

Multimodality, literacy and texts: Developing a discourse

EVE BEARNE University of Cambridge, UK



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Abstract This article argues for the development of a framework through which to describe children's multimodal texts. Such a shared discourse should be capable of including different modes and media and the ways in which children integrate and combine them for their own meaning-making purposes. It should also acknowledge that multimodal texts are not always or only screen-based. In addition, it is argued that current definitions of literacy do not readily answer to the variety of semiotic resources deployed in the design of multimodal texts. In revisiting the author's previous tentative thoughts about 'the rhetoric of design' the article develops this theme further through offering a possible framework and using this to analyse three different types of multimodal texts created by seven-year-old children. The framework is, however, a 'work in progress', which it is hoped, will open up debate.

Keywords affordance; cohesion; multimodality; rhetoric

Introduction

With the greater availability and accessibility of digital technology, literacy has taken a spatial turn. The screen now takes a central place in public communications and increasingly in educational settings, changing the ways in which reading and writing are understood. Reading on screen means using different – and varied – reading pathways and processes from reading continuous print (Brice Heath, 2000; Holsanova and Holmqvist, 2006; Kress, 2003a). Writing very often now involves a visual element, if not in terms of including drawing, then perhaps in the use of varied sizes, shapes and colours of typeface and fonts and in the fact that the design on the page may not be sequential in the same way as continuous written text. In addition, screen texts, sometimes including print and image, are often accompanied by sound and visual effects. Technological developments have also contributed to an upsurge in complex picturebooks for all ages, as well as having a profound influence on the design of information books (Moss, 2003). However, the proliferating material, social and textual affordances

of the screen and book make demands on theories of literacy. The spatial organization of material and ideas means a different way of understanding how texts are constructed and socially mediated.

The shift from page to screen means looking 'beyond the linguistic' (Jewitt, 2005: 315) to semiotics: from a theory about language alone to a theory that can take account of different components of meaning. The semiotician Michael Halliday, one of the greatest influences on current theories of multimodality, proposes three communicational elements which function simultaneously to make meaning: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual (Halliday, 1978). The ideational component involves decisions about the interpersonal (audience/readership) component and these are realized in a text form which communicates ideas and intentions coherently. So meaning drives the approach taken to the listener/reader/watcher and influences the structure of the text. Since the ideational and the interpersonal are the invisible or implicit elements of a communication, the shape of the text itself – its grammar – realizes the meaning through patterned representation (Halliday, 1985). In going beyond, but incorporating, sentence grammar in his semiotic theory of language, Halliday has influenced multimodal theory as it takes into account other non-linguistic elements of communication including gesture, movement, image, music, sound and colour alongside written and spoken language (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006; Macken-Horarik, 2004; Martinec and Salway, 2005).

To Halliday, the grammar of any utterance, any representation, any text, describes the patterns that make it comprehensible to members of the culture in which it is produced and received. Syntax describes sentence grammar: the ways in which any language community expects a sentence to be patterned for it to make sense to that community. Text grammars similarly represent expectations that certain texts will be structured according to developed conventions. However semiotic theory also includes the notion of intentionality. While the grammars of texts may be culturally developed, mediated and maintained, there is still the possibility for individual agency. This position may seem paradoxical, but fits well with Bourdieu's view of social practices as 'regulated improvisations' (Bourdieu, 1977: 78). Far from a grammar being a fixed set of rules, the notion of patterns of representation allows for flexibility, transformation and creativity (Kress, 2003b). Central to multimodality is the concept of design, of intentionality (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000; Kress, 2003b; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006), which introduces a dynamic through emphasizing both the social relationships of any communicative act and the possibilities for transformation as texts are constructed. A further essential element is that

of reflective critical analysis of texts and 'the contexts of culture and situation in which they seem to work' (New London Group, 2000: 24). Multimodality, then, is part of a theory of literacy as essentially social (Barton et al., 1999) and multimodal texts contribute to a changing ecology of literacy (Mackey, 2002) where children's experience of a range of digital and paper-based texts contributes to their potential for composing and understanding other texts. In particular, children's knowledge of popular cultural texts, often in the home, gives them the basis for a critical understanding of texts and the contexts in which they are produced (Marsh, 2004; Vasquez, 2005). To energize this critical potential in educational settings, however, means having a discourse through which to describe and analyse multimodal texts (Bearne, 2003a; Macken-Horarik, 2004). This is easily said, but such a discourse needs to be flexible enough to cater for the different semiotic modes; it needs to be able to describe a specialized text such as the written novel as well as the highly dispersed text of a film. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of the need for an overarching approach, the development of an analytical framework is pressing, particularly since in many areas of education, not least those concerned with literacy, students are expected to produce multimodal texts.

Affordance and cohesion

The ubiquity of the screen and its influence on definitions and understanding of literacy cannot be underestimated. However, its very dominance tends to obscure the fact that many multimodal texts are not screen-based. A multimodal text is created by the combination of: image, sound (including speech and music), gesture and movement and writing or print, communicated through paper, the screen, face to face meetings, performative space. This makes the enterprise of absorbing multimodality into literacy a very demanding one. Perhaps 'literacy' is not an adequate term to describe the texts, contexts and practices of the 21st century, since it privileges the written over other forms of communication (Bearne, 2003b, 2005; Kress, 2003b). In the shifting text landscape (Carrington, 2005), it may be more accurate to use 'text' to describe the combination of the representational modes of speech and sound, writing, image, gesture, with the communicative media: book, magazine, computer screen, video, film, radio. Importantly, multimodal texts work through the combination and interrelations of modes as they are woven together to make different kinds of texts.

If language and literacy only carry part of the meaning of multimodal texts (if they are present at all) then it is necessary to consider the contribution of all elements of a text. As Kress puts it, 'If a message is "spread across"

different modes how does each constituent work?’ (Kress, 2003b: 35). Does an image do the same as its accompanying words? Does a gesture simply echo the spoken words it illuminates? These questions are central to developing an educational theory of multimodality since children need to be in a position to choose the most telling mode(s) and media for their communicative intentions. Seeking answers means considering the potential affordance of modes and media – what they allow the composer of a text to do and what constraints they operate. The affordances of modes and media of representation depend on time and space. While it is possible to re-read the pages of a novel because of the affordance of the medium (the book) and the mode (the printed word) it is not possible to re-read or revisit, except in memory (or through video), the moves and gestures made in a ballet. Even seeing the production again will not give exactly the same representation. Books afford some flexibility in the time that they can be appreciated whereas stage productions do not. Similarly, the space needed to create the work will make a difference to how it is understood and appreciated: the space occupied by a book makes it highly portable; the performance space of a drama or ballet makes it necessary to view it there and then.

Different types of text have their own patterns of cohesion that contribute to the overall architecture of the text. Where narrative depends on chronological cohesion, texts which are represented visually or diagrammatically depend on spatial cohesion. Cohesion in moving image texts is often created by a variety of visual effects: repeated motifs, use of perspective, close-ups, mid- and long shots; choices of setting, colour, placing and intensity of light; patterns of sound effects and musical refrains and repetitions to underpin the emotional elements of the text. These work alongside the linguistic cohesion of dialogue: connectives, conjunctions, pronoun references, deixis, substitution, ellipsis and lexical patterns. In live-acted drama or ballet, positioning on the stage and the rhythms of movement and gesture add to the patterns of sound, colour, lighting and dialogue that help to make sense of the drama. In narrative picture books, the lines, vectors, the direction of characters’ eye gaze, repeated visual motifs, gesture and stance, framing and spatial organization act as visual connectives to create text cohesion. These structural elements operate alongside the ideational and interpersonal aspects of meaning.

The rhetoric of design

In revisiting the notion of the rhetoric of design (Bearne, 2003b) my interest is in children’s text production, specifically in educational settings. Drawing on Halliday’s meaning functions I use ‘design’ to invoke the ways

in which ideational and interpersonal meanings are intentionally combined to create texts, assuming children's agency as they compose. Current views of rhetoric (Andrews, 1992; Kress et al., 2001) provide a unifying theoretical perspective between the verbal and the visual and contribute to a frame for considering the ways in which modes combine to communicate meaning. In spoken rhetoric, which includes the use of gesture, posture and movement, the 'argument' or communicative effect is made through emphasis, intonation, pause and pace. All of these can be said to have their parallel in written and pictorial form. In written or pictorial text, emphasis is created by size of image, heaviness of line, punctuation, font, graphic conventions like speech balloons, lexical or visual repetition (Doonan, 1993; McCloud, 1993). Spoken rhetoric takes account of gaps in sound for communicative effect; persuasive emphasis depends on pause and intonational nuance. The gaps, comparable to the white space on the page or the rests in music or punctuation in printed language, alongside other emphatic elements like gesture and facial expression, create the pace of the text and so contribute to the force of the message. In printed or visual texts the use of space, the placing of images and text, font size and shape create the pace and rhetoric of the designed page. As post-modern picturebook makers have shown, too, playful disruptions of text cohesion and unexpected juxtapositions evoke humour in a similar way to verbal puns and jokes (Lewis, 2001; Nikolajeva and Scott, 2001). In addition, other semiotic theories help to develop categories to describe the orchestration (Bourne and Jewitt, 2003) of different modes.

In using the notion of rhetoric – the ways in which representation is shaped for communication for a specific audience (Kress et al., 2001) – the ideational and interpersonal functions are realized through a combination of modes. However, since all texts have patterns of cohesion, it is possible to compare the effects of certain common elements of representation and communication. *Image* including *content, size, colour, tone, line, placing/use of space* is an essential strand (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006; Macken-Horarik, 2004; Martinec and Salway, 2005). *Language* (syntax and lexis) is another important component and in the proposed framework I draw on Halliday (1978) and Kress et al. (2001) where the relationships between language and other elements of multimodal communication are seen as dynamic and interactional. Since multimodality goes beyond the written word, *sound, vocalization and gesture* come into play. Van Leeuwen has noted that intonation is relatively neglected in studies of multimodality (Reitstatter et al., 2005) and although he discusses voice quality and timbre (Van Leeuwen, 1999) it seems that sound in multimodality is undertheorized. Sidnell and Stivers (2005) also consider the function of intonation, framing their discussion

within interactive dialogue, which emphasizes the interrelationship between word and gesture. In her analysis of gesture, Norris (2004) offers four different categories: *iconic* (often with pictorial content mimicking accompanying speech); *metaphoric* (again with pictorial content but presenting abstract concepts); *deictic* (pointing to objects or ideas); and *beat* (emphatic movements in/out or up/down) (Norris, 2004: 28). For these distinctions she draws on the anthropological work of Kendon (1997) and cognitive psychology (McNeill, 1992). More recently, Kendon (2004) and Streek (1993) have examined the relationships between gesture and speech, including facial behaviour as gesture, and Franks and Jewitt have specifically analysed gesture as part of the orchestration of meaning across semiotic modes (Franks and Jewitt, 2001). Alongside these elements of multimodal communication and representation, Norris (2004) also describes the role of head and bodily movement and posture in interactive communication while Happonen, drawing on dance theory, analyses movement and posture in children's illustrated texts (Happonen, 2001).

Viewpoint or *gaze* is less often included in analyses of non-verbal modes although highly important in terms of the interpersonal aspects of multimodal communication and representation. In her semiotic analysis of a two-year-old's representation and interpretation of graphic signs, Lancaster (2001) identifies three functions of gaze: the analytic, interpersonal and expressive. Her analysis of the relationship between the interpersonal and the expressive aspects of gaze is particularly useful in considering performative texts. Streek's view of gaze as regulatory (Streek, 1993) adds to the interpersonal and rhetorical function of gaze. He takes this further, however, in his suggestion that removal of gaze is also significant as this signals ordering of thoughts before starting an extended utterance. Kress and Van Leeuwen see gaze in images as 'a visual form of address' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 123) which invites a relation between the image and the viewer. They distinguish between a direct gaze (demand image) and an image where the gaze is directed within the image (offer image) thus underlining the role of gaze in making a direct or oblique relationship with the viewer.

It is clear, then, that semiotic theory offers plenty of scope for proposing a frame which is capable of describing children's different multimodal texts. Drawing on the theoretical perspectives above, I use the following analytic categories:

Image: content, size, colour, tone, line, placing/use of space

Language: syntax and lexis

Sound/vocalization: content, emphasis, volume, vocal intonation, pause, pace

Gaze: direction of gaze of communicator or character in representation

Movement: gesture and posture.

I apply these conceptual approaches to consider the patterned grammars of three multimodal texts created by children and to examine how the children create coherent texts through interweaving different modes in a specific form of text. These examples: a largely screen-based explanation text, a spoken narrative and a picturebook story, each by seven-year-old children in English classrooms, show how different modes and media may be more or less dominant in the creation of an integrated text. They also illustrate how the affordances of the different modes lend themselves more or less to the chosen type of text. There is, perhaps, an irony about using these three examples of children's multimodal texts, precisely because of issues of affordance. The printed page of this journal does not allow for colour, sound, movement and gesture so that the texts produced by the children can only be partially appreciated through description.

Example 1: *Bright ideas* – PowerPoint™ presentation

Catherine Phillips, working with a class of seven- and eight-year-olds planned a sequence of work combining science and design technology. Each group carried out a simulation over three weeks, designing and constructing a model of a playground for the local community, using their knowledge of electrical circuits to provide the lighting. The children presented their work in role with their model and the screen presentation, attempting to sell their ideas to an adult, also in role, who interrogated them in the style of a television 'hiring and firing' reality show. Figure 1 shows the screens of one group's design. Their model was on a table to the left of the interactive whiteboard screen and the group stood to the right of the screen as the audience viewed it. They moved about as each member of the group presented their designated part and handed the mouse to each other for clicking to introduce the different screens and elements of the presentation. For brevity, just one girl's (Rhianna's) spoken part of the text is included in this example.

Screen one has a black background with yellow symbols of lights at each corner and top and bottom of the title. The word *bright* is in alternate blue and pink letters; the eye is blue surrounded by red; the deer is brown and the *s* is green. The different features in the centre of the screen are introduced on mouse clicks with a variety of sound effects (see Table 1).

Screen two has a pale blue patterned background with the word *planning* on the left in blue shading to purple and back to blue again, and the list of decisions and equipment in green. *Planning* and the list are introduced on mouse clicks but with no sound effects.

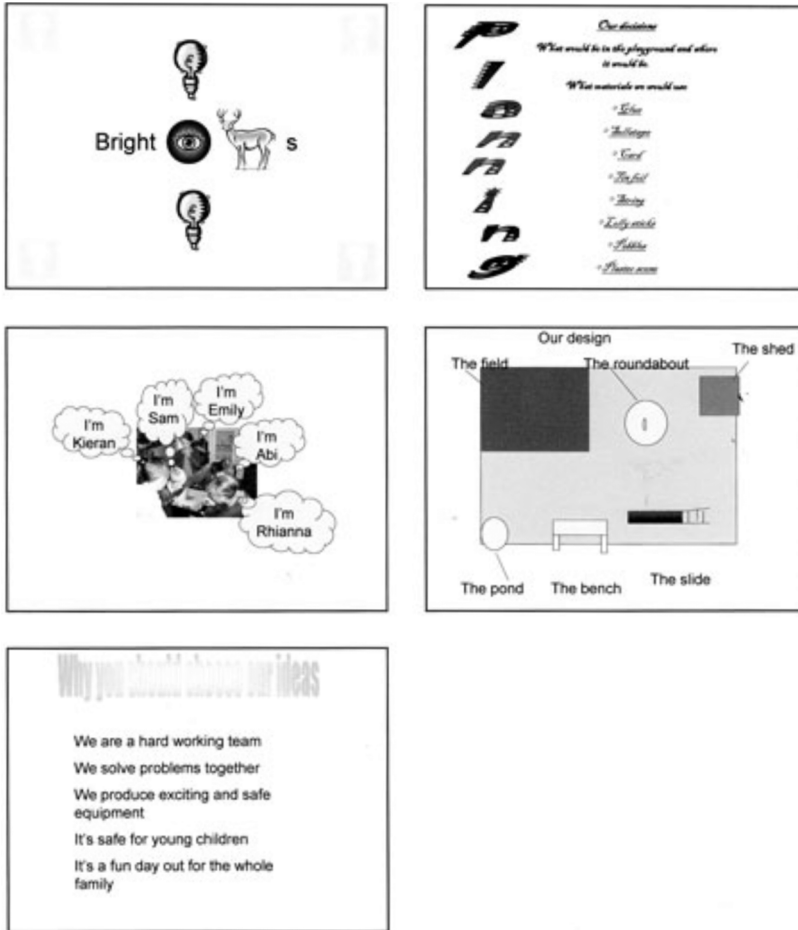


Figure 1 Bright Ideas PowerPoint™

Screen three has a red background with the name bubbles in pale grey with black lettering. Each bubble is introduced on a mouse click and in the presentation the children spoke their names as they appeared on screen. The photograph shows the children in their predominantly red uniforms and white shirts.

Screen four has a brown outer background, a darker brown for the shed, light green for most of the playground with a darker green field, pale grey pond, bench and roundabout and a purple slide. The whole image appears at once on the screen.

The background for the final screen is blue shading to red in the centre, with a yellow heading and black print for the list. Each element of the list

is introduced on a mouse click (managed by Sam) and commented on by a member of the group.

Rhianna first spoke when she said her name on screen three. Her role for the explanation on screen four was to talk about the placing of the lights on the model. After another member of the group had introduced the screen image, different children spoke about specific features, explaining the group's decisions.

Table 1 separates Rhianna's presentation into different numbered episodes using the headings *Image*, *Language*, *Sound/vocalization*, *Gaze* and *Movement*. In the transcript, pause marks / and // indicate slight and longer pauses in the transcript. Emphasis is indicated by underlining. All other vocal and visual features are individually described. Episodes are indicated by numbers in brackets.

Analysis

Image: (Content, size, colour, tone, line, placing/use of space) It is difficult to separate Rhianna's part of the text from the group's production of the screen presentation. The screens show the group's choices of colour, sound and design and the overall effect is of a combination of preferences apparently enjoying the affordance of the medium and the software to allow them to use colour, different typefaces, font sizes and sound liberally. The design of the screens shows a common feature where key elements are centrally placed, in line with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) views of salience. On most screens the group has paid attention to the audience's needs for visibility, except for screen two (2) where the need to make a list of all the equipment they used meant choosing quite a small font. Generally, however, the group shows awareness that a screen presentation works better if it is not overloaded with words or complex images.

Language: Syntax and lexis Stripped of descriptions of her gaze, gesture and the adult's questions, Rhianna's spoken contributions are clear and to the point (as shown in episodes 5, 6 and 7). The sentences are generally short, often joined by *so* and repetition of specific items, for example *lights* which was Rhianna's particular responsibility, *people* and *children*, relevant to her slot on the last screen about safety for young children (10).

Sound/vocalization Rhianna was obviously interested in the sound effects on the presentation although these were not recorded by the children but downloaded from available sound effects, for example in Episode 1. They were mostly chosen to express movement (zooming sounds) but also to

Table 1 Rhianna's presentation and conversation

Episode	Image	Language	Sound/vocalization	Gaze	Movement, gesture and posture
1	Screen 1	Bright [ideas]	zooming sound effects and drum rolls on mouse clicks	as part of the group, at times looking at the audience and at times looking away	standing mostly still with hands at sides, holding notes
2	Screen 2	Planning heading plus list	no sound effects	as above	as above
3	Screen 3	<i>I'm Rhianna.</i>		looks downwards then to the side	moves slightly forward as she says her name
4	Screen 4 playground	Labels for different parts of the	the audience but mostly looking down at the model	starts by looking at the teacher in slightly uncomfortable	standing with legs crossed, looking
5		<i>We decided to put the lights on each side of the playground/ so we // er// put stuff that needed lights there.//</i>	/ slight pause // longer pause		points to the lights at the middle of each side of the rectangle
6		<i>People would want lights by the// the play things</i>			pointing to the roundabout and the slide
7		<i>so they could keep an eye on their children and hear where they sit.</i>			
8		<i>It was a bit hard to make the lights stay up//</i>	giggles	looks at Abi	pointing to bench
9		<i>but we managed to get them to stay up in the end</i>		looks at Abi again who then starts her part of the presentation	pointing to a combination of sticky tape and blurtack at the base of each light standard
10	Screen 5 line: It's safe for young children	Heading: Why you should choose our ideas' and list of points <i>We thought that lots of little children might be there so we made the slide not too steep and we put the bench by the pond so people could keep an eye on their children</i>	picks up her cue without hesitation occasionally looking down at her notes	speaks directly to the audience looking at screen occasionally	standing quite still

Continued

Table 1 (Continued)
Conversation

<i>Episode</i>	<i>Image</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Sound/vocalization</i>	<i>Gaze</i>	<i>Movement, gesture and posture</i>
11	None	//er// no//	pauses	avoids eye contact, looks confused	stands with legs crossed
12		Oh// um//	pauses		moving across to the model
13		well/ the lights here will light the field//	Emphasis on will pauses		pointing to the lights in the middle of the top side and the left side on the screen
14		and this one is by the side of the shed//	pause		pointing to the right side of the screen image
15		well I liked making the PowerPoint/ 'cause I'd done some at home with my dad//.	slight pause pause	looking first at the group and then at the adult with a smile	standing on both legs quite still
16		I liked putting the sound in	giggle		

emphasize the humour of the 'Ideas' symbols on the first screen which were accompanied by drum rolls with each mouse click. In her spoken presentation, Rhianna spoke firmly and with sufficient volume for the class to hear but without great emphasis or intonational variation except on *will in the lights here will light the field* (13) and in her occasional giggles. Her pauses were mostly to help her gather her thoughts rather than for specific effect and the pace was consistently quite even, slowing slightly as she was answering the adult's question and then speeding up when she was answering the question about the bit of the project she liked best.

Gaze Rhianna managed to look directly at her audience occasionally, using familiar faces like the teacher and her friend Abi as props to help her transfer her gaze to the audience. She also used a regulatory gaze when indicating to Abi that it was her turn to speak (9). Rhianna's interpersonal gaze seemed aligned with the assurance she felt in her material as well as the personal assurance she felt when exposed to an audience. For quite a lot of the time her gaze was removed from her audience as she sought to shape the meaning she was trying to convey, for example, looking either at the model (4) or at the screen (10) as she was explaining particular aspects of the project.

Movement: Gesture and posture Rhianna was quite happy to move from the side of the screen to the model and back again to the group without being prompted (as was necessary for some other children in the class). At the beginning of her presentation (1–3) she was quite relaxed but when she was interrogated by the adult in role her closed posture (crossed legs) showed some hesitation. When she began to talk about liking the sound effects, however, she uncrossed her legs and became more open and animated (15). At times she used deictic gesture to indicate specific items in the playground (5, 6, 7, 9, 13 and 14) as might be expected in an explanatory text.

In general, the design of Rhianna's contribution to the group presentational text is clear and well-paced, showing her interest in specific elements of the project. In content, tone and expression it is a focused explanation of the ideational content – the thinking processes and design decisions made by the group and the specific area that Rhianna was responsible for. Also the interpersonal aspects, although expressed in a slightly hesitant manner at times, are enlivened by Rhianna's personal commitment to the project. The affordances of the PowerPoint™ and face-to-face presentation combine different modes to make the full text. The visual element of the text is partly presented on screen, which sets a light-hearted tone with

the rebus for 'ideas' although the following screens simply present information. The other visual element – the group themselves – mainly contribute to the interpersonal aspects of the text explaining the process of decision-making in the group's design.

The affordances of the screen, which can only give partial information, are complemented by the vocal element of the presentation, which gives specific focus and direction to the presentation through the allocation of roles to each group member but also adds an evaluative element, not possible on the screens alone. Rhianna's responses to the adult in role are an additional contribution both to the ideational and interpersonal components of the text as she reflects on her decisions and justifies them, a dialogic element possible in face-to-face interaction but not afforded by the screen. The rhetorical pace of the text is created in time by the mouse clicks to change screens and introduce items on the screens and by the pauses and rhythms of the children's spoken contributions. The rhetorical content is almost all contributed through the individual children's comments (in this case, Rhianna's) on their decisions. The spatial pace of the text is created by the children's movements between their presentational position and the model where their gestures add to the meaning and persuasive aspects of the text.

Example 2: *The Tin Soldier* – A spoken narrative

Claire Rollason developed a project with seven-year-olds to encourage confident storytelling using storytelling DVDs as a starting point. The DVDs are a compilation of stories drawn from around the world told by a professional storyteller.¹ The class watched him telling *The Tin Soldier* several times and talked about the ways that he used gesture, eye gaze and language effects to engage the audience's attention. In groups the children retold the story themselves, each of them taking part of the story. The following example is part of the story of *The Tin Soldier* retold by Ritchie and videoed by the teacher. As he retells the story to his classmates, Ritchie shows that he is aware that he is being filmed. Although this acts as a possible constraint at first, once he gets into his stride he shows his intention to engage and entertain his friends.

This is Ritchie's version of the opening section of *The Tin Soldier*:

Two hundred years ago/before the Victorian day there was a toyshop and in that toyshop was a toy maker. One day a man came in with two spoons and said, 'Can you please melt these tin spoons and make them into some tin soldiers?' And the toy maker said, 'Yes, I can' and a week later he came back and got the tin soldiers and then brought them to his house. The boy unwrapped them really fast and when he looked at them he said, 'Thanks, Dad' and his Dad

said, 'It's all right, son.' And then he took the soldiers out and then he put them by the shelf because it was bedtime. And then the teddy bear looked around and saw no people so he climbed down the wardrobe and waddled across to the chest and opened it up and/took the box out and opened it up and took the soldiers out and last he took out the ballerina and the castle and then he took the jack in the box up and the jack in the box springed up and then the toy soldier was on his side because he had one leg. He was looking at the ballerina thinking, 'She's beautiful' and then the jack in the box said, 'Oi, soldier boy, stop looking at my ballerina' and her arms was like this and she was outside the castle. And then the jack in the box pushed the soldier out.

The linguistic content, pauses, emphases, vocal effects, gaze and gesture are detailed in the numbered episodes in Table 2.

Analysis

Image There is no image element to this multimodal text.

Language: Syntax and lexis Ritchie's narrative is characterized by quite long, rhythmic sentences, generally linked with 'and' (most noticeable in episodes 17–27). He interrupts this rhythm with short speeches by the toy maker, the father and son and the jack in the box as well as the thoughts of the soldier. The variation between the narrative and the dialogue adds to the dramatic interest of the story. He uses time indicators: *Two hundred years* (1); *one day* (4); *a week later* (9); *then* (14, 16, 17); *last* (23) to give the back story and to create a structure for the development of the narrative. In keeping with storytelling conventions he also uses repetition for cohesion: 'there was a toyshop and in that toyshop' (1–2); 'and waddled across to the chest and opened it up and/took the box out and opened it up' (20–2). Since the story is told with the boy as a main character, Ritchie repeats the names of the toys involved to distinguish them from the boy who is referred to with the pronoun 'he'. Narrative events are often linked with 'and then' but there are some gaps and ambiguities in the story, some of which are filled by other elements of the telling.

Sound/vocalization Ritchie's narrative is told with a clear, even tone and volume so that his emphases can be taken to indicate his interest in particular parts of the story and his desire to evoke humour (18–21) and empathy for the soldier (27–8). His pauses and his breathing also give emphasis to the story and he begins with a deep breath before 'Two hundred years ago'. In alignment with his choice of language to indicate time, he also emphasizes 'One day' (4) and a 'week later' (9). In these ways he sets the time frame before getting into the story. He shows awareness that the audience may need

Table 2 Ritchie's story

Episode	Image	Language	Sound/vocalization	Gaze	Movement, gesture and posture
1		Two hundred years ago/ before the Victorian days// there was a toyshop// and in that toyshop	big breath before <i>Two hundred</i> pauses	eyes moving slightly, not quite looking directly at audience, as he orders ideas	standing easily with arms at side
2		was a toy maker		eyes down	
3		<i>One day</i> //	voice goes up – emphasis on <i>one</i>	eyes to audience	
4		a man came in with two spoons			
5		and said 'Can you please melt these tin spoons//	big breath		lifts hands as if holding spoons
6		and make them into some tin soldiers?' And the toy maker said,			lifts hands again
7		'Yes, I can'			
8		and a week later he came back	very crisp answer and a little louder		
9		and got the tin soldiers and then brought them to his house/.	emphasis on <i>week</i> slight pause	eyes to the audience	
10		The <u>boy</u> / <u>unwrapped</u> them really fast	emphasis on <i>boy</i> pause		mimes unwrapping
11		and when he looked at them he said, 'Thanks, Dad.'	emphasis on <i>unwrapped</i>		
12		And his Dad said, '// It's all right, son.'	emphasis on <i>Thanks</i> pause	looking upwards and to the right in expressive gaze	
13		And then//	pause	looking downwards and to the left also expressive	
14		he took the soldiers out://	pause	eyes downwards as he organizes ideas	
15		and then he put them by the shelf because it was bedtime.	pause	eyes to audience	
16				Looks slightly sideways as he recalls sequence	Hands moving up and down as if holding individual soldiers and placing them on shelf

Continued

Table 2 (Continued)

Episode	Image	Language	Sound/vocalization	Gaze	Movement, gesture and posture
17					holds up hands like claws
18	And then the teddy bear looked around and saw no people		emphasis on <i>teddy</i> almost sing-song intonation on <i>looked around</i>	looks from side to side, expressing teddy's actions	moves body from side to side with hands still held up as claws, miming climbing downwards
19	so he climbed down the wardrobe				mimes waddling with hands still held up
20	and waddled across		emphasis on <i>waddled</i>		eyes wide with anticipation
21	to the chest			looking down left as if at the chest	Mimes opening the box, taking items out and taking individual soldiers out
22	and opened it up and/ took the box out and opened it up and took the soldiers out		emphasis on <i>opened</i> pause for effect before <i>took</i> emphasis on <i>took</i>	expressive gaze follows hand movements	holds hand up as if holding a small object and places it to one side
23	and last he took out the ballerina		slight emphasis on <i>last</i> emphasis on <i>ballerina</i>		mimes lifting the castle and puts it in same place
24	and the castle		emphasis on <i>castle</i>		mimes lifting the jack in the box and puts it in same place
25	and then he took the jack in the box up		emphasis on <i>jack in the box</i>		wobbles body from side to side with head loose as if on a spring. Hands held up, similar to teddy posture
26	and the jack in the box sprung up			looks at audience	droops body to left with head tilted
27	and then the toy soldier was on his side because he had one leg.				maintains position
28	He was looking at the ballerina thinking 'She's beautiful'		Extends oo in <i>beautiful</i>		phrasing in time with side-to-side wobbling movements
29	and then the jack in the box said 'Oi, soldier boy, // stop looking // at my // ballerina'		very gruff voice, emphatic phrasing for effect	Still looking directly at audience	holds arms out in an arabesque posture
30	and her arms was like this				hand movement – pushing
31	and she was outside the castle				
32	And then the jack in the box pushed the soldier out				

some help in holding on to the names of the toy characters not only by repeatedly naming them but also in his emphasis (23, 24 and 25). Similarly, he marks key actions in the narrative by emphasis: *unwrapped* (11); *waddled* (20); *opened* (22). Ritchie breathes life into the dialogue, not only creating character but evoking emotion, by varying the pace, pitch and timbre of his voice, combined with pauses and emphasis, as in 'Yes, I can' (8) where he takes on a crisp, business-like tone; in the soldier's thought 'She's beautiful' (28) where he extends the *oo* sound to show the soldier's longing for the ballerina; and most noticeably in the jack in the box's threat: 'Oi, soldier boy, // stop looking // at my // ballerina' (29) where he adopts a gruff voice and uses pauses to create an overbearing effect.

Gaze Ritchie soon gets into the narrative and after a slightly oblique gaze where he marshals his thoughts, he addresses the camera/audience more steadily. The early part of his narrative is patterned by an occasional removal of gaze as he orders his ideas before continuing (1, 2, 14, 15) but as he becomes involved in telling the story his gaze becomes more dramatically expressive, supporting the characterization and following the placing of characters and objects in the story: in the exchange between the boy and his father he looks up right towards the father (12) and down in the opposite direction (13) as the father replies to the son; when the bear looks from side to side this is echoed by Ritchie's head movement (18). Although occasionally, as he seeks to recall the events of the story, he looks away from the camera, generally Ritchie maintains a clear engagement with the camera/audience.

Movement: Gesture and posture In marking events in the narrative, Ritchie's gestures are iconic, echoing the words as he tells the story: lifting his hands to indicate two spoons (5); unwrapping the parcel (11); placing the soldiers on the shelf (16); showing teddy climbing down the wardrobe (19); pushing the soldier out of the window (32). When he creates character his bodily gestures, posture and facial expressions add to the story by indicating emotion, for example widening his eyes in anticipation when the boy goes to open the chest (21). His movements and gestures begin to add significantly to the meaning of the story when he represents the three main characters: for the jack in the box he fluidly wobbles his body from side to side in imitation of a toy on a spring (26); for the soldier he droops his body and tilts his head to show that the soldier could only stand on one leg (27–8); and for the ballerina Ritchie simply uses the verbal reference 'her arms was like this' and shows her arabesque posture through his own body (30).

The narrative pace of this multimodal narrative is created by a combination of words, sound, gaze and gesture. Ritchie begins with deliberation,

using breathing, pauses and emphasis to add weight to the orientation of the story and so to engage the audience. As the story unfolds, his narration becomes smoother, with fewer pauses and he keeps the audience involved by his movements, gaze, vocal and visual effects to enliven the characterization and for text cohesion. One of the neglected cohesive features of a spoken text is the deliberate pause, the ‘white space’ of speech, a rhetorical device which makes a communication more or less effective. It is through the patterns of pauses that the storyteller varies the pace according to the emotional content and the interpersonal intent. The patterns of Ritchie’s pauses, particularly in the opening part of the story (1–13), carefully build the narrative tension. He creates anticipation as he steadily sets the scene and gives the back story. In the middle section (14–22) he adds to the anticipation as, with deliberate emphasis, he tells how teddy moves towards the chest and begins to take out the toys. In the final section (23–32) he introduces the dramatic conflict between the ballerina’s suitors which, in this extract, comes to a climax as the soldier is pushed out of the window.

Part of Ritchie’s intention as a storyteller is to focus on the dramatic conflict as he enacts the roles of the different characters to communicate the emotional content: the awe and excitement of the boy as he opens the parcel; the threatening nature of the jack in the box; the pathos of the soldier as he feels the ballerina will not be interested in him. He uses vocal and postural emphasis to add weight to key aspects of the story. Although the ideational content is partly given, as Ritchie is retelling a story he has seen told by another storyteller, he makes it his own through gesture, movement and emphasis on chosen key ideas and characterization. In using the affordance of the told story, which allows for voice, facial gesture and movement, Ritchie is able to convey the changing emotions of the characters and to build to the final conflict. The interpersonal element is clearly directed to the audience/camera and Ritchie shows awareness of the ways in which verbal patterns and rhythms, sometimes matched with physical movement, can help create a text that not only communicates the narrative to an audience but engages their emotions in the telling. The cohesion of this text is created by the interplay between the patterns of language of the narrative, the rhythms of the narrative pace and the choreography of gesture, posture and voice.

Example 3: *The Painting* – A picturebook by Grace

Grace’s teacher, Viv Sharpe, had featured Anthony Browne’s picturebooks in a project designed to introduce her class of six- and seven-year-old children to some of the different elements of multimodal texts. Grace drew

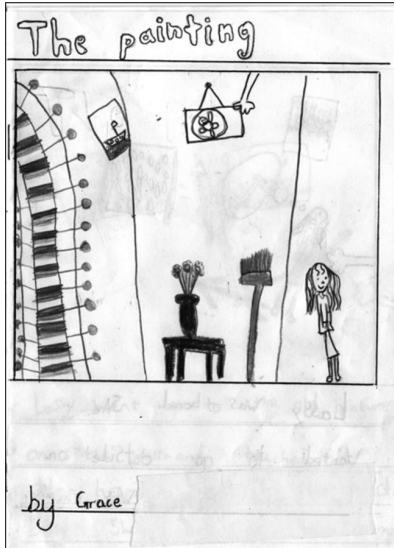
inspiration from Willy's Pictures as she creates her story of Lassy's adventure, including the metafictional device of a hand intruding into the frames of the book. She also imitates some of Browne's other recognizable features using shadows and details of domestic background as repeated motifs. Grace's story follows a familiar narrative structure: domestic setting with main character; dilemma (it is raining so that Lassy can't go out on her scooter); transformative event (entering the picture); second dilemma (trapped and Aunt Kathie doesn't hear her); event and third dilemma (explores and finds treasure and a scary pirate); resolution (goes back through the picture); conclusion (home for tea).

Analysis

Image: Content, size, colour, tone, line, placing/use of space Grace uses a quirky style throughout, particularly through the use of the hand that acts both as a cohesive device as it intrudes from outside the frames of the pictorial narrative and as a deictic, indicating specific features of the action. In the cover image – see Figure 2 and Table 3 – (1) the hand is adjusting the picture of the baby (echoing Browne's *Changes*, perhaps?); on others it points towards Lassy herself at key moments of the narrative (2, 4 and 8), or when placed at the right hand side seems to invite the reader to turn the page (3 and 5). Finally, it waves 'bye' to the reader (8). This metafictional element humorously echoes the central theme of the story where Lassy herself puts her hand into a picture and then climbs into another world. The repetitive use of shadows also contributes to cohesion, pointing towards the 'new' (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006) part of the image (2, 3 and 5), except for on the final page where the shadow points downwards towards the end of the written part of the story (8). Again, echoing Browne's characteristic surrealist features, Grace uses the pictures on the wall to add to the atmosphere of the narrative. The ship picture – *The Painting* of the title – changes as Lassy climbs into it so that by the second double page spread (5) the previously tranquil weather in the picture becomes stormy with rain and lightning surrounding Lassy as she stands on the deck. In the third double page spread Lassy and the reader are inside the picture looking at the stormy sea outside the portholes (6) then on the right a whirlwind, indicated by the intruding hand, suggests just how difficult life is becoming on board the (now pirate) ship (7). In addition, just as in Anthony Browne's books, the picture on the wall in the right hand image of the first double page spread (3) is replicated in miniature on the right hand image of the third spread (7), reminding Lassy of where she came from.

In line with the grammar of visual design Grace positions elements of the images in the *given*, *new*, *real* and *ideal* positions according to her interest

Cover



First double page spread

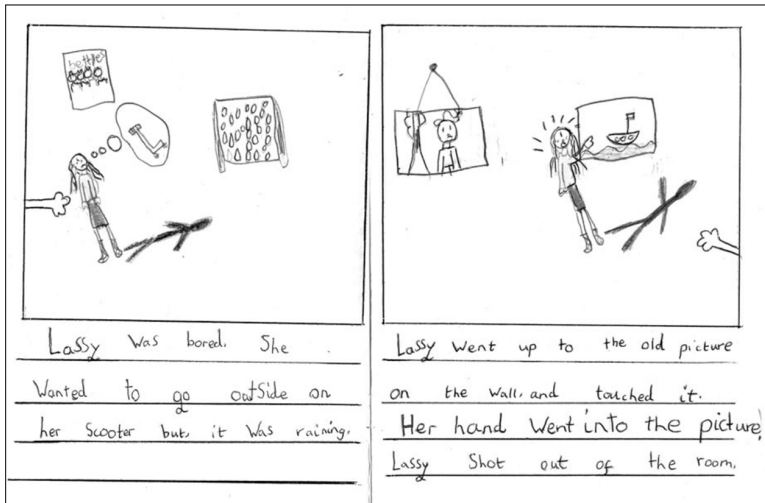
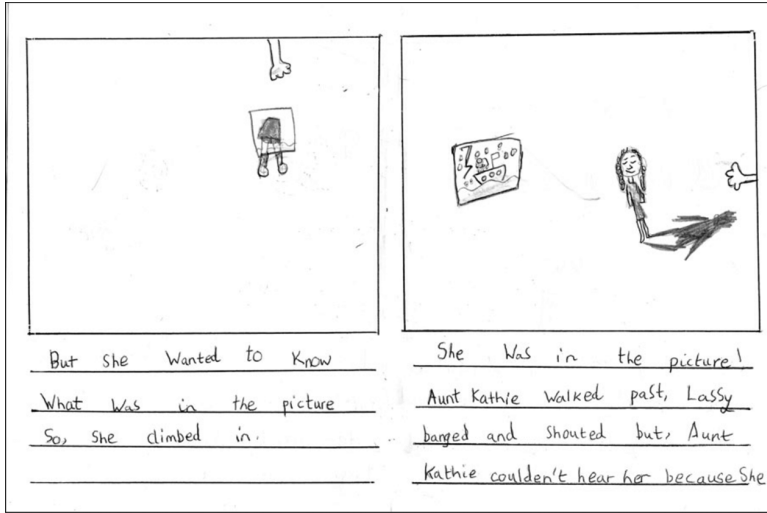


Figure 2 Grace's picturebook

(Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). On the cover (1), where the painting is the given element of the title, the ship picture is positioned at the top left and Lassy, who is yet to be introduced as the main character, is on the right in the new position. In the left hand frame of the first double spread (2), Lassy is on the given, left-hand position, mirroring her position as the

Second double page spread



Third double page spread

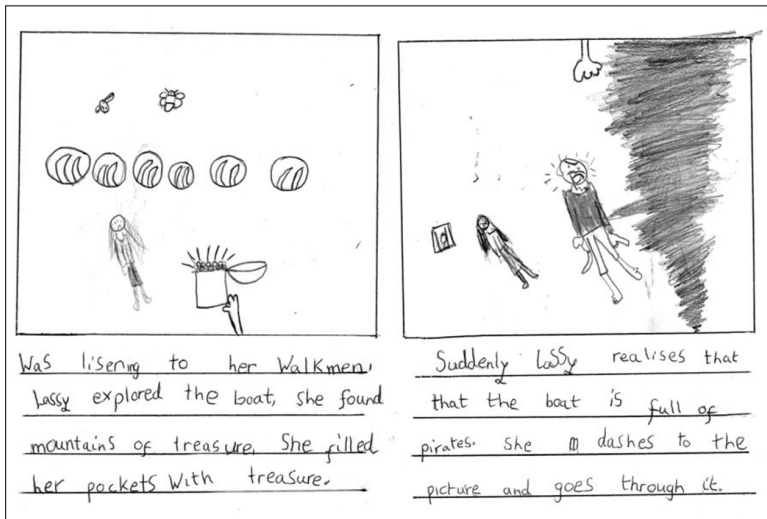


Figure 2 (Continued)

subject of the written sentence. In the following image (3) she moves towards the centre as she puts her hand into the picture – the central action of the narrative. In the left hand frame of the second double page spread (4), Lassy is depicted in the new position climbing into the picture, again mirroring her position in the written part of the text where ‘so she

Back cover

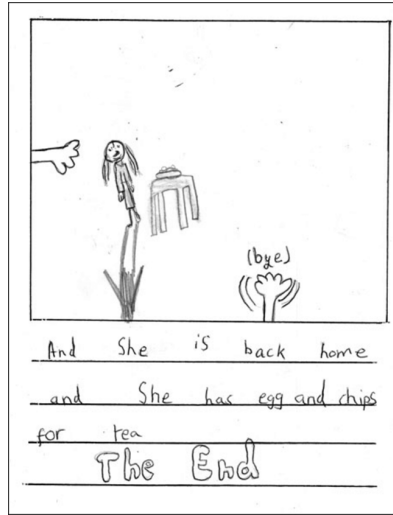


Figure 2 (Continued)

climbed in' ends the sentence. On the facing page (5) she is trapped in the picture on the left (given position) as the words tell the reader 'She was in the picture!'. In the final three frames (6–8) Lassy once again occupies the given position as she resumes her role as the key character in the story. The intruding hand sometimes appears from the position indicating the *ideal* ('of ideas' or 'what might be') (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 193) as on the pages where Lassy is climbing into the picture and where the whirlwind enters from the top and on the right – the *new* – hinting at trouble ahead.

Grace maintains a mid-shot perspective suitable to the action of the story and with appropriate size of characters and background details throughout her book. Rather than use close-ups to enhance her narrative she uses selective detail and colour and since this is an adventure story with not much emphasis on reflective feelings, Grace has chosen aptly. Atmosphere is created through domestic detail as in the scooter thought bubble, the Beatles poster and the rain seen through the window in the first double spread (2); the portholes and treasure chest (6) and the threatening-looking pirate with his moustache and cutlass (7), and the table with Lassy's meal of egg and chips on the back cover (8). Grace is equally selective about colour, using it as a cohesive motif, for example, for the sea in the picture throughout and the colour of her clothes. Noticeably, in the final image where Lassy has returned home after her adventure, she is wearing

Table 3 Analysis of Grace's picturebook

Episode	Image/colour	Language	Sound/vocalization	Gaze	Movement, gesture and posture
1	Cover: purple patterns on the left, dark blue sea on the picture, dark blue table and vase, lighter blue flowers and hall stand. The rest in black and white	Title: The Painting By Grace H.	larger font to draw attention to the title	demand image of Lassy and in the picture on the wall with a baby image	still posture with arms at side and happy facial expression deictic hand pointing to the painting and echoing the title
2	left hand frame of first double page spread: black and white except for Lassy's yellow top and red skirt	Lassy was bored. She wanted to go outside on her scooter but, it was raining.	comma used for pause before introducing the problem of rain	demand image of Lassy and the Beatles in the poster on the wall	facial expression rather more reflective
3	right hand frame of first double page spread: black and white except for Lassy's yellow top and red skirt and blue sea on the picture of the ship	Lassy went up to the old picture on the wall and touched it. Her hand went into the picture! Lassy shot out of the room.	larger font and exclamation mark to show amazement that she could put her hand into the picture	demand image of Lassy and in the left hand picture on the wall	deictic hand 'introducing' Lassy Lassy's hand going into picture and shocked facial expression deictic hand indicating this event
4	left hand frame of second double page spread: black and white except for red skirt and blue sea	But she wanted to know what was in the picture so, she climbed in.	comma used for emphatic pause before introducing the idea of climbing into the picture	offer image of the back of Lassy's skirt as she climbs into the picture	only legs visible as Lassy climbs into the picture
5	right hand frame of second double page spread: black and white except for the Aunt Kathie's red skirt and purple top	She was in the picture! Aunt Kathie walked past. Lassy banged and shouted but, Aunt Kathie couldn't hear her because she	exclamation mark to underline the remarkable fact that she had climbed into the picture	demand image of Lassy in the picture. forward facing image of Aunt Kathie but no gaze to audience as her eyes are shut	deictic hand coming from top of picture to point to action Aunt Kathie has closed eyes and content expression as she listens to music on the Walkman deictic hand indicating the narrative dilemma

Continued

Table 3 (Continued)

<i>Episode</i>	<i>Image/colour</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Sound/vocalization</i>	<i>Gaze</i>	<i>Movement, gesture and posture</i>
6	left hand frame of third double page spread: black and white except for Lassy's yellow top and red skirt	Was listening to her walkmen! Lassy explored the boat. She found mountains of treasure. She filled her pockets with treasure.	exclamation mark to show how helpless Lassy felt, as Aunt Kathie couldn't hear her banging and calling	forward facing image of Lassy but her gaze is on the treasure chest	upright posture with dismayed facial expression hand holding up treasure chest
7	right hand frame of third double page spread: black and white except for Lassy's yellow top and red skirt and the pirate's orange top black whirlwind on right suggesting trouble ahead	Suddenly Lassy realizes that that the boat is full of pirates. She dashes to the picture and goes through it.		forward facing image of Lassy with gaze on the pirate Pirate's 'demand' gaze, directly connecting with the reader	Lassy in upright posture with alarmed facial expression pirate's grim threatening expression
8	back cover: black and white except for Lassy's now green top and yellow skirt and green table	And she is back home and she has egg and chips for tea. The End	larger font to emphasize conclusion	demand image of Lassy	deictic hand at top of picture again pointing to the narrative dilemma presented by the pirate upright posture with happy facial expression hand in picture at the bottom waves 'bye' with graphic movement marks

different colours. One of the most striking aspects of Grace's design is her use of white space. She draws attention to different elements of the pictures by carefully positioning images that seem to float in the spaces of the frames uncluttered by colour. This device is most emphatic in the drawing of Lassy climbing into the picture (4). Placed at the top right of the frame (the *ideal/new* position which indicates what is about to happen in the imaginary world of the story) and emphasized by the intruding hand, this is the only element in the frame, drawing attention to this action as the pivotal event in the narrative.

Language: Syntax and lexis Grace uses simple straightforward syntax, with *Lassy* and *she* largely as the subjects of the sentences. In a similar way to her use of colour, repeated visual motifs and positioning, the repeated noun and pronoun create overall text cohesion. She adds energy to the narrative through her choice of verbs: *shot* (3), *climbed* (4), *banged* (5), *shouted* (5), *explored* (6), *dashes* (7). The verbal element of the text generally matches the visual element, both following the events and indicating Lassy's emotions as the story develops. Generally, she ends sentences on the page that have the matching images, but on one page turn (5–6) she splits the sentence to prompt the reader to turn the page to see what happens: 'Aunt Kathie couldn't hear her because she' (page turn) 'Was listening to her walkmen!'. The gap between each part of the sentence echoes the pause of a storyteller heightening suspense as the reader discovers why Aunt Kathie cannot rescue Lassy from being trapped in the picture.

Sound/vocalization: Content, emphasis, volume, vocal intonation, pause, pace Although there is no actual sound in this text, volume, intonation and pace are implied in the use of punctuation. Grace uses commas to create narrative tension, making the reader pause before a new event is about to happen: 'She wanted to go outside on her scooter but, it was raining' (2); 'But she wanted to know what was in the picture so, she climbed in' (4); 'Lassy banged and shouted but, Aunt Kathie couldn't hear her' (5). Grace also uses exclamation marks and larger font to emphasize key events in the story: when Lassy enters the picture (5) and when Aunt Kathie, who could have rescued her, doesn't hear her because she is listening to her Walkman (6). The emphatic punctuation is dispensed with as the story resolves itself and Lassy reaches home.

Gaze: direction of gaze of communicator or character in representation As was clear from Ritchie's storytelling, a direct gaze is an immediate appeal to the audience. In Grace's book, Lassy is generally presented as

facing the audience/reader, matching the verbal element of the book which foregrounds Lassy and her exploits. The only images where she is not facing the audience, either directly or obliquely, are at pivotal moments in the story, for example, where she enters the imaginary world of the picture (4) and when she sees the pirate (7). Although Aunt Kathie faces the reader/audience, her eyes are closed so the absence of gaze adds to the frustration of her not being able to help Lassy. The pirate's direct gaze – and his threatening expression – act as a demonstration to the reader that Lassy is in a tricky situation. The generally direct approach to the reader is echoed by the faces in the different pictures on the walls. In a similar way to the use of the shadows and the hand, Grace uses gaze as a vector in the frames where she is looking at the treasure and the pirate to direct the reader towards salient elements of the image.

Movement: Gesture and posture In a similar pattern to the audience-facing images of Lassy, her posture is largely upright and still, with arms at her sides. Grace alters the emotional pace of the story by changes in facial expression, where Lassy moves through contentment (1) to discontent (2), shock (3), dismay (6), back to contentment at the conclusion of the story (8). Physical movement is largely indicated through the verbal part of the text and by the placing of the character on the page. However, Grace uses gesture and posture to indicate key moments in the narrative, for example at the point where her hand goes through the picture (3) and when she climbs into the ship picture (4). She creates narrative tension by depicting Aunt Kathie with closed eyes and a smile (5), oblivious to Lassy's shouts because she is absorbed in her music.

In this multimodal text, Grace uses the affordances of a picture book format as she matches words and images, each creating the pace of the story through the designed use of punctuation, the placing of items on the page and in the use of white space. Although the ideational content is partly drawn from her reading of Anthony Browne's picturebooks, her reading has given her a sense of how to deploy patterns of cohesion in a text made up of words and images. Grace constructs her narrative by the repetition of colour and of visual and verbal motifs and by using the familiar structure of an adventure story with its rhythms of climax and anticlimax. The images, both in content and design, indicate a strong awareness of the interpersonal aspects of the story, with the added quality of humour generated by the use of metafictional devices. Her rhetorical intent is shown in an awareness of how to engage an audience, most clearly indicated in the quirky details of the images which add to the reader/viewer's enjoyment – as if Grace and the reader are sharing a few private jokes.

Discussion

It is clear that each of these multimodal text makers has the ability to combine modes and media to create/design texts that communicate meaning with rhetorical force. In terms of affordance, each example indicates a skilful use of the possibilities of the modes and media used. (Since each task was given by the teacher it is tendentious to say 'the modes and media chosen', although within the given mode/medium frame each child clearly did make choices and decisions.) Each has a visual element, if not more than one – as in the screens and personal presentation and conversation in Example 1. The visual was perhaps the most dominant mode here, as the PowerPoint™ screens, the model and the group presenting the work all focused the audience on the visual. In Example 2 the visual element was limited to Ritchie alone, and in Example 3, the images in the book made up a substantial part of the communication. However, in each case, the visual needed to be accompanied by language. In Example 1 the relative inflexibility of the screen and model could not convey the decisions made nor have anything like the rhetorical impact of the spoken part of the presentation. For Ritchie, the verbal element was paramount and although this might have been a written story, the affordance of an enacted telling made it possible for him to add tension and engage the audience in the emotional core of the story through variations in intonation, pace and vocal timbre as well as through gesture and facial expression. In telling the story, Ritchie was communicating not just the events but the emotions and motivations of the characters, independent of any authorial comment. On the other hand, Grace's picture book depended heavily on the affordance of the visual to communicate not just the narrative but to engage as an author with the reader through her use of metafictional devices. There is an element of authorial intent evident in each example, but the level of explicitness varies according to the affordance of the medium and the text type. As she was presenting explanatory text, it was possible for Rhianna to make explicit comment on the process and content of the project. In a fictional told story, although Ritchie might have chosen to break off from the narrative to interpose comment, he chose not to take this explicit route but to convey his attitude as the teller through visual, vocal and gestural means. In a similar way, Grace chose to make her presence as the narrator felt through the visual and not the verbal elements of the story.

Each example shows how, by drawing on different semiotic modes, each child achieved coherence through combining modes to express the ideational and interpersonal components of their texts. In terms of the analytical frame employed, as has been indicated, Example 1 has greater emphasis on *image* and

language, with *sound/vocalization, gaze and movement, gesture and posture* contributing rather less to the overall rhetorical effect. The image element largely contributed content because of the constraints in the affordances of presentational software and the computer screen which, in this text, did not offer the rhetorical effect. The group could have recorded their voices and accompanied the screens with some additional explanatory elements which could not be conveyed visually, but the verbal presentation accompanying the screens afforded more dynamic rhetorical possibilities through the use of gesture in indicating important parts of their model and in answering questions. As screen-presented information cannot easily be revisited, the audience would not be able to browse through the presentation, so that the children's spoken contributions combined with the screen elements make for a balanced text capable of informing and persuading the audience.

The weight of Example 2 is on *language, vocalization, gaze and movement, gesture and posture*. The only visual element is in the image of Ritchie himself on the video and so the analysis did not deal with *image*. (It could be argued that imagery in the story itself could be analysed in this category, but Ritchie did not use verbal imagery to elaborate his telling.) In terms of rhetorical design, the integration of the spoken verbal mode and associated vocal effects, movement, gesture and posture, afforded direct audience communication. The physical and intonational elements allowed Ritchie to enhance the narrative, particularly the characterization. In telling the story, Ritchie's direct address, the patterns in his narrative structure and his vocal variation engaged and held the audience's attention. In line with any accomplished storyteller's narrative, Ritchie took account of the need for helpful repetition and staged telling since his hearers would not easily be able to refer back to the beginning of the story as the narrative progressed. His knowledge of the affordance of oral narrative influenced the way he told his story as he sought to keep his audience's attention.

Image and language were the predominant modes in Grace's story in Example 3 with *sound/vocalization, gaze and movement, gesture and posture* contributing rather less, although importantly, to the overall force of the text. The relationship of the words and images could be described as parallel in content, but Grace uses visual detail to add to the humour and appeal of the story. She takes advantage of the affordance and materiality of a designed picturebook, where the reader can flick back and forwards as they read, as part of the integration of the different elements of her adventure story, referring backwards and forwards through the use of detail in the images. In terms of rhetorical design, through patterns of repeated motifs and repetitions she shows a sophisticated awareness of how verbal and visual cohesion works to engage, amuse and intrigue a reader.

In developing the analytical frame it was necessary to consider the function of different elements of representation, whether presented personally, on screen or on the page. In Examples 1 and 3, where the paper- or screen-based pictorial texts used colour to enhance particular effects, Ritchie's spoken text relied on vocalization for 'colour'. Physical movement, gesture, posture and facial expression, which were very much part of the presentation and oral narration in Examples 1 and 2 could only be captured in static form in Grace's picture book, although she uses graphic devices to capture the idea of movement. The rhetorical pace of Ritchie's spoken story is paralleled by Grace's use of white space on the page and the placing of objects in that space. The punctuation in the written part of Grace's story is echoed by the emphasis given to particular spoken words or phrases in Example 2 and by sound and visual effects in the presentation screens of Example 1. Throughout the examples it is possible to identify particular aspects of representation that do the same job irrespective of the mode or medium.

Although the analysis offered here has separated out the elements of image, language, sound, gaze and movement, it is important to see how these different modes interrelate to make meaning. To return to Kress's question about whether different modal elements do the same job as each other (Kress, 2003b), it seems that there are differential balances between modes and the media through which each text-maker communicates meaning that work towards the rhetorical force of each text. It is in the complementarity of the modes that the meaning resides and so it is possible, through a common frame, to show how integrated texts work to communicate meaning. What also seems clear from these three examples is that the complexity of the texts goes beyond what can be described and given value through the lens of traditional literacy. In any of these examples, if the language elements alone (either spoken or written) had been the focus for judgements of the rhetorical success of the text, much would have been missed.

In using this frame it is also clear that some elements are more and less familiar in the act of describing and giving value to children's texts. In face-to-face performative texts like presentations and storytelling, it is perhaps more usual to give weight to the content rather than the performance, yet from Examples 1 and 2 it is clear that as much rhetorical force comes from the physical and vocal as from the visual and the verbal. This is where the integration of Halliday's three functions becomes critical: the ideational content of any text only communicates in combination with the interpersonal and these, in turn, influence the choices made in representing the ideas as a communication.

Conclusion

The three examples analysed here all come from projects designed to encourage children's multimodal text production. Agency, choice and text experience can be seen operating even within school-based activities developed by teachers for specific learning ends. However, when it comes to educational institutions giving value and status to children's productions, there are significant gaps in policy and practice. Each of the children involved drew on models and examples of multimodal texts. The group who made the PowerPoint™ had seen their teachers (and parents) using presentational software; Ritchie drew on the video of a professional storyteller and Grace took inspiration from a picturebook author she knew well. In each case the teachers involved explicitly taught the children about the features of the texts and how they contribute to communication with an audience. Models, examples and deliberate teaching are needed if children's own multimodal text production is to be fostered and developed. Part of this will be teachers' own use of the semiotic resources of different modes and media and a sense of their distinctive qualities. A moving image text offers something different from a novel. Neither is 'better' than the other but each exploits the affordances of specific modes to do the job the text maker wants them to do and these matters need to be discussed with students.

Further to the establishment of a multimodal pedagogy, however, will be the need for some way of describing and assessing progress (Burke and Hammett, 2009). Current national testing arrangements are predicated on written evidence and although Stein (2003) argues that, at least in terms of reading, some aspects of multimodal teaching and learning can be accommodated in national testing arrangements, there are still barriers to including students' multimodal text production in formal assessment. In part this is because of the lack of a common discourse about multimodal texts. Also, since much of the work around multimodality has been associated with literacy or English as a curriculum subject, expectations and culturally developed practices about assessment are firmly rooted in judgements about written language. There is, happily, much current interest in multimodality but this brings its own problems as discussions are often based on assumptions that multimodality necessarily involves screens. The future possibility of a shared discourse about multimodal texts will need to be one that can steer a course between traditional views of literacy and the seductions of digital technology.

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Notes

1. Storyteller Phil McDermott from *The Story Spinner* Day One productions. (<http://www.thestoryspinner.co.uk>)

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Correspondence to:

EVE BEARNE, University of Cambridge Faculty of Education, 184 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8PQ, UK. [email: eve.bearne@care4free.net]