THE ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE AND VISUAL IMAGES –
AN INTEGRATIVE MULTISEMIOTIC APPROACH

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CHAPTER 1
SITUATING THE RESEARCH

1.1 Reconstructing Experience

To live is to experience. A central theme in the study of humanities be it from the perspective of linguistics, anthropology, cultural studies, history and others, is the understanding of the phenomena known as human experience. An important consideration to be made on this issue is whether experiences can ever be reconstructed so that a full meaning that reflects the nature of that experience can be made. An individual’s experiences of the world are mediated through semiotic resources, or tools. These semiotic resources or modalities enable the construing and reconstructing of experiences, allowing meanings to be made from them. One of the fundamental assumptions in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is the ability of semiotic resources, particularly language, to function as tools for semiosis, or meaning making. This claim is consistent with Vygotsky’s (1987) proposal that language is the chief means of mediation between the child and the world of experience.

1.1.1 Semiotic Resources

However, the available semiotic tools are nevertheless inadequate to fully reconstruct any experience. For instance, the semiotic resource of language operates by classifying experiences categorically, in turn determining and shaping the meanings produced from the experience. Take, for example, the case where I experience a particular emotion, and using language to express my feelings and select the lexical choice ‘happy’ as the best fit for my feeling. I have in fact only
categorised my experiences or feelings under the classification of ‘happiness’. This level of awareness or categorisation nonetheless enables me to continue operating normally, in the societal sense of normalcy. However, the truth is that the reconstruction of my experience has been mediated through the semiotic resource of language, and has inevitably resulted in a reduction. Hence, in the earlier example, the category of ‘happiness’ is only the best fit but is not and never will be the perfect fit to describe the profoundness of the emotion I experience.

Experiences are also locked within the framework of time. These experiences are segmented by the semiotic resources of visual images. Particularly salient moments in time are captured on a visual image, which is essentially, a frozen instantiation of time. The tendency of semiotic resources to select only the salient parts of experiences for crystallisation leads to an unavoidable and necessary reduction of human experiences. Hence, in every re-telling or reconstructing of experiences, it is inevitable that there are reductions into categories if the modality used is language, and into images marked by salience if the semiotic resource is pictorial. Here lies the dilemma of human experience: that without the mediation of semiotic resources in reconstruction, experiences can never be understood. Yet, in any deployment of these semiotic resources, there must necessarily be a reduction of the complexity and fullness of that experience to categories and images generating a filtered understanding or partial illumination.

1.1.2 Meaning

Meaning is therefore the result of the mediation of choices between the semiotic resources and experience. Every single experience is translated through semiotic resources as a set of meanings to an individual. The sum of all the meanings subscribed to by an individual becomes his social reality. The social reality in this study follows from Berger & Luckmann’s (1966) understanding of a reality that is socially constructed. The notion of a socially constructed reality has been an
increasingly fashionable label in the post-modern era, emerging from the disenchantment with the privileging of logic and reason during the earlier period of the Enlightenment. In addition, social theories of power relations and domination also saturate discussions on this subject. When a set of meanings is collectively subscribed to by a community, the group culture is established. Culture includes all the ways of thinking, working and representations accepted as normal in a group, that is, its collective social realities.

Culture, according to Halliday (1978: ii) is an also an “edifice of meaning – a semiotic construct”. The term semiotic community, follows from the idea of a ‘speech community’, and describes the people in the same culture, sharing the same assumptions and selecting choices within the common semiotic resources to make meaning. In other words, the semiotic community abides by the ideologies and either implicitly or explicitly endorses these ideologies. The semiotic community could also engage in either actively or passively reproducing certain norms, perpetuating the dominant structures and ideologies. The Whorfian hypothesis claims that language is a reflection of culture, in varying degrees. I argue, however, that this view of linguistic determinism, or even in a lesser assertive stance, linguistic relativity, can be rather simplistic. A more delicate examination of the negotiation between language and culture shows that instead of merely reflecting culture, language can dynamically reproduce culture thus perpetuating social reality. In addition, there is also the recognition that semiotic resources, like language, are not just passively reproducing social reality. Instead, semiotic resources actively renegotiate social reality, through the reconstructing of experiences. Furthermore, through a deliberate and “positive act of semiotic reconstruction” (Halliday, 1975: 140), individuals can resist their social reality, thereby challenging the paradigm that they operate in and consequently transforming culture. The relations between semiotic resources and culture are more fully explained in Chapter 6.
1.1.3 Text

The social reality or culture is perpetually in a state of flux. The reason is that culture is constantly being reinforced and renegotiated with every meaning making activity within the culture. The site for meaning making or semiosis is the text, also known as discourse. All texts are ultimately reconstructions of the individual’s experience, both real and hypothetical. The text, according to Halliday (1986) is both product and process. The text is a product and a reflection of the culture that produces it. The text is also a process as it plays a significant role in constantly remaking the culture, where the text is derived from.

Halliday (1986) stresses the need to study a text from a dual perspective of a product and a process. He states:

“The text is a product in the sense that it is an output, something that can be recorded and studied, having a certain construction that can be represented in systemic terms. It is a process in the sense of a continuous process of semantic choice, a movement through the network of meaning potential, with each set of choices constituting the environment for a further set” (Halliday, 1986: 10).

The post-modern position is an important step towards understanding that a text means independently of authorial intentions and could be analysed as an artefact of culture. The assumption of a socially constructed reality and a malleable culture is fundamental to the various undertakings in discourse analysis and multimedia studies.

1.1.4 Ideology
Ideology, a particular set of thinking and ideas, is in fact a set of dominant meanings, valued by an individual and collectively as a culture. Ideology is an inescapable fact. There is always a set of values, practices, and ideas, which is esteemed highly by the majority in every culture. Hence, ideology differs from one culture to another. For instance, the notion of what makes a successful person varies from culture to culture. This majority in a culture does not refer to the largest group in the semiotic community, and often they are not the most in numbers. This majority, however, is the group that exercises the greatest power, or to use Foucault’s (1972) term, bio-power. Bio-power, according to Foucault (1972), is the set of macro-social functions of power knowledge in the regulation and investigation of population. The dominant ideologies shape and determine the social reality of the semiotic community. These ideologies in turn are transmitted and reinforced through the total meaning made by the semiotic resources and their co-deployment via the interface of a text.

Threadgold (1986) cites Bourdieu (1977) and Foucault (1972) and adds to our understanding of ideology as more than just merely values and ideas esteemed in a culture, but also an effectual constituent to the maintenance of power-relations or bio-power in society. The Marxist’s understanding of ideologies as necessarily perpetuating a sense of ‘false consciousness’ and ‘distorted reality’ is abandoned for a perhaps more expansive theory of ideology as a set of fundamental values and beliefs, often dismissed as commonsensical, but remaining crucial in the preservation of the status quo in a culture. John Stephens (1992) describes the ideologies in texts as implicit, and therefore invisible. These “ideological positions are invested with legitimacy through the implication that things are simply ‘so’” (1992: 9).

The sense of preserving a social reality, is further extended by Bourdieu’s (1977) proposal that ideologies facilitate cultural reproduction where symbolic violence through ideological domination on the unsuspecting, reinforces cultural practices, power relations and social hierarchies. Foucault
(1972) also proposes the operations related to the mechanisms of normalization, where dominant discourse dictates what is considered as normal in a society through ideological transmissions. The aims of normalization are specifically to maintain and preserve the distributions and balances of power and order in society.

The exercise of such bio-power by the strong against the weak in a semiotic community is neither transparent nor overt. It is usually masked under a façade of normalcy, disguised under the cloak of what Roland Barthes (1977) terms as ‘myths’. Hence, it is necessary to constantly challenge and question the reasoning behind the ideologies and assumptions, so often taken for granted in social life.

Threadgold (1986) further draws the connection between semiotic resource(s) and ideology. Citing language as an example, she notes that “(i)deas do not circulate in the air. They are produced and reproduced as spoken or written utterances, in verbal and other media” (1986: 16). In other words, ideologies are transmitted through semiotic resources, for instance, language and pictures, in a text. Since there exists a strong connection between the meanings made through the semiotic resources and ideology, it could perhaps be productive to examine the ideologies of a culture by studying the meanings made through semiotic resources in the text as a cultural product.

1.2 Research Focus

It is of paramount importance then to understand the nature of semiotic resources at our disposal, as they serve as mediators for human experience as well as tools in the reconstruction of human experience. The meaning that results from the deployment of semiotic resources must also be studied to obtain a better understanding of the social reality of an individual and the culture of a group. This is done through an analysis of a text in the culture. Starting with an analysis of the total
meaning made in a multisemiotic text, this understanding paves the way to proceed to an examination and interrogation of the ideologies found within the text, thereby providing a platform to launch a critique of the culture, through the cultural product expressed in a text. Although my approach may differ from Foucault (1988), I would like to aspire towards Foucault’s aims of a critique in this dissertation. Foucault (1988: 154-155) wrote:

“A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought, the practices that we accept rest… Criticism is a matter of flushing out that thought and trying to change it: to show that things are not as self-evident as one believed, to see that what is accepted as self-evident will no longer be accepted as such. Practising criticism is a matter of making facile gestures difficult”.

These assumptions, modes of thought, practices when scrutinised and cross-examined, reveal the ideological scaffoldings of a particular social reality or culture.

The analysis of a text can reveal the dominant meanings or ideologies in a particular culture, contributing to the understanding of society’s values and nature. In understanding meaning, an appreciation of the different realms of human experience emerges. This ultimate aim of text analysis is adopted in my study.

1.3 Picture Books and Ideologies

In this section, I focus on the genre of the picture book, the text type I am concerned with in this dissertation. I offer a working definition of picture books and establish their status as multimodal texts. Following this, I discuss the ideological views represented in picture books and how they are transmitted through linguistic and pictorial semiotic resources.
1.3.1 Defining Picture Books

To plunge into the easy definition that picture books are merely texts with pictures may seem rather unsophisticated and too general to be useful. This unhelpful definition encompasses a huge variety of books and groups them into the same broad category. The range can include texts with few pictures inserted between the pages of a book, for instance, Antonie de Saint Exupery’s (1995) The Little Prince alongside books that have pictures and some words on every page, such as Dr Seuss’ (1957) The Cat in the Hat and even a physics textbook filled with charts, diagrams and pictures.

A more precise definition of a picture book must be established to allow for classifications that are more specific. In this study, the term picture books refers to texts that have traditionally been placed under the category of Children’s Literature. The assignment of picture books to this category of children’s literature is not unproblematic though. I am aware that the question of what constitutes children’s literature remains very much a matter of contention and struggle for many literary scholars (see for example, Hunt, 1996 and Sarland, 1996), especially since the label ‘Literature’ has acquired a sense of prestige and by implication, a connotation of elitist exclusivity. In an attempt to avoid this controversy, the term ‘picture books’ in this study will be less controversially described as belonging to the less politicised genre of children’s fiction, popularly consumed by children in the younger age group.

What distinguishes the category of picture books from the rest of the children’s fiction is that picture books make meaning through the use of language and pictures, which are two unique and separate, but complementary, meaning-making resources. What this implies is that meaning is made through the independent modality of language and pictures as well as in the co-deployment of
these two semiotic resources. This will be more fully explored in my study. The success of the picture book is also often related to how well this co-deployment is negotiated. Lewis (1996: 7) endorses this claim, observing that “the best picture books are those where pictures and words are woven together in some way to provide a composite form of text”.

In addition to this, Shulevitz (1996: 239) adds that “in a true picture book, words cannot stand on their own; without pictures, the meaning of the story will be unclear. The pictures provide information not contained in the words”. Hence, out of the three books mentioned earlier, the physics textbook would have been excluded from our definition of a picture book as it belongs neither to the category of children’s fiction, nor even to the genre of fiction. *The Little Prince* is also not considered as a picture book as the visual images located within the book are neither crucial nor fundamental to the understanding of the plot in the narrative. They serve merely as illustrations, featuring artistic impressions of certain scenes narrated in the linguistic text. Books of this type could thus be more appropriately termed as *illustrated books*. This is not to say that the visual images in these books are irrelevant to the total meanings in the text. Illustrated books are also multimodal texts. However, for the purpose of this study, I distinguish between picture books and illustrated books, while recognising that the visual images in illustrated books also renegotiate the total meanings made in the multimodal text. Amongst the three earlier examples, only the example of Dr Seuss’ *The Cat in a Hat*, falls under the category of a picture book.

1.3.2 Picture Books and Ideologies

Books intended for children’s consumption are often presented in a simple and direct manner. However, behind that deceptively innocuous projection, lie manifold ideological assumptions needed to preserve the simplicity of the language and the structure of the text. Briggs (1996: 24) notes that “because of a general obligation to instruct, and in particular to teach the child about his
place in society, children’s fiction expresses with particular clarity a [particular] society’s sense of itself and its structure, as well as its justification of those structures”. The popular belief that books for children ought to teach certain values or to adopt a more cynical perspective, propagate certain ideologies is asserted rather ominously by Inglis (1981). He declares that “only a monster would not want to give a child books she will delight in and which will teach her to be good” (1981: 4). A critical view on the teaching of ‘goodness’ would usually imply the impartation of values and the transmissions of ideologies esteemed in a culture to the child.

This imparting of ‘goodness’ may be more important than it appears to be, with its consequences possibly determining the continued survival of a society. Zipes (1983: 54) observes that, “the level and quality of a national culture depends on the socialisation developed by human beings to integrate young members into society and to reinforce the norms and values which legitimise the socio-political system and which guarantee some sort of continuity in society”. Hence this transmission of ideology to children, through children’s fiction, is an important acculturation practice and perhaps even part of a nation building or culture preservation endeavour. The success of this impartation will determine the continued existence of a culture. This omnipresent didactic intent in children’s texts locates them as what sociologist Basil Bernstein (1990) terms as *pedagogic texts* or *pedagogic discourse*. The implications of this association are discussed more fully in Chapter 5.

Briggs (1996) also observes that even without a didactic intention expressed overtly, the tendency and need to simplify constantly leads to implicitness and assumptions made in children’s fiction. The invisible assumptions or ‘silences’ in the text are embedded so deeply that they only surface with the reader making deliberate effort to adopt a critical reading of the text. These assumptions view certain ideas, practices and values as commonsensical. However, as commonsense is only commonly shared amongst those who belong to a particular community, a closer examination of
these assumptions could be productive in revealing a particular culture’s values and beliefs. These values and beliefs, as discussed earlier, are what have been loosely termed as the ideology of a culture in this dissertation.

Stephens (1992: 8) claims that “a narrative without an ideology is unthinkable: ideology is formulated in and by language, meanings within language are socially determined, and narratives are constructed out of language”. My use of the term ‘ideology’ will also avoid the Marxist’s reading of ideologies as implying subversive elements and a sense of otherness. Instead, this study will share Hunt’s (1999: 41) understanding of ideology to “refer to all espousal, assumption, consideration, and discussion of social and cultural values, whether overt or covert. In that sense, it will include commonsense itself, for commonsense is always concerned with the values and underlying assumptions of our everyday lives”. That is, this dissertation adopts the position that ideologies are ubiquitous and function as an essential factor for the existence and survival of a culture.

Hollindale (1988) distinguishes three different levels of ideology that can be found in all texts, particularly in children books. The first level, according to Hollindale (1988: 47) is “an overt, often proselytising or didactic level”. This is where the author makes clear that it is his intention to teach a certain virtue or a specific value. The second level is less assertive than the former, and this occurs where the characters in the story are used as mouthpieces echoing certain worldviews and ideological positions, without ironic distancing. Finally, there is what Hollindale (1988: 47) calls an “underlying climate of belief” which he identifies as being inscribed in the basic material from which fiction is built. In the latter two levels, it is of little significance whether the author had intentions to shape the child’s consciousness, through the ideological stances adopted in the text, or whether it was largely unconscious, with the ideological positions actually belonging to the author’s implicit and unexamined worldview. In other words, the author may have no didactic intentions, yet
his unexamined ideologies would nonetheless surface in his writings. Regarding the intentions of
the author, this study adopts the post-structuralist position that meaning is found within the
unregulated play of reading the text, through the interpreting of various semiotic systems, as
elaborated in the works of Roland Barthes (1977), Umberto Eco (1979) and Jacques Derrida
(1976). This dissertation is thus primarily interested in investigating the meanings that are made
within a text itself, anchored in the context of situation and culture.

The study of these ideologies can therefore be compared to the study of a culture. As Stephens
(1992: 8) declares, “ideologies, of course, are not necessarily undesirable, and in the sense of a
system of beliefs by which we make sense of the world, social life would be impossible without
them”. This definition, which promotes a critical evaluation of the beliefs and practices of a culture
through a critique of texts with currency in the culture, allows for a systematic deconstruction of
these values within the context of culture. As we shall see, effectively, this evaluation is mapped
also on the communication plane of Ideology on the proposed Integrative Multisemiotic Model (see
Figure 3.1), where meanings made through the picture book could be seen in the light of its role as
a tool for the purposes of indoctrinating values and ideas in society.

1.3.3 Pictures in Picture Books

The archaic understanding of the role of pictures is typified in the words of Pope Gregory the Great
in the 1600s. He dismisses pictures as being primarily helpful only for the illiterate declaring that:

“And then, with regard to the pictorial representations which had been made for the
edification of an unlearned people in order that, though ignorant of letters, they might by
turning their eyes to the story itself learn what had been done…”

Pope Gregory the Great
Epistle XIII. Book XI
The word ‘pictures’ and the term ‘illustrations’ have been used interchangeably, often even in specialised literary discussions. This misrepresentation arises from the assumption that pictures function only to explain or ‘illustrate’ what has been described with language. Traditionally, as reflected by Pope Gregory’s remark, the opinion is that the primary purpose of pictures is to help those with an inability to understand the language or unable to comprehend clearly the meaning that has been made through the language. Ironically though, beneath this apparent condescending view of pictures, lies the primary reason for the reinstatement of the role of pictures today. Pictures have the ability to mean. Moreover, because of this acknowledgment of the meaning-making capabilities of pictures, visual images deserve recognition as a semiotic resource. The argument for visual images as a semiotic resource is discussed more fully in Chapter 2. Visual images, popularly labelled as “illustrations” also bear the implication that pictures have the capability to clarify through ‘showing’, where the description prowess of language is inadequate to elucidate. Pictures make meaning by showing or depicting a certain scene and thus are more adept at topological meanings. Lemke (1998) observes that language makes meaning usually by describing, thus it is more effective in handling typological meanings. These specialisations result in different functions in their co-deployment in a multisemiotic text and different meanings made. The different roles of language and visual images in a text are discussed in Chapter 5. With the recognition of their specialisations, it is therefore important to appreciate the ability of pictures to make meaning as a semiotic resource. The mechanisms, by which pictures make meaning and the dynamics that occur during the co-deployment of language and picture in a multimodal text, are the subject of discussion in the following chapters.

Although there is an increasing recognition of the significance of visual images in meaning making in a multimodal text, there remains much theoretical void to be filled. Nodelman (1989) observes that there is a significant vacuum in the research on pictures in picture books. Nodelman (1989: 1) reveals that literary critics seldom talk about the pictures in picture books as they lack an adequate
vocabulary to “describe visual style and pictorial dynamics”. However, he observes that even for the art specialists, pictures in picture books have been neglected for their perceived low status as art forms. The state of under-theorisation is so deplorable that Nodelman (1989: 1) comments even “tattoos and certain kinds of graffiti attract more attention”.

Stephen (1992: 158) also recognises that readers “have to learn how to interpret or ‘read’ a picture just as much as a verbal text, and that learning is part of acculturation”. He explains that all texts contain attitudes and ideologies transmitted through both language and visual images. Hence, it is never possible to ever respond to them objectively, as “they arouse emotional responses perhaps more quickly than they do intellectual ones, but in any case they do both because a representation of something is always at the same time an interpretation of it” (1992: 162). In other words, it is impossible to reconstruct an experience without construing it and impossible to construe an experience without reconstructing it.

Thus, pictures convey meaning and need to be anchored in culture to regulate its polysemous nature. In view of this, “a knowledge of learned competencies and cultural assumptions” (Nodelman 1988: 17) is therefore indispensable for the reading of pictures. The need to be equipped with social knowledge in order to access pictures implies that pictures can convey attitudes and embody ideological stances as well. In fact, as Stephen (1992: 165) summarises, “picture books express a wide range of ideological positions—some explicit, some implicit, some affirming the dominant social apparatuses, some challenging [these structures]”. The understanding of the total meanings made by the pictures requires “our knowledge of the conventions they operate by” (1992: 242).

The lack of an adequate understanding of how pictures make meanings in picture books opens up a theoretical space to be filled. Nodelman (1989) proposes that “both words and pictures need the
equal attention of those who would understand picture books; picture books demand the invention of a new kind of criticism” (1989: 2). Lewis (1996: 272) also notes that “an adequate theory of the picture book must directly address the bifurcated nature of the form (word and pictures)”. A preliminary proposal of such a theory to understand the interaction and integration of language and visual images is the primary endeavour of this dissertation. And since the apparatus needed to construct such a theory cannot be found in literary studies or in art discourse, I shall explore the field of semiotics, the study of signs as conceived in systemic functional theory to construct a theoretical model to understand the complex nature of the meaning made in a picture book.

While discourse analysts, working in the systemic functional linguistics perspective, have discussed language development in children (for example, Halliday, 1979; Hasan, 1986; Painter, 1984; 2000) and more specifically, the language used in children books (for example, Williams, 1998; 2000), there remains little research on the picture book as a multimodal text. That is to say, little work has been done in the field of multimodality where the co-deployment of the semiotic resources of language and visual images in a picture book are explored. As a response to the under-theorisation, in the following pages, I will put forward an Integrative Multisemiotic approach based on systemic-functional theory which will hopefully facilitate a better understanding of how meaning is made in a multimodal picture book.
CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics Theory

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language as a resource for meaning making. Halliday (1986) sees language as functional, which means that it plays a functional role in a specific context. SFL is also a theory of meaning as choice. Hence, SFL “is a type of system structure theory where system networks display the available options in the different systems (the paradigmatic relations) while the actual choices are described structurally (the syntagmatic relations)” (O’Halloran, forthcoming).

Halliday (1986) explains his departure from the traditional approach to understanding meaning. He observes that “the sign has tended to be seen as an isolate, as a thing in itself, which exists first of all in and of itself before it comes to be related to other signs” (1986: 3). Wishing to avoid this rather atomistic concept of sign, he modifies his approach to semiosis from the study of signs to the study of sign systems. In other words, instead of operating with the concept of the sign as an entity, Halliday approaches semiosis from the perspective of a sign as a network of systems. Meaning is both constructed and construed in consideration to all the paradigmatic options available. The meaning made therefore can be seen in the light of other possible but unrealised choices. Halliday (1994: 16) describes his constituent structure as a “device for mapping different kinds of meaning onto each other and coding them in concrete form”.

Halliday proposes that language is organised around four functions, which he terms as metafunctions. The four metafunctions are Experiential, Logical, Interpersonal and Textual. The experiential metafunction is concerned with the environment and the representation of experience.
The logical metafunction has to do with the construction of logical relationships. The interpersonal metafunction is concerned with how language is used to act on others to define role relationships. The fourth metafunction is the textual metafunction. This metafunction “breathes relevance” into the other three by organising and structuring them (Halliday 1994: xiii).

Halliday’s contributions also extend to the context plane. A fundamental principle in SFL is its association between semiotic resources and context. Language is described as a social semiotic (Halliday, 1978) and thus language can only be understood in its context of use. Halliday (1978) therefore holds that the relationship between meaning and context is inextricably linked. Hasan (1995) also stresses that without context, it may be possible to describe the structure of semiotic resources but it will be impossible to explain the meaning it makes. SFL thus theorises social context into two strata above the level of discourse semantics of a text. This is seen in Figure 2.1.

![Figure 2.1 Relationship between Language and Context](image)

**Figure 2.1 Relationship between Language and Context**
(Adapted from Eggins, 1994: 75)

Halliday (1978) terms the two strata as context of situation and context of culture. The context of situation is the immediate context in which the semiotic resource is used. The three elements of context that correlate to the metafunctions are used to describe the context of situation. They are
namely, Field, Tenor and Mode. Field has to do with social activity, its topics and content. Tenor is the nature of the relationship between the participants in meaning making and Mode is the medium and role of the semiotic resource in the activity. This correspondence with the tri-functional perspective on the semantic plane, suggests that there is a “tendency for the experiential metafunction to realize field, for the interpersonal to realize tenor and for the textual [to realize] mode” (Hasan, 1995: 221). This relationship, known as the context metafunction hook-up hypothesis, can be represented in the Table 2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contextual Variable</th>
<th>Metafunction Meaning</th>
<th>‘Reality Construal’</th>
<th>‘Work done’</th>
<th>Grammatical System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIELD</td>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td>Reality</td>
<td>Representing our experience of reality</td>
<td>TRANSITIVITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENOR</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Social Reality</td>
<td>Enacting our social relations</td>
<td>MOOD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODE</td>
<td>Textual</td>
<td>Semiotic Reality</td>
<td>Presenting messages as text in context</td>
<td>THEME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 Contextual variable and Metafunction hook up
(Reproduced from Christie & Unsworth, 2000: 9)

Halliday (1999: 6), following Malinowski (1923) and Firth (1957), proposes the “situation as the context for language as text” and Whorf (1956), too, postulates the “culture as the context for language as system”. Although his ideas form the foundations of functional semantics motivating a theory of meaning, Halliday (1999) recognises that his idea of context of culture could be expanded further to enhance its explanatory usefulness.

In the light of the work pioneered by Halliday, Jim Martin (1992) theorises the usefulness of stratifying Halliday’s (1978) context into communication planes. Martin (1992) applies Hjelmslev’s
(1961) denotative and connotative semiotic and describes language, from a tristrata perspective as seen in Figure 2.2.

![Figure 2.2 Connotative Semiotic and Denotative Semiotic in Language](Adapted from Martin, 1999: 40)

The phonology/orthography stratum, more appropriately termed in this study as the phonology/typography or display stratum is described as denotative semiotics together with the lexico-grammatical stratum and the discourse semantics stratum. Context is then treated as a connotative semiotic which has language as its expression plane. Martin (1992: 493) defines communication plane as “the levels of semiosis articulated by this process of realisation”. Martin (1992) includes two perspectives in his interpretation of Halliday’s (1978) context. The first is the communication plane of register analogous to Halliday’s context of situation and the second is the reinterpretation of the context of culture as genre. Controversy over Martin’s (1992) ideas can be found in Hasan’s (1995) critique. Amongst other contentions, Hasan (1995: 198) accuses Martin of erring like Hjelmslev (1961) in suggesting that language is portrayed as “the expression of its own varieties”. However, Martin (1999) clarifies his ideas reiterating that the difference between his use of register and Halliday’s (1978) use of context of situation is merely terminological. The term ‘register’ in Martin’s (1992) usage did not refer to varieties of language, which was possibly the most frequent meaning of the term ‘register’. Instead, Martin (1999: 29) explains that the term
‘register’ was preferred because of their “concern to get away from materialist (i.e. non discursive) readings the term context invites”. Martin’s (1992) conception of register is organised with respect to field, tenor and mode, reflecting the metafunctional approach to meaning. Approaching it from the Hjelmslev’s (1961) perspective, register is therefore “the name of the metafunctionally organised connotative semiotic between language and genre” (1992: 502). This theory of genre is possibly more helpful and tenable than Hasan’s (1984/1996) theory as it breaks out of the tri-functional distinction and provides a platform for “the integration of meanings engendered by field, tenor and mode as systemically related process” (Martin, 1992: 495). Hence, by articulating a “teleological perspective” (1992: 503) of text functions, texts can be classified in ways that cut across metafunctional components in language or other semantic systems. This is illustrated in Figure 2.3. The relationship between genre and register in the system of connotative semiotic is realisation, with language acting as an expression plane for register and register as an expression plane for genre. Martin’s (1992) *English Texts: Systems and Structure* (1992) and *Modelling Context* (1999) offer an extensive explanation for these theorisations.

Beyond these two planes, Martin (1992) also introduces a fourth communication plane, ideology. This is also shown in Figure 2.3. In keeping with what has been stated above, genre is the expression plane for ideology. On this level, Martin (1992) builds on the ideas of Bakhtin (1981) whose theories of dialogism and heteroglossia necessitates an intertextual perspective to the study of meaning. Martin (1992) observes that meaning potential is unequally distributed across a culture, by which access is regulated by socio-cultural factors such as ethnicity, gender, class and generation. This process of continual negotiation of resources functions as a source of semogenesis justifying the theorising of the communication plane of ideology. Martin (1992) is not the first to see this need. Lemke (1985: 17) notes that “every text is a polytext that necessarily situates itself in a system of opposing viewpoints, all of which speak through it the politics of the community”. Halliday & Hasan (1985) have also included the concept of intertextuality in their writings.
Halliday & Hasan (1985: 47) acknowledge that without this notion, it is impossible “to explain what Voloshinov labels as the ‘multi-accentuality’ of the sign function in terms of the inadequate notion of Saussurean value”. In other words, Martin’s (1992) conception of ideology on the outermost concentric communication plane is a much anticipated and useful addition.

Two other important concepts in SFL are realisation and rank constituency. Halliday uses realisation to relate, for example, semantics with grammar. He explains that “the wording ‘realizes’, or encodes, the meaning” (1994: XX). Halliday (1994) defines constituency as a form of structural organisation, where meanings are made through parts that build into wholes. The concept of rank conceives the relationship of constituency within a strata or layer. Each rank is made up of the elements on the rank below. The SFL rank constituent hierarchy is composed of the elements below each rank:

![Figure 2.3 Semiotic Environment of a Text](Adapted from Martin, 1992: 496)
I use Halliday’s conceptions in SFL as well as Martin’s development of these theories in my proposal of an Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM) in Chapter 3. Martin’s (1992) communication planes are represented in the IMM as a framework for understanding the meaning in a text. Further to that, additions and modifications are made in the IMM to reflect its capability for the analysis of a multimodal text. In addition, systems stemming from SFL theories and perspectives are proposed and discussed.

2.2 Multimodal Research

In this age of the multimedia, there is an increasing awareness that meaning is rarely made with language alone. As Baldry (2000) and Kress & van Leeuwen (2001) note, we live in a multimodal society, which makes meaning through the co-deployment of a combination of semiotic resources. Visuals, gestures and sounds often accompany the linguistic semiotic resource in semiosis. As such, there is a pressing need to understand the dynamics of meaning making, or semiosis, in multimodal discourse. Academic disciplines that focus on mono-modality, such as linguistics, must come into dialogue with other fields of research, for instance, visual communication studies and media studies, to facilitate the interdisciplinary nature of multimodal research.

In this dissertation, I propose the Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM) as a ‘meta-model’ for the analysis of meaning of a page, or Frame, which involves the use of both language and pictures as semiotic resources. The term ‘meta-model’ is used to describe the IMM as a model, which brings
together and incorporates many of the matrixes and frameworks available in the field of multi-
modal studies based on the systemic functional approach. This is undertaken with the aim of 
unifying these contributions on the different planes and dimensions on a meta-level.

The central theory on which I base my conceptions is Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), 
developed by Michael Halliday (1978, 1994). Though it was originally conceived for the semiotic 
resource of language, the application of SFL to other semiotic resources has been productive. 
Pioneering work in the application of systemic functional theory to visual images includes 
Images. Following this, further applications of SFL to other semiotic resources, such as 
mathematical symbolism and the hypertext, have proved to be useful (for example, O’Halloran, 
1999, 2000; Lemke, 2002). Various studies have also theorised the interaction and integration 
between language and pictures as these semiotic resources co-occur on a page. Of significance are 
Lemke’s (1998) observation of a “multiplication of meaning” that results through intersemiosis and 
O’Halloran’s (1999) identification of semiotic metaphors, where “semantic reconstruals” are 
brought about with a shift in the functional status of semiotic choices. Royce (1998: 45) also 
proposes an “intersemiotic complementarity” that describes the deployment of ‘intersemiotic 
resources’ in a multimodal text. Further to this, Thibault (2000) uses phase theory to effectively 
conceptualise a framework to analyse the integration of language, visual images, sound and music in a television advertisement.

While the direct adoption of a linguistic theory such as SFL to theorise other semiotic resources has 
been criticised (for example, Saint-Martin, 1990), Sonesson (1993: 343) cautions that “the outright 
rejection of the linguistics model must be at least naïve, and as epistemologically unsound as its 
unqualified acceptance”. As such, a delicate balance between the adoption and rejection of 
linguistic theories to visual analysis must be maintained. That is, theories and conceptions used in
linguistics may not belong solely to the study of language and could be productive in their applications to other semiotic resources. For example, although SFL is deemed to be a theory of language, it also rests essentially on the fundamental assumption of language as a social semiotic. Therefore, it is also appropriate to interpret SFL as a semiotic theory as well as a particular theory of language.

2.3. **The Visual Message as a Multimodal Text**

One of the ubiquitous forms of multimodal text is the visual message. Here the name ‘visual message’ emphasises the medium in a text. In this case, the visual message refers to discourses that are transmitted through the visual medium and experienced with the sense of sight. This includes all forms of printing, which includes language, expressed in its written form through graphology or typography, as well as the semiotic resource of visual images, mathematical notations and other technical symbols. The visual message is usually characterised by the co-deployment of the semiotic resources of language and visual images. Picture books for children, the genre of texts for discussion here, are one of the best examples of the visual message as a multimodal text. As mentioned earlier, the co-deployment of various semiotic resources, for instance, language, visual images, sound or music in any combination in meaning making is termed generally as multimodality. In addition, the greatest commonality between the semiotic resources of language and visual images is that both can be expressed in print through the visual medium, that is, in the form of a visual message.

The history of the visual message is intertwined with the genealogy of man. The first appearance of the visual message is found in the pre-historic time of rock paintings (petrograms) and rock carvings (petroglyphs). Johann Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press around 1450s ushered in the era of the printed text proliferation. Today, the visual message plays a crucial role in the knowledge-
information revolution. Since the advent of recording in print, the world’s knowledge, information and persuasive rhetoric are mostly encapsulated in printed texts and the retrieval of this information is only possible through the visual perception of reading. In the light of the common occurrences of the visual message, it is helpful to derive a clearer understanding of how meaning in a visual message is made, especially in a multimodal text where the ‘cross-coupling’ of language and visual images generates semiosis.

2.3.1 Nature of a Semiotic Resource

The term ‘semiotic resource’ has been used frequently in this study and the usage of this term has gained increasing popularity in the field of multimodal research. However, the term, whose roots can be traced back to the study of semiology is not wholly unproblematic. In this section, I review the nature of a semiotic resource from the SFL perspective, and suggest that there is more involved in the definition of a semiotic resource than the simplistic understanding of it being a tool for meaning making.

Halliday (1978) operates on the assumption that a semiotic resource must have (1) an expression and content plane, as well as (2) possess systems operating on each plane. Within each plane, there lies a network of options as “a representation of the potential at that level” (1978: 40). A system, according to Halliday, is “a set of options together with an entry condition, such that if the entry condition is satisfied, one option from the set must be selected” (Halliday, 1969: 253 in de Joia & Stenton, 1980: 109). In other words, the system is “an abstract representation of paradigm” (Halliday, 1971: 55 in de Joia & Stenton, 1980: 109). The notion of language as a semiotic resource is derived from Halliday’s (1978) seminal proposition of language as a social semiotic. A social semiotic is “a system of meanings that constitutes the ‘reality’ of the culture” (1978: 123). As mentioned earlier, semiotic resources are therefore closely connected to context and a social reality.
Following Halliday (1978), a SFL-based guideline regarding the nature of semiotic resources and systems can be established. A semiotic resource possesses a content plane, where a grammar operates, and an expression plane, where the content plane is articulated. Further to that, systems operating within a network are also present on each of the strata or plane. A semiotic resource is thus differentiated from a system, in that a system does not possess a content plane and an expression plane. Instead, systems are metafunctionally based configurations of the meaning potential of each semiotic resource. Systems may also host several *subsidiary systems*, or *sub-systems*, where the sub-systems operate on a different level of delicacy from the main system. For instance, on the expression plane language as a semiotic resource possesses the system of TYPOGRAPHY. Within TYPOGRAPHY, there is a sub-system of FONT, and within FONT, there are many sub-systems as well, including, for instance, COLOUR. With these principles as guidelines, it is easier to distinguish between a semiotic resource and a system or other mechanisms that may all contribute, albeit in different capacity, to the meanings in a text.

A simple example of a semiotic resource, as illustrated by Eggins (1994) is the traffic light. It is a modality because it possesses both an expression plane and a content plane. The expression plane consists of the system of COLOUR, namely, Red, Amber and Green. There is also a set of grammar rules in operation. This is evident through the fixed sequence in the lighting of colours, and that at any one time only one colour is lit. In a sense, a paradigmatic selection is made. The system of COLOUR is meaningful but, in itself, it is not a semiotic resource, but rather the system by which the representational meaning potential of the semiotic resource of the traffic light discourse is realised. Other semiotic resources include sculpture (O’Toole, 1994), music (Callaghan & Mcdonald, in press), mathematics (O’Halloran, 2000) and visual images (O’Toole, 1994; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996). Of particular interest in this study is the semiotic resource of visual images. A discussion stemming from a comparison between language and visual images as modalities is initiated in the following section.
Despite the broad definition of the nature of a semiotic resource, based on Halliday (1978), it is discriminating enough to disqualify some claims to be a semiotic resource. Royce (1998), for example, proposes an “intersemiotic complementarity” that describes the operations of “intersemiotic resources” (1988: 45) to produce in the reader, the feel of a single, coherent multimodal page. Unhelpful implications may arise in the naming of the processes responsible for the synergistic combination between the two modalities as “intersemiotic resources”, suggesting that there is a set of semiotic resources responsible for intersemiotic relations. This will lead to the question of what is then the expression and content planes of these ‘intersemiotic resources’ as well as what are the systems operating within these resources.

I propose that the nature of the processes at work in the co-deployment of modalities may not be consistent to the common understanding of semiotic resources, therefore labelling these processes as intersemiotic resources may be counter productive. Following O’Halloran (1999), I have found it more productive to refer to these processes such as semiotic metaphors (O’Halloran, 1999, forthcoming) and homospatiality simply as mechanisms that operate on the Space of Integration (SoI), during intersemiosis. The more neutral naming of these processes as mechanisms, frees these processes from the complications of the association as semiotic resources, and establishes a theoretical platform where further unhindered investigations into the nature of these processes can take place.

Likewise, van Leeuwen (2002) also notes that typography has been increasingly seen as a semiotic mode in its own right, although van Leeuwen (2002) observes that typography does not appear to be quite a stable semiotic system yet. van Leeuwen’s (2002) reservation is reasonable. I foresee that typography may never arrive at a stable position as a semiotic resource, for instance, like language, because of the nature and disposition of typography. In my approach to the understanding of a multimodal text, outlined in Chapter 3, I have found it more helpful to view typography, not as a
semiotic mode, but as a configuration of systems, with many sub-systems operating within it. That is, TYPOGRAPHY is a network of systems on the expression plane otherwise known as the display stratum of the semiotic resource of language. Similarly, it is more productive to classify LINES, SHADING and SHAPE not as semiotic resources but as systems and sub-systems through which the pictorial modality expresses meaning. These systems represent a configuration of meaning potential of semiotic resources, containing paradigmatic options, instead of an expression and a content plane.

2.3.2 Visual Images as Semiotic Resources

Having discussed the nature and characteristics of semiotic resources, it is appropriate to examine whether the claim that visual images are semiotic resources is tenable. Comparing the visual images with the semiotic resource of language, visual images can be observed to have a display, grammar and discourse semantics strata as well. Halliday (1978: 39) proposes that language is a “system of meaning potential”. Both the content and expression plane have a network of options where meaning is made through paradigmatic selections. Language is an abstraction until it is expressed through either speech or writing. When the linguistic semiotic is expressed through sound, the display stratum is phonology. When language is realised through writing, the expression plane is graphology or in the instance of a printed text, typography.

O’Toole (1994) and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) argue that visual images are tools or semiotic resources, just as competent as language, in meaning making. I add to their conceptions by proposing that visual images, like language, are conceptual abstractions, each with its potential to mean. As shown in Figure 2.4, language is an abstract system of meaning potential, realised through its grammar, and this is expressed on the display stratum through Typography in printed texts. In the same manner, visual images are also abstractions that are realised through a visual
grammar, which contains systems such as FORM, PERSPECTIVE, LAYOUT and STROKES on the display stratum.

The separation between display and grammar for the pictorial semiotic may be perceived as an uneasy one due to the interwoven nature of the elements on both strata in meaning making. Nonetheless, it is useful and necessary to differentiate between the two planes in order to investigate the systems’ potential and understand the meaning making process. The example in Figure 2.5 demonstrates the theoretical distinction between the display and grammar stratum.

The expression plane of the face in Figure 2.5 involves the system of COLOUR and FORM used to make meaning. This refers to the thin black line, the two black circles as well as the larger white circle. Each of them independently as well as a unified whole has meaning potential and thus has both a denotative value and a connotative value. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, the selections of
SHAPE and HUE are meaningful, although the connotative value of these options is usually more polysemous and less ‘fixed’ as it is subjective and context dependent.

The grammar stratum, as extensively theorised by O’Toole (1994) and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996), relates one disparate element to another and explains how the whole functions cohesively to make meaning. Just as the grammar of language concerns itself with the chains of words to form coherent sentences, the grammar of visual images is about the piecing of one item with another to bring across a coherent message. The relations of the parts to a whole, for instance, how the various shapes form an iconic face in Figure 2.5, operate on the grammar stratum. This grammar is culturally dependent and governs the way a reader ‘reads’ and construes a visual message.

Following O’Toole (1994), a hierarchy of different ranks analogous to Halliday’s (1978) rank scale for language is proposed to look at the meaning made on each of the rank units, from Member to Figure and Episode to Work. This adoption of a rank scale operating within the principle of constituency where one rank is constitutive of the next higher rank in the hierarchy facilitates a more systematic analysis of the meaning made in the different units on the visual grammar stratum. In a sense, this delicate distinction between the display and grammar stratum can be made with the expression plane being largely concerned with the surface features of the text and the content plane having to do with the interactions and negotiations between the different elements in the text.

2.3.3  Extending the Claim of Arbitrariness

Having established that visual images are semiotic resources just like language, it could be useful to look at some of the similarities and differences in nature between the two of them. Eisner (1990: 13) cites evidence claiming that words and visual images “are derivatives of the same origin”. It is hardly surprising that words and visual images share many similarities between them, as both are
derived from a common ancestry. Diringer (1986) further elaborates that pictographs and pictograms are essentially the pre-embryonic stage of writing. The final stage, according to Senner (1989: 5) is achieved “when pictograms, logograms, and ideograms became phonograms, that is, when the phonetic value of the sign became independent of the original referent of the sign (and eventually of the external shape) and could be combined productively in a conventional system to intercommunicate”.

Despite sharing the same historical origin, and many similarities, I argue that the difference between language and visual images lies in the degree of arbitrariness in the relationship between the signifier, particularly the expression plane of the semiotic resource, and the signified, and the concept that is represented. Saussure (1916/1983) proposes that there is an arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified in language. The concept of a female child or signified, for example, could be realised by different signifiers in different languages. For instance, in the English language, the signifier is “Girl”; in the French language, it is “jeune fille”; and in the Italian language, it is “Ragazza”. The lack of an obvious physical relationship between the signifier ‘girl’ and the signified concept of a ‘female child’ indicates that their connection is capricious.

I propose that the claim of arbitrariness between the signifier and the signified can be further extended. The signifier of language could be expressed either through sounds in phonemes, in the spoken form or visually through typography or graphology, expressed in the written form. Concerning the spoken form, it is clear that the relation between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. This is stated with the exception of onomatopoeia (sound words), where the signifier mimics the vocalization of the signified, for instance, in the ‘ringing’ of a telephone. The claim of arbitrariness is also valid in writing systems of language, where the signifier belongs to the syllabic and alphabetic type. However, in certain writing systems such as the logographic type, where the signifiers are derived from icons of the objects represented, this claim of arbitrariness may perhaps
need to be modified. Certain types of writing systems for language, although having each symbol representing a morpheme, may use signifiers originating from pictograms, evolving into a standardized writing system over time. Some prominent examples are Chinese Characters and Egyptian Hieroglyphics. Tracing the history of such logographic writing systems can illustrate the standardization and codification of pictograms into a writing system for language over time. Some instances of this are seen in Figure 2.6.

![Figure 2.6 Evolutions of 11 Chinese Characters Through Time](Reproduced from Keightley, 1989: 173)

With this, it is perhaps appropriate to propose differing degrees of arbitrariness between the signifiers and the signifieds in language. As opposed to language, visual images have a lower degree of arbitrariness, thus implying a higher degree of iconicity. Visual images, however, are
primarily iconic, that is, they resemble the subjects they represent. Barthes (1977) proposes the term the *perfect analogon* to describe the highest possible level of iconicity or mimesis with the object, such as the image that a photograph produces. In visual images, where there is a higher level of iconicity, the signified and the signifier are related through *mimesis* or resemblance. The opposite end of the scale as opposed to the analogon is the *abstraction*. The analogon has a lower degree of arbitrariness whereas the abstraction has a higher degree of arbitrariness. The typography/graphology of a language usually complies with the conception of “the abstraction”. Scientific and mathematical notations are also those that lean towards the higher ends of abstraction. Expressionist paintings such as the works of Picasso, for instance, will fall about midway between the scale of abstraction and iconicity.

Since a lower level of iconicity but a higher degree of arbitrariness is involved in abstractions, the relationship between the signifier and the signified is reinforced through *codification*. In other words, codification links the signifier to the signified with a high degree of arbitrariness between them. Codification or ‘grammaticalization’ can only take place though effective socialisation as part of the semiotic community. For instance, in mathematical notations, there is a higher degree of arbitrariness between the signifier and the signified and therefore, stronger codification is required, thus necessitating a deeper initiation of members into the particular community. Notations such as \( \pi \) and \( \Sigma \) can be baffling for the non-members and its codified meanings only accessible to members of a particular semiotic community.

### 2.3.4 Basic Building Blocks: Words and Icons

Just as the building blocks of meaning in language are lexical items or words, I propose that the building blocks of visual images are *icons*. In addition, the lexico-grammar of a certain language is culturally specific. For instance, a speaker of the Chinese language deploys different lexical sets
from a speaker of the English Language. Likewise, icons are contextually and culturally specific as well. Different semiotic communities would have different styles of representing the same objects and ideas.

However, the question of where to delineate the boundaries of an icon may arise. For instance, with reference to Figure 2.5, when is a dot recognised as merely a dot, and when is it functioning as an iconic eye? Icons are the pictorial representations of objects identifiable in the culture. Thus, the recognition of an icon as resembling an item is crucial in deciding what constitutes an icon. The arrangement of lines and dots in a certain manner or the ‘visual-grammatical’ placement, for instance, in Figure 2.5, may bring about recognition of an iconic face. This identification of the icon is dependent on the relationship between its surrounding co-text, in this example, the lines and the dots. The identification of the icon in turn also allows us to recognise the iconicity of these co-texts. For example, after recognising the iconic face, the significance of its co-text becomes apparent. In this case, it becomes clear that the dots represent the eyes and the line stands for the mouth. This is similar to how certain ambiguous words in language are disambiguated when construed in relation to their surrounding co-text, that is, the other words surrounding them. For instance, the word “bank” can mean either the sides of a river or a financial institution. When used in the environment as follows, “The robbers broke into the bank”, the meaning of the word is disambiguated. It must be clarified that the internal arrangements of lines and dots to constitute an icon are part of an icon’s visual grammar, just as the relations between part and whole is the grammar of the semiotic resource. In other words, the icon itself lies on the expression plane of the modality, although the composition of an icon and the relationship between iconic elements belong to the grammar stratum.

Due to constraints of time and space, it is not possible for a detailed investigation of the different implications of the proposal of icons as the vocabulary of visual images to be undertaken here.
Nonetheless, my proposal hopes to initiate further work along this direction, which can contribute to a better understanding of the nature of visual images as semiotic resources.

Chapter 2 has been concerned with reviewing and discussing key conceptions within SFL theory and multimodal research. As well as with this, concerns such as the nature of a semiotic resource, the case for visual images as semiotic resources as well as issues relating to the common history of language and visual images have been addressed. Having established a theoretical foundation, I proceed to build upon these ideas in Chapter 3 with the aim of developing a framework for the analysis of a multimodal text.
CHAPTER 3
DEVELOPING THE MODEL

3.1 Proposing an Integrative Multisemiotic Model

Despite the advances made through recent research, there remains a lack of understanding of how meanings are made in multimodal texts. Apart from Thibault’s (2000) preliminary framework for the analysis of film, a comprehensive framework to examine processes involved in the phenomenon of semiosis and intersemiosis in a multimodal text is lacking. In this dissertation, I propose an Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM), which can be crudely translated as a means through which different aspects of meaning made with the semiotic resources of language and visual images can be accounted for.

The IMM, displayed in Figure 3.1, demonstrates topologically the complex multi-faceted nature of meanings made in a multisemiotic text. The rectangular blocks are used to represent the planes and dimensions of each resource, and serve simultaneously as a metaphor for the meaning made on each stratum. Following Martin (1992), three communication planes are conceptualised for each semiotic resource. They are (1) the expression plane or the display stratum, (2) the content plane, which can be stratified into the grammar and discourse semantics strata, and (3) the context plane, which consists of register, genre and ideology.

The top view of the model appropriately displays the expression plane of the two semiotic modalities. This is significant as the display stratum is the interface between the text and the reader. This interface is mediated by the medium and materiality of the text, which also mediates the content and context planes. For example, a wedding invitation card is commonly printed on certain
Figure 3.1 The Integrative Multisemiotic Model
types of paper, thus indicating that the genre of the text may determine the materiality options of the medium, which together carry ideological implications as well.

An elevated platform between the linguistic and pictorial modalities can be seen from the top of the IMM. I refer to this as the Space of Integration (SoI), which is a theoretical platform, where intersemiosis occurs through contextualising relations. As I explain further in Section 3.7, meaning expansion can also result through the mechanisms of Homospatiality and Semiotic Metaphor within the SoI. The elevation of the SoI signifies topologically the semantic expansion that results from the interaction and negotiation between the semiotic resources.

The meanings made through the systems on the expression plane and the stratified content planes are organised metafunctionally. Thibault (2000: 362) proposes that “metafunctions are best seen as a principle of integration for approaching the experiential, interpersonal, logical and texture dimension of the text as a whole”. As discussed in Chapter 2, although Halliday (1978) had conceptualised the notion of metafunctions for the semiotic resource of language, following O’Toole (1994) and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996), it may be productive to extend the theory of metafunctional organisation to other systems within other semiotic resources as well. In other words, within the SFL tradition, all semiotic systems can be seen to organise meaning metafunctionally.

The commonalities of metafunctional organisation across semiotic resources are drawn upon and the metafunctional distinction is used as a means of integration across communication planes and semiotic resources. Metafunctions are seen as the common factor in all meaning making systems as well as the common denominator on the expression and content planes. Consequently, following Thibault (2000), the structural principle of integration in a multimodal text is based on
metafunctionality. Further to this, the metafunctions also prove to be helpful in the theoretical segmentation of a text into typological classifications for the purpose of analysis.

On the content plane, the systems are categorised according to the three metafunctions. In the lexico-grammatical stratum of language, this organisation is attributed to Halliday (1994), who proposes the tri-metafunctional distinction of ideational, interpersonal and textual metafunction. The systems within the lexico-grammar stratum of language are organised according to the metafunctional meaning. Following Halliday (1994), Martin (1992) proposes that the systems operating on the discourse semantics stratum can be classified metafunctionally as well. Martin’s (1992) organisation is adapted for the systems proposed for the discourse semantics stratum for visual images in this dissertation.

O’Toole (1994) and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) demonstrate the productivity of the metafunction hypothesis in their proposal that the systems for the visual grammar of visual images can also be organised metafunctionally. O’Toole (1994: 24) proposes a detailed matrix and demonstrates its usefulness through a close analysis of Botticelli’s Primavera. It is useful to recognise a discourse semantics stratum for visual images as well as for language. Systems operating on this stratum for visual images are adapted from Martin’s (1992) systems for language and are organised metafunctionally. In the IMM displayed in Figure 3.1, the sub-system of HUE in the system of COLOUR shows the metafunctional distinctions within the systems on the content plane.

I propose the term ‘system-metafunction fidelity’ as the degree of dedication of a system towards a specific metafunction. Although the meanings made are organised according to the metafunctional classifications, it is useful to note that the system-metafunction fidelity on the visual grammar stratum is not as rigid as it is for the lexico-grammar in language. In other words, the metafunctional categories by which the systems for visual images on the visual-grammar stratum
are organised may be more fluid than what is shown on the matrix. For instance, the system of RHYTHM may be oriented towards interpersonal meanings in one instantiation and textual or experiential in another.

The meanings made on the expression plane are also organised metafunctionally. However, the main systems on the expression plane, unlike those on the content plane, are not dedicated primarily to a single metafunction. Thus, there is very low system-metafunction fidelity. That is, although it is possible to distinguish the meanings made on the expression plane as being ideational, interpersonal or textual, the systems responsible for these meanings may overlap. For instance, the system of COLOUR can realise ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning simultaneously. Likewise, the interpersonal meaning, for instance, could be made through the system of both SIZE and COLOUR. Hence, it is unhelpful to impose a categorical tri-metafunctional distinction and instead, a cline, represented by the system of SATURATION in COLOUR, as shown in Figure 3.1, is used to show the fluidity of the systems on the expression plane.

The IMM rests entirely upon the context plane. This is significant because all meaning must be anchored in the context of situation and context of culture. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, Martin (1992) suggests that the sociosemantic variable of Field, Tenor and Mode, ‘hooks up’ with the metafunction on both the communication planes of Register and Genre. Another layer, Ideology, is also proposed by Martin (1992) to look at the positions within discourse formations manifested across a range of texts. Meanings made on this inter-textual level are also heteroglossic in nature according to different reading positions and subjectivities.

The IMM aims to provide the apparatus for the analysis of a multimodal text that utilises both the linguistic and pictorial semiotic resources. Using the IMM as an approach also permits a systematic evaluation of the meaning made on various planes and at the same time provides the platform for
understanding the interaction between the modalities and to examine the occurrence of semantic expansion during intersemiosis. In what follows, I discuss more fully some dimensions of the IMM, which can contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of intersemiosis.

3.2 Theoretical Contributions of the IMM

Responding to the perceived need to theorise the systems operating on the expression plane, my study proposes two matrixes to account for the Typographic and Graphic selections made within the semiotic resources of language and visual images respectively. The two matrixes are conceived in the tradition of SFL and are organised metafunctionally. The system networks proposed in this dissertation are still very much in an exploratory stage. As such, examples drawn from various texts will be used to bridge theory and practice. The proposed matrixes also represent a deliberate effort to give recognition to the role of the expression plane in meaning making.

On the semantics stratum, I am also interested in looking at the meaning or the emergent narrative that is obtained from a sequential series of Frames, operating in unison in a picture book. In other words, how the consecutive series of visual images on pages of a picture book make sense. Following Martin’s (1992) proposal of a discourse semantics stratum for language, I propose a discourse semantics stratum for the semiotic resources of visual images. The systems, oriented towards Halliday’s (1978) metafunction organisations, are described and demonstrated in this dissertation. These systems proposed are namely, VISUAL TAXIS, VISUAL TAXONOMY, VISUAL CONFIGURATION and VISUAL REFERENCE. In particular, for VISUAL TAXIS, which deals with the logico-semantic relations between Frames, McCloud’s (1993) transition scale is adapted to describe the transition relation between the Frames.
Gestalt theory in art has long observed the phenomenon of the whole as being always greater than the sum of its parts (Gombrich, 1960). Likewise, in the interaction and integration between the linguistic and pictorial semiotic resources, the total meaning made is more than the sum of the meaning made by each independent modality. In other words, semantic expansion or a “multiplication of meaning” (Lemke, 1998) occurs during this co-deployment. My study proposes a Space of Integration (SoI), within IMM, where the contextualising relations between two modalities can be studied. In addition, as I explain more fully in Section 3.7, semantic expansion can occur through the mechanisms of Homospatiality on the expression plane, and Semiotic Metaphor (O’Halloran, 1999) on the content plane. Before discussing these contextualising relations, I first look at the content and expression planes for language and visual images.

3.3 Reviewing the Grammar Stratum

3.3.1 The Lexico-Grammar stratum of Language

Halliday (1994) pioneers the systems, that constitutes the lexico-grammar stratum for language. The matrix reproduced in Table 3.1 shows the system network, which lists the options available on the lexico-grammar plane for meaning making. As detailed explanations of the systems and demonstrations of the model’s productivity have been exhaustively outlined elsewhere (see for example, Eggins, 1994; Halliday, 1978; 1994), this dissertation will be brief in the discussion of Halliday’s (1994) systems for language.
Table 3.1 Systems for Language
3.3.2 The Visual-Grammar Stratum of Visual Images

Working in the tradition of SFL, O’Toole (1994; 1995) and Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) have formulated approaches for the examination of visual images. Following Halliday (1994), O’Toole (1994; 1995) organises the visual image on a hierarchical rank scale, where systems operate across three reinterpreted metafunctions of Representation, Engagement and Composition. Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) propose a “grammar” of visual images, where linguistic theories are applied correspondingly to visual studies. For instance, the system of Theme/ Rheme in language is reinterpreted as Given/ New information in visual images. Both approaches have contributed significantly in providing the pictorial semiotic with the conceptual language and tools that encourage and enable further insights and study on the visual image.

Bearing in mind, Kress & van Leeuwen’s (1996) contribution, my proposed IMM adapts O’Toole’s (1994) ideas for the analysis of visual images on the Visual Grammar stratum. The reason for this is that O’Toole (1994) has limited his extensions of the linguistics model to the meta-theory of SFL and the re-interpreted tri-metafunctional organisation of the visual systems. Studies in the Gestalt tradition, studies in the psychology of visual perception and advances in contemporary linguistics (for example, Gombrich, 1960; Baxendall, 1972; Leech, 1969) are also drawn upon in the formulation of O’Toole’s (1994) matrix. O’Toole (1994) has demonstrated through his theorisations a recognition of the distinction in the nature between the two semiotic resources, and the ability to build upon the advances of SFL as a productive semiotic theory.

As mentioned earlier, O’Toole (1994) details and demonstrates the usefulness of his systems to analyse the meaning of the pictorial text on the visual-grammar stratum through his analysis of Botticelli’s Primavera. In A Systemic-Functional Semiotics of Art, O’Toole (1995: 165) offers a more extensive grid, which he terms as “a map (therefore a schematic model) of the semiotic space
created by the work within which our perceptions and conceptions are negotiated”. O’Toole (1995) adds a higher level of School/Genre to take into account the style of the painting, for example, Baroque or Impressionism, as well as the notion of intertextuality between the painting and other texts. Significantly, O’Toole (1995) also recognises that there is a need to analyse the expression plane of the painting itself, proposing a new delineation, under the level of Member, but serving only the Modal and Compositional metafunction. The grid, though perhaps still raw in its formulation, represents in the form of a conceptual seed, the ideas that have been expanded upon in this study. O’Toole (1995: 170) confesses in a footnote that he is “not clear at this stage whether intertextuality should be seen as part of the semiotic code of painting or whether it is rather a system operating at the contextual level of genre”. Despite this, his ideas represent significant strides towards the understanding that the total meaning of the painting is not only made on the stratum of visual grammar, but on the expression and context strata as well.

In *Engaging with Art*, O’Toole (1999) streamlines his framework into a simple and neat matrix, focusing only on the stratum of visual grammar. My study will adapt O’Toole’s (1999) matrix, with his systems proposed for the pictorial semiotic resource on the grammar stratum. However, systems such as SHAPE REPETITION and CONTRAST IN TEXTURE belong more appropriately to the expression plane and they are replaced with the previous set of systems formulated in O’Toole’s (1995) matrix. The modified matrix for visual grammar used in this dissertation is shown in Table 3.2.

Through the IMM, a separate expression plane is proposed to examine the display stratum of the pictorial semiotic resource through its Graphics selections across the three metafunctions. In addition, the content plane is stratified into the grammar and semantics stratum, with systems in operation on both strata. An independent plane of context will also be proposed to look at the
phenomenon of intertextuality through the level of Genre and Ideology, following Martin (1992), who disregards the metafunctional distinctions on this plane. However, this study does not embark on an extensive discussion of the context plane, due to constraints of both space and time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VISUAL GRAMMAR</th>
<th>Representational</th>
<th>Engagement</th>
<th>Compositional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WORK</td>
<td>Scene</td>
<td>Framing</td>
<td>Geometry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Light</td>
<td>Parallelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Portrayal</td>
<td>Gaze</td>
<td>Texture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPISODE</td>
<td>Local setting</td>
<td>Scale to Whole</td>
<td>Alignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific Action</td>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>Local Frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Portrayal</td>
<td>Prominence</td>
<td>Verticals &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Horizontals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE</td>
<td>Stance</td>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>Parallelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gesture</td>
<td>Characterisation</td>
<td>Separateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>Centrality in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Episode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMBER</td>
<td>Parts of Body</td>
<td>Prominence</td>
<td>Shape repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objects</td>
<td>Stylisation</td>
<td>Rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Natural Forms</td>
<td>Irony</td>
<td>Contrast in texture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 Systems for Visual Images
(Adapted from O’Toole, 1999)

3.4 Theorising the Expression Plane

3.4.1 Perceptual Equity

A fundamental assumption for the expression plane in a multimodal text is perceptual equity. This is based on the similar expression of the two semiotic resources through the visual medium. Saint-Martin (1990) claims that pictures are primarily objects of visual perception and therefore are distinct from language in many ways. While acknowledging this, my study also recognises that the linguistic semiotic resource expressed through the system of Typography makes meaning a visual experience through the hypothetical reader’s sense of sight. With the adoption of this position, I discuss some of the assumptions based on the commonalities between the two modalities before
discussing the unique systems through which each operates to make meaning. Since both language and visual images are similarly expressed through the visual medium on a page and experienced visually through the sense of sight, it is necessary to assume co-equal statuses between the two modalities. This assumption challenges the conventional privileging of language over visual images. My study recognises that both the linguistic and pictorial semiotic resources serve different, though complementary functions. Therefore, both are equally important as signifying systems through the different roles they perform.

Until recently, the pictorial text has often been relegated to the status of mere illustrations to the linguistic text. In the field of semiology, interest in visual communication may be traced to Barthes’ (1977) influential work, *Rhetoric of the Image*, where the visual images are seen to play a somewhat attendant role to language. Here language is seen to ‘anchor’ by elaborating or ‘relay’ by extending the meaning of the visual text. My study also recognises that despite the constant co-deployment of language and pictures in a multimodal text, both language and visual images can function independently. Some instances of these include the popularity of wordless picture books, such as the Monique Felix’s (1980) *The Story of A Little Mouse Trapped in a Book*, and the increasing use of wordless instruction sheets to transcend language barriers, such as the Swedish based but internationally marketed, IKEA furniture, which utilises only the pictorial semiotic in the assembly instructions. The success of these examples of visual communication attests the ability of the pictorial modality to operate independently.

The adoption of the stance that both the linguistic and pictorial modalities should share an equal status is now widely recognised (for example, Baldry, 2000; O’Halloran, 2000; Thibault, 2000 and Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001). van Leeuwen (2000), for instance, criticises the negative comparisons between language and visual images in his refutation of Barthes’ (1977) earlier proposition that words have “fixed meaning” while images are “polysemous”. In addition to this,
van Leeuwen (2000) confronts some misconceptions regarding the pictorial semiotic such as the assertion that visual images cannot represent negative polarity. van Leeuwen (2000: 179) also argues that visual semiotics should focus “not only on the image as representation, but also on the image as (inter)act”.

Lemke (1998) observes that language and visual images each have their individual functions and strengths. He summarises some of the key distinctions by noting that language is more adept in encapsulating typological meaning, or meaning by category. It is also a more time-sensitive semiotic where the linear progression of time can be reflected. The pictorial modality, on the other hand, has resources for the representation of topological meaning, or meaning by degree. It is also a more space-sensitive semiotic that supersedes the linguistic mode in representing spatial relations. Each with their own niches, it is hardly surprising to find them serving different functions in a multimodal text. In addition, the co-deployment of these two semiotic resources in a multimodal text can lead to meaning expansion as well. Nevertheless, it is important to understand also that systems within each resource independently have the potential to realise unique meanings that may not necessarily be integrated during intersemiosis. This is the meaning made by each independent modality on each plane and is topologically reflected in the model as the area outside the SoI as shown in Figure 3.1.

The assumption of equal status means that both are accorded co-equal value in meaning making. The implication of this on the display stratum is that of perceptual equity between the two semiotic resources. It must be noted, however, that having the same status does not translate to the claim that both the semiotic resources of language and pictures have the same degree of influence on each other in a text. It is not unusual to find that in one particular text, the linguistic semiotic is more dominant than the pictorial semiotic, and in another text the salience of the visual image is greater than that of language. This is elaborated in Section 3.7 where intersemiosis between language and
visual images on the Space of Integration (SoI) is discussed. The proposed model shown in Figure 3.1, also allocates equal space for each semiotic resource thereby signifying topologically the equity status between the two semiotic modalities.

3.4.2 Reading Path

The assumption of perceptual equity on the expression plane has profound implications on the approach to the analysing of a multimodal text. The expression plane is the interface the reader experiences upon reading the text. In this dissertation, the term ‘reading’, despite being a term derived from the study of language, is taken to include visual perception or viewing. Reading, following Sardar & van Loon (2000: 44) in the field of media studies, is defined as “the process of interaction when a text is analysed as well as the final result of that process, the interpretation”. Hence, in any multimodal text, it is useful to chart the reading path that the hypothetical reader may follow in the reading of different episodes in a Frame. In a sense, the reading path is the order by which the reader processes different episodes in a multimodal text.

As previously mentioned, Thibault (2000) uses phase analysis in his deconstruction of a film segment, where salience or the “use of foregrounding strategies” allows for certain modalities to be thrust into prominence. Analysis and transcription are therefore guided by the contrastive salience of a specific semiotic resource in each particular instance. This presupposes and builds upon the theory of a reading path where the viewer reads, according to the contrastive salience of the semiotic resources in each particular instance. O’Halloran (1999) also proposes that a practical approach to analysing a multisemiotic text can be made through a progressive analysis following the “reading path determined by the choices within different semiotic codes” (1999: 323).
The notion of a linear or uni-directional reading path deserves to be more closely examined. This conception seems to be appropriate for a reader reading a book or magazine, navigating across the pages or Frames in a linear reading pattern, governed by literacy conventions. Following Pang (2000), however, this would more suitably be termed as a directional path rather than a reading path. The usefulness of a restrictive and regulated reading path breaks down when analysing the multimodal text where this constitutes a page or Frame. The reading path in a multimodal Frame is seldom only uni-directional, as the hypothetical reader’s eyes are led through contrastive salience, possibly even in a back and forth fashion between two items on a page. In other words, the path, although sequential due to constraints of the human visual perception, may not be uni-directional but is free to be bi-directional as well (Pang, 2000) as displayed in Figure 3.2. Following the assumption of perceptual equity, the reading path may disregard the distinction between linguistic and pictorial semiotic resources as the reader is drawn by the contrastive salience of an item or section.

**Figure 3.2 Unrestrictive Bi-directional Reading Path across 3 Items.**

Kress & van Leeuwen (1998) introduce the notion of scanning which clarifies their earlier claim that readers tend to read in a left to right and top down pattern. They describe scanning as a process that occurs before reading. The “scanning process sets up connections between the different...
elements, relating them to each other in terms of their relative importance” (1998: 205). I would add that this “relative importance” is determined by the contrastive salience between Episodes. The scanning process first locates our eyes on the Centre of Visual Impact (CVI), which signals the beginning of our reading process. Scanning usually takes place according to the left to right, top down scanning pattern in a Frame, although this pattern is again closely related to the context of the reader’s literacy conventions.

The notion of a CVI is an interesting one. Bohle (1990) cites Garcia’s proposal of the CVI as the focal point where the reader enters the page. Working in the tradition of Gestalt psychology of picture perception, Sonesson (1993: 378) claims that evidence has been found for “the existence, if not for an order of reading, then at least of certain points of fixation where the glance tends to cluster”. The initial point of fixation or the CVI is the hypothetical reader’s point of entry into the multimodal text, which initiates the entire process of visual perception. This occurs in each reading of a text.

3.4.3 Critical Impetus in Metaphorical Meaning

I endeavour in this section to propose system networks for some of the more prominent systems for language and visual images on the expression plane. The systems discussed in this dissertation are not exhaustive and the theorisations on these systems remain very much in a rudimentary stage. The purpose of this section is to propose preliminary systems, all of which require further theorisation.

Although the meanings made through the systems in the grammar stratum are organised metaphorically, I have argued that the tri-metaphorical distinction is much more uncertain on the expression plane. In other words, the meanings made on the display stratum can be more appropriately described on a cline, that is, the metaphors are not distinct categories on the cline,
but rather are best represented as shades (displayed in Figure 3.1), through the varying SATURATION of the blue hue. This phenomenon is the result of the non-specialisation or the low degree of dedication to the systems on the expression plane to a specific metafunction. Instead, the same system can be responsible for the ideational, interpersonal and textual meanings in a text. Since the system-metafunction fidelity is low on the expression plane, it could be useful to look at the critical impetus or the necessary conditions and circumstances that reveal which particular metafunctional meaning is likely to emerge on the display stratum.

The critical impetus for a dominant interpersonal meaning made on the expression plane is salience, and salience can be achieved through contrast of colour, shape, size and so forth. The critical impetus for the strong textual meaning made on the expression plane is the presence of textual unity and cohesiveness. But first, however, what is the nature of the ideational meaning made on the expression plane? Visual semioticians Floch (1986) and Thurlemann (1990) have observed a double layer of signification in pictures. They term the first level as ‘iconic’ and the second as ‘plastic’. Sonesson (1993: 325) explains that “on the iconic level, the picture is supposed to stand for some object recognisable from the ordinary perceptual lifeworld, while concurrently on the plastic level, simple qualities of the pictorial expression serve to convey abstract concepts” within the lifeworld as well. Lifeworld, according to Husserl is the ‘world taken for granted’. To extend this rather crudely into SFL terms, lifeworld can be compared to the context of situation and context of culture, the social reality in which the individual operates, or as mentioned in Chapter 1, the collective social realities, constituting a group culture.

Doonan (1993: 15), working on picture books from a literary perspective, also recognises the “two modes of referring” in pictorial images. She simplifies Denotation as the representation of an object in a particular context of culture. Exemplification, on the other hand, is the mode by which “abstracted notions, conditions and ideas” (1993: 15) are represented within that culture. Doonan’s
(1993) approach to the representation and composition of pictorial semiotics is congruent to the formulations proposed in this dissertation, which draws expeditiously upon some of these ideas. Modifying the original sense of denotation and connotation as proposed by Barthes (1977), my dissertation will use the terms Denotative Value and Connotative Value as the terminology to describe the two types of ideational meanings made on the display stratum.

The Denotative value is understood as the literal or iconic meaning. For instance, the denotative value of the colour red is confined to the perception and reference of the reddish hue. Saint-Martin (1990) observes that two persons can look at one colour and yet see it differently. Hence, it must be added that the use of Denotative value needs to be qualified by the acknowledging of the reader’s cultural-based subjectivities. This contrasts with Barthes’ (1977) use of denotation as a rather non-context dependent platonic ideal. In other words, the Denotative value is understood in this dissertation as the literal but context dependent meaning. Like Floch & Thurlemann’s conception of the ‘plastic’ and Doonan’s proposal of ‘Exemplification’, the Connotative value is the set of ideas and abstractions evoked from the literal image. For instance, the Connotative value of the colour red refers to the abstract concepts, which the colour evokes in the reader. Dependent on the context of culture, the red hue could even connote antithetical ideas ranging from danger in the European context to good fortune in the Chinese culture.

The interpersonal meaning dominates when system choices on the expression plane generate Salience, in other words, when salience has a critical impetus. This salience can sometimes be achieved through contrast, for example, the use of colour. The critical impetus of salience can be likened to the notion of ‘markedness’ in Halliday’s (1994) conceptions. In text analysis, the notion of ‘markedness’ could be helpful to account for the meaning expansion on the lexico-grammatical stratum as well as on the display stratum. Markedness in Halliday’s (1994) usage means to ‘stand out’ as an atypical choice. The choices made in TYPOGRAPHY for most texts are usually
stereotypical options according to their genre. For instance, in a context of a formal academic text such as a dissertation, a particular selection of appropriate TYPOGRAPHY is expected. In addition, because of the association of certain typography with particular genres, any departure from the convention or mismatch between typography and genre would render those typographical choices as ‘marked’. This is consistent with Halliday’s (1994) observation that there is an order in a clause which is usually expected in a particular clause type, for example, the nominal group functioning as Subject is usually the first item in a clause which has a declarative mood. When this order is not adhered to, the clause is marked. A marked selection in TYPOGRAPHY is also meaningful. The notion of critical impetus is thus useful when included in systemic analysis of both linguistic and multimodal discourse. The critical impetus of salience is therefore used to identify the environment whereby certain interpersonal meanings may dominate. Textual meanings are usually observed when the critical impetuses of Unity and Cohesiveness in a text are in operation. For example, in a tapestry design, the system of SATURATION and HUE in COLOUR and the geometric forms through the system of SHAPE operate to create unity and cohesion in the text.

3.5 System Network on the Expression Plane

In this section, I discuss some of the more predominant systems on the expression plane in Typography and Graphics. Meaning on the expression plane is made through the selections in TYPOGRAPHY within the systems of FONT and LAYOUT. The system of FONT in TYPOGRAPHY has three sub-systems, TYPE, SIZE and COLOUR. Paradigmatic options are also available within each of the three sub-systems. The system network of TYPOGRAPHY is displayed in Figure 3.3.
Figure 3.3 System Network for Typography
As the meaning potential of particular systems is theoretically infinite, it is not possible to list all the possible options. Thus, the network represented in Figure 3.3 confines itself to a few common selections for the purposes of exemplification. For instance, the system of TYPEFACE keeps expanding with new font types being created. The options shown within this system in Figure 3.3 are merely the Typeface families, within which many other Typefaces are classified. For instance, the Typeface Times New Roman is categorised within the Roman family. The system of SIZE also contains too many options to be listed here and thus the option of 12 point is an example and the sign $\infty$ indicates the system’s infinite potential. It is the ultimate cline.

As displayed in Figure 3.3, the system of LAYOUT within Typography includes the systems of SPACING and JUSTIFICATION. The system of SPACING has three sub-systems. LEADING is the spacing between lines on a page, which includes options for double to single spacing. KERNING, on the other hand is the adjustment of space between the letters of a word. INTERNAL SPACE refers to the space between words. The system of JUSTIFICATION is the alignment of sentences. Finally, the choices for INDENTATION allow a clearer demarcation between paragraphs and function primarily to signal a shift in direction or text-type from the preceding lines.

There are systems operating on the expression plane for visual images on the Graphics stratum as well, namely PERSPECTIVE and FORM. PERSPECTIVE, according to Doonan (1993: 34), is “the way an artist controls space in the picture”. PERSPECTIVE has two sub-systems: DEEP SPACE (DS) and POINT OF VIEW (PoV). DS portrays an illusion of a three-dimensional world through a two-dimensional image on a page thereby generating a sense of illusionary depth. DS can be achieved through CONTRASTING SIZE, CONVERGING LINES or CHIAROSCURO. The system network for Graphics is shown in Figure 3.4. The use of CONTRASTING SIZE, for example, Picture A in Figure 3.5 shows that illusionary depth is created as the slide is represented as located further back in the picture world. On a two-dimensional surface, the figure of the duck is
shown to be larger than the slide. This interpretation, however, defies the hypothetical reader’s cultural knowledge. Hence, in order to make sense and maintain relevance, the reader assumes that Deep Space (DS) through CONTRASTING SIZE generates the impression of a three-dimensional world. This interpretation, as opposed to a world of enormous ducks, fits more congruently with the reader’s world. The theoretical assumption behind this interpretation is consistent with Sperber & Wilson’s (1986) theory of relevance in verbal communication, which suggests that their observations can be extended to visual communication as well. In Plate 2, the use of CONVERGING LINES to produce DS seen in Picture B is taken from Satoshi Kitamura’s (1986) *When Sheep Cannot Sleep*. The series of converging vectors give a sense of illusionary depth and add to a sense of three-dimensionality into the picture world. Finally, CHIAROSCURO is the application of light and shadow to create DS in Picture C. The example of the Merlion statue shows how shading can suggest a sense of three dimensionality on a two dimensional plane.

PoV is the viewpoint through which the reader is presented with a scene in the picture. Following cinematography theory, Bordwell & Thompson (1997: 241) explain that there are systems available in a cinematic shot, which determines the reader’s entry into the story world. Two main systems are ANGLE and DISTANCE. ANGLE is the tilt in which the visual image is presented. A high tilt may place the viewer in a somewhat voyeuristic position. This can be seen in the Frame shown in Picture D in Figure 3.5, where the reader is ‘situated’ in a position of an intrusive outsider. A sense of alienation and detachment or feelings of superiority could result from a skilful use of the high tilt. Correspondingly, a low tilt may lead the reader to feel overwhelmed, usually with the character positioned to be ‘towering’ over the reader. An example can be seen in Picture E, where the whole pile of toys is emphasised, and the children portrayed above the clutter. Finally, the system of DISTANCE includes the categories of Long Shot, Medium Shot and Close-up. Although these categories are relative, they are typically discernible, as displayed in Picture F and have a powerful effect.
Figure 3.4 System Network for Graphics
Figure 3.5 Perspective
Figure 3.5 Perspective
The system of FORM contains four sub-systems, those of COLOUR, SHAPE, LINE and STROKES. COLOUR, following Doonan (1993), operates through three sub-systems. HUE or pigment distinguishes the colour across the spectrum, making it possible to differentiate, for instance, blue from purple. TONE “is a measure of light and dark of an area regardless of its colour, and is the quality of a surface as measured purely by its position in the scale between black and white” (Doonan 1993: 30). TONE or shading can render the effects of texture and lighting. SATURATION refers to the purity of a colour. The primary colour such as red, yellow and blue are hues with the highest level of intensity or saturation.

The system of SHAPE includes the options GEOMETRIC and regular or NON-GEOMETRIC and irregular. The selection of the shapes adds to the multifarious meaning made in the text. For instance, a picture composed of largely regular shapes positioned horizontally or vertically could suggest stability and even connote a sense of rigidity. The system of LINE “creates contour, modelling, shading and a sign for movement. A contour puts a line round objects and figures and gives them individuality and character” (Doonan, 1993: 23). LINES such as those used to create varying tone could render the effect of lighting conditions. Finally, the system of STROKES in Graphics refers to the way in which colour is applied. Some common options available are Brush, Pencil, Paint and Crayon. The options available in each system are represented in Figure 3.4.
3.6 The Semantics Stratum

3.6.1 Discourse Semantics for Language

The semantics stratum is concerned with the relationship between the sequential series of Frames in a picture book. In this dissertation, I term the story that is derived from the reading of a sequential series of Frames in a picture book as the emergent narrative. Systems operate on the semantics stratum to enable an interpretation of the emergent narrative from the sequential arrangement of Frames. The conception and nature of systems for visual images on the discourse semantics stratum are adapted from Martin’s (1992) conceptions for language in the framework of SFL. In this section, I describe the nature and characteristics of these systems in operation on the discourse semantics stratum for both language and visual images.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metafunction</th>
<th>Discourse Systems</th>
<th>Visual Systems</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logical</td>
<td><strong>CONJUNCTION:</strong></td>
<td><strong>VISUAL TAXIS:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paratactic</td>
<td>Transition Relations</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Hypotactic logic semantic relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideational</td>
<td><strong>IDEATION:</strong></td>
<td><strong>VISUAL TAXONOMY:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxonomic Relations:</td>
<td>Associating Elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Superordination and Composition</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nuclear and Activity Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td><strong>NEGOTIATION:</strong></td>
<td><strong>VISUAL CONFIGURATION:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discourse functions</td>
<td>Flow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mood</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tracking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual</td>
<td><strong>IDENTIFICATION:</strong></td>
<td><strong>VISUAL REFERENCE:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phoricity</td>
<td>Visual Linking Devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reference chains</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 Systems on the Semantics Stratum
Martin (1992) applies SFL to the other dimension of the stratified content plane, that is, the level of semantics. He proposes a system where the cohesive organisation of the text is structured metafunctionally, to elicit “text-sized meaning” as opposed to clause-size meaning on the grammar stratum (Martin, 1992: 1). Martin (1992) explains his ideas, in particular, his proposed systems of CONJUNCTION, IDEATION, NEGOTIATION and IDENTIFICATION, which he argues are the key systems for meaning on the level of the discourse semantics for language.

According to Martin (1992), CONJUNCTION deals with logical meaning, specifically those to do with the relations of addition, time, cause, and comparison between messages, realised variously through paratactic, hypotactic and cohesive conjunctions. IDEATION focuses on the lexis and the various taxonomic, nuclear and activity relations among lexical items. NEGOTIATION looks at discourse as exchange. Stemming from the interpersonal perspective, it examines the speech act sequence and in the case of a narrative, the structure of discourse. Finally, the system of IDENTIFICATION serves the textual metafunction where participants for instance, people, places and things, are tracked through the text. Each system’s partnership with its corresponding metafunction, as well as the choices made within the systems is shown in Table 3. The description here is brief, as Martin (1992) has already provided a comprehensive explanation for his proposals.

3.6.2 Discourse Semantics for Visual Images

Research on the semantics stratum for visuals in comparison has been less developed. A picture book is made up of many Frames. Each Frame consists of a Work, using O’Toole’s (1994) rank scale (See Table 3.2). The cohesive relationship across Frames in a picture book merits attention, as it is crucial for meaning making in the emergent narrative. Hence, in adapting principles from Martin’s (1992) systems, I propose the following systems are at work in the pictorial semiotic. This
involves various adaptations of Martin’s (1992) original proposition for language. In order to reflect the reconstructions for visual images, the terms have been renamed as VISUAL TAXIS, VISUAL TAXONOMY, VISUAL CONFIGURATION and VISUAL REFERENCE.

The system of VISUAL TAXIS deals with inter-Frame relationships hence serving the logical metafunction. This is based on the various structural relations or the formulation of taxis types from language in Martin’s (1992) system of CONJUNCTION. VISUAL TAXIS applies these taxis types to describe the logical-semantic relations between different Works. The taxis types in visual images are not limited to merely paratactic and hypotactic relations as with language. Instead, there can be different types of logico-semantic relations or “transition relations” across Frames. I have found McCloud’s (1993) proposal of a transition scale, where the logico-semantic relations between different Frames is categorised, useful. The various transition relations are discussed more fully and in the light of the other systems in Section 3.6.3.

The system of VISUAL TAXONOMY is a reinterpretation of Martin’s (1992) IDEATION system. VISUAL TAXONOMY is concerned with the choices made in the representation of the visual images, as well as the taxonomic, nuclear and activity relations. These relations operate in the visual image through the recurrence of Associating Elements (AE) across Works. AE are items that are associated in part or as part of a greater object or notion. These AE may manifest themselves through a pictorial part-whole relationship or even a part-part relationship, following the semantics of collocation for language. For instance, in Figure 3.6, the cereals box is an AE indicating the setting as being breakfast time in the morning. AE can also be used as a means to connect Frames. This is seen in DDGS, where the presence of trees in Frame 3 and a lamp post in Frame 4, shown in Figure 3.6, are AE to signify the setting, in this case, along the streets. In a way, therefore, the AE aids in drawing a connection between the two Frames. AE operates in tandem with the system of
Visual Linking Devices (VLD), within the system of VISUAL REFERENCE, in building up the unity and cohesiveness of the emergent narrative.

VISUAL REFERENCE, with its linguistic counterpart IDENTIFICATION serves the textual metafunction. This system is interested in the tracking of participants in a discourse. For pictures, reference chains take the form of Visual Linking Devices (VLD), where the recurrences of these VLD function textually to create cohesion. These VLD are analogous to the motifs found in a text that only utilises the linguistic semiotic, where the recurring elements function as connectors between Frames to strengthen the FLOW between the Frames. The most common VLD is the depiction of the main character in the narrative. In DDGS, for example, the Figure of Dominic Duck is represented in every single Frame as shown in Figure 3.6. Not only does this emphasise the importance of Dominic Duck and along with it the propensity to empathise with him, the VLD also operate as chains of reference, bringing coherence and cohesiveness across different Frames and throughout the entire narrative.

The system of VISUAL CONFIGURATION serves the Interpersonal metafunction and is concerned with the discourse structure generated by the sequential reading of the various Works. More specifically, it focuses on the emergence of a narrative structure or the emergent narrative with the reading of a series of pictures through the system known as FLOW. FLOW determines the level of reader’s engagement and reasoning required to obtain the emergent narrative from the sequential series of Frames. In a series of Frames that are connected strongly with many Visual Linking Devices and Associating Elements, the system of FLOW is strong; hence, a lower level of engagement is required on the part of the reader to obtain the emergent narrative. In contrast, a text with few VLD and AE will lead to a weak FLOW. In such cases, the reader is required to be more involved, in order to ‘make sense’ of the emergent narrative. Figure 3.7 shows the contrast in FLOW between two sets of Frames.
Figure 3.6 Associating Elements and Visual Linking Devices in DDGS

Picture A: Strong FLOW in *Dominic Duck goes to School*

Picture B: Weak FLOW in *Time to Get Out of the Bath Shirley*  
(Reproduced from Burningham, 1978: 12-13)

Figure 3.7 Contrasts in FLOW
3.6.3 Types of Transition Relations

McCloud (1993: 74) proposes six categories on a transition scale to “unravel some of the mysteries surrounding the invisible art of comics storytelling” which can contribute to the understanding of the Visual Taxis. McCloud’s (1993) conceptions are useful in their applicability to all the logico-semantic relationships for the pictorial modality, regardless whether the genre is comic strips, picture books or a series of advertisements sharing the same theme. I shall use McCloud’s (1993) categories in the light of Martin’s metfunctions oriented systems, and examine how these systems operating together can aid our understanding of how the emergent narrative is obtained from the sequential series of Frames. McCloud’s (1993) transition relation categories are reproduced in Figure 3.8.

![Figure 3.8 Transition Relations](Reproduced from McCloud, 1993: 74)

The moment-to-moment transition relation represents events over time at different instantiations. The time lapse is usually not very significant and the reader is able to interpret the narrative in the sequential series of visual images rather easily. This is because the Visual Linking Devices (VLD),
usually in the guise of the main subjects, is in operation. Similarly, the setting or scene, another VLD, often remains constant across the Frames of the Moment-to-Moment transition relation. In other words, minimal actions represented by the slight shift in the positions of objects suggest the passing of time. In addition, the system of FLOW is strong, allowing easy access to the emergent narrative in a moment-to-moment transition type of logico-semantic relationships.

The next type of transition relation is the action-to-action progression. According to a study carried out by McCloud (1993: 75), this category is very popular in comic strips. The action-to-action transition relation is similar to the moment-to-moment transition relation in that both are dependent on the salient VLD and a strong existent FLOW across the Frames. However, the main difference between the two is that in the Action-to-Action transition relation, the main emphasis, instead of time, is the sequence of activity or movement.

The Subject-to-Subject transition relation uses less VLD to track the participants in each Frame. Instead, the AE system is used to represent the part-whole and part-part relationship between the Frames. The FLOW system is also not as strong as in the previous two categories, hence, requiring a stronger engagement in the reader to make certain assumptions about the emergent narrative. As McCloud (1993: 71) observes, “the degree of reader involvement is necessary to render these transitions meaningful”.

Requiring even greater reader involvement and deductive reasoning is the Scene-to-Scene transition relation. Here either VLD or AE may be deployed. The main characteristic of the Scene-to-Scene transition relation is the lapse of “significant distances of time and space” (McCloud, 1993: 71), from one Frame to the next. Hence, the system of FLOW between these Frames is considerably weaker. The Aspect-to-Aspect transition relation traces different aspects of a place, idea or mood over time, similar to the wandering eye of a hypothetical reader. Here, the AE system is dominant.
as the reader builds upon the part-part or part-whole relations in order to make sense of the emergent narrative.

Finally, McCloud (1993) proposes a Non-Sequitur transition relation for Frames, where the FLOW system is non-existent. Even the VLD and Motifs systems are absent in this form of transition. In other words, in a non-sequitur transition, there is no emergent narrative, nor even any logical relations between the Frames. The impracticality and unlikelihood of such a transition suggest that the proposal of a non-sequitur transition is unnecessary except for the theoretical purposes of having a polar extreme for contrast. McCloud’s (1993) proposal of a Non-Sequitur transition relation is therefore unrealistic and unlikely in a textual instantiation, particularly so in a picture book as the Frames are positioned deliberately and meaningfully in a sequence. McCloud (1993: 73) also claims, “no matter how dissimilar one image may be to another, there is a kind of alchemy at work in the space between panels [Frames] which can help us find meaning or resonance in even the more jarring of combinations”. My study attempts to describe this ‘alchemy’ through the proposal of the VLD, AE and FLOW systems, to obtain a clearer understanding of the ‘magic’ in the space between the Frames.

3.7 Space of Integration

The Space of Integration (SoI) functions as the theoretical platform for the discussion of the dynamics in the interaction between language and visual images for meaning making in a multisemiotic text. SoI topologically reflects the semantic multiplication brought about by the interaction and integration (or intersemiosis), between the two semiotic resources. Thibault (2000: 362) explains that it is “on the basis of co-contextualising relations that meaning is created”. Following Thibault (2000), I propose contextualising relations as the meaningful relationships that
are present between two modalities. Intersemiosis is therefore a result of the contextualising relations between the two semiotic modalities.

One of two types of contextualising relations can be found whenever two modalities operate in a multimodal text. In cases where the meaning of one modality seems to ‘reflect’ the meaning of the other through some type of convergence, the two resources share co-contextualising relations. On the other hand, in cases where the meaning of one modality seems to be at odds, or unrelated to the other, their semantic relationship is one that diverges. Here, the resources share re-contextualising relations. The implications of these two contextualising relations are apparent in the semantic expansion that consequently occurs with the co-deployment of language and visual images.

It may be helpful to differentiate between the nature of the interaction between the semiotic modalities and the extent or degree to which the linguistic item contextualises the meaning of visual image. Both semiotic modalities can either co-contextualise or re-contextualise the other, regardless of the degree of mutual contextualisation. The nature of the interaction between the two semiotic modalities, and not the degree, refers to whether the two resources are co-contextualising or re-contextualising. Further to this, the interaction between the semiotic resources are seen to be mutually contextualising at every instantiation, as opposed to Barthes’ (1977) conceptions where either the visual “image illustrates the text … [or] the text loads the image” (1977: 26).

Cheong (1999) also notes the symbiosis between the two modalities, referring to it as the Bi-directional Investment of Meaning. Cheong’s (1999) analysis of advertisements as multimodal texts suggests that the degree of interconnectedness and the degree of interweaving of meaning between language and visual images can be measured through a scale known as Contextualization Propensity (CP). CP simply “refers to the degree/extent which the linguistic items … contextualize the meaning of the visual images” (1999: 44). In other words, CP measures the strength of the
influence the modalities exercise on each other. Cheong (1999) also shows that CP in turn has a direct influence on the Interpretative Space of the reader resulting in either a high or low Semantic Effervescence of the text. For example, a multimodal text with a high Contextualization Propensity will lead to a low Interpretative Space thus resulting in a low Semantic Effervescence. Essentially, Cheong’s (1999) proposals provide the meta-language to look at the degree and extent of contextualisation the two semiotic resources have on each other, that is the implications of these contextualising relations. My proposals, however, are concerned with the nature of the interaction between the two semiotic modalities. Understanding this phenomenon can contribute significantly to a clear understanding of the mechanisms at work on the Space of Integration (SoI). In addition, further expansion of meaning may also occur on the SoI through the process of Homospatiality and Semiotic Metaphor. The avenue by which this multi-faceted semantic multiplication occurs on each plane is discussed in the following sections.

3.7.1 SoI on the Display Stratum

One mechanism that can result in a semantic expansion on the display stratum is Homospatiality. The term is adapted from Carroll’s (1994: 198) conceptualisation of “disparate elements in one spatially bonded homogenous entity”. Carroll (1994) originally proposes the term for the analysis of visual metaphors. However, its incorporation into IMM to describe the related phenomenon of two systems sharing the same spatial coordinates on the display stratum is productive. This integration of the two different semiotic systems on the expression plane where one superimposes on the other usually results in semantic multiplication, where the meaning made is reinforced or where new meanings are made.

An example of this is shown in Picture A on Figure 3.9, where the linguistic text, realised through the system of FONT on the TYPOGRAPHY, “Snaaap” shares the same spatial coordinates as the
visual image realised through the systems in Graphics of the word breaking into two. The mechanism of Homospatiality functions to reinforce the meaning of a strong force breaking an object into two. Hence, an expansion of meaning through reinforcement results from this process of Homospatiality.

Another example is found in Picture B where the visual image of the smoke emitted by the campfire functions simultaneously as the typography for the word ‘Hot’. Thus, through the mechanism of Homospatiality, the sense of heat and smoke from the fire are represented. These extensions of meaning are a result of the intersemiosis on the expression plane of the multimodal text.

![Picture A](Reproduced from Sallustio, 1999b: 4)

![Picture B](Reproduced from Sallustio, 1999b: 4)

**Figure 3.9 Homospatiality**

### 3.7.2 SoI on the Grammar Stratum

![Figure 3.10 Semiotic Metaphor](Image of diamond reproduced from http://www.hearts-on-fire.com)

**Figure 3.10 Semiotic Metaphor**

(Image of diamond reproduced from http://www.hearts-on-fire.com)
I suggest that *Semiotic Metaphor*, a mechanism proposed by O’Halloran (1999, forthcoming), operates on the grammatical stratum in the SoI. O’Halloran defines semiotic metaphor as the process whereby “semantic reconstruals” across different semiotic resources occurs with a shift in the functional status of an element, consequently leading to a multiplication of meaning. That is, “the new functional status of the element does not equate with its former status in the original semiotic or, alternatively, a new functional element is introduced in the new semiotic, which previously did not exist” (O’Halloran, 1999: 348). Although originally proposed for the reconstrual of elements between language, mathematical symbolism and visual images, the conception of semiotic metaphor is productive in its extension to other semiotic resources.

An example of this is shown in Figure 3.10. The association of the image of a diamond is juxtaposed with the linguistic clause “because he loves me”. This association of the visual image of a diamond with the linguistic clause implies the gift of a diamond is an expression of love. Here the process of ‘love’ is reconstrued as the entity of a diamond and thus, is an example of a semiotic metaphor. Indeed, it could be argued that diamonds (as gems, not cutting agents) are in themselves always semiotic metaphors. Is that true of all social symbols? This new meaning is only possible in the co-deployment of the two modalities, thereby allowing meaning expansion to result from this juxtaposition.

O’Halloran (1999) further distinguishes between the semiotic metaphors on two ends of a cline. The *parallel semiotic metaphor* not only has “an expanded semantic field but also one which is situated within the old”. (1999: 348) Although there could be *redundant meaning* due to overlaps, “new layers of meaning are simultaneously added to the original representation”. The reconstrual of elements in a *divergent semiotic metaphor*, however, is more far-reaching. Here, “the functional element is reconstructed into a new semantic field” (1999: 348).
Semantic redundancies are a possible by-product of the meaning made through parallel semiotic metaphors. These redundancies are realised when there is a duplication of the meaning made by the semiotic resources. These meanings, though actualised when the modalities are independent, serve a reinforcing function when the two systems combine in the SoI. A by-product of divergent semiotic metaphor, on the other hand, could be the surfacing of conflicting meanings. These conflicts or examples of “ideological disjunction” are a possible result “of the complex, often intricate, relations of inter-functional solidarity among the various semiotic resource systems that are co-deployed” (Thibault, 2000: 321). However, the SoI usually brings about a harmonisation of these disjunctions and conflicts “in the service of the semiotic project of this particular text” (Thibault, 2000: 321). In a multimodal text where the modalities share co-contextualising relations, there is a stronger likelihood for parallel semiotic metaphors to arise, where the new meaning made remains situated within the old. Divergent semiotic metaphors where new, previously unrealised meanings are being made through the process are more likely to emerge from a text, where its modalities share re-contextualising relations.

3.8 The Integrative Multisemiotic Approach

In this Chapter, I have proposed a meta-model, known as the Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM), to provide a rudimentary framework for the analysis of the co-deployment of language and visual images in a multimodal text. Systems operating on the expression plane for both the linguistic and pictorial modality have been proposed and the system network presented. The extensive work done by Halliday (1994) and O'Toole (1994) have been discussed and acknowledged, and their ideas incorporated into the IMM. On the level of discourse semantics, Martin’s (1992) theorisations for language have been extended to the visual images, in the light of the work done by McCloud (1993). A theoretical space, the SoI has been introduced and proposed to facilitate a discussion on the occurrence of intersemiosis. A hypothesis that contextualising
relations between modalities lead to a multiplication of meanings is made and mechanisms responsible for intersemiosis, chiefly homospatiality and semiotic metaphors are proposed. The purpose of this Chapter is to formulate a preliminary model to allow for the analysis of a multimodal text. The productivity and usefulness of this model is tested in Chapter 5, when the conceptions are put into practice in the deconstruction of a picture book, using the IMM.
CHAPTER 4
STRUCTURING THE TEXT

4.1 Structures in a Picture Book

This Chapter examines the different types of structures that may appear in a picture book using the example from *Dominic Duck Goes to School* (DDGS). These are namely the Narrative Structure, the Componential Structure, the Editorial Structure and the Generic Structure. These structures emphasise the different aspects of the picture book where meanings are made. The Componential Structure focuses on the various Frames in the picture book, which come together in a unified manner to produce a coherent and cohesive narrative. The Narrative Structure derived from Toolan (1998) reveals the nature of the narrative components in the picture book. The Generic Structure follows from Hasan (1984/1996) and describes the genre of the picture book. Finally, the Editorial Structure is concerned with the make up of a picture book, including the peripheral components from a publisher’s perspective. The different attributes and functions of these structures are discussed in the following sections. Figure 4.1 shows all the pages in DDGS. The linguistic text in DDGS segmented in its Episode summary is also reproduced in Table 4.1.
Figure 4.1 Dominic Duck Goes To School
Figure 4.1 Dominic Duck Goes To School
Table 4.1 Episode Summary in DDGS
4.1.1 Componential Structure

One perspective of the picture book is that it is a text comprising of ‘smaller texts’ on each page, arranged sequentially. The reading path through the book is uni-directional, with the conventions of literacy guiding the reader from the first page to the last in a linear reading path. For the purposes of analysis, each of these ‘smaller texts’ are categorised as Frames. A Frame is an arbitrary segmentation of the picture book into ‘smaller texts’. A Frame is identified by its clear parameters. It is usually framed by the borders of a page; but in cases where there is more than one Frame on each page, it is demarcated by clearly delineated boundaries. Figure 4.2 shows an example where there is only one Frame on a page as well as an example of several Frames on each page.

![Picture A: One Frame on a Page](image1)

![Picture B: Several Frames on a Page](image2)

**Figure 4.2 Frames in DDGS**

Each Frame consists of one Work, following O’Toole’s (1994) ranks for paintings. A Frame, however, can contain a single clause, a clause-complex or multiple clause complexes. Each Work and Clause Complex can be further separated into smaller analytical categories. These categories exist in a constituency relationship with each other, where each category consists of the one below it. Constituency is a constructional resource, “whereby parts are built into wholes, and these again
to larger wholes” (Halliday, 1994: 16). The constituency structure for each system is summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clause Complex*</td>
<td>Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause</td>
<td>Episode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word</td>
<td>Member</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Optional in a Frame

**Table 4.2 Ranks for each System in a Frame**

![Diagram of Componential Structure of Picture Book](image)

**Figure 4.3 Componential Structure of Picture Book**
As established earlier in Chapter 2, the picture book is a multisemiotic text, which makes meaning through the co-deployment of the language and visual images. Hence, in order to understand how meaning is made, it is necessary to understand the meanings made by each modality, as well as the meaning arising from the interaction between them. The meaning made must be anchored in the context of situation and context of culture. The co-tangential circle model is adapted from Martin (1992) and the primary purpose of the model here is to show the text as situated within the context, which is interpreted stratally as Register and Genre.

Figure 4.3 shows the componential structure of the picture book. This is where several Frames constitute a Part in the text. As shown in Table 4.1 and Table 4.3, DDGS is structured in five Parts, demarcated by the five key events that are found in the narrative. The first three Parts are marked with Dominic Duck initiating the conversation with Mama conveying his reluctance to go to school. This is followed by Mama asking Dominic Duck for his reasons and a rebuttal given by Mama for the complaint that Dominic Duck has. Part 4 is unique in that, there is an absence of linguistic text. Instead, visual images are used to represent the highlights of Dominic Duck’s school experiences. Part 5 models the pattern in the first 3 Parts. However, this time, Dominic Duck declares his wanting to go to school and offers many reasons for his decision. Mama, on the other hand, remains silent throughout the entire Part 5.

The allocation of Frames in each Part for DDGS is shown in Table 4.3. The Frames are positioned sequentially. This is similar to the Frames in a comic strip. The main difference between DDGS and a comic strip is that the Frames in DDGS are larger and mostly occupy a whole page, in contrast with the comic strips, where the Frames are smaller and are organised sequentially on a page. Each Frame and Part is significant as they serve important roles and functions in both the Narrative structure and Generic Structure.
### Table 4.3 Corresponding Frames in each Part

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parts</th>
<th>Corresponding Frames</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frame 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Frame 4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Frame 7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Frame 10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Frame 16-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Part in DDGS, with the exception of Part 4, has an Opening Frame, a Follow Up Frame and a Closing Frame. An example of the first Part is shown in Table 4.4. The labelling of the Componential Structure is helpful when standardising the references to the Parts in the analysis and discussion of the text.

### Table 4.4 Labels of Frames in Part 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Labels in Each Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Opening Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Follow Up Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Closing Frame</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.1.2 Narrative Structure

The picture book is a narrative narrated by two modalities. It follows then that the picture book possesses a narrative structure. The term narrative structure is derived from Toolan (1998). The sequential arrangement of the Frames in the picture book realises the narrative. Toolan (1998), following Labov (1972), uses the following classification for a narrative outline. Toolan’s (1998) structure of a narrative, with some of his explanatory notes is summarised in Table 4.5.
Table 4.5 Elements in the Structure of a Narrative
(Adapted from Toolan, 1998: 137-138)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>A summary of what happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Description of participants, time and place of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicating Action</td>
<td>Events that happened temporally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Comments and responses to Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Closure or what finally happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>Morals or bridge of story back to “teller-addressee present”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adhering to Toolan’s (1998) proposal, the elements in the narrative structure of the DDGS can be matched with the Frames in the Componential Structure. Table 4.6 shows the Frames in the narrative and the Elements associated with it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Parts realisations in DDGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Part 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicating Action</td>
<td>Part 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Part 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Part 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Realisations Elements of in DDGS

Every Part in DDGS, with the exception of Part 4, comprises three Frames. The Parts operate together to produce a narrative, which contains all the elements in the structure of a narrative. However, the first three Parts are also self-contained, so that in itself, it is like a micro-narrative, with its own micro-Elements operating within it. An example is in Part 1 as shown in Table 4.7.
4.1.3 Generic Structure

Hasan (1984/1996) introduces the concept of a generic structure, so that related texts are classified into genres, and these genres can be identified by the same basic structure they share. She further proposes generic structures for textual events such as sales exchange as well as nursery tales. In this section, I address the concerns with Hasan’s (1984/1996: 54-55) generic structure potential (GSP) of a nursery tale reproduced below:

\[(\langle \text{Placement} \rangle^{\uparrow}) \text{Initiating Event}^{\uparrow}] \text{Sequence Event}^{\uparrow} \text{Final Event}^{\uparrow}[(\text{Finale}), (\text{Moral})]\]

The round brackets enclose optional elements. Likewise, the elements not enclosed by the round brackets are obligatory. Hence, in any given nursery tale, the narrative is considered in Hasan’s terms as complete with just the Orientation, Complicating Action and Evaluation elements present. Elements in the angled brackets signify that their realisation may be over a few Frames and could even be included in the realisation of other elements. The dot between Finale and Moral shows that the order between the two elements is reversible while the carat sign indicates fixity in sequence. Mobile elements are allowed to change their order within the limits of the square brackets. Hasan’s (1984/1996) notations are summarised in Table 4.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Frame Realisations in Part 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Frame 1 or Opening Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complicating Action</td>
<td>Frame 1 or Opening Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Frame 2 or Follow Up Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution</td>
<td>Frame 3 or Closing Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 Elements within Part 1
In the light of Toolan’s (1998) contribution in the field of narrative studies, it is perhaps helpful to bring together Toolan’s (1998) and Hasan’s (1984/1996) formulation, in order to obtain a more useful GSP for narratives. This is shown below.

\[
\text{[<Abstract>^) Orientation^]} \text{ Complicating Action} \text{^ Evaluation [^Resolution, (Coda)]}
\]

Hasan (1984/1996) states the purpose of a GSP is to provide a metalanguage to describe the resources in the construction of a narrative. Each element in the GSP is also called Stage, following Idema’s (2001) use of the label ‘Generic Stage” in his model for tele-film analysis. Stages are distinct from the five Parts that have been labelled in the Componential Structure as they serve different purposes. Stages disregard the Part classifications, though it is common to find a Part under the Componential Structure, functioning as a Stage as well. A Stage may merely comprise one Frame or many Frames. For instance, the Orientation Stage is represented completely in the Opening Frame of Part 1. Once the obligatory stages are in place, the narrative of a picture book is obtained.

In order to understand the total meaning made in a picture book, it is necessary to look at the meaning made in each individual Frame treating each Frame as a Work in its own right. In addition, it is also crucial to examine the Intra-textual relations within the picture book to
understand how the collection of Frames functions cohesively to make meaning. In other words, there are two levels of analysis to be performed—the first on the level of the Frame and the second on the level of the picture book or discourse.

4.1.4 Editorial Structure

![Figure 4.4 Covers of DDGS](image)

**Picture A:** Front Cover  **Picture B:** Back Cover

**Figure 4.4 Covers of DDGS**

![Figure 4.5 Peripherals in DDGS](image)

**Picture A:** Title Page  **Picture B:** Imprint Page  **Picture C:** Back Matters

**Figure 4.5 Peripherals in DDGS**
In order to facilitate understanding of the components in the picture book in this dissertation, it is helpful to have some understanding of the editorial structure in the text. The editorial structure is the sum total of all the components that make up the entire picture book, and not just concerning the narrative of the story itself, unlike the previous structures. These components, often assumed to be peripheral of the book itself, contribute to the total meaning made in the text as well. This section introduces some of the editorial labels for these components and briefly describes the instantiations of these peripherals in DDGS.

Figure 4.4 shows the Front Cover and Back Cover of DDGS. The Front Cover contains the following information:

Title of the story: Dominic Duck Goes to School

Logo of the Series Title: Creative Readers

Logo of the Publishers: EPB

Writer and Illustrator’s Name: Maeli Wong and Don Low

As shown in Figure 4.4, the visual image shows Mama and Dominic Duck apparently in conversation. Mama looks slightly pensive and Dominic Duck is pushing the school bag forward between the of them. The scene, framed by a white box, summarises in a single image the narrative in the book. The ‘tussle’ between Dominic Duck and Mama over the issue of going to school is shown in the meaningful positioning of the two Figures as well as the significant positioning of the school bag in the middle. The Front Cover not only provides the crucial information, as expressed above, but also functions effectively to inform the reader what to expect in the picture book by summarising the focus of the entire narrative in a single visual image featured on the Front Cover.
The Back Cover serves the same purpose as well. On the Back Cover of DDGS, there is once again the logo of the Series Title as well as the International System of Book Number (ISBN) with a bar code for referencing and transactional purposes. The title is reiterated above the Blurb of the story. The Blurb, as seen in Figure 4.4, does not attempt to summarise the story. Instead, it sets the stage for the story. From the reading of the Blurb on the Back Cover, a simple introduction is given to initiate the reader into the story.

The first page of the book is the Title Page. In the example of DDGS as shown in Figure 4.5, the Title Page contains the Title, the logo of the Series Title, the name of the Writer and Illustrator as well as the logo of the publishers. In contrast to the Front Cover, the visual image on the Title Page is comparatively much smaller. Instead of showing Mama with Dominic Duck, the visual image on the Title Page features Dominic Duck with a female companion. In the light of the narrative, the Title Page prepares the reader for the turnabout in Dominic Duck’s attitude towards school and for one of the reasons he gives for changing his mind, that is, the friends he has made in school. The visual image on the Title Page thus anticipates the ending in the story.

The Imprint Page also shown in Figure 4.5 usually follows the Title Page. The main purpose of the Imprint Page is to provide publication, copyright and disclaimer information. The names of the people involved in the production of this book top the list. Following this, details of the publishers and publication matters are given. After this information we find the copyright rules as well as the approval stamp given by the Ministry of Education, endorsing the book for use from the year 2001 to 2005 in Singapore. Other information such as the typeface, printer and the ISBN are also listed on the Imprint Page.
The Story begins on Page 1 of the text, after the Imprint Page. In DDGS, the story spans over 14 pages and over 18 Frames. The last page in the book, as shown in Figure 4.5 is known technically as the Back Matters. Here, other titles in the Creative Readers for Primary One are listed, chiefly for promotional reasons. As well as these features, we once more find the publisher’s logo and the series title logo. Put together, these various components make up the Editorial Structure of the book, instrumental in the production and publication of the book and contributing to the total meaning made in the text. Figure 4.6 summarises the components of the Editorial Structure.

![Figure 4.6 Editorial Structure of a Picture Book](image)

### 4.2 Brief Introduction of DDGS

Dominic Duck Goes to School (DDGS) is the first title in The Creative Readers Series for Primary Ones. Published by SNP Publishing Education Pte Ltd, the text is catalogued under the category of supplementary readers, recommended for reading beyond the scope of the compulsory texts in the prescribed syllabus. Its intended readership is probably students in the first year of formal education or children about to begin their primary school education. One of the compelling reasons to select this text is the endorsement the Ministry of Education has placed on the book, approving it for current use in school. This reinforces the notion that the ideologies embedded in this text make up the official discourse in Singapore’s education of the young.

The narrative of DDGS belongs to the genre of an allegory, where animals through the means of personification behave like humans and enact a story with overt didactic intents. In DDGS, Dominic Duck worries about going to school and voices his concerns to Mama. Mama responds to each of Dominic Duck’s worries with a reassurance. Eventually, after his first day at school,
Dominic Duck brings back a good report of his day and declares his liking of school. DDGS is a good representation of a Singaporean picture book. The members of its production and publications team as well as the writer and illustrator are all local Singaporeans. The theme of education in Singapore is a central concern and the text raises issues such as the theme of parent-child relationships, the process of growing up and the search for an identity. These themes address the concerns that are closely related to life in Singapore.

Given the nature of this project, DDGS has also been chosen particularly for its short linguistic text, comprising of only a clause or a maximum of two clauses on each page. This allows for a complete lexico-grammatical analysis, enabling a comprehension of the meaning made through language in the entire text. The lexico-grammatical analysis is the platform by which claims and observations of the text can be made in conjunction with the visual analysis. My approach allows the unique meaning made by each semiotic resource as well as the results from their interactions in the multimodal text to be analysed. This in turn can enable a meaningful discussion on the issues raised in the book. Through an evaluation of the ideologies and attitudes that the picture book contains, a better understanding of the role the pedagogic text has in the local Singaporean context can also be obtained. Further to this, the roles and functions of the semiotic resource of language and visual images in this particular picture book are examined, and their unique contributions to the meaning made in this book are discussed as well.

The meanings obtained in DDGS is a result of the co-deployment of the semiotic resource of language and visual images. It must be affirmed that both modalities are equally significant in contributing to the total meaning made in the multimodal text. The different nature of language and visual images are tapped to fulfil distinct though complementary roles and functions. This is more extensively discussed in the following Chapter.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSING THE TEXT

5.1 Applying the IMM

Having proposed and reviewed some of the conceptions and theories of multimodality the proposed Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM) will be used to analyse a local Singaporean picture book. There are two aims to this endeavour. The first is to test the usefulness of the framework and ideas proposed. The second is to obtain a better understanding of the ideologies operating in a pedagogic text in Singapore through the analysis of a representative text.

Due to the constraints of space and time, the analysis carried out in this dissertation needs to balance between being concise and succinct but at the same time has to be substantial enough to make effective claims. Hence, although an entire picture book is the subject in this discussion, only selected parts are rigorously analysed using the IMM. The selective analysis pertains particularly to the analysis of the visual images in the text. In this study, I perform a full analysis on the first Frame in the book. Nonetheless, salient portions of the texts are discussed, especially textual examples that best illustrate certain ideas, as well as parts crucial to the understanding the narrative of the text.

I begin this Chapter with the lexico-grammatical analysis of the linguistic text in the picture book. As mentioned earlier, a detailed analysis of the visual images and linguistic text appearing in each of the Frames in the text is not possible. As such, a full discussion of the first Frame is performed as a demonstration of the IMM’s usefulness and productivity. Moving from a micro-perspective to a macro-perspective of the text, the attitudes and ideologies elicited from the linguistic analysis and
portions of the pictorial analysis can be used as an example of the feasibility of the model proposed in Chapter 3.

5.2 DDGS as a Pedagogic Text

Apart from being a multimodal picture book, DDGS also serves a very crucial function of educating the reader. In other words, one of the key roles of DDGS is to operate as an instrument of pedagogy or a tool for socialisation purposes. Bernstein (1990) observes that pedagogic discourses contain two main functions, instructional and regulative. He sees in pedagogic discourse an embedding of the “discourse of competence (skills of various kinds) into a discourse of social order in such a way that the latter always dominate the former” (Bernstein, 1990: 184). In other words, in a pedagogic discourse such as DDGS, there is both an instructional function in which knowledge and skills are taught, and a regulative function in which role relationship, institutions and hierarchy in society are reinforced. The regulative discourse is an ideologically motivated function, which operates somewhat covertly in the text. As such, it is more interesting and hence, a greater portion of my analysis is devoted to show how the lexico-grammar of language articulates this discourse of social order. The discourse of competence is more explicit and operates on both the structural and content level of language. Briefly, in the following section, I examine how the instructional function is conveyed through the choices made on the lexico-grammatical stratum.

5.2.1 Instructional Function

As mentioned earlier, the instructional function or the discourse of competence operates on both the structural and content level of language. On the structural level, this refers to the teaching of competence in the knowledge and use of the English language. This is achieved in DDGS through the constant repetition of lexical items and the rhythmic syntactic structure, where the text can be
separated into Parts in an almost formulaic structure (refer to Table 4.1, Table 4.3 and Table 5.3). Such rhythmic repetition is characteristic of pedagogic texts in general. More specifically, the text equips the child-reader with the simple vocabulary used in certain domains, such as family and school. The text also demonstrates to the child-reader the correct usage of grammatical structure of questions, answers and exclamations. This is evidenced by the analysis of the lexis that whenever a new lexical item is introduced, for example, ‘miss’ and ‘friends’, they are reinforced again through repetition. The analysis of the speech function and mood also shows a sampling of various types of sentences for the child to learn. Table 5.1 shows the representation of statements, questions and exclamations in their mood realisations of declarative and interrogative in DDGS.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaratives</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogatives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclamations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.1 Representations of Sentence Types**

Finally, the prevalence of the mental processes in the story also encourages the child to build up his vocabulary of emotive and cognitive words, for instance words such as ‘like’ and ‘want’. What has been discussed are some of the strategies by which the picture book is deployed as a mediator in instruction to a child.

Besides teaching the child-reader language competence, the discourse of competence also operates through the content of language. The narrative is essentially about a child’s fears of going to school. As mentioned earlier, DDGS explicitly identifies its target readers as students in Primary One level or children that are about to begin their formal education in Singapore. In this, the child-reader is likely to develop a strong empathy with Dominic Duck the main protagonist of the story, who is
also facing the prospect of his first day of school. This identification is also established through the selection of the subjects in the story. This is summarised in Table 5.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clauses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Clauses</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Why</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Why</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The teacher</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>my teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The teacher</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>You</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 List of Subjects in the Clauses

Out of the 20 subjects, 15 of them refer to the protagonist, Dominic Duck. Clearly, Dominic Duck is the focus and main character in the story. Significantly, out of the 15 references to Dominic Duck, 10 of them are realised by the pronoun “I”. The ubiquitous use of the pronoun “I” encourages a strong identification with Dominic Duck and his woes. This empathy with Dominic Duck facilitates the instruction of the mother’s overt advice to Dominic Duck and to the child-reader. Advice and reassurance such as in Clause 5 “You will make new friends.” and Clause 11 “The teacher is very kind.” teaches the child not to be fearful of school, and at the same time inculcate a particular worldview to Dominic Duck and the child-reader. This is notable because the instructions given to Dominic Duck are intended indirectly for the child-reader as well. In a sense then, the picture book functions as a socialising tool to indoctrinate the ‘right’ or ‘acceptable’ values to the child-reader.
5.2.3 Regulative Function

Having looked at how the discourse of competence operates in the instructing of both language competence and social competence, I will now perform a lexico-grammatical analysis on the text, so as to obtain a systematic deconstruction of the regulative function or the discourse of social order embedded in DDGS. As explained earlier, Halliday’s (1994) system of theme structures the information presented in the text and foregrounds the selected parts. The system of TRANSITIVITY reveals the particular construction of experience. The system of MOOD demonstrates the enactment of social relations as well as the statuses between participants. Approaching the analysis from the tri-metafunctional perspective, the SFL analysis of the grammar stratum in language could sensitise us to the regulative discourse in the text, and in the process, uncover its ideological strands.

5.3 A Lexico-Grammatical Analysis Of DDGS

5.3.1 Weaving the Narrative

In the analysis of the textual metafunction, the system of THEME in the text is examined. The theme analysis is conventional to that of a generic narrative. Most of the clauses have a simple thematic structure. There are only a few multiple Themes, with three textual themes and four interpersonal themes. As discussed earlier, the topical themes mostly refer to Dominic Duck, hence underlying his role as the main protagonist in the story and facilitating the reader’s identification. The textual themes are fairly usual for a narrative which consists of dialogues between two participants. This is with the exception for the “but” in Clause 18 functioning as an adversative structural conjunction that marks the shift of focus in Mama’s speech. The repeated use of the conjunction “and” is deployed by Dominic Duck to signal his gush of excitement as he returns home from school. The paratactic expansions in Clause 22 & 24, “and my teacher is very kind”,

100
“And today, I learnt”, are used to join the strings of exclamations he issues, upon his return from school.

The four interpersonal themes in the text function as vocative adjuncts which Dominic Duck employs to address “Mama”. This explicit nomination invites Mama to respond to Dominic Duck’s statements. Each vocative adjunct “Mama” marks a new Part in the narrative. An analysis of the speech function in the interpersonal metafunction in the following section reveals a pattern of discourse that recurs within each Part. As discussed in Chapter 4, the text can be easily segmented into five Parts as summarised in Table 4.1, using the interpersonal themes as a guide.

Mama consistently responds to Dominic Duck’s statement in the first 3 Parts in DDGS. Following that, Mama goes on to challenge Dominic Duck’s argument with her reasoning. Conspicuously, however, in Part 5, Mama remains silent even though she is addressed directly as usual by Dominic Duck. This is significant and invites further exploration, which is carried out in Section 5.3.3.

Interestingly, the only marked theme in the entire text is found in Clause 24 in Part 5. The theme is marked with the foregrounding of the circumstance adjunct of time in Clause 24, ‘Today’. This markedness is meaningful as it anchors the discourse in time. It is interesting to note that all the previous concerns by Dominic Duck were hypothetical. The statement that he “learnt to quack loudly” in Clause 24 instead is anchored in time, buttressed by the experiences he had in school. The marked theme makes this argument salient. A multimodal analysis of both the language and visual images perhaps illustrates this argument more appropriately as the visual images are used to ‘narrate’ Dominic Duck’s experiences in school.
5.3.2 Competing Reality

The experiential metafunction has to do with the reconstruction and construal of experience. As the speaker selects the paradigmatic options on a syntagmatic structure in the construction of a clause, a ‘reality’ is being constructed. This social reality of the individual can either be accepted or rejected by the other participants in the discourse. The system that constructs the experiential aspect of social reality is TRANSITIVITY.

The TRANSITIVITY analysis of the processes chosen in the construction of the text can be revealing. Dominic Duck’s fears of school are expressed through the mental affective desiderative process of “don’t want” in Clause 1. He consistently repeats these assertions initiating each of the first 3 Parts in Clause 6 and 13, “Mama, I don't want”, giving a new set of concerns about school each time. Notice that the material process “to go” is a beta clause dependent on the main clause with the process of “want”. This is significant of the fact that the act of going to school must follow his mental decision of wanting to go in the first place.

Attention is drawn towards Clause 19 in Part 5 where there is a repetition of the similar clause structure and mental cognitive process, though this time, the polarity is not negative. Dominic Duck contradicts his previous declarations in Clause 1, 6 and 13, “Mama, I don't want”, overtly with the positive assertion of wanting to go to school. Evaluating just from the basis of the linguistic text alone, the transition seems rather abrupt and unaccounted for. However, Dominic Duck’s change of mind is more progressive when seen in the light of the entire multimodal text, where the series of visual images fill this linguistic void. This is discussed more fully in Section 5.7. Nonetheless, the prominence of Clause 19 through the lack of the usual negative polarity adjunct of “not” is meaningful.
Delving deeper into the TRANSITIVITY analysis, a better understanding of Dominic Duck’s concerns as well as Mama’s rebuttal of his arguments can be attained. Dominic Duck’s initial complaint in Clause 4 is that he does not have any friends. This is conveyed through the relational attributive possessive process of “have”. The relational process describes a state of being and Dominic Duck, through the selection of this process, constructs a reality. This state of being can only be refuted by an explicit contradiction through the rejection of the construction. A possible example of a rejection of that reality could be “But you have many friends”. Mama, however, did not employ this strategy. Instead, she responds by using a material process of telling Dominic Duck to “make new friends”. Implicitly, Mama has accepted Dominic Duck’s construction of reality but she tells Dominic Duck that he can change that reality by acting on it through a material process of ‘make’. Significantly, in the ergative analysis, Clause 5 is the only clause that has an effective voice with an agent, which is attributed to Dominic Duck. This is another reminder for Dominic Duck that he has the agency to modify the state of being he has constructed in Clause 4 by simply going out to make friends.

The next concern raised by Dominic Duck in Clause 9 is realised again through the relational process, this time through the attributive intensive “is”. Dominic Duck describes the teacher as being big, once more constructing a reality through the relational process of being. This time, Dominic Duck even responds to his own construction with a mental affect process of being ‘afraid’ of the teacher in Clause 10, “I am afraid of her”. As before, Mama implicitly accepts Dominic Duck’s construction of reality. However, she adds her own construction of the teacher with the relational attributive intensive process of ‘is’ describing the teacher as being “very kind” in Clause 11, “The teacher is very kind”. She adds in Clause 12, “You will like her”, that Dominic Duck will respond favourably to her construction of the teacher with the mental affect process of “like”. Mama thus allays Dominic Duck’s fears by providing him with an alternative construction of
reality as well as suggesting another mental affect response to the teacher countering Dominic Duck’s construction.

Following this, Dominic Duck voices another concern, this time through the mental affect process. In Clause 16, “I will miss you Mama”, he predicts that he “will miss” Mama. In response, Mama explicitly acknowledges Dominic Duck’s concerns, she further adds her own mental affect process that she “will miss” him too. However, Mama is quick to point out with a relational attributive intensive process ‘is’ in Clause 18 “but school is a lot of fun”. In constructing this reality of school, she hopes to distract Dominic Duck from his emotions of missing Mama.

Like all the previous concerns, Dominic Duck is silent after Mama’s construction. As such, it is a mystery whether there is an implicit acceptance of Mama’s construction or a silent ignoring of Mama’s advice. The turning point comes in Part 5 on Clause 19, “Mama I want”, when Dominic Duck declares with a mental cognitive process that he wants to go to school. As mentioned earlier this sudden transition can only be explained through the analysis of the series of visual images in the Frames between Clause 18 and 19, where the visual images portray Dominic Duck’s experiences leading to his change of mind.

Now, it perhaps could be useful to look at how Dominic Duck constructs a new reality in Clauses 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 that answers the concerns he faced previously. In Clause 21, “I have a lot of friends”, he echoes the relational attributive possessive process “have” which he used in Clause 4, “I don't have any friends in school”. This time he constructs an antithetical reality of his having many friends. His use of the relational attributive intensive process “is” in Clause 9 “The teacher is big”, is repeated in Clause 22 and 23 where he constructs the reality that his teacher is very kind and that he likes her. Finally, regarding his concern in Clause 16 “I will miss you Mama”, that he will miss Mama, Dominic Duck did not replace the clause with another mental affect emotive
process. Instead his exclamation in Clause 24 & 25 deploys the mental cognitive process in which he said that he has ‘learnt to quack loudly.” The behavioural process of ‘quack’ is dependent on the main clause. The mental cognitive process of “learns” in the main clause reflects the education that Dominic Duck receives in school. Significantly, the lesson is that he has learnt how to ‘quack loudly’. Learning to quack loudly for a duck is a step towards self-realisation and independence. Further to this, it implies metaphorically that while in school Dominic Duck has found “a voice” that he can articulate both loudly and boldly. In other words, Dominic Duck is now able to form opinions of his own. The curious insertion of the mental cognitive process in Clause 24 has interesting implications. Positioned after a series of reconstructions of reality that answer his previous concerns of going to school, Clause 24 can be read as Dominic Duck’s answer to his concern of missing his mom. If this argument is plausible, then the learning Dominic Duck has in school has taught him independence and has given him a voice for himself so that he no longer is dependent on Mama.

However, there seems to be something more going on through a closer study of TRANSITIVITY. The new ‘voice’ which Dominic Duck articulates in Part 5, of him having many friends and him liking the teacher because the teacher is very kind, seems to be a direct replication of what Mama had told him earlier on. In other words, the new reality constructed now through his exclamations is identical to the one constructed by Mama previously. In addition to reinforcing the notion that Mama is always right or will turn out eventually to be right, there seems also to be a pertinent strand of the regulative function emerging in the text. The voice Dominic Duck has ‘found’ is situated within the institution of the school. The voice also seems like an echo of the official discourse. This argument is reinforced by the silence of Mama, which is made conspicuous through both the interpersonal theme and the discourse patterns, which is discussed in the following section.
5.3.2 Competing Statuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Clause</th>
<th>Frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part 1</td>
<td>Clause 1-5</td>
<td>Frame 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 2</td>
<td>Clause 6-12</td>
<td>Frame 4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 3</td>
<td>Clause 13-18</td>
<td>Frame 7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 4</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Frame 10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part 5</td>
<td>Clause 19-25</td>
<td>Frame 16-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 Parts in DDGS

Unlike the ideational metafunction that construes experience and reconstructs reality, the interpersonal metafunction enacts role relationships among the participants. This power play between Dominic Duck and Mama can be seen in their discourse structure, which is divided into Parts shown in Table 5.3 and shown in the actual clauses reproduced in Table 4.1.

It is noted that each time, Dominic Duck is the one who initiates each Part. Their almost formulaic speech patterns are summarised in the Table 5.4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Speech Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominic Duck</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mama</td>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominic Duck</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mama</td>
<td>Contradict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 Speech Pattern Elements in Each Part

The table represents the obligatory elements in all three Parts. An optional element, such as the speech function of Acknowledgement (Martin, 1992) is found in Part 3 as well. Looking at the discourse pattern, it is evident that the dominant party is Mama. Although Dominic Duck initiates
each part, the conversation is steered by Mama who asks the questions and contradicts the answers given. It is significant to note that Dominic Duck remains silent upon Mama’s contradiction, suggesting that the last word and the arbiter’s right goes to Mama, who is vested with parental authority.

This pattern is upset in Part 5 where it shows Dominic Duck having the last word of the Part and effectively the entire narrative. Instead of interrupting as usual after the initiating statement by Dominic Duck in Clause 19, “Mama I want”, Mama remains silent and Dominic Duck continues with a string of exclamations. This marks the turning point of the narrative, and as observed in the transitivity analysis, Dominic Duck achieves self-realisation and receives a ‘voice’. Nonetheless, as has been suggested earlier, this ‘voice’ of Dominic Duck seems merely to reproduce the official discourse propagated by his mother earlier on.

Dominic Duck appears to accept and endorse the opinions of Mama, having gone through the acculturation experience in school. The educational institution as an indoctrinating experience and a means of socialisation is a common thesis of the discourse of the social order in pedagogic texts. Notice also that this time, Mama conspicuously did not interrupt Dominic Duck. Could it be that Dominic Duck can have the last word, not because Mama is unable contradict him, but perhaps that there is no need to contradict him, now that he is proffering the socially accepted ‘correct’ opinions? Beneath the appearance of independence and finding an identity, it can be disquieting to note that his newfound voice is merely an echo of the ‘correct’ values originally propounded by Mama and now advocated by the education institution.

Before going to school, Dominic Duck was dominated by parental authority, which is translated in his not being able to respond to Mama’s construction of reality. This is observed in Dominic Duck’s silence after every contradiction Mama offers to his answers. Mama’s immediate response
to Dominic Duck’s declaration that he does not want to go to school, through a clause with an ellipsed process, is worth examining as well. This is seen in the clause, “Why not, dear?”, in Clause 3, 8 and 15. This truncated clause is significant because with a medium and a process ellipsed, it renders the statement almost unquestionable and difficult to challenge. Thus an interrogative “Why not?” may seem to be more uncompromising than if the medium and process are not ellipsed such as in “Why do you not want to go to school?”. The interrogative “Why not?” is more likely to be issued from someone in the position of power, as it explicitly demands information, without giving an explanation, from the recipient. Effectively, Mama’s immediate response to Dominic Duck with a ‘Why not?’ can be seen as her asserting her parental authority.

The use of the mood adjuncts in the text is fairly usual for a narrative. There are a few mood adjuncts, mostly expressing polarity and two degree adjuncts as well as one comment adjunct. They are namely “not”, “too” and “very”. The vocative adjuncts with which the participants typically address each other have interesting implications as well. Dominic Duck addresses his parent with the title of “Mama”, thus implicitly subjecting himself as a child under the authority of a parent. It is worth noting as well that the reader only learns of Dominic Duck’s name through the title of the story. The name Dominic Duck is never mentioned throughout the entire story. This results in an almost effective obliteration of the individuality and identity of Dominic Duck. Mama uses the term of endearment ‘dear’ to address Dominic Duck. In doing so, she essentially subjects Dominic Duck in her own construction of her ‘dear’, which effectively subjugates Dominic Duck’s individuality and identity. The absence of Dominic Duck’s name throughout the entire narrative further reinforces the argument that the self-realisation he attains at the end does not lead to an actualisation of his identity. Instead, he has merely learnt to echo official ideologies.

Similarly, the teachers in the school are not given an identity through a name. Instead, Dominic Duck addresses them as ‘the teacher’ prefixing the label with the article ‘the’. Not only does it
convey a sense of formality, but it also suggests a dehumanisation of the teachers, where their very identity is defined by the function they serve in the institution of the school. Following the regulative reading of the text, if the school is an agency of socialisation, the teachers are perhaps the tools through which this mass indoctrination is achieved.

5.3.4 Dominic Duck and the Child-reader

Following this reading of the text, it can be argued that Dominic Duck through the course of events has moved from being subjected under parental authority to socialisation by the education institution in order to reflect the official ideology. This reading could very well be Bernstein’s (1990) discourse of social order that is embedded in the pedagogic text. Operating on the level of the text as a mediator of learning for the child-reader, the regulative function in the text works to socialise the child-reader with the ‘correct’ values and ‘right’ opinions as well. Disguised thinly in this book through the discourse of competence, the regulative function is the teaching of the official ideology to the child-reader propagated firstly by Mama and reiterated through Dominic Duck, the protagonist with whom the child-reader has developed empathy and with whom he has learnt to identify with. In the case of Dominic Duck, the pedagogic discourse through the school experience was a successful socialisation to the institutional norms. Likewise, the pedagogic discourse through this narrative can be seen as aiming to extend vicariously the same effect and success upon the child-reader as well.

5.4 Analysis of the Display Stratum

Having examined the lexico-grammatical stratum of language, and evaluating the meaning made on the grammar plane, it is appropriate to look at the meaning contributions of the expression plane of language as well as the meaning made on the expression and content plane of visual images. I begin
with the expression plane of language, through a discussion of the system of TYPOGRAPHY in DDGS. Following this, I examine the display stratum of visual images in the text. The visual grammatical analysis of the visual image on the first Frame of the text and an evaluation of the mechanisms and processes operating on the discourse semantics stratum between the two modalities in DDGS are also undertaken in Section 5.5. My analysis will move progressively from the expression plane to the content plane through the framework provided for by the IMM, thus facilitating a progressive unveiling of meaning made on the different levels at each instantiation. The meanings made here are seen in the light of the meanings already suggested and unveiled through the lexico-grammatical analysis of language.

The focus in this section is on the meaning made on the expression plane or display stratum in the text, with reference to the Opening Frame. The selections on the expression plane chosen in this text are largely consistent across all Frames. Hence, most of the observations made here are generalisable and can be extended to all the Frames in the text. This is because with few exceptions the typographic selections and graphic choices, are generally regular across all the Frames throughout DDGS.

5.4.1 Expression Plane of Language

Beginning with the semiotic resource of language, a subsidiary system within the system of TYPOGRAPHY is FONT. As stated on the Imprint Page, the TYPOGRAPHY is set in Font size 26 point and the TYPEFACE chosen is New Vag Rounded Thin, belonging to the San Serif family. The COLOUR used for the linguistic text is black. These typographic choices are consistent across all the Frames throughout the text, with the exception of linguistic texts that are situated within the pictorial domain, or as proposed later, those belonging to the story world. Some examples of these exceptions can be seen in Figure 5.1. These typographic selections for the system of FONT are
archetypal of a picture book designed for a child-reader, with the easy to read rounded typeface and the large font sizes as well as its technical black colour selected to convey a sense of formality and propriety. The system of SPACING within TYPOGRAPHY in DDGS is also typical of a picture book intended for young readers. The choices made in the sub-systems of LEADING, KERNING and INTERNAL SPACE ensure that the words are generously spread to facilitate the ease of reading for a child-reader. The opening Frame is justified to its left. However, in the case where there is only one linguistic clause in a Frame, such as in Frame 2, the justification is taken from the centre.

The linguistic text on each Frame altogether makes up the linguistic narrative of the story. Significantly, these clauses are situated between Speech Marks operating within the system of PUNCTUATION thereby implying that the linguistic text represents the speech of the characters in the narrative. Interestingly, as shown in Figure 5.2, it is not revealed explicitly through the linguistic text which character is making the speech. The reader can only infer the association of speech with the characters using clues from the representations in the pictures and the reader’s cultural assumptions of the dynamics of the parent-child relationship. In this manner therefore, the relationship between language and visual images is a mutually dependent one. This interdependent relationship between language and pictures is necessary for the understanding of the entire narrative, as well as the meaning made on each Frame. The symbiotic relationship between the two semiotic resources is more fully examined later in Section 5.8. On the expression plane, it suffices to note that the linguistic text consists essentially of the verbal projections of the characters in the picture. The lack of an omniscient narrator evaluating the story is an uncommon feature, especially in a narrative of this genre. The implications of this deliberate omission are also discussed in Section 5.8.
Figure 5.1 Expression of Language in DDGS

Figure 5.2 “Who is saying what?”

Figure 5.3 Contrast in the Segregation of Language and Visual Images
The Denotative value of Typography refers to the different letters of the alphabet, which are arranged together to enable the recognition of meaningful words. These lexical items are in turn strung together into clauses for meaning making. The Connotative value of the typographic selections are perhaps more meaningful here. Despite the absence of an omniscient narrator, the typographic selections strongly suggest that these clauses do not belong in the pictorial domain and consequently the world of Dominic Duck. This distinction may not be obvious in Frame 1 as the clauses are set in front of the pictorial background. However, the distinction is more pronounced in the final Frame, where the clauses are set apart from the picture on a white background. The contrast is shown in Figure 5.3. The typographic selection of a formal black colour with the standardised typeface implies a distinct separation between the linguistic text and the pictorial text.

I suggest that the world of Dominic Duck in DDGS is depicted only through the pictorial semiotic resources, because there is an absence of an omniscient narrator detailing the events in the story world. Thus, even though the linguistic text serves as the visual representation of Dominic Duck and Mama’s voices, it does not quite belong to the story world of Dominic Duck. I argue that language on the display stratum operates on the threshold between the child-reader’s world and the world of Dominic Duck, functioning primarily as a link between both worlds. While the visual images represent the story world where the characters live in, the linguistic text acts as the

![Figure 5.4 Language as Interface between two Worlds](image-url)
interface, bridging the story world with the world of the child. This proposal, diagrammatically represented in Figure 5.4, is more fully discussed in Section 5.8. Having looked at the expression plane of language in DDGS, I now turn to a discussion of the expression plane in visual images.

5.4.2 Expression Plane of Visual Images

The display stratum of the visual images emphasise the shapes, lines and masses of colour that make up the pictures through the systems of FORM and PERSPECTIVE in the graphics stratum. COLOUR operating with the system of FORM plays a critical role in meaning making on the expression plane. This selection is especially significant as the pictorial semiotic resource represents the world of Dominic Duck. The sub-system of COLOUR is thus one of the means through which the world is portrayed. The colour choices made across all the Frames in this picture book are not strongly saturated HUES. Instead, the options consist of mostly pastel shades lending to a somewhat ‘softer’ touch to the story world. Distinct tones of black and white are avoided, and instead, light grey and dark brown are used for a softer contrast. In some Frames, pastel colours are juxtaposed against a white background, which the typography of the linguistic text is set against. Apart from the purpose of segregating language and pictures, white is used sparingly in some Frames. White is not as adept in attracting attention, as compared with coloured hues. Black is shunned in this picture book for children, perhaps because of its connotative value of negativity, mourning and death. Substitutes for black, such as the grey hue of shadows and the different shades or the differing intensity in saturation of the brown hue is selected for features like hair, eyes and even skin colour of some ducks portrayed in the story. The HUES often used in this picture book are the pastel shades of yellow, orange and brown, different saturations of green, turquoise and blue, as well as related hues of purple and red. The selections are shown in Figure 5.5. A contrast in the colour selections with options made in other picture books is also shown in Figure 5.5.
Figure 5.5 Contrast of Hues in Picture Books

(Picture A: Pastel Hues) (Reproduced from Wong, 2000: 6-7)  (Picture B: Bright Hues) (Reproduced from Sallustio, 1999a: 18-19)

Figure 5.6 Iconic Shapes Establishing Settings

(Picture A: Slide- Playground)  (Picture B: Blackboard- Classroom)  (Picture C: Lamp post & Tree- Streets)

Figure 5.7 Selections of Geometric Shapes
(Reproduced from McKie & Ziefert, 2001: 1)
The sub-system of SHAPES hosted by the system of FORM consists of mainly cultural icons belonging to the modern day urban society. Iconic shapes representing a painting, the back of a chair, a pack of milk, a box of cereals and a bowl on a table with table cloth are displayed in the Opening Frame. The presence of these icons leads the reader to infer the time of the day, even without the need for an iconic clock pictorially represented in the story world to show the time. Drawing from the child-reader’s cultural knowledge, these objects, represented in Frame 1, are associated with breakfast in the morning at home. The lexico-grammatical analysis of the linguistic text earlier also points in this direction, enabling the reader to understand that it is the first day of school for Dominic Duck.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Introduction Stage of DDGS, like most Stages in this text, consists of three main Frames, namely the Opening Frame, the Follow Up Frame and the Closing Frame. The Opening Frame in the Introduction Stage of a text is crucial, as it serves the primary purpose of establishing the setting and introducing the characters of the narrative. Effectively, the first Frame in the Introduction Stage situates the time and venue of the story world, thereby orientating us to the setting of the narrative through the meaning made by these icons. Other iconic shapes such as the lamp post, slide and blackboard in DDGS establish the setting of each Frame in the same way, be it along the streets, at the playground or in the classroom. Some examples are shown in Figure 5.6

As mentioned earlier, I propose that the world of Dominic Duck is represented largely through visual images. In comparison, the linguistic text within the narrative gives no indication whatsoever that the characters are non-human. These ducks represented in the visual images, however, behave consistently as humans and this facilitates identification between the child-reader with the protagonist Dominic Duck. The simple iconic 2-dimensional pictorial representations of the duck through the abstract sketching also allow for a greater sense of empathy between the readers with
the character. As McCloud (1993: 44) observes, the simple design of most characters is “to assist in reader-identification”.

The selections made in the system of SHAPES are mostly based on the iconic association to the objects found in the child-reader’s world. In contrast to Figure 5.7, where the visual images are higher in the degree of abstractions, the selections made in DDGS are higher in iconicity. The strong association between the story world with the child-reader’s world through the relations of iconicity further promotes identification and empathy between the child-reader and Dominic Duck thereby facilitating ideological transmissions. The ideological implications of this identification between the child-reader and Dominic Duck are fully discussed in Chapter 6.

The system of LINE in the Opening Frame is especially meaningful. There are only a few sets of distinctive lines: those that denote the doorframe and the boundary on the wall as well as those outlining the shape of the table and the checked design of the tablecloth. These lines become particularly significant when they are examined together in consideration with all the vertical and horizontal vectors in the Frame. Figure 5.8 shows the dominant vectors in the opening Frame.

The high incidences of horizontal and vertical vectors found in the Opening Frame generate a sense of stability. However, extending this idea further, it can be argued that the dominant vector associated with Mama is the vertical vector, with her neck being the salient vertical vector whereas the dominant vector associated with Dominic Duck is the horizontal vector, which is realised through his beak. I also suggest that tension and conflict between the two characters are dramatised and negotiated through the interplay of gaze (O’Halloran, submitted for publication). The visual grammatical analysis in Section 5.5 further proposes that this energy dramatises the underlying tension in the verbal challenge between Dominic Duck and Mama that is articulated through the linguistic text. This hypothesis is more fully discussed in the next section.
Figure 5.8 Vectors on the Opening Frame

Figure 5.9 Curved Vectors
Moving to another aspect on the expression plane for pictures, it is significant that the interplay of vectors seems to intensify and reaches its peak at a spot, shown in Figure 5.9. The vectors resulting from the creases in the tablecloth also converge towards the horizontal vector made by Dominic Duck’s beak. Interestingly, just above the beak are the somewhat curved horizontal vectors formed by the curvature of the chair’s back. Following the argument that the interplay of vectors is a metaphor for foregrounding the conflict between the two characters on a stable background, the curves of the chair’s back could perhaps dramatise the compromise being attained eventually, or even suggest a metaphorical manifestation of the energy between the two characters.

In the system of PERSPECTIVE, there are in operation the sub-systems of DEEP SPACE, DIMENSIONALITY and Point of View (PoV). In terms of DEEP SPACE, the Opening Frame does not exhibit a substantial illusionary depth. Rather, the room in which the action takes place seems to be relatively ‘flat’. The only suggestion of DEPTH is the conventional cultural knowledge leading to the inference that Mama and the chair is positioned behind the table. Dominic Duck is clearly fronted, being positioned at the bottom right corner of the Frame; although as the visual analysis in Section 5.5 explains, Dominic Duck is not the Centre of Visual Impact (CVI). The purpose of this deliberate absence of illusionary depth is to have an equal distribution of attention on the two main Episodes in this Frame, with a certain de-emphasis on the setting to minimise distraction. As discussed in Section 5.5 as well, this strengthens the case of the bi-directional reading path here and contributes to the dramatisation of the conflict between the two characters.

The characters, as well as their world, in the story are represented from a two-dimensional perspective in the pictorial text. The display stratum of the visual images uses rather crude and simplistic representations of icons. The simplicity of style and the minimalistic form of representation, apart from promoting the reader’s empathy as discussed earlier, may also give an indication of some factors affecting the production of this picture book. The drive towards mass
economical production for picture books in the *Creative Readers Series* constrains the options, such as colours and materials of the artist. The speed by which the *Creative Readers Series* is produced clearly limits the time and consequently the details and quality of the picture book. Nonetheless, the two dimensional representations in the pictorial text reinforce the notion that the intended readers are children and that the primary purpose of the picture book is pedagogy, hence the visual images are representative of the way children draw. The simplicity of these visual images promotes the identification between the child-reader with the characters.

*Figure 5.10 Competing Centre of Visual Impact*

The PoV taken for the Opening Frame is on a flat angle of 180-degree, at Eye Line level as well at a Medium Shot distance. While a high angle perspective on the story world could give an intrusive voyeuristic feel, the options selected here promote a sense of identification and empathy with the characters, placing the reader in a position that looks at the characters ‘straight in the face’. Any
sense of superiority or inferiority to Dominic Duck is omitted through the selection of the direct angle. Instead, identification with Dominic Duck’s subjectivity is encouraged.

The Centre of Visual Impact (CVI) seems divided between both the Figures of Mama and Dominic Duck. This is a result of an Internal Arrangement of this area causing this participant to be salient. Balanced with the intensity in the interplay of Gaze vectors between Mama and Dominic Duck, the Opening Frame facilitates a steady bi-directional reading path, travelling back and forth along the gaze path of the character. This is expressed in Figure 5.10.

The Spatial Positioning in the Opening Frame is meaningful as well. Mama, representing parental authority is located in a higher position relative to Dominic Duck. In terms of the semiotics of positioning, Mama is positioned to indicate her power over Dominic Duck. This is according to the semiotics of placement, where the one placed in higher position is inferred to be in greater authority and thereby deemed to exercise greater control than the one in the lower position. The full implications of this spatial positioning on the meaning of the text are discussed fully in the analysis of the visual grammar in the Frame. Finally, the Organizational metafunction for the graphics stratum, under the system of STROKES, has selections made with the paintbrush. This again is consistent across all the Frames in this picture book.

5.5 The Grammar Stratum on the Opening Frame

The analysis of the grammar in the pictorial text begins with isolating parts of the visual image into a hierarchical rank scale. Thereafter, I examine the systems contributing to the three metafunctions operating from the level of Work to the level of Member. The Opening Frame operates on the level of a Work, according to O’Toole’s (1994) rank scale. Within this Work, there is one distinct Episode, which in this case happens to be encapsulated in one Frame. As discussed in Chapter 3,
Episodes are arbitrary segmentations of the Work according to a happening or a scene. Unlike this opening Frame, there could also be more than one Episode in a Work, for instance, in O’Toole’s (1994) analysis of Botticelli’s *Primavera*. The main Figures in this Episode are Mama and Dominic Duck. Both are placed at opposite corners of the Frame. As observed earlier on the expression plane, this placement is significant as it articulates the conflict between the two characters. In addition, the conflict also functions as a dramatisation of the verbal challenge in the linguistic text. Also seen on the display stratum is the competition between Mama and Dominic Duck as the CVI. The prominence of Mama is a result of its density and positioning. On the other hand, the intensity of converging vectors draws attention to Dominic Duck, thrusting it into prominence as well. This results in the bi-directional reading path between the two Figures, following the system of direct Gaze between the two characters.

The system of GAZE constructs linear vectors or “reading paths” that connects the two Figures. In the Opening Frame, with the exception of the direction of Mama and Dominic Duck’s beaks, the Gaze vectors between the two of them serves as the primary connector between the two participants in the Episode. Significantly, the Gaze path between the two is an inclined one. Mama, who is positioned higher gazes down at Dominic Duck. In a sense, the Gaze path further accentuates the status differences between the two characters. Metafunctionally speaking, the system of GAZE in the pictorial text serves the Interpersonal or Engagement metafunction of shedding light on the relationship between the participants.

The system of FRAMING also contributes to the Engagement metafunction. The Framing of the Work in the Opening Frame is rather unusual. Mama is framed to the left in the Work, and Dominic Duck is framed to the right in the Work. This is unusual because with the positioning of the two participants functioning as frames, leaves the area in the middle rather empty. The Figures of Mama and Dominic Duck seem to frame a portrait of a duck in the middle. Directly below the portrait is
an empty chair, which, although is not quite fully in the middle of the Work, is positioned strategically between the two characters. Despite the portrait and the chair being centrally framed, attention is not drawn to it because of its comparatively minuscule size as well as the dominant bidirectional path between the two Figures. Nonetheless, the central placement of the portrait framed by the two Figures demands attention. I propose that the positioning of a chair between the two characters functions as a metaphor for the conflict between Dominic Duck and Mama. The chair is likened to an analogy of a no man’s land, a pseudo border between the two conflicting parties. In a sense then, the chair is a contested space between Dominic Duck and Mama. In the light of the understanding that one of the main themes in DDGS is the attainment of an identity for Dominic Duck, the empty chair may signify the status or position that Dominic Duck desires to achieve. This reading is built upon the assumption that Mama is sitting on a chair. The assumption, however, must be inferred as the table with the tablecloth blocks the reader PoV. The focus on the portrait is significant as well, because an interesting parallelism emerges when the hypothetical reader follows the Gaze path of the darkly coloured duck in the portrait.

5.5.1 Work

The SCENE of the Opening Frame is set at a breakfast table in the interiors of a house. Presumably, Mama is sitting on a chair and is looking down at Dominic Duck. Dominic Duck is standing across the table and looking up at Mama. Except for the speech between the two characters, the ACTION is low in intensity and energy. The PORTRAYAL of the characters as Ducks is further discussed under the system of CHARACTERISATION in Section 5.5.3. Nonetheless, Mama is portrayed to be smiling genially at Dominic Duck who seems to be looking rather worried. The system of PARALLELISM serves the Organizational metafunction, where the central action of Gazing between Mama and Dominic Duck is mirrored between the duck in the portrait with the visual representation of a duck on the cereal box. Thrust into prominence by its central position, the
portrait of the duck seems to have its gaze fixated down towards the icon of a duck on the cereal box. This is an interesting parallel as displayed in Figure 5.11, where the characters of Mama and Dominic Duck have shadow counterparts that mimic their relationship. It is easy to associate the duck in the portrait to be representative of Mama, as just like Mama, the duck is placed on a relatively higher position and has a gaze that is inclined downward. The mirroring is strengthened with the closed bill of both Mama and the duck in the portrait. The duck on the cereal box is associated with Dominic Duck for similar reasons as well. Both the duck on the cereal box and Dominic Duck are situated in a lower position relative to its partner and are positioned as looking up at the other duck. In addition, the slightly open bills of Dominic Duck and the image of the duck on the cereal box reinforce their resemblance.

The association between the characters with their counterparts may be useful to reveal, by implications, the veiled aspects of Mama and Dominic Duck. Significantly, the duck in the portrait is represented in dark brown, with the image of the duck on the cereal box in a paler hue. The contrasting choices in the colour hues signal the disharmony between the two Figures. Extending the comparison further with the cultural association of colours through its connotative value, the darkly coloured duck in the portrait is more alienating. In juxtaposition, the white colour of the duck on the cereal box has a connotative value of naïveté and innocence. The bills of the duck are pursed slightly open, further contributing to the impression of the ‘unsuspecting victim’ facing impending evil. The congruency of this reading to their counterparts Mama and Dominic Duck is reinforced when the ideologies of the text are being critiqued. Dominic Duck, the young child, *tabula rasa* and represented by the white duck comes into direct confrontation with theIdeologically complex adult, represented by the darkly coloured duck. The Gaze path between Mama and Dominic Duck, replicated between the duck in the portrait and the image of the duck on the cereal box, intersects with each other, making a cross. This mirroring and criss-crossing of the
gaze path, shown in Figure 5.12 adds to the many vectors in the Frame, contributing to the tension suggested earlier.

**Figure 5.11 System of PARALLELISM**

**Figure 5.12 Criss-Crossing of GAZE path**

### 5.5.2 Episode

Moving to the rank of the Episode, I have identified one single Episode in the Opening Frame. As shown in Figure 5.12, the Episode consists of the Figure of Mama, the Figure of Dominic Duck and
includes the participant in the portrait and the cereal box. The internal arrangement of this Episode is worth discussing. The area that surrounds Mama is densely packed. The area around Dominic Duck contains the site where an intensity of vectors meet, and a rather large fronted Dominic Duck. The portrait area is comparatively less dense. Nonetheless, its central placement being flanked by the other two participants, allocates a certain measure of salience to it as well.

The interplay of lines and Gaze vectors through the system of VERTICALS and HORIZONTALS has been discussed previously in the analysis of LINES on the expression plane. However, on the grammar plane, it is worthwhile noting that the composition of the visual image though the interplay of vectors contributes to the sense of stability to the background as well. The system of LINE on the display stratum and the system of VERTICALS and HORIZONTALS on the grammar stratum overlap one another to a certain degree. As clarified earlier in Chapter 3, I reiterate that the expression plane has to do more with the surface representations of the visual image as opposed to the visual grammar stratum, which has to do more with the operations and relations between items or systems in a visual image. I recognise, however, that the distinction between the two may also not always be clear, as is the case with these two systems.

5.5.3 Figure

Moving to the rank of the FIGURE, the systems of STANCE, GESTURE and CHARACTERISATION are in operation. As discussed in Section 5.4, the main characters in the narrative are cast in the iconic shapes of ducks. However, although these characters are in the form of ducks, they do not behave in a fashion congruent to the reader’s cultural knowledge of ducks. Mama Duck has long hair on her head and wears a hat; the ducks live in a house; Dominic Duck goes to school with the other ducks, and Mama can even communicate in English with Dominic Duck! In fact, apart from the form of a duck in which they resemble, the characters behave exactly
like humans. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, the narrative belongs to the genre of an allegory, where animals are personified as humans. The world of ducks as represented through the visual images is thus an intentional parallel with the world of the child-reader. Significantly, the imaginative story of the personified ducks is only represented through the pictures. Apart from the linguistic reference in the title of the story *Dominic Duck Goes to School*, there is no reference else where throughout all the linguistic exchanges in the story, that the characters in the story are not humans or are even ducks! The phenomenon is a result of the different role language and visual images are designed to serve in this pedagogic text, as elaborated in Section 5.8. This provides further evidence that the semiotic resources of the visual images depict the imaginative story world of Dominic Duck, whereas the linguistic semiotic resources serve as the intermediary, bridging the story world and the world of the child-reader.

In terms of STANCE, I have earlier discussed the implications in the power relations with respect to the semiotics of positioning where Mama is positioned higher than Dominic Duck. Interestingly, the high placement of Mama or another authoritative figure towering over Dominic Duck has been maintained consistently throughout all the Frames. Dominic Duck is never featured alone; even his imaginary teacher shown in Picture A of Figure 5.13 takes on a visual representation. This is with the exception of the last Frame, where for the first time, Dominic Duck is captured in the CVI in the Frame and represented all alone by himself. This is significant as the lexico-grammatical analysis has revealed that Dominic Duck in the final Frame has already achieved independence and attained a sense of his individuality. The pictorial semiotic resource emphasises this by showing Dominic Duck spreading his wings, with its connotative value of flight and a symbol of independence. The irony is, as discussed later, just as ducks can never really fly, Dominic Duck can be seen as never having truly attained his independence. As displayed in Figure 5.13, this contrasts with the opening Frame, where Dominic Duck is shown to be looking rather forlorn and morose at the prospect of school.
As explained earlier, the CVI in the Opening Frame is on Mama, where the reader follows the gaze path of Mama down towards Dominic Duck. This is significant, as the reading path is directly opposite to the sequence of speech in the linguistic text. The linguistic text represents the speech of Dominic Duck before the speech of Mama. However, the visual image draws attention first to Mama then to Dominic Duck. This balances the power play between the two characters, with each character represented first with the different modalities. In addition, for a reader that possesses both linguistic and pictorial literacy, there is a reinforcement of the tension between the two characters.

Assuming the reader begins from the linguistic text, the sequence starts from Dominic Duck’s statement to Mama’s challenge, followed by the reading of the visual image from the CVI of Mama and tracing her gaze path towards Dominic Duck. Taking this reading, Dominic Duck is somewhat derided through the downward gaze of Mama, even though it was Dominic Duck who first initiates the speech act.
5.5.4 Member

There are only a few comments to be made on the rank of Member in the Opening Frame. This is because, as discussed earlier, the visual representations are rather crude and abstract, being sparse in detail and sketchy in its representation of the parts of the body. This is a result of a combination of reasons, firstly to promote reader-character identification through the simple iconic representations, and secondly, the constraints due to cost and time, in other words, production factors, both of which have been discussed earlier. Of particular significance on the rank of Member are the simple geometric shapes through which the icons are made up. In the Opening Frame, as discussed earlier as well, these lines and vectors contribute to the dramatic tension, serving as a metaphor for the conflict in the Frame.

5.6 Discourse Semantics Analysis for Visual Images

Having discussed the nature of the systems that operate on the semantics stratum so as to obtain the emergent narrative in Chapter 3, I shall discuss these conceptions with reference to DDGS. A breakdown of all the transition relations in DDGS yields the following results. Table 5.5 shows the type of transition relations between all the Frames in DDGS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Relation</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moment to Moment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action to Action</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject to Subject</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene to Scene</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect to Aspect</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Sequitur</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5 Transition Relations in DDGS
The statistics obtained from DDGS differs from those McCloud (1993) highlighted for comic books. For instance, McCloud (1993) notes that the most common transition relation in comic books is Action-to-Action. Following this transition relation at a notable distance is Subject-to-Subject, and the remaining transition relations, Scene-to-Scene. In contrast, the most common transition relation in DDGS is Scene-to-Scene and followed by Subject-to-Subject transition relation. Action-to-Action transition relation only occurs once in DDGS.

![Frame 1](image1.png) ![Frame 2](image2.png)

**Frame 10-15**

**Figure 5.14 Scene-to-Scene Transition Relation**

The difference observed between the genres of comic books and picture books is likely to stem from a pragmatic reason. There are more panels or Frames, available on a single page in a comic book. Hence, the comic book is able to emphasis the Action-to-Action transition relation, which dramatises the movement through the action from one Frame to another. The picture book, on the other hand, is made up of comparatively lesser amount of Frames. Thus, each Frame is crucial and
instrumental in representing a certain narrative stage, or embodying the direction of the emergent narrative in a picture book. Generally, the scene-to-scene transition relation is usually more common in picture books.

Since there are three types of transition relation in DDGS, I select an example of each one and discuss their manifestation in DDGS. The first is the Scene-to-Scene transition. This is the relation between the Frame 1 and Frame 2 as shown in Figure 5.14. Although there is no significant lapse of time between Frames, I have classified this relation as Scene-to-Scene rather than Moment-to-Moment. This is because the setting in the two Frames has changed. In the context of Frame 1 and 2, there is a strong FLOW operating through the Visual Linking Devices (VLD) of Dominic Duck and Mama. Scene-to-Scene transition can also be observed in Part 4 of DDGS, as shown in Figure 5.14, where the text uses a sequence of six visual images to represent Dominic Duck’s experiences in school. This is appropriate as each of the Frames features a different scene of Dominic Duck’s experiences in school. Collectively these Frames make up a collage by which the salient moments of Dominic Duck’s experiences in school are represented visually, in the most effective and space-economical manner.

The second type of relation found in DDGS is the Subject-to-Subject transition relation. This is seen between Frame 4 and 5, Frame 16 and 17, as well as Frame 17 and 18, as shown in Figure 5.15. In the first case, the subject of not wanting to go to school links the two Frames. Frame 5 shows a caricature of a rather unpleasant looking teacher, representing Dominic Duck’s reason for not wanting to attend school. Frame 16 and 17 function as an antithesis to Frame 4 and 5, thus it is linked in a similar manner. In Frame 16 and 17, the subject is the wanting to go to school. This time, a visual representation of a kindly looking teacher is offered as a reason. Finally, in Frame 17 and the final Frame, the subject of what Dominic Duck has learnt in school provides the main linkage between the two Frames. It is interesting to note that the understanding of the Subject-to-
Subject transition relation is helped by the understanding of the linguistic text on the page, where the topic in each Frame is encased. The linguistic semiotic resource is greatly helpful though not always necessary in the Subject-to-Subject transition relation as exemplified in Figure 5.16.

Figure 5.15 Subject-to-Subject Transition Relation

Figure 5.16 Visual Subject-to-Subject Transition Relation
(Reproduced from Felix, 1980: 1-2)
Frame 7 and 8 in Figure 5.17 show the sole example of the Action-to-Action translation relation, given the reasons discussed earlier. The VLD of the characters and settings remain consistent in the two Frames. The only difference is that Frame 8 offers a close-up with Dominic Duck from moving towards Mama in Frame 7 to embracing her in Frame 8. The transition relation of Action-to-Action is suitably appropriate here, as the topic is Dominic Duck missing his Mama. Hence, the foregrounding of Dominic Duck’s movement towards Mama suggests his unwillingness for physical separation. This in turn is translated as the emotional proximity between Dominic Duck and Mama. The Action-to-Action transition relation has facilitated the communication of this meaning most effectively.

5.7 Highlights of School Experiences in Part 4

Part 4 in DDGS, unlike the other Parts, consists of only the semiotic resource of visual images. The six Frames packed across a two-page spread, describe Dominic Duck’s experiences in school. Due to constraints of time and space, a rigorous analysis of each Frame, such as that accomplished for Frame 1, is not possible in this study. As such, short comments on each of the Frame are made. The
The objective of this section is to suggest reasons, through a study of these Frames, for Dominic Duck’s change in attitude towards school, a mystery posed by the absence of linguistic text and for which answers can only obtained through an understanding of the visual images.
Frame 10 is set along a corridor in school. The time is likely to be outside class time, presumably during a break or before school. Interestingly, three of the Frames, namely 10, 11 and 15 are set outside of lesson time, with the other three Frames, 12, 13, 14 set in class. This seems to provide a nice balance between the experiences outside lesson time with the experiences during lesson time. This balance is upset, however, when the combined spatial occupation of the Frames set outside class is evidently much greater than the rest of the Frames that are set in class. A possible reading stemming from this observation is the suggestion that school is not merely a place for learning but a place for fun as well. In this case, the suggestion could be made, that the draw of fun outside of class may play a greater role in influencing Dominic Duck’s change of attitude. An argument that supports this reading is the observation that Frame 11 is saliently located in the top centre amongst the 6 Frames. In a sense then, Frame 11 can be seen as the CVI of the two-page spread on page 10 and 11. If this is indeed the case, then the emphasis of fun made here could add to the suggestion that the school experience for Dominic Duck consists of mainly fun filled activities occurring outside the classroom setting.

Frame 10 has a very balanced composition with two main characters facing each other in the middle of the page and two secondary Figures framing them. The prominence in this Frame is obviously Dominic Duck and his female friend. This is a scene of socialisation with the opposite sex, and a hint of courtship, or at least a growing friendship that is taking place. The relationship between Dominic Duck and the nameless (could it be she, like Dominic Duck, is also in the process of searching out her own identity?) female friend seems to develop over the Frames. In Frame 11, she is shown again, this time represented as cheering for Dominic Duck. In Frame 14, the female friend is smiling as Dominic Duck receives praises from the teacher. Frame 15 shows Dominic Duck waving farewell to his female friend. Perhaps even here there is a subtle suggestion that Dominic Duck is performing the gallantry act of ensuring his female companion gets home safely before he does.
This reading of blossoming romance in Frame 10 can take on a more serious twist when both Dominic Duck and the female friend’s bills are seen to have sexual symbolism, as suggested in Figure 5.19. Dominic Duck’s bill adopts the position of a phallic symbol poised for penetration into the female duck’s slightly pursed bills, symbolic of the female genitalia. In addition, throughout all the Frames featured in this Part, Dominic Duck is represented as the main actor, with his female friend consistently in the more passive and supporting role. These observations have implications on both the stereotypical relations as well as the socially perceived norms of heterosexual relations. The ideological intents of the choices made are reinforced, given that these observations are found within a pedagogic text.

Frame 11 shows the scene, presumably during a lesson break, at a playground. The composition in this scene is once again significant. The options made within the system of LINES and SHAPES here consist mostly of curves with edges smoothened out. Sharp angles and rough edges are absent here, conveying a sense of harmony. The message in the Frame is mainly encouragement and affirmation. The delight of Dominic Duck is shown in him ‘clapping’ his wings and the presence of the female duck cheering him on. Again, the stereotypical gender construction is reproduced. The clear blue sky also provides the sympathetic background supporting the positive reading of this Frame.

Frame 12 deserves particular attention, despite it seeming to have been marginalized to a corner, with only a little space allocated to it. Here, the scene takes place in a classroom, where Dominic Duck literally receives the thumbs up sign from his teacher. The sense of recognition for Dominic Duck’s effort is rewarding. However, in the light of the lexicogrammatical analysis earlier, more perhaps can be retrieved from the visual image in Frame 12. The image that Dominic Duck is producing on his canvas is a replica of his Mama. Effectively, Dominic Duck is receiving affirmation and praises for producing that image. Following the reading from the analysis given
earlier, where Mama is a representation of official and cultural ideologies, how can the reproducing of an imitation or a replica of his mother in a creative class of drawing, testify to Dominic Duck’s attainment of his own voice and securing his own identity? In other words, through the agencies of socialisation, that is the teachers, Dominic Duck is receiving affirmation and approval for reproducing the official discourse propagated earlier by his Mama, and now repackaged and endorsed by the institution of the school.

In Frame 13, there is yet another deceptively pleasant scene. It is set in the laboratory where Dominic Duck seems to receive instruction from a science teacher. This seems to indicate that the acquisition of knowledge is one of the reasons for Dominic Duck’s change in attitude towards school. This may be true, but more could perhaps be said with respect to this Frame. The scene in this Frame is set in a science lesson. However, the learning is done through the demonstration by a teacher only. This has suggestion of learning through a single authoritative source, which is often the teacher, rather than via experiences and hand-on sessions. The limitations imposed on the student to act further dilute the worth of a practical session as such. Instead, a pseudo pattern of rote learning is presented. Further to this, the power relations in the semiotics of placement, where the teacher is positioned so as to be higher than Dominic Duck, suggest that the teacher embodies authority and exercises power.

Figure 5.20 Putting on an Identity
Frame 14 depicts a classroom scene with the positive epithet “braveness” scrawled on the blackboard. Presumably, the attribute is somewhat linked to Dominic Duck as he is shown to be rewarded by his teacher. The classmates cheering behind him again adds to the sense of acceptance that Dominic Duck wins from his friends and contributes to the very positive and encouraging atmosphere. More, however, could be said with respect to the details in this Frame. The cap, which the teacher puts on Dominic Duck, is significant. Firstly, the cap is in the shape of the top half of a Duck’s head, with the lid of the cap as the bill. This has implications for the theme of identity in DDGS. Here, the teacher can be seen to be putting on a so-called identity, or at least a set of ideal characteristics upon Dominic Duck. The suggestion of this is that the identity remains merely as ‘put on’ and not part of the person of Dominic Duck at all. The final Frame, as shown in Figure 5.20, portrays Dominic Duck as having attained his identity and self-hood and shows him to be wearing the cap given by the teacher. This is meaningful as it reinforces the reading of the cap as a symbol of a new ‘identity’ projected upon Dominic Duck by the authorities.

Finally, in Frame 15, the scene depicts the dismissal some time after Dominic Duck’s first day at school. Judging from the smiles on the characters’ faces, both Dominic Duck and his friend seem to have enjoyed their day. The visual image of them waving good bye to each other seem to suggest that both Dominic Duck and his friend are looking forward to meeting each other the following day in school. It is appropriate that Frame 15 represents the dismissal of school, as Frame 10 to Frame 15 shows moments of Dominic Duck’s school day. Frame 16 onwards mark Part 5 in this narrative, where Dominic Duck explains to Mama, his change of attitude and opinions towards school.

5.8 Functions of each Semiotic Resource in DDGS

As discussed earlier in Chapter 3, the semiotic resources of language and visual images serve different roles and functions in their co-deployment. Due to their nature, each of the semiotic
resources is more adept in making certain meaning. Language, for instance, is better at classification and representing abstract entities. In DDGS especially, language is used as a means to represent the dialogue between the two characters. The exchange also employs several relative processes, which constructs a reality experientially.

Visual images, on the other hand, are more adept in representing experience, anchoring the abstract categories made with language into physical and concrete embodiment. For instance, in DDGS, when Dominic Duck exclaims, “The teacher is big. I am afraid of her”, the visual image represents a fierce looking teacher, presumably in Dominic Duck’s imagination. Interestingly, the visual image paves the way for the reader not just to enter into the story world of Dominic Duck, but into his psyche as well. The visual image is consistently deployed to feature what Dominic Duck is thinking, bringing about a quasi Frame within a Frame. This is seen in Frame 2, 5 and 17. In a sense then, the mental process as represented by the linguistic modality is ‘made physical’ through the representation in concrete terms of what Dominic Duck is thinking. To a certain extent, this is what has been described by Barthes (1977) as language anchoring or ‘fixing’ the meaning of the visual image.

In addition, as discussed earlier, the linguistic semiotic resource functions as an interface between the child-reader and the world of Dominic Duck. The visual image, however, serves primarily to depict the world of Dominic Duck. This reading is based on the observation that language is used not in the usual narrative fashion, where action and happenings are being described. Instead, language is used only to represent the dialogue between the two characters. Further to this, the expression plane of language also suggests that the linguistic text is not of the story world. This is despite language being superimposed upon the visual image as happens in most of the Frames, and only separated distinctly into two portions in the final Frame.
Certain contexts of usage may exploit this dichotomy of functions such that it becomes more pronounced. In the context where the picture book is used as an instrument of pedagogy, in the scenario of an educator reading to a child, the child is usually drawn towards the more interpersonally salient pictures. The visual images are therefore the gateway into the story world for the child, whereas the educator reads the linguistic text to the child, thereby mediating between the story world and the world of the child-reader. The interdependent relationship between language and pictures in the pedagogic text necessitates the comprehension of both modalities in order to understand the narrative. Thus a child-reader, who is unable to read the linguistic text yet, requires the mediation of the educator as the intermediary to enjoy the story.

In the context where the picture book serves primarily as a tool for the learning of the English language, the dichotomy is again put to good use. The story world represented by the pictures is more accessible to a child-reader as the representations or signifiers relates with the objects in the child’s world through mimesis. In other words, the iconic representations are in the image of its counterparts in the real world. This familiarity lends itself as a platform where the understanding and learning of language in the linguistic text can take place through the associations and inferences between the two semiotic resources. In addition, the mutually dependent relationship between the semiotic resources of language and visual images suggest that both modalities are essential if a complete understanding of the narrative in DDGS is to be obtained.

Language is used in DDGS to propel the narrative forward and shows how the narrative can be separated into five distinct Parts for analysis. The linguistic semiotic resource not only plays the crucial instructional role in teaching the child-reader about the English language, as discussed earlier, but also functions as an intermediary which transmits the ideologies embedded within the text to the child-reader. The poet, Ezra Pound (1913) eulogises the visual image or picture as “an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time”. Indeed the visual images feature a
particularly significant moment in the dialogue between the two characters, encasing the moment in a single visual Frame. In addition, the image captured in a visual Frame is usually of a particularly significant moment and merits close examination. Even when this is not the case, in the least it brings out the question as to why a particular moment, amongst others, is chosen for representation. In DDGS, the visual images also serve an important function of promoting reader’s identification and affiliation through the abstract style of the picture and the use of personified animals. The sense of empathy developed with the characters, in particular the protagonist, Dominic Duck, is important as this is crucial in the facilitating of ideologies and the transmissions of the institutional values to the child.

Finally, as discussed in the sections earlier, the analysis of the linguistic text alone in DDGS is insufficient to allow for a complete understanding of a multimodal text. The important question raised in the lexiogrammatical analysis of language is to explain the seemingly abrupt change in Dominic Duck’s attitude towards school. This very important information, perhaps even seen as the climax of the entire book, is left linguistically silent. Instead, in Part 4 on page 10 and 11, there are six miniature Frames, which represent highlights of Dominic Duck’s pleasant experiences in school. As each of these selection shows a separate scene from Dominic Duck’s experience in school, and that these Frames are chosen over many possible scenes to depict Dominic Duck’s experience, these selections are meaningful and are discussed in Section 5.7. Each of the Frames is briefly commented upon so that the reasons for Dominic Duck’s change in attitude towards school can be understood. DDGS is chosen as a text for analysis, because it effectively exploits the potential within the two semiotic resources for meaning making.

The relationship between the modalities of language and visual images is a co-dependent one. DDGS is thus an example of a multimodal children’s book where neither the language nor visual images semiotic resources make sense without the other. In other words, the narrative is incomplete.
without one or the other. Recognising that meaning is made uniquely in each individual semiotic resource, the co-deployment of the two modalities in a multisemiotic text results in a multiplication of meaning as well. Following the analysis from the Integrative Multisemiotic Model in Chapter 3, the relationship between language and visual images in DDGS can be said to be of a divergent strand, as both modalities seem to be re-contextualising the other. In as sense then, the meaning made from the co-deployment of both modalities is an emergent one, significantly different from the meanings made from each individual semiotic resource.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Implications of Analysis

As discussed earlier, the first objective of the analysis in Chapter 5 is to understand the meanings made in the text in order to elicit the ideologies, which can be revealing of the Singapore culture. The second objective is to demonstrate the workings of the Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM) and to determine the usefulness of the framework to multimodal research. The extent to which these aims are achieved is discussed in the following sections.

6.1.1 Reflections on Singaporean Culture

As noted in Chapter 1, the text is both a product and a process of the culture from where it emerges. Dominic Duck Goes to School (DDGS) has been chosen particularly for its representation of Singaporean society. Factors contributing to DDGS’s suitability include the endorsement from the Ministry of Education, an agency which controls the propagation of certain ideas and values of the young, as well as the nature of the picture book as a pedagogic text, which has embedded within it a regulative function. The analysis suggests that DDGS makes obvious efforts to facilitate the reader’s identification and empathy with the main protagonist. Coupled with the fact that the main intended readership of DDGS are the younger members in the culture, the text is seen as a tool for acculturation as well as the transmission of ideologies along with the notions of normalcy in the Singaporean society.

The main idea that DDGS seeks to propagate is that school is fun. This idea directs the main part of the narrative. Dominic Duck begins with a great reluctance towards school. He makes a list of
several reasons for not wanting to go to school, only to have each of them counter-refuted by Mama. Mama exercises obvious power, being both a parent and an adult and offers the ‘correct’ perspectives of schooling. Later on, as shown in Part 4 of the text, Dominic Duck’s experiences in school prompt him to change his negative attitude to school. When the formulaic scenes from Part 1-3 is replayed in Part 5, Dominic Duck echoes Mama’s earlier perspectives and declares his liking of school. Further to that, Dominic Duck also claims to have found his identity or, to adopt a more cynical reading, his place in society. After his first day in school, Dominic Duck is converted by both the parental authority and the institutional experience he had in school. This ‘happy ending’ to the story in Part 5, functions as the coda, but also reinforces the moral of the story, which is summarised simply as the child will enjoy going to school. As the first title in the Creative Readers for Primary Ones, it is important that this idea is put across effectively. This is because the adherence to this set of ideas will serve as a firm foundation, enabling further socialisation, which is required to take place in the school environment.

However, some other ideas seem to be propagated through the story as well. One of them is the suggestion that the parent or the adult is always, or will eventually, be proven right. In DDGS, the accuracy of Mama’s views is proven by Dominic Duck’s actual experiences, which he adopts as his own views as well. The success in the transmission of these ideas is dependent on the degree of identification and empathy the child-reader develops with Dominic Duck. As discussed in Section 6.2, not all ideologies are passively adopted and the child-reader could actively reject them or selectively accede to some while tenaciously resisting against others.

Having discussed the main direction of the text, it is interesting and appropriate to examine some of the more controversial issues that the multimodal analysis has revealed. One of the most pertinent issues is the suggestion that Dominic Duck has not really attained his identity at the end of the story; instead, he has been successfully acculturated by parental authority and the educational
institution to echo the socially correct views, as well as to adopt the socially accepted sense of normalcy in the culture. This suspicion is strengthened through the visual analysis in Part 4, as discussed in Chapter 5. The full implications of this reading could give rise to the accusation that the education system and the upbringing of children is not promoting the thinking and creativity which is necessary for the attainment of an individual’s identity. Instead, the culture’s survival is based on its ability to reproduce by propagating the ideas and values which are assimilated by the young. If this reading is conceivable, then DDGS, in the guise of a simple and innocent picture book, is actually a social satire on Singapore culture.

There are also signs of the pressure on Dominic Duck to go to school. This issue is a central theme in the Singaporean society, where parents place a lot of emphasis on the education of the child. The text makes a comment on the typical parent-child relations in the Singaporean culture as well. This is suggested through the dynamics of unequal power play between Mama and Dominic Duck. In addition, the text also demonstrates consistency to the often-touted Asian value that children ought to show respect to their elders by not talking back to them. This is reflected in the relationship between Dominic Duck and Mama. Although Dominic Duck, given a child’s natural inquisitive tendency to ask questions, initiates the conversation in most of the Parts, Mama exercises greater control over the exchange. Dominic Duck only speaks again in his turn to respond to Mama’s question. He remains significantly silent after Mama offers her perspective. As observed in Chapter 5, Dominic Duck only breaks this formulaic turn taking pattern in Part 5, where having acquired a voice in school, Dominic Duck is effectively given the last word in the Part and in the narrative. The cap given by the teachers in Part 4, and worn by Dominic Duck in the final Frame, further suggests that Dominic Duck’s identity is ‘put on’ rather than acquired individually.

The implications of the analysis in Chapter 5 reveal certain values and ideas of Singaporean society. Pertinent themes such as the importance of education and the dynamics of parent-child
relationship are also dramatised in the narrative. From the perspective of DDGS as a product of Singaporean culture, these issues are revealing of the ideologies that are entrenched within the culture. Adopting the view of the text as a process, the ideas and values promoted in DDGS further reproduce the cultural norms and foster certain attitudes, which help to build the culture by influencing the lives of the children. The learning of these values and ideas through the pedagogic text and through the schooling experience is likened to the rites of initiation these younger members are obliged to perform before acquiring the full status of their membership in the culture as an adult.

6.1.2 Contributions to Multimodal Research

This study hopes to contribute to the multimodal research, where there is an increasing recognition that meaning is made through a variety of semiotic resources. I have proposed the Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM) as a meta-model, which aims to synthesise the various research efforts in the field, as well as provide a framework where different meaning making aspects of the multimodal text can be located. I have also theorised the expression plane of both language and visual images as well as the discourse semantics stratum of the visual images. These conceptions have been applied to the analysis of DDGS in Chapter 5. The analysis testifies to the usefulness and the productivity of the proposals made. The full meaning of the multimodal text can only be more fully understood when the display, grammar and semantics strata of the text are examined. The neglect of any of these planes will render the discussion of the text’s meaning partial. The focus of my analysis has been to demonstrate the workability of the proposals made earlier, together with the limitations as listed in Section 6.3. This does not imply, however, that the conceptions proposed are final and complete. The proposals remain in a rudimentary stage, having only gone through the rigorous application of a single text. Nonetheless, the frameworks proposed in this dissertation aim towards a better and fuller understanding of the multimodal text.
6.2 Locating the Text on the Context Plane

All readings and meanings made in a text are to be anchored and filtered through the context plane. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, Martin (1992) proposes the Register, Genre and Ideology strata on the context plane, differentiating the various aspects for a clearer understanding. Due to constraints of time and space, I am not able to fully discuss these strata with respect to DDGS. However, I wish to conclude my discussion in this dissertation by situating the text in the wider perspective of social reality and culture, that is the context stratum, as displayed in Figure 6.1. I also propose that the relationship between the text and culture is that of Reflection, Reproduction and Reconstruction. In doing so, I come full circle with my discussion on the relationship between experience and meaning in Chapter 1, and locate my contributions in this dissertation in the larger field of the attempt to understand meaning and fathom the enigmatic phenomenon of experiencing.

![Figure 6.1 Relationship between Text and Culture](image-url)

Figure 6.1 Relationship between Text and Culture
The text as a product is usually a reflection of the culture from which it emerges. Hence, the analysis of texts provides a platform by which a critique of the culture can be launched. This assumption is applied in this study, where the analysis of the meanings in DDGS, unmasks certain ideologies, which is then inferred as representative of the culture in Singapore at large. Not all texts provide a representative mirroring of the culture though, and the degree of this representation is dependent on how entrenched the text is within that culture.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the text is also a reproduction of culture through the making of meanings from the experiences of an individual. Halliday (1993) discusses the relationship between language and social reality. He repudiates the Whorfian hypothesis of linguistic relativity asserting instead that “language does not passively reflect reality; language actively creates reality…Grammar construes reality to the prevailing means and relations of production” (1993: 7-8). The semiotic resources of language and visual images play the mediating role in the reconstruction of the social reality and culture. Vygotsky (1987) recognises that there are many resources or ‘tools’ through which experience is mediated. He notes that these resources facilitate the permeation of what is ‘normal’ in their semiotic community in the process, demarcating those who belong and conform, against those whose deviant acts and thoughts render them marginal to the community. Bourdieu’s (1977) theory of symbolic violence is also useful to explain the attitude of the dominated members in the semiotic community who, despite the injustices against them, persist in implicitly or passively reproducing the cultural norms. In a sense then, individuals tend to reproduce certain dimensions of culture or social reality through meaning making rather than exercising a deliberate effort to initiate and construct an alternative or ‘new’ reality.

However, this does not mean that individuals are caught in a helpless cycle of reproducing culture. Texts are able to reconstruct a social reality that circumvents the culture it emerges from. Instances of such texts are found in the genre of fantasy and fairytales. As Halliday (1975: 140) asserts, “[w]e
are not prisoners of our cultural semiotic; we can all learn to move outside it. But this requires a positive act of semiotic reconstruction. We are socialized within it, and our meaning potential is derived from it”. In other words, we are not trapped in a social reality where every semiotic construction is a reproduction of culture. Instead, it is possible to operate outside the cultural paradigm by challenging and eventually changing the paradigm. However, as Halliday (1975) notes, it involves an effort to do that.

In addition, the view of the reader as tabula rasa, passively waiting as a blank slate for inscription, vulnerable to all ideological indoctrination, is overly simplistic. Travis’ (1998) proposes the theory of reader’s agency, which suggests that the reader can choose whether to endorse and conform to the ideologies or to resist them by deliberately acting in a manner contrary to the ideologies in the text. Thus by rejecting the ideologies within the text, the reader challenges these ideologies by reconstructing the meanings propounded. The extent, to which the reconstruction takes place, depends on the degree of consciousness, where individuals are aware of their power to modify culture. In a broader and perhaps somewhat idealistic vision, as more individuals are sensitised to their agency to change social reality through language, within the social constraints, there may result in a little less self-perpetuated social injustices or what Bourdieu (1977) termed as ‘symbolic violence’.

6.3 Limitations of Study and Further Research

Factors of space and time have constrained the scope and depth of this project. This is exacerbated with the tremendous research potential of the expanding realm of multimodal studies. In this study, I have been careful to trace and acknowledge the source of my ideas and to locate them within the Integrative Multisemiotic Model (IMM), which organises different resources according to their particular contribution to multimodal meaning making. Some instances of these new concepts are
the notion of homospatiality, the systems on the expression plane for both language and visual images as well as the systems on the discourse semantics stratum for visual images. I hope that these conceptions can facilitate further research through the application of these ideas to a wider variety of multimodal texts, which may either build upon or debunk these notions.

As far as possible, I have tried to show the productivity of these conceptions by subjecting them to a textual analysis in DDGS. However, as only one text is used in my analysis, it is not possible for every system proposed in the display or semantics stratum to be discussed. Likewise, due to the nature of the picture book, there is much lesser happening on the Space of Integration (SoI) than may have been obtained from for instance, an advertisement. Hence, the analysis in Chapter 5 is not able to demonstrate the complete workings of these ideas. Nonetheless, in my proposals of these notions in Chapter 3, I have attempted to show examples of these systems and conceptions occurring in other texts.

Due to both time and space, I have also been unable to complete a full discussion of the context plane, as represented as the bottom slice in the IMM. Although I have discussed notions in the context plane, such as the relationship between the text and culture in Section 6.2 and Chapter 1, there remains much theorising to be completed in this area.

Finally, concerning the IMM proposed in this dissertation, there are some observations to be made as well. As a meta-model, the IMM synthesises various research efforts by situating them on the planes and dimensions of the framework so that there is greater centrality and focus. For instance, a researcher working in the field of materiality and medium of the semiotic resource will be able to locate the phenomenon within a larger theoretical multisemiotic model (in this case, across the communication planes). The IMM is designed to unify the diverse research and studies in the field
by locating their contributions into a single model, which takes into account the complexities of multimodal meaning making.

However, some qualifications exist with respect to the IMM. The problem of addressing a dynamic phenomenon with a typological description and framework is a perennial quandary. Hence, the IMM may bear the criticism, like other frameworks, of being reductionistic and even rigid in the categorisation of systems according to the metafunctions, despite the usefulness of the metafunction as a principle of theoretical integration as discussed in Chapter 3. The severity of this criticism, however, is somewhat alleviated in the IMM with the construction of a model that can reflect topological meaning as well. It is also useful to note that the categories in actuality are more fluid than can be represented on clearly delineated and neat classifications of systems in the model as indicated through the theory of system-metafunction fidelity. There are overlaps, which apply across ranks as well as over metafunctions.

Apart from recognising the fluidity of the classifications, it is useful to note that each of the metafunctions may not be equally dominant on a multimodal page. O’Toole (1994) discusses the monofunctional tendencies of certain schools of paintings, where a single metafunction may tend to dominate in a certain work. Similarly, not all metafunctions are equally salient in a multimodal text, despite the appearance of the equal topological space allocated to each metafunction in the abstract theoretical construction of the IMM. Hence, it is not surprising to find a particular metafunction having a greater role in a certain multimodal text.

O’Toole (1999) also comments that since only some options within the systems in the matrix are selected in the construction of any one text, it is not necessary to account for every system in the analysis of a text. Likewise, in the IMM, there are many systems used to describe and analyse a multimodal text. However, not every single system needs to be accounted for in an analysis; rather,
the model is to serve our purpose of understanding how meaning is made in a multimodal text through the choices which have been made in the text.

Despite these possible weaknesses, a categorical framework for the analysis of a multimodal text that pays attention to the meanings made on the expression plane as well as on the Space of Integration is helpful. IMM may be likened to a neat and well-equipped toolbox. The toolbox contains the concepts and theoretical language at our disposal to describe and account for the phenomenon of the multimodal construction of meaning. Just as one does not use all the equipment in a toolbox to fix a leaking tap, the analyst selects the tools most useful in his deconstruction of the text. It is hoped that IMM is a more adept set of equipment to study the phenomenon of multimodality in a text, although it remains along with the other conceptions proposed in this dissertation, at a provisional and exploratory stage.
REFERENCES


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