End
Big	24	28	COP	End
Big	25	28	COP	End
Big	26	28	COP	End
Big	27	28	COP	End
Big	28	28	COP	End
Chooch Helped	1	18	COP	Beginning
Chooch Helped	2	18	COP	Beginning
Chooch Helped	3	18	CTP	Beginning
Chooch Helped	4	18	CTP	Beginning
Chooch Helped	5	18	CTP	Beginning
Chooch Helped	6	18	CTP	Beginning

Chooch Helped	7	18	CTP	Middle
Chooch Helped	8	18	CTP	Middle
Chooch Helped	9	18	CTP	Middle
Chooch Helped	10	18	CTP	Middle
Chooch Helped	11	18	COP	Middle
Chooch Helped	12	18	COP	Middle
Chooch Helped	13	18	COP	End
Chooch Helped	14	18	COP	End
Chooch Helped	15	18	COP	End
Chooch Helped	16	18	CTP	End
Chooch Helped	17	18	COP	End
Chooch Helped	18	18	COP	End

Appendix 2. Calculations

Row labels	Count of spread type
Cooperative	222
Expanding	81
Counterpointing	26
Sylleptic	15
Wordless	33
Total	377

Row labels	Beginning	Middle	End	Total
Cooperative	33,33%	31,53%	35,14%	100,00%
Expanding	28,40%	30,86%	40,74%	100,00%
Counterpointing	46,15%	38,46%	15,39%	100,00%
Sylleptic	40,00%	13,33%	46,67%	100,00%
Wordless	15,15%	54,55%	30,30%	100,00%