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animated movies: A site for developing multimodal literacy pedagogy

RE-CONFIGURING IMAGE-LANGUAGE RELATIONS AND INTERPRETIVE POSSIBILITIES IN PICTURE BOOKS AS ANIMATED MOVIES: A SITE FOR DEVELOPING MULTI-MODAL LITERACY PEDAGOGY

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Abstract

The long tradition of the re-versioning of picture books as animated movies continues as a significant dimension of contemporary popular culture. While school students frequently experience both book and movie versions, classroom work does not appear to give emphasis to the ways in which the affordances of the different media are deployed to construct different interpretive possibilities, even when the story versions are ostensibly very similar, and there is a tendency for younger students to elide such interpretive differences. This paper extends recent work using systemic functional linguistics and inter-image analyses of children's picture books (Painter, Martin, & Unsworth, 2013) to compare two short segments of *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010; Tan, 2000) in the book and movie versions of the story. The comparative analysis is intended to indicate the accessibility of a metalanguage of multimodality derived from systemic functional semiotics as a pedagogic tool for multimodal literacy pedagogy.

Introduction

For many decades well-regarded literary picture books in English have been reproduced as animated films. Perhaps the best and longest known of such films are those produced by Weston Woods in the US. Books such as *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins, 1968) soon appeared as an animated movie (Deitch, 1970) as did the Maurice Sendak's (1962) classic picture book of *Where the Wild Things Are* (Deitch, 1973). Other classic literary picture books such as Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* have been made in to animated television series (Jackson, 1992). A substantial number of well-known picture books were also produced in animated versions in CD ROM format. These included stories such as *George Shrinks* (Joyce, 1985, c1994), *Stellaluna* (Cannon, 1993; RandomHouse/ Broderbund, 1996) and *The Polar Express* (C. Van Allsburg, 1985; Chris Van Allsburg, 1997). More recent years have seen the frequent appearance of movie versions of established literary picture books as box office successes, highly celebrated within broad popular culture, as was the case, for example, with the recent movie of *Where the Wild Things Are* (Jonze, 2009), the movie of *Fantastic Mr Fox* (Anderson, 2009) from the picture book by Roald Dahl (1974), the movie of *The Polar Express* (Zemeckis, 2004)from the well-known picture book by Chris Van Allsburg (1985) and the movie *Hugo* (Scorsese, 2011) from the Caldecott medal-winning, illustrated story, *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick (2007).

The experience of ostensibly the same story in multiple paper and digital media formats is a substantial and increasingly routine aspect of literary culture for a broadening age range and social spectrum in the community, as a multi-media re-versioning of established literary works bridges into popular culture. Older generations today still have a chronological perspective on the production of the book, the movie, and then the video game…but younger generations grow up to encounter such stories, as endure, as simply being simultaneously accessible in various formats. Sometimes adults note that the appearance of characters in movies is not as they had imagined when reading the book, or that there are omissions in the movie of some aspects of the story as experienced through the book. But there appears to be a tendency for children to elide any differences between the various versions of the story, especially in relation to animated versions of picture books. This may be partly because the animations are very true to the original drawings in the depiction of characters and also, since the stories are quite short, omissions of aspects of the story are usually not an issue. In addition, while in relation to some stories such as *Stellaluna* (Cannon, 1993, 1996) the differences between the book and animated versions are very stark, the differences between book and animated versions of other stories such as *George Shrinks* (Joyce, 1985, c1994) and *The Little Prince* (de Saint-Exupery, 2000a, 2000b) are more subtle, but nevertheless significant in terms of their influence on variation in the interpretive possibilities of both versions (Unsworth, 2003a, 2003b, 2007). Such subtleties may not be readily perceived by the less experienced reader/viewer. It may also be that the ways multi version stories are dealt with in school do not address the "constructedness" of story through choices among the meaning-making resources of language and image. As part of a large

research project (Macken-Horarik, Unsworth, & Love, 2011-2013), a girl in the fourth year of school was recently interviewed about work in English in her classroom. She talked about the story of *The Lost Thing*, which involved the original picture book by Australian author Shaun Tan (Tan, 2000) and the animated movie (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010), which won an Oscar at the Academy Awards in the United States in 2011 for the best animated short film.

> Daki: … an I think he actually found the lost thing so that he could open up and actually not be lost himself…..that's why.. that's the purpose of the lost thing in him..I think.
>
> Researcher A: And was that in the book or the movie that you are talking about? Or did you look at both?
>
> Daki: Well we had the book, but we watched the movie as well.
>
> Researcher B: Yes, so maybe that's the movie because I don't remember the ending of the book being like that. That's interesting. So you've done the book and the movie.
>
> Daki: Well we had a look at the book. Yeah, but mostly the movie.

The student made a very plausible interpretive response for which there is ample, clear and explicit evidence in the movie portrayal of story, but while such an interpretation may be possible from a reading of the picture book, adducing the textual support for such an interpretation from the book version would be much more challenging. So the student's eliding of difference between the story versions highlights the need to enhance classroom work with literature, in paper and digital media, by incorporating the teaching of how the resources of image and language are deployed to make meaning and how variation in such deployment constructs difference in meaning. It also suggests as a very engaging, enjoyable and effective pedagogic

strategy – the comparative analyses of corresponding segments in book and animated versions of the same story.

This paper extends recent work using systemic functional linguistics and inter-image analyses of children's picture books (Painter, Martin, & Unsworth, 2013) to compare two short segments of *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010; Tan, 2000) in the book and movie versions of the story. The comparative analysis is intended to indicate the accessibility of a metalanguage of multimodality derived from systemic functional semiotics as a pedagogic tool for multimodal literacy pedagogy.

The Lost Thing: Interpreting the book and movie versions of the story

The original picture book version of *The Lost Thing* (Tan, 2000) and the animated movie (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010) tell a humorous, and, notwithstanding assertions in the narration to the contrary, a profound story about a boy who discovers a bizarre-looking creature while out collecting bottle-tops at a beach. Having guessed that it is lost, he tries to find out who owns it or where it belongs, but the problem is met with indifference by everyone else, who barely notice its presence. Each is unhelpful; strangers and parents are unwilling to entertain this uninvited interruption to day-to-day life. Even his friend is unable to help despite some interest. The boy shows concern for this hapless creature, and attempts to find out where it belongs. The movie version of *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010) can be viewed at http://www.traileraddict.com/clip/the-lost-thing/short-film.

A key theme of the story is the unfeeling apathy and indifference of people to the plight of those who do not seem to have a place

or be able to find their way in the mainstream highly routine and self-absorbed lifestyles of contemporary society. But the theme is pursued very differently in the book and the movie, despite the broad consistency of events in the two versions and the very similar depiction of characters, with the appearance of the animated characters being very true to the original drawings in the book. This ostensible high level of similarity perhaps contributes to students' eliding of the differences between the two versions. Three dimensions of significant difference between the two versions will be briefly explored in this paper. The first concerns the theme of the story, and specifically as reflected in the nature of the relationship between the boy and the lost thing; the second deals with characterization, focussing mainly on the extent to which the interior world of the boy is portrayed; and thirdly the nature of the reader/viewer stance or engagement with the story that is constructed by the meaning-making choices from the resources of image and language. The focus of the discussion is how the differences in the configuration of image-language relations construct the different interpretive possibilities in these three areas across story versions.

Theorizing image-language relations remains a challenge for multimodal semiotics and multiliteracies education (Chan, 2010; Unsworth, 2006b; Unsworth & Cleirigh, 2009). Recent research on literary picture books (Martin, 2008b; Painter & Martin, 2011; Painter, Martin, & Unsworth, 2011; Painter, et al., 2013) argues that treating inter-modal relations as if they were intra-modal cohesive (Royce, 2007) or logico-semantic ones (Martinec & Salway, 2005), problematically assumes a simple equation of meanings in the different modalities, and that, at least in relation to children's picture books, "visual and verbal meanings are not realizations of an underlying meaning; rather they cooperate, bi-modally, in

the instantiation of a genre" (Martin, 2008b, p. 136). This paper explores such visual-verbal cooperation with a view to informing pedagogy. In doing so it draws on recent applications of Martin's notion of 'commitment' in relation to instantiation (Martin, 2008a, 2008c, 2010) – the notion that different instances of visual or verbal participant, process or circumstance depiction simply 'commit' more or less meaning. It also draws on the system of interactive meanings in images proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001/2006) and modified and extended to incorporate an account of visual focalisation by Painter and her colleagues (Painter, 2007; Painter & Martin, 2011; Painter, et al., 2013).

While there are many aspects of the two versions of *The Lost Thing* story that invite comparison and close analysis, in this paper space will permit discussion of only two short story segments: the first of these is where the boy has temporarily hidden the lost thing in the family shed and feeds it something that it likes to eat; the second is towards the end of the story when the boy and the lost thing part company as the lost thing enters a kind of sanctuary for similar bizarre creatures.

Feeding the lost thing

In the book there is only one page showing the boy feeding the lost thing (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Feeding the lost thing

The narration in the corresponding book and movie segments dealing with feeding the lost thing in the back shed are displayed in Table 1.

Book	Movie
I hid the thing in our back shed And gave it something to eat, Once I found out what it liked. It seemed a bit happier then, Even though it was still lost.	(I hid the thing in our back shed And gave it something [[to eat]], Once I found out [[what it liked]]. It seemed a bit happier then, Even though it was still lost.) *I DECIDED TO HIDE* the thing in our back shed, AT LEAST UNTIL I COULD FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO NEXT. I MEAN I COULDN'T JUST LEAVE IT WANDERING THE STREETS. *THE LOST THING SEEMED HAPPY THEN.*

Table 1. Book and movie segment narration for feeding the lost thing

The grey print in the movie column on the left hand side of Table 1 indicates that this narration from the book version was omitted in the movie. The upper case print shows the narration that occurred in the movie only, and the upper case italics shows the sections of narration in the movie that have some grammatical variation from that in the book.

Theme

In the book the verbal account of the feeding indicates that only the boy was agentive ("I gave …I found out…") and implies that the lost thing was entirely passive. In systemic functional linguistic (SFL) terms (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004), it is the boy who is Actor in material processes and the lost thing is Carrier of an Attribute in relational processes as well as being Sensor in a mental process of affect ("liked"), but in a downranked clause. In terms of the Kress and van Leeuwen (2001/2006) grammar of visual design, the image is transactional - again with the boy clearly as the Actor and the lost thing as the Beneficiary. It is difficult to construe the image of the lost thing as doing anything apart from holding its lid open and accepting what the boy in throwing in. Since the image shows the boy from a long distance it is not possible to discern any affect in his facial appearance. There is some expression of affect in the boy's appraisal of the lost thing as "a bit happier", albeit reduced by the negative graduation "a bit" and the use of "seemed", and this is further qualified by the insecurity of "still lost". In this segment of the book then, the boy's response to the lost thing seems to be largely emotionless concern and the lost thing appears to be the impassive beneficiary.

In the narration in the movie there is no equivalent of the second two lines of the book narration of this segment:

And gave it something to eat,

Once I found out what it liked.

This feeding of the lost thing is depicted only visually and there is no verbal commitment to the feeding in the movie at all. It is important to examine what meanings the images of the movie do commit in relation to these events: From a high angle distant view outside we see the boy enter the shed. Then from our first view when he is inside the shed we see the lost thing moving, with its tentacles exploring various items on the shelves along the shed wall until it pulls a box of what appears to be brightly coloured baubles off the shelf right in front of the boy so that, as it falls, the boy catches the box in his arms. The lost thing then gestures with his tentacle to the boy to follow it. The lost thing moves backwards from the boy at the same time opening the lid on its top extremity with more tentacles emanating from inside it to reveal a bright yellow light. It then uses its large pincers to manipulate a ladder against its side, which the boy climbs until he can look inside the top of the lost thing at a brightly lit swirling of tentacles in a compartment of dials and levers. Into this dynamic combination of the organic and the mechanical the boy throws the baubles from the box selected by the lost thing. In this purely visual account in the movie, the lost thing is clearly agentive, taking the initiative in looking for food, and facilitating the boy's being able to feed it by arranging the ladder.

The commitment to the meaning of the feeding event in the verbal text of the book is very limited. In "…I found out what it liked"

we do not know what is entailed in "I found out" and there is no complementary commitment in the image to clarify this. The movie, on the other hand does commit visually to showing how the boy came to know what the lost thing liked to eat. But this greater commitment in the movie shows that it was the lost thing that was agentive in this process, in direct contrast to what is implied in the book. The movie also commits much more in showing the actions that resulted in the boy's standing on the ladder feeding the lost thing. Here again it is the initiating action of the lost thing that brings about this feeding by the boy from the ladder. While this episode in both versions of the story is broadly the same, the movie commits more meaning visually and it is this increased commitment that changes our interpretation of the character of the lost thing – and of the boy, and also changes our interpretation of the emerging relationship between them from that suggested in the book. In the movie what is emerging is a theme of collaboration and complementary companionship.

Characterization

In the previous section we have noted how the movie commits additional meaning to the feeding segment that offers a different interpretation of the character of the lost thing – and the boy, from that offered in this segment of the book. Through both language and image the movie tends to provide entre into the boy's thoughts and feelings that does not occur in the book.

The narration that is distinctive to the movie version of this segment builds 'interiority' into the characterization of the boy. This is achieved through the use of the mental processes "decided" and "figure out", so that we know what is going on in the boy's consciousness as well as what he is doing materially. This is consolidated by the

boy's self evaluation of positive propriety: …I couldn't just leave it wandering the streets." No such interiority is built in the narration of the book version of this segment. In fact, it appears that this is starkly excluded. For example, the narration in the book simply states "I hid the thing in our back shed…" as opposed to the inclusion of the interior oriented mental process "I decided to hide…".

Interiority cannot be inscribed in images but it can be inferred from movement, gesture and expressions of facial affect. In this movie segment we see the rear view of the boy's head moving as he appears to be tracking the movement of the tentacles of the lost thing along the shelves of the shed, and we can infer that he is wondering what the lost thing is trying to do or is looking for. We see similar head movements from the boy when the lost thing seems to be gesturing to him, when the lid of the lost thing opens, and when it begins to move the ladder. Once he is at the top of the ladder the view is of the face of the boy looking directly at us over the brightly illuminated top of the lost thing. The facial expression is one of amazement. No such inferences can be drawn from the very distant view of the boy in the image in the book (Figure 1).

Engagement

In the book the feeding episode is depicted on the left hand side of the double page spread on one page only as shown in Figure 1 (the right hand side includes a small image of the shed with part of a tentacle of the lost thing protruding). This long distance observe view contributes to the social distance between the reader and the characters. The vertical angle is at eye level and the horizontal angle is somewhat oblique so that we observe the scene with the boy almost in profile view. According to Kress and van Leeuwen

(2001/2006) when the horizontal angle is such that the frontal plane of the represented participants is parallel to the frontal plane of the viewer, this indicates maximum involvement of the viewer in the world of the represented participants. An oblique horizontal angle, however, constructs the relationship between the viewer and the represented participants as "other". Notwithstanding the first person narration of the verbal text then, this image positions the viewer as a detached outside, even remote, observer, constructing a reader/ viewer stance referred to as *appreciative* (Painter, et al., 2013), where readers/viewers can observe and learn in a detached way from the story without becoming involved with characters through building up pseudo interpersonal relationships with them.

Figure 2. Gesturing to follow

In the movie segment there is much more variation in the positioning of the viewer in relation to the images. Initially, inside the shed, a mid, social distance, eye level observe view shows, from a slightly oblique angle, a rear view of the boy and a front view of lost thing facing each other as the lost thing searches along the shelves

on the shed wall. This changes to show the full body of the boy and part of the lost thing in profile as the lost thing manipulates the box of coloured items into the boy's arms and then seems to gesture with its tentacle for the boy to follow it. The view then changes again to the mid, social, only very slightly oblique, rear view of the boy and front view of the lost thing facing each other (Figure 2). Now, rather than being a detached observer, the viewer is much more strongly aligned with the boy, being positioned to see "along with" the point of view of the boy (Painter, et al., 2013). As the lost thing opens its top lid, the boy's head and gaze move up synchronously, maintaining our view of this as being mediated as "along with" that of the boy. The view then shifts to a very high angle, looking down on a front view of the boy holding his box. To the left and right of the screen in partial view are the very large pincers of the lost thing, with the right one beginning to move a ladder (Figure 3). This particular view of the boy and the lost thing's pincers could only be from the top centre of the lost thing. As viewers then, we are being positioned to have the point of view of the lost thing, so our point of view is mediated, inscribed as being that of the character (Painter, et al., 2013). This is confirmed by our view of the top of the ladder as it responds to the push from the pincer to fall and lean up against the side of the lost thing, and our high angle view down on the boy as he begins to climb the ladder towards our gaze. The next shift is an extreme low angle view from the left of the bottom of the ladder depicting the soles of the boy's shoes in a close up and a rear view of him as he climbs up the ladder. While our point of view is not that of the boy, we are positioned to view the climb up the ladder in a similar way that he would. Our next view is from across the top of the brightly lit opening at the top of the lost thing at the face of the boy looking straight at us. This is what Kress and van Leeuwen (2001/2006) call a demand image, and what

Painter and her colleagues (2013) refer to as a contact image. Since the depicted characters gaze is directly toward the viewer, it is as if a pseudo interpersonal contact is being made. The next shift is to an eye level profile view of the boy atop the ladder feeding the lost thing from his box (Figure 4) – quite similar to the corresponding image in the book, although in the movie the social distance of the image is a little closer, and the warm yellow light seems to emanate from inside the lost thing, whereas in the book the light is much dimmer and emanates from a single bulb being held aloft by one of the tentacles inside the top of the lost thing (Figure 1).

Figure 3. Focalization as the lost thing

While the *appreciative* reader/viewer stance in the book maintains a distanced relation with the characters, the viewer stance constructed in the movie is very different. Painter and her colleagues contrast the *appreciative* stance with an *empathetic* stance "where common humanity is recognized and the reader stands in the character's shoes"(Painter, et al., 2013). In the movie the closer social

distance, inclusion of contact images, and particularly the mediated point of view 'along with' and 'as' the depicted characters, shifts the reader/viewer engagement from appreciative to empathetic.

Figure 4. Feeding the lost thing - movie

Saying goodbye: the parting of the boy and the lost thing

As the story moves to its conclusion in the book, one image (Figure 5) depicts the parting of the boy and the lost thing. The text above the image on this page reads:

> I didn't know what to think, but the lost thing made an approving sort of noise. It seemed as good a time as any to say goodbye to each other. So we did.

Below this text the image is a long distance, observe view of the boy and the lost thing in profile facing each other gesturing a goodbye wave to each other with both hands/'tentacles' extended forward. And then at the bottom of the page is the single line with the boy as narrator saying:

> Then I went home to classify my bottle-top collection.

In the movie, this narration accompanying the "departure" image is omitted. The entire 'goodbye' scene in the movie is conveyed only through the images and there is no narration at all.
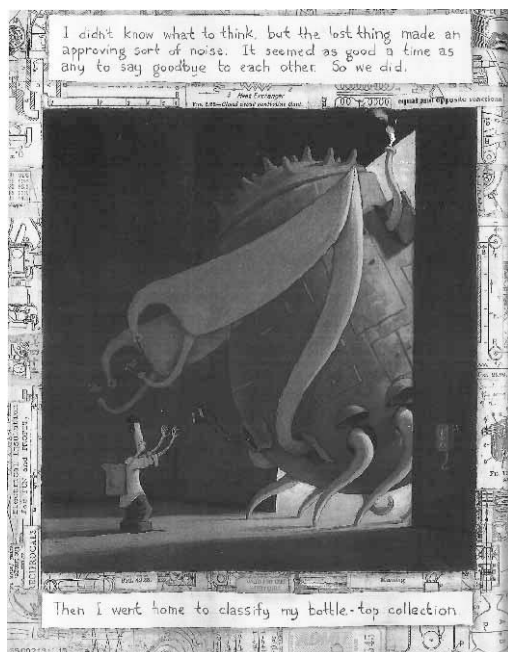

Figure 5. Saying Goodbye

Theme

In the book the verbal text commits minimally to saying goodbye. It simply indicates that saying goodbye occurred, with no indication of what was said or how it was said. The use of the elliptical sentence "So we did" suggests how inconsequential the saying goodbye was, and this is emphasized by the next sentence indicating that the boy then immediately went home to classify his bottle top collection. There is a complete lack of verbal commitment to any emotional involvement in the departure, and the image also commits to only a fairly routine, unemotional waving gesture. This departure segment in the book is quite consistent with the earlier segment on feeding the lost thing in that the theme of unfeeling indifference and apathy is played out as the boy's emotionless concern and the impassive acceptance of the lost thing.

The departure scene in the movie begins with close up contact images of the boy looking straight out at the viewer as the door of the strange creatures' sanctuary opens (Figure 6, top left). After these, we see two long distance observe images showing the boy and the lost thing beside each other facing out towards the viewer (Figure 6, top right). These suggest the collaborative relation of companionship between the two characters. Subsequently the boy turns to look up at the lost thing. His mouth opens to a half smile in profile view. The view then shifts to a more social distance view of the boy's upper body and head in profile – but with the just discernible smile sustained and still looking at the lost thing (Figure 7). These images tend to support the perception of positive affect and collaborative companionship between the two characters.

Figure 6. Saying goodbye silently in the movie of *The Lost Thing*

The parting of the boy and the lost thing is depicted minimally in the book through the one observe image of the boy and the lost thing in profile facing each other and waving goodbye. What is described above indicates the greater visual commitment to the depiction in the movie of the actions that occurred immediately prior to this 'waving goodbye' scene. There is also greater commitment in the movie to the actions that occurred immediately following this common 'waving' scene. This is where we see in the movie the full rear view of the boy parallel to the frontal plane of the viewer with the boy facing the door of the sanctuary as the lost thing departs through it (Figure 6 bottom left). The camera lingers on this rear view of the boy for some seconds, and as the sanctuary door closes, the boy's head is tilted to one side so that he can maintain his view through the remaining opening (Figure 6 bottom right). Collectively these images strongly imply a very significant affective bond of companionship between the boy and the lost thing. While the parting of the boy and the lost thing is ostensibly similar in the book and movie versions of the story, the difference in the visual and verbal commitment to affect privilege very different interpretive possibilities in the experience of

this segment of the story in the book and in the movie. Far from the emotionless concern and impassive acceptance in the book, the movie contrasts the unfeeling apathy and indifference of people with the caring, collaborative companionship of the lost thing and the boy.

Characterization

Invoked interiority of the boy is a significant aspect of characterization in this segment. In the book the language and the image do not commit any emotional involvement in saying goodbye and only commit minimally to the actual process of saying goodbye. This absent or limited commitment, in addition to the boy's immediate return to classifying his bottle top collection, invoke an unemotional, dismissive attitude to the encounter with, and departure from, the lost thing. In the movie interiority is evoked by the expression of facial affect (made possible by the mid and close up images) and by gesture. There are three close up contact images of the boy's face with a dumbfounded look in response to seeing the collection of bizarre creatures on the opening of the sanctuary door. He is staring straight ahead with his mouth closed showing his lips as a straight line and a kind of blank look. We subsequently see the boy's mouth open to a half smile in profile view with his head turned to the lost thing and the sustaining of this smile as the view moves away to a more social distance (Figure 7). Positive affect and companionship towards the lost thing can be inferred from these expressions. Above we noted the full rear view image of the boy as the lost thing entered the sanctuary and the door began to close. We also noted that, as the door closes, the boy's head is tilted to one side so that he can maintain his view through the remaining opening (Figure 6 bottom right) which permits the inference of the boy's affective commitment to the lost

thing and wanting to prolong his last view of his companion for as long as possible. So in the book it is lack of commitment to emotion in the language and the image that invokes interiority in respect of the boy, while in the movie it is the absence of language and the quite strong commitment to affect through facial expression and gesture that invokes interiority of a very different nature in the boy.

Figure 7. The boy smiling.

Engagement

Again in the saying goodbye segment of the book, notwithstanding the first person narration, the nature of the image and the language chosen maintain the sense of detached viewer observation – very much an *appreciative* stance (Painter, et al., 2013). It is interesting to compare this, not only to the treatment of the departure itself in the movie, but also to the way in which this episode in the movie portrays a kind of culminating visual construction of the growth of companionship and emotional connection of the boy to the lost thing.

For most of the goodbye scene in the movie the point of view is 'unmediated ' (Painter, et al., 2013) where the viewer is positioned as external to the story context and the point of view is not aligned with any of the represented participants and does not become that of any of the represented participants, until the very end of the scene when the camera moves to show a full body rear view of the boy looking through the doorway into the sanctuary. However, a large proportion of the views in this scene are where the frontal plane of the represented participants and the frontal plane of the viewer are parallel, suggesting maximum involvement of the viewer with the represented participants. Half of all the images of maximum involvement in the movie occur in this episode where the boy and the lost thing are saying goodbye (Unsworth, in press-a).

As noted above, the contact images are close up views of the boy's shoulders, neck and head looking straight out at the viewer (Figure 6, top left), as the door of the strange creatures sanctuary opens. These are the first such close up contact images with maximum involvement in the movie. Not only is the contact shift to a close up view, but also there are three such close up views in this episode. Hence the 'saying goodbye' episode visually intensifies this more intimate contact with the boy. After the first two contact views, we see the two long distance observe images showing the boy and the lost thing beside each other facing out towards the viewer, as they look through the door to the strange creatures' sanctuary (Figure 6, top right). These images of maximum involvement of the viewer with the boy and the lost thing together reflect the similar image from the previous episode when they are about to enter 'the tall grey building'. But in this 'saying goodbye' episode we have two such views, again intensifying through repetition, the emphasis on maximum viewer involvement with the boy and the lost thing together.

The point of view shifts significantly when the camera moves to show the full rear view of the boy parallel to the frontal plane of the viewer with the boy facing the door of the sanctuary as the lost thing departs through it (Figure 6). In this case, although it is a long distance view, the rear view image does indeed position the audience view along with that of the boy (see Unsworth, in press-b for further discussion of rear view images and point of view being along with that of the represented participant). As the sanctuary door closes, the boy's head is tilted to one side so that he can maintain his view through the remaining opening (Figure 6), which intensifies the involvement and empathy of the viewer with the boy. In contrast to the book, the movie constructs views of the character of the boy as interactive with the viewer and, if not actually standing in his shoes, the viewer is positioned to adopt a point of view closely aligned with that of the boy. Hence, while the book constructs the reader's engagement as *appreciative*, the movie constructs *empathetic* viewer engagement.

More than eating and saying goodbye

Although the discussion of *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010; Tan, 2000) here has been necessarily very abbreviated, it has been possible to show consistent evidence for the way the theme of unfeeling indifference and apathy among people toward the needs of those who do not fit neatly into mainstream society is developed very differently in the book and movie versions of the story. The character of the lost thing was seen to be much more pro-active in the movie and the internal world of the character of the boy was minimally invoked in the book as the language did not commit to his mental processes or emotional involvement and the images were too distant to discern

expressions of affect. In the movie, on the other hand, the interiority of the boy was inscribed through the use of mental processes in the narration and strongly invoked through facial expression of affect and gesture. Notwithstanding the very similar first person narration in the book and movie versions, the manner of engagement with the reader/viewer is very different. The reader/viewer stance constructed through the images in the book is *appreciative*, where the reader/viewer experiences the story from an outside, detached, distanced point of view. This is reflected in the unmediated observe long distance view of the images. On the other hand, in the movie the viewer is positioned to have the point of view of the lost thing and to have an "over the shoulder" view along with the point of view of the boy, as well as close up contact views of the boy and the views of the boy and the lost thing where the frontal plane of both is parallel to the frontal plane of the viewer suggesting maximum involvement of the viewer in the world of the represented characters.

The limitation of the discussion to the two short episodes of eating and saying goodbye was partly due to space constraints, but also intended to show from a pedagogic perspective the manageability and meaningfulness of detailed cross media comparison of very short story segments. Of course, other choices of short segments for comparison could have been made on principled bases, such as episodes involving minor characters in both versions or the meeting of the lost thing at the very beginning of the story and the coda reflecting on the encounter with the lost thing at the very end of the story (Unsworth, in press-b). Other meaning-making systems could also have been explored, such as ambience (Painter, et al., 2013), particularly as suggested by the variation in the nature of the 'splash' of yellow warmth as shown in the feeding episode in the book (Figure 1) and the corresponding image in the movie

(Figure 4). It is also possible to extend the investigation of aspects of the systems that were involved in the comparison here, such as the significance of the rear view image in aligning point of view with that of the focalizing character, which is important in children's literature, although it occurs only in the movie and not in the picture book of *The Lost Thing* (Tan, 2000). For example, in Anthony Browne's *Gorilla* (1983) there are four back view images of Hannah alone, four of Hannah and the gorilla, and one of Hannah and her father (see Painter, et al., 2013 for further discussion and examples of 'back view' and focalization). It also needs to be remembered that there are affordances distinctive to the picture book format, which have significant influence on interpretive possibilities of the story and have not been addressed here, such as the dense print and technical drawings that form the background on which the images and story text is superimposed, also creating a variety of frames and borders with their particular interpretive impact (Painter, et al., 2011). Hence, while the short story segments examined in this paper yielded a very substantial semiotic basis for discussing the interpretive possibilities of the different versions of the story, clearly such texts support very extensive investigative alternatives, suitable for informing classroom work for students from the middle primary/elementary school to senior high school.

Conclusion: A site for developing multimodal literacy pedagogy

The construction of meaning at the interface of image and language is central to interpretive reading/viewing and effective composition of multimodal narratives of different kinds in paper and digital media. While literary studies of picture books have long celebrated the joint role of images and language in forming the

interpretive possibilities of these works (Meek, 1988; Nodelman & Reimer, 2002), it is only within the last two decades, with the increasing inclusion of images in a range of different types of texts, and the relative ease of this with recent means of digital media production, that the necessity of re-thinking past monomodal views of literacy and literacy curriculum and pedagogy has brought new emphasis to the image/language interface in multimodal text comprehension and composition (Andrews, 2004; Dresang, 1999; Kamil, Intrator, & Kim, 2000; Kress, 2000; Luke, 2003; Russell, 2000). The new Australian national curriculum for English makes quite explicit the requirement for students to learn about the image-language interface. For example, in responding to literature, year seven students are required to be able to

> Compare the ways that language and images are used to create character, and to influence emotions and opinions in different types of text (http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/).

Such a task would seem to assume at least the concomitant development of explicit systematic knowledge about the meaning-making resources of language and image – linguistic knowledge such as knowledge of grammar, discourse and genre and similarly relevant knowledge of visual semiotics. But although the need for such metalanguages does not now seem contentious (Unsworth, 2008b, 2010), the nature of the metalanguages and the extent of knowledge about language and image that is facilitative of multimodal literacy development at the various stages of schooling remain very unclear (Macken-Horarik, Love, & Unsworth, 2011; Macken-Horarik & Morgan, 2011). Although the theorizing of meaning-making at the interface of image and language is still in its infancy the one

theoretical framework that has been arguably most systematically involved in investigating image-language relations in multimodal texts is systemic functional semiotics (see Martinec & Salway, 2005 for a review). While some of this work has investigated curriculum area and literary texts in paper and digital media, we are a long way from understanding the nature and extent of a metalanguage of multimodality that will be most productive for teachers and students in literacy learning and teaching in the multimodal communication contexts of the 21st century (Macken-Horarik, et al., 2011; Macken-Horarik & Morgan, 2011).

Animated movies of literary picture books are an important site for investigating the nature and extent of a metalanguage for multimodal literacy development at different stages of schooling. It has long been recognized that for children now growing up in an online multimedia world, their experience of a great deal of literary narrative is such that they take the "multiplicity of media and versions for granted" (Mackey, 1994, p. 19), and that discussing children's literature in terms of paper media texts alone "ignores the multimedia expertise of our children" (Mackey, 1994, p. 17). However, while work with new media forms of literary texts in classrooms is crucial (Mackey, 1999, 2001a, 2001b; Unsworth, 2006a; Unsworth, Thomas, Simpson, & Asha, 2005), it cannot be simply assumed that experience of multiply versioned stories equips children and young people to understand how the interpretive possibilities of story are being shaped by the affordances of the different media through which they are being experienced. Despite a very significant proportion of young people being highly adept at using digital media for creative expression, research and social life, they are not necessarily correspondingly adept in understanding how multimedia affordances influence the interpretive possibilities

of the texts they are negotiating (Jenkins, 2006; Kellner & Share, 2007; Luce-Kapler, 2007). While contemporary curricula such as the new Australian national curriculum can mandate such outcomes (through the requirement for year nine students to, for example, "*Explore and explain the combinations of language and visual choices that authors make to present information, opinions and perspectives in different texts* - http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English), the pedagogy needs to draw on systematic semiotic accounts of how meaning is constructed jointly by language and images in different contexts. At least in relation to literary picture books, systemic functional semiotics has recently been able to significantly contribute to building up such an account (Martin, 2008b; Painter & Martin, 2011; Painter, et al., 2013; Unsworth, 2007) and has begun to relate this to moving image re-versioning of multimodal literary texts (Unsworth, 2008a, in press-a, in press-b). By infusing this work into teacher education and working with teachers and students in classrooms we can develop and refine an effective educational semiotics for multimodal literacy in the 21st century – animated movies of literary picture books provide a very enjoyable and productive context in which to begin such work.

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