A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of the Compositional Meaning of Moral Lessons in Picture Books for Children

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Abstract

The current study examines moral lessons in picture books for children. Picture books for children are important in teaching moral values, as they often blend text with images to create meaning. This combination has the potential to convey moral lessons effectively for children. However, the integration of visual and textual modes in this context has not been studied. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by addressing key questions. The questions are: What role does the compositional arrangement of elements play in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons in picture books for children? How does the integration of visual and textual modes enhance moral lessons in picture books for children? The study aims to investigate the role of the compositional arrangement of elements in picture books for children in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons, and to analyze the importance of integrating visual and textual modes in picture books for children for enhancing moral lessons. The study analyzed two fiction picture books for children using Kress and van

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Leeuwen's (2006) model, applying a qualitative methodology. The study concluded that the arrangement of visual elements plays a crucial role in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons. The central placement of key characters, the use of contrasting colors and sizes, and the positioning of text in relation to images all work together to highlight these lessons. Moreover, the integration of visual and textual modes significantly enhances the clarity and effectiveness of moral messages. Images make these lessons more accessible and memorable for children, while the alignment of text with images reinforces the intended moral lessons.

Keywords: discourse analysis, moral lessons, multimodality, picture books for children, textual mode, visual mode.

تحليل متعدد الوسائط للمعنى التركيبي للدروس الاخلاقية في الكتب المصورة للاطفال

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المستخلص
يتناول هذا البحث المعنى التركيبي للدروس الأخلاقية في الكتب المصورة للأطفال، اذ تعد الكتب المصورة للأطفال وسيلة مهمة في تعليم القيم الأخلاقية للاطفال، إذ غالبا ما يتم الدمج بين النص والصورة لإظهار المعنى، وهذا الدمج محتمل ان يمتلك القدرة على إيصال الدروس الأخلاقية بشكل فعال للأطفال، ومع ذلك لم يتم دراسة هذا الدمج في هذا السياق، لذلك تهدف الدراسة إلى سد هذه الفجوة من خلال الإجابة على بعض الأسئلة، والأسئلة هي، ما الدور الذي يلعبه الترتيب التركيبي للعناصر في توضيح وتأكيد الدروس الأخلاقية في الكتب المصورة للأطفال؟ وكيف يعزز دمج الأنماط البصرية والنصية في إيصال هذه الدروس؟ الدراسة تهدف الى التحقيق في دور الترتيب التركيبي للعناصر في الكتب المصورة للأطفال في توضيح وتأكيد الدروس الأخلاقية، وتحليل اهمية دمج الأنماط البصرية والنصية في الكتب المصورة للاطفال لتعزيز الدروس الاخلاقية، وحللت هذه الدراسة كتابان مصوران للأطفال باستخدام نموذج كريس وفان ليوين (2006) مع تطبيق منهجية نوعية، واستنتجت الدراسة بان ترتيب العناصر البصرية يلعب دورا حاسما في توضيح وتأكيد الدروس الأخلاقية، فالموقع المركزي للشخصيات الرئيسة، واستخدام الألوان والأحجام المتباينة، وموقع النص بالنسبة للصور، كلها تعمل معا لتسليط الضوء على هذه الدروس، بالإضافة إلى ذلك فإن تكامل الأنماط البصرية والنصية يعزز بشكل كبير من وضوح وفعالية الرسائل الأخلاقية، فالصور تجعل هذه الدروس أكثر سهولة في الفهم وأكثر رسوخا بالنسبة للأطفال، بينما يعزز التوافق بين النص والصورة من الرسائل الأخلاقية المقصودة.
الكلمات المفتاحية: تحليل الخطاب، دروس أخلاقية، تعدد الوسائط، الكتب المصورة للأطفال، النمط النصي، النمط البصري.

1.   INTRODUCTION

Picture books play a vital role in children's learning, fostering reading skills and instilling social and moral values. Traditionally, moral lessons in children's books have relied on text, but modern picture books often blend words and images to create meaning. This combination has the potential to make moral lessons more accessible and engaging for children. However, limited research exists on how this interaction between text and visuals influences children's moral learning.

Stories shape children's thinking and moral development by presenting relatable characters and situations, allowing them to grasp lessons on a deeper level. Picture books enhance this process by incorporating visual elements that can reinforce or even expand the text's meaning. Despite their potential, the specific ways in which these elements work together to teach morals remain unstudied, highlighting the need for exploration of their combined impact. This study tries to address this gap by employing multimodal discourse analysis to investigate how the combination of text and images in picture books effectively communicates moral lessons.

The study **aims** to investigate the role of the compositional arrangement of elements in picture books for children in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons and to analyze the importance of integrating visual and textual modes in picture books for children for enhancing moral lessons. The study **hypothesizes** that the compositional arrangement of elements in picture books for children plays an important role in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons and that the integration of visual and textual modes in picture books for children enhances the clarity of moral lessons.
The study is carried out to answer the following **questions**:
1. What role does the compositional arrangement play in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons in picture books for children?
2. How does the integration of visual and textual modes enhance moral lessons?

2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis refers to a range of distinct approaches for studying text, each emerging from various theoretical backgrounds and disciplinary fields. There isn't one unified 'discourse analysis' but rather multiple forms of analysis to use the term. What these approaches have in common is the rejection of the realist idea that language merely serves as a neutral tool for reflecting or describing reality, along with a firm belief in the crucial role of discourse in shaping social life. The term 'discourse' is used to refer to all forms of talk and text, including naturally occurring conversations, interview content, and any form of written text(Gill, 2000).

According to Schiffrin et al. (2001), discourse analysis is a dynamic and expanding field, with current research emerging from a wide range of academic disciplines that vary significantly from one another. This includes the fields where models for understanding and analyzing discourse were first developed, such as linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy.

It also includes disciplines that have applied and often extended these models and methods to address problems within their own areas, such as communication, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and artificial intelligence. Given this disciplinary diversity, it is unsurprising that the terms 'discourse' and 'discourse analysis' carry different meanings for scholars in various fields. For many, particularly in linguistics, discourse is typically understood as anything beyond the sentence; for others, discourse refers to the study of language use.

Davies and Elder (2004) state that discourse analysis can be broadly defined as the study of language from a communicative perspective and/or the study of communication from a linguistic viewpoint. A more detailed explanation of this definition usually involves concepts such as language in use, language beyond the sentence level, language as meaning in interaction, and language within situational and cultural contexts. Depending on their theoretical perspectives, such as functionalism or structuralism, linguists may emphasize one or several of these aspects over others.

The term 'discourse analysis' was first introduced by Zellig Harris in 1952 as a method for analyzing connected speech and writing. Harris focused on two primary interests: the study of language beyond the sentence level and the interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic behavior. He explored the former in the greatest depth, seeking to develop a framework for describing how linguistic features are distributed within texts and how they are combined in various types and styles of texts(Platridge, 2006).

Johnstone (2008) mentions that, for discourse analysts, discourse typically refers to actual instances of communicative action conducted through a language. Although some scholars define the term more broadly as meaningful symbolic behavior across various moods, in this context, discourse is generally treated as a mass noun. Discourse analysts tend to use discourse instead of discourses, similar to how we refer to other concepts with mass nouns, such as music, some music, or three pieces of music rather than three musics, or information, the flow of information, a great deal of information, rather than thousands of information. While communication often involves language, it can also include other media, such as photography, clothing, music, architecture, and dance, all of which can convey meaning. Consequently, discourse analysts frequently consider the relationship between language and these other modes of semiosis or meaning-making.

The diversity in discourse analytic research is influenced by the types of data researchers use. While discourse analysts may study various forms of representation beyond language, such as images and films, or examine language use alongside other practices, the majority of research focuses on some form of language data. Some researchers explore historical materials, such as old letters, but most concentrate on contemporary language and communication-related data. This is analyzed with the understanding that language provides insight into social phenomena. For instance, spoken language, such as focus group discussions or interview responses, is often examined, not simply as straightforward reporting, for example, witness statements, but for its broader social significance(Taylor, 2013).

2.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics

According to Fontaine (2013), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), as the name suggests, focuses on the functional aspects of language. The systemic aspect highlights how these functions are organized within the language. Michael Halliday initially developed the SFL theory in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Halliday views language as a semiotic system, meaning it is an organized resource that speakers use to create meaning. In Systemic Functional Linguistics, language is understood as a set of patterns or choices for meaning-making. This system-based organization reflects the various ways in which language can be used to communicate.

Teich (1999) states that the key theoretical concepts arising from the Systemic Functional Linguistics perspective on language, along with the central question guiding all linguistic inquiry, are as follows:

- Language is a behavioral potential;
- Language constructs meaning;
- Language is multifunctional;
- Using language involves making choices within the range of potential and ultimately realizing that potential.

Fontaine (2013) points out that language functions encompass both the purposes it serves how and why people use language and its linguistic functions, which refer to the grammatical and semantic goals assigned to language elements. He also mentions that, for Halliday, a key idea is that language serves a social purpose, meaning a linguistic theory must account for these functional aspects of language in actual use. Eggins indicates that systemic approach to language is functional in two primary ways:

1. It raises functional questions about language, emphasizing the query, How do people use language?
2. It views the linguistic system through a functional lens, prompting the question, How is language constructed or used?

To address the first question, systemicists examine genuine, everyday social interactions. This text analysis leads them to propose that people navigate texts collaboratively to create meanings together.

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, language is regarded as a system that connects meaning with form, making it a system of signs. Sign systems are familiar to us, as we encounter them regularly. For instance, a traffic light represents a simple sign system, with each of its three signs, red, amber, and green, conveying a distinct meaning(Fontaine, 2013).

According to Butt et al. (2012), similar to users of traditional grammar, users of systemic functional grammar begin their analysis of language by categorizing sentence constituents based on their class, often using box diagrams. However, their analysis extends beyond this initial step, as their primary focus is on meaning and choice. They then use this foundational constituency analysis to examine the functions of each component, thereby uncovering the meanings conveyed within these segments of language.

They also mention that, as speakers and writers, we utilize language to account for three distinct functions simultaneously:

1. expressing and communicating ideas: We convey our thoughts and concepts effectively.
2. interacting with others: We engage in communication and build relationships through dialogue.
3. organizing ideas and interactions: We skillfully arrange our ideas and interactions within text to instill coherence and to consider the needs of our audience or conversation partners.

These three functions are so fundamental that they are collectively referred to as metafunctions (Butt et al.).

2.3 Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Multimodal discourse analysis examines how texts utilize various modes of communication, including images, film, sound, video, and words, to convey meaning. This approach has been applied to both print genres and media genres, such as webpages, films, and television programs. It explores the design of multi-modal texts and investigates how semiotic resources, such as color, framing, focus, and the arrangement of elements, contribute to meaning-making within these texts(Platridge, 2006).

According to O'Halloran (2004), multimodal discourse analysis is a collection of research papers focused on the field of multimodality. The studies aim to advance both the theoretical and practical aspects of analyzing discourse and contexts that employ multiple semiotic resources, such as language, visual imagery, facial design, and architecture. These papers introduce new social semiotic frameworks for analyzing diverse discourse genres, including print media, dynamic and static electronic media, and three-dimensional objects in space.

Platridge (2012) states that the interpretation of texts is often shaped not only by the use of words but also by their integration with other modalities, such as images, films, video clips, and sound. For instance, public reactions to the events of September 11 were heavily influenced by the visuals broadcast on television, as much as by verbal accounts. This application of multimodal discourse creates a sense of proximity to the events and deeply engages the audience with what was happening.

He also adds that the multimodal nature of discourse is evident in both print and television genres. For example, the portrayal of women in magazines depends not only on the written content but also on the accompanying images. These representations are not strictly localized, especially in the case of magazines with international distribution networks. They often take on a global dimension (Platridge, 2012).

In the process of evolution, living organisms are equipped with different sensory channels, also referred to as modes, including vision, hearing, smell, taste, and pain perception. A mode serves as the form of information exchanged between the human brain and the environment. When this exchange occurs through a single sensory channel, it is termed a single mode. If two sensory channels are involved, it is called a double mode. When three or more sensory

channels are used for information exchange, the process is referred to as multimodality (Hong, 2012).

The theoretical foundation of multimodal discourse analysis is rooted in systemic functional linguistics, developed by Michael Halliday. Specifically, this theory posits that systems beyond language are also sources of meaning. In interpersonal communication, when a single mode fails to convey the speaker's meaning adequately, other modes are employed to enhance and provide additional information, making the message clearer and more detailed. Ultimately, when one mode is insufficient to fully express meaning, other modes are introduced to achieve mutual understanding. The relationship between these modes, when they work together to complete each other, is termed a 'complementary relationship.' Conversely, when modes do not work together in this way, they are referred to as 'non-complementary relationships'(Hong, 2012).

Lyons (2016) points out that multimodal studies are founded on three primary assumptions. First, communication is understood to always involve multiple modes, such as speech, writing, gestures, and images, where the relationship between these modes contributes to the process of meaning-making. Second, meaning is shaped through the selection and arrangement of these different modes during interactions. Third, the resources employed by individuals in communication are socially developed over time, creating a shared cultural understanding of how meaning can be conveyed. Multimodal expression is therefore deeply influenced by context, with meanings being constructed within specific social and cultural environments, according to the communicative needs of various communities or cultures. Consequently, multimodal research greatly benefits from insights provided by intercultural communication studies. Likewise, multimodal approaches offer valuable perspectives for examining intercultural communication, highlighting the significance of various semiotic resources beyond verbal or textual expressions that are culturally embedded.

The wide range of approaches and concerns within multimodal studies is likely one reason for hesitance in classifying it as a distinct academic discipline with its own specific theories. Challenges such as accessing multimodal signals, developing appropriate analytical tools and techniques, addressing theoretical complexities, and navigating the institutional landscape. All of these challenges have contributed to difficulties in establishing multimodal studies as a separate field comparable to disciplines like linguistics, media studies, or psychology. Furthermore, the practical analysis of dynamic video has only become possible in recent decades, and the emergence of interactive digital media introduces additional challenges for multimodal analysts and publishers. These challenges include the immense complexities of analyzing and connecting multiple semiotic resources within multimodal discourse, many of which remain unresolved(O' Halloran and Smith, 2011).

According to Gee and Handford (2012), modes are shaped by social influences and reflect ongoing processes of selection across various contexts. Questions such as why certain materials are chosen over others, and why specific aspects are emphasized while others are overlooked, highlight the impact of social concerns, interests, and needs. These choices reveal much about the histories and practices of the group using these modes. Furthermore, while two cultures may share a mode, the similitude of it can vary significantly. This

indicates that the reach or application of a mode is not uniform across different societies and cultures. For example, while gesture is a universal mode, its use can differ dramatically between speech-impaired communities and those without such impairments.

2.4   Visual Grammar: Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2006)

In visual grammar, the structure of visual language is closely aligned with linguistics, just as grammar in linguistics outlines how words are confined to form clauses, sentences, and texts. Visual grammar describes how visual elements, such as people, places, and objects, are combined into visual statements, with varying degrees of complexity and scope. Similar to linguistic structure, visual structure represents a specific interpretation of experiences related to form and social interaction(Moerdisuroso, 2014).

The approach of visual grammar is rooted in the social dimension. Its structure is not a mere replication of reality, but rather a construction of a depiction of reality, shaped by the interests of the social community that creates, distributes, and interprets the image, making it inherently ideological. The meanings conveyed by printmakers, photographers, designers, painters, and sculptors are primarily social in nature. To analyze these meanings, it is necessary to examine various aspects and rules of visual grammar, including elements and structure, the positioning of participants, modality, composition, and materiality (Moerdisuroso, 2014).

According to Gibbons (2012), Kress and Van Leeuwen, in 'Reading Images,' they build on Halliday's systemic functional linguistics and its concept of metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal, and textual). To develop their visual grammar, they analyze images as narrational or compositional   (ideational), explore relationships between represented participants and viewers (interpersonal), and focus on image composition (textual). This application of linguistic theory to visual analysis is a key and controversial aspect of their approach.

2.4.1   Representational Meaning

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), there are two types of participants involved in every social-semiotic act. They are interactive participants and represented participants. Interactive participants are those involved in the act of communication. They are the ones who speak and listen, write and read, create images or view them. In contrast, represented participants are those who form the subject matter of the communication, including people, places and things, both concrete and abstract, depicted in speech, writing or images. They are the participants being spoken or written about or visually represented.

Representational meanings focus on the relationship between the represented participants (characters shown in the image). They are categorized into two types: narrative structures and conceptual structures. Narrative structure pertains to the actions and reactions of the participants, while conceptual structure involves the classification or categorization of participants within the discourse under analysis (Indrayani, 2018). For example, a viewer sees a painting of a man raising his hand and understands it as simply a man lifting his hand,

without knowing that the gesture means a greeting. This is representational meaning, recognizing what is shown based on experience, without understanding its cultural or symbolic meaning (van Leeuwen & Jewitt).

2.4.2   Interactive Meaning

Interactive meanings refer to the relationships between the represented participants and the interactive participants, or viewers. These meanings are structured through three key aspects: contact, social distance, and attitude(Indrayani).

The connection between the image and the viewer is established and maintained through visual resources, which determine how images either directly or indirectly engage their audience. Contact (gaze) includes two types of image acts: demand, where the represented participant makes direct eye contact with the viewer, and offer, where there is no direct gaze toward the viewer. Social distance is conveyed through the size of the frame, influencing the viewer's perception of social closeness or distance from the represented participants. Attitude is expressed using specific visual resources that communicate a particular perspective or point of view toward the represented participants in the image(Hussein & Fattah, 2020).

Images, for instance, can position people, places, or objects at different distances from the viewer, which affects how viewers relate to them socially. When people are shown in close-up shots, it creates a sense of intimacy and personal connection, as if they belong to the viewer's social group. Details of their face and expression are visible, making them appear as individuals. On the other hand, when people are shown in long shots or from a distance, they appear more anonymous and impersonal, like strangers or social types rather than unique individuals (van Leeuwen & Jewitt).

2.4.3   Compositional Meaning

Composition links representational and interactive meanings of an image through three interconnected systems. Information value refers to how the placement of elements, participants, and syntagms that relate them to each other and the viewer assigns specific informational roles based on different zones of the image, such as left and right, top and bottom, or center and margin. Salience determines the degree to which elements attract the viewer's attention, influenced by factors like foreground or background positioning, relative size, tonal or color contrasts, and variations in sharpness. Framing involves the use or absence of framing devices, such as dividing lines or actual frame borders, to either connect or separate elements, indicating whether they conceptually belong together or not(Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Students, for example, creates a layout where the written description is placed at the top of the page and the drawing at the bottom. This composition gives the text a higher information value by positioning it in the 'ideal' reading position, while the image at the bottom acts as supporting information. The clear division between text and image shows framing, and the

size and placement of each element determine their salience, guiding the viewer's attention through the page in a structured way (van Leeuwen & Jewitt).

2.5 Picture Books

A picture book is a type of book that combines illustrations on every page with accompanying text, both of which narrate the same story(Oktarina et al., 2020). Lewis (2001) indicates that the picture book, as a distinct form of text, is a relatively recent development that evolved gradually from earlier printed materials like chapbooks, toy books, and comics. Early examples resembling modern picturebooks began to emerge in the late nineteenth century, but the form only became fully established in the mid-twentieth century. Since the 1960s, the number of picturebooks published annually has steadily increased, making them feel like an enduring presence. The form now boasts renowned creators, iconic texts studied globally, and a dedicated audience in both educational and domestic settings.

Picture books play a crucial role in supporting literacy development. Activities like exploring new books, rereading familiar stories, imagining alternative endings, or creating artistic interpretations allow young children to engage with text meaningfully. Incorporating picture books into daily routines during early childhood is essential. Reading to children and involving them in activities that promote expressive language, phonological awareness, and critical thinking fosters the skills and attitudes needed for reading and writing success(Oktarina et al., 2020).

According to Vital (2022), the types of picture books are:
1. Nonfiction picture books: Nonfiction picture books are based on factual information, real people, or real events. These books often focus on one of three main areas: a historical event, the biography of a significant person, or an exploration of the natural world, such as specific animals, groups of animals, or habitats. Occasionally, these categories overlap within a single book.
2. Concept picture books: Concept picture books are designed to teach early concepts and are among the most popular themes for young readers. They serve as educational tools for the youngest audiences. Common themes in concept picture books include the alphabet, colors, numbers, and shapes. Some concept books simply present and illustrate the concept without additional narrative.
3. Poetry picture books: Picture books can feature complete stories written in rhyme, collections of poems by a single author centered on a specific theme, collections by a single author without a defined theme, or compilations of poems by multiple authors.
4. Fiction picture books: Fiction picture books involve made-up stories and are the most common type of picture book. They can cover any topic, but it's important to consider the target audience. Young children are still learning about the world, so these books typically feature situations and characters that they can relate to and understand. Popular themes include farms, bedtime, friendship, and the alphabet, as they connect with familiar experiences, such as learning animal sounds. Topics

like a school test, however, may not resonate with a four-year-old who has never attended school.

2.6   Moral Values

Moral values are significant ideals or principles that individuals adhere to in order to differentiate between right and wrong. These ideals or virtues are regarded as valuable for shaping and enhancing an individual's character. Moral values represent positive traits such as honesty, integrity, truthfulness, compassion, helpfulness, love, respectfulness, hard work, and similar virtues. They form a set of guiding principles that assist individuals in assessing what is morally good or bad. Moreover, moral values are a collection of accepted beliefs or standards that direct a person towards maintaining noble opinions and following a righteous path in life(Kumar and Kumar, 2022).

Slote (2024) points out that Moral values serve as a foundation for making decisions, helping individuals determine what is right or wrong, good or bad. These values differ from other decision-making bases, such as financial considerations, convenience, artistic preferences, arbitrary choices like flipping a coin, physical or health-related factors, and rational approaches like researching a product before purchasing. Moral values act as the standards of good and evil that influence a person's behavior and choices. They can originate from various sources, including societal and governmental norms, religious teachings, or personal beliefs. When moral values stem from society and government, they may naturally evolve over time as the laws and moral standards within that society change.

Mazumdar (2017) indicates that moral lessons are the guidelines we establish for living a good and ethical life. They represent the principles and beliefs that help us distinguish between right and wrong behaviors, attitudes, and actions. These lessons can be seen as a code of ethics that individuals adhere to, whether in personal life or within organizations, guiding them to lead a life of integrity and righteousness. Essentially, they are the 'dos' and 'don'ts' that promote happiness and harmony in life. Taught from a young age in schools, these moral lessons often stem from traditional sayings and proverbs that have been passed down through generations, continuing to shape values across time.

3.   METHODOLOGY

3.1   Research Design

This study employs a qualitative method to analyze the data. As noted by Creswell (2009), qualitative method focuses on exploring both textual and visual data, utilizing various inquiry strategies suited to in-depth interpretation. The qualitative method is particularly appropriate for this study because it allows for a detailed examination of the interplay between text and images in children's picture books. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how visual and verbal elements work together to communicate moral lessons effectively. Through qualitative analysis, the study can interpret the meanings embedded in both images and text and uncover how their relationship enhances the delivery

of moral messages to young readers. Therefore, qualitative analysis is essential to capture the complexity and richness of multimodal communication in children's literature.

3.2   The Criteria of Data Selection

The data of the study represents images collected from two fiction picture books for children. The picture books for children are sourced from the Internet. These books were selected based on specific criteria:

1. they are intended for children between the ages of three and nine,
2. they are fiction picture books,
3. they contain a moral lesson,
4. they are relatively short in length,
5. and they combine both text and images.

3.3   Data Collection

The data collection process involved identifying books that fit the criteria, followed by a thorough review to confirm the presence of the required features. From each book, specific pages were chosen for analysis based on their use of both visual and textual elements. This ensures that the material selected is appropriate for examining how meaning is conveyed through the integration of text and images.

3.3   The Adopted Model

The model of analysis for this study is Kress and Van Leeuwen's model (2006). This model is selected to be suitable to analyze images and text. The reasons for choosing this model are as follows:

1) It explains how images and text work together to create meaning in multimodal texts like picture books.
2) It helps analyze how moral lessons are visually represented through images.
3) It examines how readers engage with both visuals and text, enhancing message delivery.
4) It focuses on the layout and composition, revealing how design influences understanding.
5) It provides a clear, flexible framework suitable for analyzing diverse modes in children's books.

The model starts with the representational meaning, interactive meaning, and compositional meaning. The representational meaning has two types, the narrative and conceptual. Each one of these types has its own divisions. The interactive meaning is divided into the contact (demand or offer), social distance (close up, medium shot or long shot), attitude (horizontal and vertical angle), and modality (high modality or low

modality). The compositional meaning has the information value (left, right, top, bottom, and center margin), salience, and framing (strong or weak).

3.4 Procedures of Data Analysis

The data is analyzed using Kress and van Leeuwen's model (2006). The data is analyzed by following certain steps:

1.   After collecting the data, two images were selected from each picture books for children: the key action image and the moral image. The key action image illustrates a significant event or behavior, while the moral image reflects the outcome or ethical resolution. These images were chosen to demonstrate how characters, actions, roles, and relationships etc. evolve from the action to the moral conclusion.
2.   Each picture is given a title to indicate its content.
3.   The data is analyzed qualitatively. The data is analyzed qualitatively to show the way in which the image and text work together to contribute to moral lessons.
4.   In the qualitative analysis, the data is analyzed visually from the representational, interactive, and compositional meaning.
5.   After the visual analysis, a textual analysis and textual-visual interplay is used to analyze the text and to show how the text and image contribute together to moral lessons.
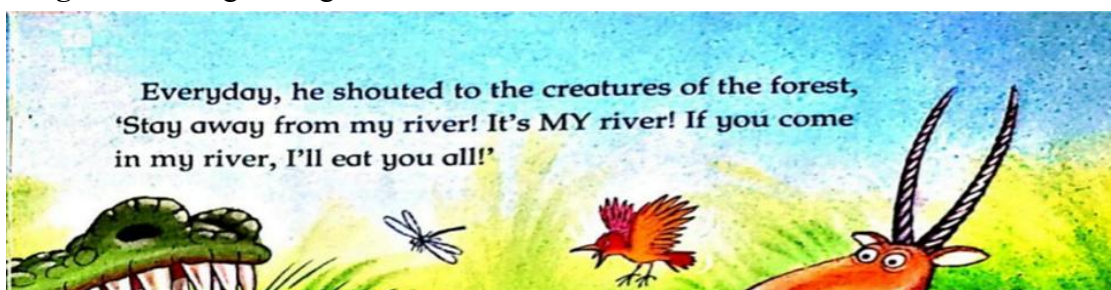
4.   DATA ANALYSIS OF PICTURE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

The data are analyzed by taking two pictures from each story. The first picture contains introducing the key action image while the second picture contains the moral lesson. These images were chosen to demonstrate how characters, actions, roles, and relationships etc. evolve from the action to the moral conclusion. The analysis contains visual analysis, textual analysis and textual-visual interplay.

4.1 The Selfish Crocodile by Faustin Charles

The Selfish Crocodile is a children's picture book by Faustin Charles and illustrated by Michael Terry. It tells the story of a mean crocodile who refuses to share the river with other animals. He scares them away, claiming the water is his. One day, the crocodile suffers from a terrible toothache. Despite his reputation, a brave little mouse offers to help. The mouse successfully removes the painful tooth, and the crocodile is so grateful that he changes his ways, becoming kinder and sharing the river with others. The story teaches lessons about kindness, sharing, and the value of helping others.

Image 1: The Frightening Crocodile

1) Visual Analysis

a) Representational Meaning

The image 1 depicts the selfishness of the crocodile. The represented participants are the mouth of the crocodile, various animals, and the river. The mouth of the crocodile positioned on the left with exaggerated sharp teeth and a dominant stance, representing aggression and territorial behavior. It functions as the **actor**, initiating the **actional process**. The act of shouting is the **vector** and the animals are the **goal**. All the animals are reacting with shock, fear, and concern. They are the **reactors** in the **narrative process**, emphasizing the crocodile's selfishness. Their gaze is the **vector** and the crocodile is the **phenomenon**. The river and grass frame the scene, reinforcing the crocodile's territorial claim. The insects and birds enhance the depiction of a place affected by the crocodile's behavior. The exaggerated depiction of the crocodile's teeth serves as a symbol of dominance and intimidation, visually supporting the textual claim of selfishness and aggression.

b) Interactive Meaning

The crocodile does not make direct eye contact with the viewer, focusing instead on the forest creatures. This **offer** image invites viewers to observe rather than engage directly. The animals' direct eye contact with the crocodile intensifies their reaction, heightening the emotional tension. The **medium shot** social distance offers a balanced view of the crocodile's threat and the creatures' reactions, fostering a sense of involvement without being overly immersive. The image has a **frontal angle** for involvement and **eye-level angle** to show equality. The high color saturation (vivid greens, blues, and yellows) maintains engagement and aligns with children's picture book. The exaggerated facial

expressions and body postures reduce realism but enhance emotional clarity, reinforcing the didactic nature of the story.
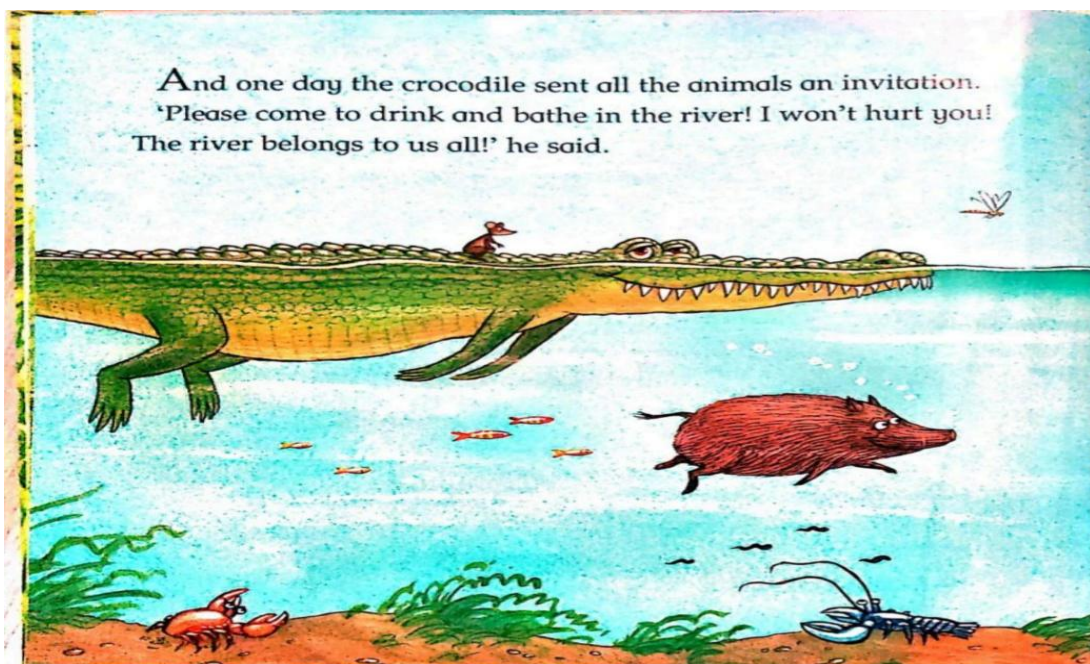
c)   **Compositional Meaning**

The crocodile, positioned on the **left**, represents the given, a pre-established power where it controls the river. The frightened animals on the **right** represent the new, introducing the problem of exclusion and the need for resolution. The crocodile's large size, sharp teeth, and strong contrast against the background make it the most salient element, immediately drawing the viewer's attention. The animals' collective reaction forms a secondary salience, guiding the viewer's eye from left (threat) to right (reaction). The positioning of the crocodile separate from the animals creates a visual divide (**strong framing**), reinforcing the theme of selfishness and isolation. The vectors created by the crocodile's open mouth and the animals' gaze establish a coherent narrative flow, ensuring the viewer follows the confrontation.

2) Textual Analysis and Textual-Visual Interplay

The use of capitalized words in 'MY river' highlights possessiveness, mirroring the visual separation of the crocodile from the other creatures. The direct speech like 'Stay away from my river' intensifies the crocodile's aggressive tone, aligning with its exaggerated visual form. The animals remain silent, emphasizing their submissive role and reinforcing the power imbalance. The placement of text at the **top** (ideal) ensures that the visual scene unfolds at the **bottom**, guiding the viewer's reading path from the threat (crocodile) to the reaction (animals). The alignment of aggressive words 'I'll eat you all!' with the crocodile's open jaws visually strengthen the threat, ensuring cohesion between text and image.

Image 2: *The Good Crocodile*

1) Visual Analysis
a) Representational Meaning

In the image 2, the Crocodile, previously an aggressor, is now a good figure. It swims calmly, visually reinforcing its shift from selfishness to generosity. The wild boar now freely swimming in the river, symbolizing the acceptance of the crocodile's invitation. Fish, a crab, and a crayfish inhabit the scene, reinforcing harmony. The bird on the crocodile's back is a signifier of peace and coexistence, symbolizing that other creatures now trust the crocodile.

The image has an **actional process**. The crocodile swims horizontally, directing the narrative flow from left to right, symbolizing progress and change. The crocodile is the **actor**, the swimming is the **vector**, and there is no goal indicating that this actional process is a non-transactional process. The image also has a **reactional process**. The presence of the animals engaging with the river suggests an acceptance of shared space, reinforcing the moral lesson of cooperation. The animals are the **reactors** to the crocodile's situation (the **phenomenon**).

b) Interactive Meaning

The crocodile does not engage directly with the viewer; rather, it interacts with the environment and other creatures. This is an **offer** image, inviting the viewer to observe the newly established harmony. The small aquatic creatures lack expressive facial reactions, emphasizing a sense of comfort rather than tension. The **medium shot** creates a sense of inclusion, allowing the viewer to engage with the scene without feeling too distant or too intimate. The horizontal orientation of movement mirrors the reader's natural reading direction (left to right), reinforcing the idea of forward progression. The image has a **frontal angle** which suggests involvement and it has an **eye-level angle** which indicates equality between the viewer and the represented participants. The high color saturation (bright greens, blues, and reds) aligns with children's book aesthetics and signals positivity. The smooth lines and rounded shapes in the crocodile and animals contrast with the previous sharp, exaggerated teeth, visually reinforcing the shift from aggression to peace. The gentler expression on the crocodile's face contrasts with the previous aggressive stance, making it appear more approachable.

c) Compositional Meaning

The crocodile, positioned on the **left**, represents the given. It is still the dominant figure but has changed its role. The other creatures on the **right** represent the new. The successful integration of other animals into the river fulfils the story's moral lesson. The crocodile remains the most salient element, but its positioning in the water rather than above softens its dominance. The animals now share the space in a more integrated manner, contrasting with the previous visual separation. The text's positioning at the **top** allows the scene to unfold at the **bottom**, guiding the viewer's interpretation seamlessly.

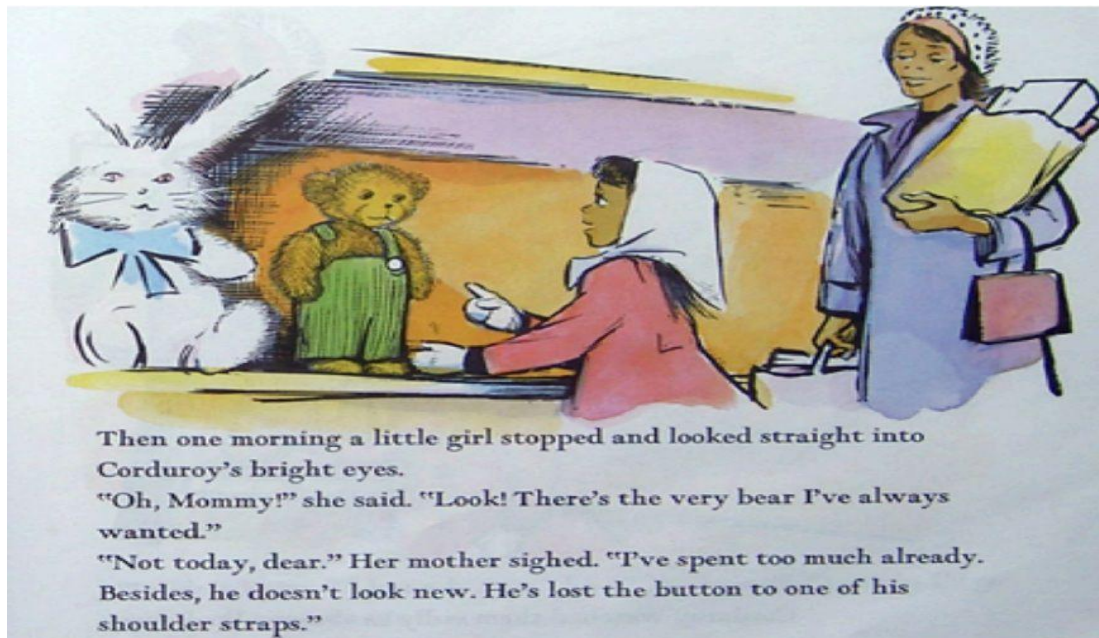### 2) Textual Analysis and Textual-Visual Interplay

The shift in tone is evident in the crocodile's direct speech, which now includes welcoming and inclusive language 'Please come to drink and bathe in the river! I won't

hurt you!.' The phrase 'The river belongs to us all!' directly contradicts the previous claim of ownership, signaling a moral lesson of sharing. The calm water and the animals' relaxed demeanor visually support the text's assertion that the crocodile has changed. The use of past tense 'sent all the animals an invitation' signals that the transformation is complete, reinforcing the closure of the narrative.

4.2 Corduroy by Don Freeman

Corduroy, written by Don Freeman, tells the story of a stuffed bear named Corduroy who lives in a department store. Corduroy wears green overalls but is missing a button, which makes him feel incomplete. One day, a little girl named Lisa wants to buy Corduroy, but her mother refuses, saying he looks worn out. That night, Corduroy ventures through the store in search of his missing button, leading to an adventurous exploration. Despite not finding the button, Lisa returns the next day with her saved money and buys Corduroy, taking him home. She sews on a new button, and Corduroy realizes he has found a true friend and a loving home. The story highlights themes of acceptance, friendship, and finding value in imperfections. It teaches that love and kindness matter more than appearances.

Image 3: *Young Girl Admiring a Teddy*

Then one morning a little girl stopped and looked straight into Corduroy's bright eyes.
"Oh, Mommy!" she said. "Look! There's the very bear I've always wanted."
"Not today, dear." Her mother sighed. "I've spent too much already. Besides, he doesn't look new. He's lost the button to one of his shoulder straps."

1) Visual Analysis
a) Representational Meaning

The image 3 depicts a young girl admiring a teddy bear in a store while her mother expresses reluctance to buy it. The Corduroy is small teddy bear dressed in green overalls stands on a store shelf. His missing button signifies imperfection, making him seem

vulnerable yet endearing. His position at the center of the girl's gaze highlights his importance. The little girl's gesturing hand and forward-leaning posture indicate curiosity and excitement. The mother dressed in a blue coat with a shopping bag, she exhibits practicality and restraint. The rabbit toy is A large stuffed rabbit with a blue bow is positioned behind Corduroy. It serves as a contrast to Corduroy, appearing pristine and complete, reinforcing Corduroy's imperfection. The image has two reactional processes. The little girl (**reactor**) looks at (**vector**) the Corduroy (**phenomenon**) with admiring. The mother (**reactor**) is looking at (**vector**) the little girl (**phenomenon**) in a way that indicates constraint and reluctance.

b) Interactive Meaning

The participants are not looking directly at the viewer. This establishes an **offer contact** which makes the viewer observe the situation rather than being directly involved. The image has a **frontal angle**. The **medium shot** and the **eye-level angle** creates a neutral perspective, allowing the viewer to empathize equally with the child's enthusiasm and the mother's reasoning. The colors of the picture makes it less real. The soft watercolor style conveys a sense of warmth, aligning with children's book aesthetics.
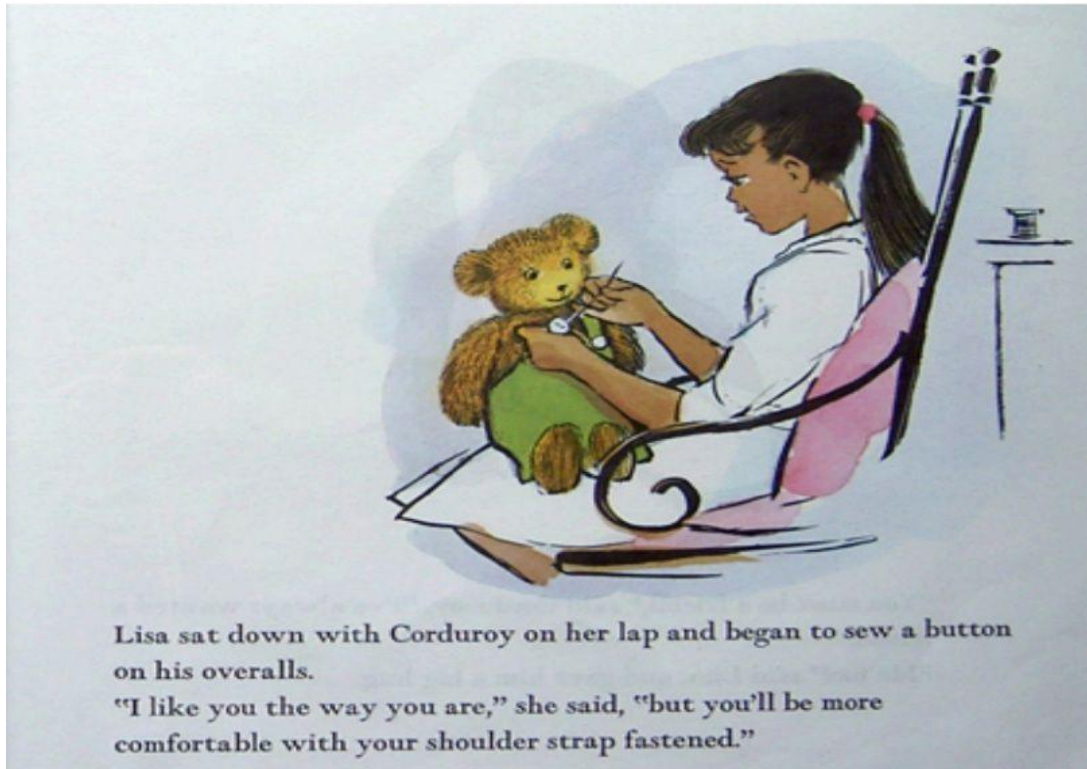
c) Compositional Meaning

The rabbit toy (**left**) represents the standard expectation of a perfect toy, while Corduroy (**center**) represents uniqueness despite flaws. The girl and mother's positioning on the **right** side represents decision-making and action. Corduroy and the girl are in the foreground, emphasizing their emotional connection. The mother is slightly in the background, symbolizing distance from the child's desires. Corduroy is the most salient participants due to his central placement, the girl's pointing gesture directing the viewer's gaze toward him, and his bright green outfit, contrasting with the background colors. The store shelf acts as a horizontal divider (**strong framing**), separating Corduroy from the human participants, reinforcing the barrier between desire and ownership.

2) Textual Analysis and Textual-Visual Interplay

'Look! There's the very bear I've always wanted.' This text expresses excitement, reinforcing the girl's emotional attachment to Corduroy. 'Not today, dear.' The mother's sigh reflects financial constraint and practicality. The mother's reasoning 'He doesn't look new' contrasts with the girl's emotional value for Corduroy. The text is positioned at the **bottom** of the image, guiding the reader to first engage visually, then confirm the story's context through words. The mother's verbal refusal contrasts with the child's visual excitement, reinforcing conflicting perspectives.

Image 4: *Sewing a Button*

Lisa sat down with Corduroy on her lap and began to sew a button on his overalls.
"I like you the way you are," she said, "but you'll be more comfortable with your shoulder strap fastened."

1) Visual Analysis

a) Representational Meaning

The image 4 portrays the little girl sewing a button onto Corduroy's overalls, symbolizing care. The little girl seated in a pink chair, she holds Corduroy gently, reinforcing a sense of comfort and security. Her focused gaze and delicate sewing action emphasize nurturing and affection. The Corduroy sits on the little girl's lap, reinforcing his child-like vulnerability. His soft expression and relaxed posture indicate trust and contentment. The girl's act of sewing symbolizes repair, acceptance, and transformation. The image has an actional process. The girl (**actor**) is sewing (**vector**) the button (**goal**) which reflects care and acceptance. The picture also has a **reactional process**. The girl's direct gaze at Corduroy and her gentle handling indicate affection.

b) Interactive Meaning

The girl's focused gaze on Corduroy establishes an **offer** rather than a demand interaction, as the girl is engaged in restoring Corduroy rather than addressing the viewer. The image has a **frontal angle. The eye-level** angle and the **medium shot** creates a balanced perspective, allowing the viewer to engage emotionally and empathetically with the girl's actions. Soft watercolor style and gentle color palette Reinforces the warmth and tenderness of the scene. There is a contrast between the girl's white dress and Corduroy's green overalls. White symbolizes purity and care, while green symbolizes growth and renewal.

c) Compositional Meaning

The image is at the **top** (ideal) while the text is at the **bottom** (real). The girl and Corduroy are the most salient due to their positioning at the **center** of the image. The girl's delicate sewing action reinforcing care. Corduroy's relaxed posture showing contentment. The lap holding Corduroy creates a sense of unity and completeness, reinforcing emotional attachment and belonging. This unity is indicated by **weak framing**.

2) Textual Analysis and Textual-Visual Interplay

'I like the way you are.' This text reinforces unconditional acceptance. 'But you'll be more comfortable with your shoulder strap fastened.' This speech by the girl indicates practical care, balancing affection with improvement. The text is placed beneath the image, ensuring the reader processes the visual connection between the girl and Corduroy first before reinforcing it with words. The gentle tone of the girl's speech mirrors the soft colors and delicate actions in the image, creating a harmonious multimodal representation of love and care.

5. DISCUSSION

The hypotheses of the study were that the compositional arrangement of elements in picture books for children plays an important role in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons and that the integration of visual and textual modes in picture books for children enhances the clarity of moral lessons. The results of the study indicate that using images with text in picture books for children helps enhance the moral lessons for children. In the first picture book, The Selfish Crocodile, the arrangement of the animals in the key action image shows the way in which they are separated from the crocodile because of his selfishness. This separation and selfishness are made clear by the crocodile's speech, such as 'Stay away from my river,' and the repetition of the possessive pronoun 'my.' Meanwhile, in the moral image, the animals are depicted close to each other, delivering the moral lesson of sharing, and this is also made clear by the crocodile's speech, 'The river belongs to us all.' The placement of the text at the top and the image at the bottom contributes to the clarity of the moral lesson by exposing the reader to the situation via the text first and then allowing them to understand the situation well by observing the image.

6. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the compositional meaning has an important role in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons in picture books for children. The arrangement of visual elements plays a crucial role in clarifying and emphasizing moral lessons. The central placement of key characters and the positioning of text and images work together to highlight moral lessons. In addition to this, the integration of visual and textual modes enhances the clarity and effectiveness of moral lessons in picture books for children. Images make the moral lessons more accessible and memorable, while the alignment of text with images strengthens their impact.

This study is limited to exploring how the layout, design elements, and the interplay between textual and visual elements contribute to conveying moral lessons in children's picture books. It focuses on the analysis of traditional print media, excluding digital formats and reader reception. The study does not address cultural interpretations or psychological impacts, concentrating solely on the multimodal features.

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