

Music, multiliteracies and multimodality: Exploring the book and movie versions of Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*

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ABSTRACT

Well-known stories in established and contemporary literature for children are increasingly becoming available in various moving image media versions as well as in traditional book formats. Classroom exploration of the same story in different narrative formats has addressed the impact on meaning-making of similarities and differences in language and image across versions. What has received very little attention however, is the role of music in conjunction with image and language in the construction of the potentially different interpretive possibilities of the multiple versions of ostensibly the same story. This paper discusses the nature and role of music, images and language in the book and movie versions of Shaun Tan's story of *The Lost Thing*, drawing attention to the role of music in highlighting key interpretive differences deriving from subtle variation in the use of image and language in the two story versions. Implications for students' multimodal text creation and interpretation in the context of the new Australian Curriculum: English are briefly noted.

Introduction

A substantial and growing number of well-known picture books and illustrated novels have now been adapted as digital animated movie versions, and while some similar stories are now composed for the digital moving image format, such as *The Fantastic Flying Books of Mr Morris Lessmore* (Joyce, 2011), a number of picture book authors are simultaneously producing book and digital media versions of their stories such as *The Heart and the Bottle* and the corresponding i-pad app (Jeffers, 2009). The appearance of movie versions of established picture books and illustrated novels are frequently highly celebrated within broad popular culture, as was the case, for example, with the movie of *Where the Wild Things Are* (Jonze, 2009) from Maurice Sendak's classic picture book (1962), the movie of *Fantastic Mr Fox* (Anderson, 2009) from the illustrated novel by Roald Dahl (1974), and the movie of *The Polar Express* (Zemeckis, 2004) from the well-known picture book by Chris Van Allsburg (1985).

In many 'parallel' paper and digital media versions of such literature the story is ostensibly the same,

although some, such as *The Polar Express* are quite different. But for many, at least the events and the characters appear to be the same, with the animated images and language in the movie often not readily discernibly different from the book. However, even subtle changes in language, and different choices in the positioning of images, and in the visual point of view, can construct very different interpretive possibilities for the movie and book versions. In all of these adaptations, of course, music is a fundamental distinguishing feature of the movie versions. However, notwithstanding the significance of music in digital multimodal texts (Noad & Unsworth, 2007) and studies comparing picture books with their animated versions (Bearne, 2003; Parker, 1999, 2001; Unsworth, 2003), it is very difficult to find any discussion of the role of music in these digital multimodal literary narratives. Those who have drawn attention to the multimodal nature of literacy and have advocated a multiliteracies pedagogy, have privileged the role of images in multimodal texts to the virtual exclusion of any consideration of music (Anstey, 2002; Anstey & Bull, 2006; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kist,

2005; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003, 2006; Leu, 2006; Leu, Kinzer, Coiro & Cammack, 2004; Unsworth, 2001). However the new national Australian Curriculum: English (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2010) makes quite explicit reference to the role of music in students' experience of multimodal literary texts. For example, in year three students are expected to ...

Create texts that adapt language features and patterns encountered in literary texts, for example characterisation, rhyme, rhythm, mood, music, sound effects and dialogue ... (and)... multimodal texts that combine visual images, sound effects, music and voice overs to convey settings and events in a fantasy world (ACELT1791).

And in year eight the students are expected to be ... creating and performing scripts for short plays that make use of the affordances of visual, verbal and additional modes (for example music) to create atmosphere, to deepen interpretation of verbal meaning and to enhance the drama of a performance (ACELT1768)

In order to inform such multimodal literacy practices and their development through multimodal literacy pedagogy, it is essential to develop a literacy research and pedagogic agenda that includes music within the repertoire of multimodal literacy resources (Duncum, 2004).

In this paper we will first briefly indicate the joint influence of traditions of literary appreciation of picture books and functional semiotic accounts of the meaning-making resources of language and images in shaping our approach to explicating the multimodal nature of the interpretive possibilities constructed by language and images in picture books. Next we will outline the kind of research evidence for the impact of music on the interpretation of visual texts, and then indicate how we derived from this, an approach to analysing the music soundtrack of an animated movie version of the popular literary picture book, *The Lost Thing* by Australian author Shaun Tan (2000). We will then discuss two key segments of the story showing how the music interacts with the images and language in the movie to construct distinctively different interpretive possibilities from those that are constructed by ostensibly the same episodes in the book version. In the light of the new Australian Curriculum: English for students up to year ten in Australian schools, implications are drawn for the significance of developing an appreciation of the increasing availability of multiple versions of the same literary narrative in book and digital multimedia formats as well as for the importance of more systematic inclusion of music as a significant dimension of multimodality in contemporary texts.

Visual grammar and the narrative art of picture books

From the 1980s, a growing body of scholarship has argued that the picture books of children's literature (literary picture books), need to be regarded as a bimodal form of text in which the images play just as important a role as the language in constructing the interpretive possibilities of the narratives (Anstey & Bull, 2000; Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Doonan, 1993; Keifer, 1995; Meek, 1988; Nodelman, 1988; Prain, 1998; Spencer, 1982, 1991).

Prior to this work the prevalent view, which continued until well into the 1990s, has been well summarised by Perry Nodelman:

It is unfortunately true that most discussion of children's picture books has either ignored their visual elements altogether or else treated the pictures as objects of a traditional sort of art appreciation ... rather than narrative elements (Nodelman, 1988, p. ix).

Nodelman argued that approaches based on art appreciation were delimiting because they did not take account of the narrative role of the images. He argued that, from this perspective, we might best understand images in picture books 'in the light of some form of semiotic theory', which suggests ...

the possibility of a system underlying visual communication that is something like a grammar – something like the system of relationships and contexts that makes verbal communication possible (Nodelman, 1988:ix).

Here, and in the subsequent detailed discussion of the visual construction of action, of interactive relationships between image and viewer and of the effects of variation in layout, Nodelman seemed to be anticipating the emergence of the work of Kress and van Leeuwen, which began with their publication of the first version of *Reading Images* (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1990). In subsequent revisions the work became known as *Reading Images: A grammar of visual design* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006).

Extrapolating from systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1978; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Martin, 1992), the functional semiotic account of images by Kress and van Leeuwen adopts the concept of three different kinds of meanings always being made simultaneously by the choices made from the visual (and verbal) meaning-making systems:

- Ideational or representational meanings are constructed by the forms of visual representation of events in the material world, the objects and participants involved, and the circumstances in which they occur (including symbolic representation). In still images actional processes

are usually depicted by the ‘vectors’ or angles or the trajectory of represented participants’ bodies or limbs or mechanical components associated with movement, which enable the inference of action of various kinds. Reactional processes, dealing with mental or perceptual processes, are usually inferred from the gestures and/or posture of participants including their gaze.

- Interpersonal or interactive meanings concern the kinds of relationship constructed between the viewer and what is viewed. These pseudo-social interactive relationships are influenced by factors such as the choice of a close up or distant view of a participant; whether participants in images seem to look directly at the viewer and hence make contact with the viewer, or have their gaze directed internally and hence are simply observed by the viewer. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) refer to an image where a represented participant makes eye contact with the viewer as a demand and to an image where such contact is not made as an offer. Recent accounts of images in picture books has suggested that a more appropriate term for demand is a contact image and correspondingly a more appropriate term for offer is an observe image (Painter, Martin & Unsworth, 2013). In this paper we will refer to contact or observe images.
- The nature of the interactive meanings are also influenced by additional factors such as whether the viewer looks down on or up to the represented participants, positioning either the viewer or the represented participant as more powerful; and whether the image is presented ‘front on’ with the frontal plane of the represented participants parallel to that of the viewer, indicating inclusion of the viewer in the represented world, or if the image is viewed from an oblique angle, ‘othering’ the represented participant from the viewer.
- Textual or compositional meanings deal with the ways in which the layout of the image indicates information value or relative emphasis among the elements of image. Factors such as the location of elements to the left or the right of the page, the relative size of elements and the types of borders, as well as other factors including colour, and the presence of a human or animal face, influence the ways in which attention may be drawn to various aspects of the image.

Following the orientation to the literary analysis of picture books informed by social semiotic theory as envisaged by Nodelman (1998), a substantial and growing amount of work has used the frameworks

provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) to explicate the multimodal construction of interpretive possibilities in picture books and the pedagogic implications of such accounts (Astorga, 1999; Lewis, 2001; Unsworth, 2001, 2006; Unsworth, Thomas, Simpson & Asha, 2005; Williams, 1998, 2000). In this paper we also draw on the key concepts from the ‘grammar of visual design’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The images and image sequences discussed herein have been analysed in terms of the visual means for constructing representational and interactive meanings as outlined above. Some recent work has extended the Kress and van Leeuwen frameworks in relation to representational, interactive and compositional meanings in picture books (Martin, 2008; Painter, 2007, 2008; Painter & Martin, 2011; Painter, Martin & Unsworth, 2011; Painter et al., 2013). Drawing on this new work, we make some reference to the significance of colour in communicating interpersonal atmosphere, and we make use of the system of focalisation, which describes options for the construction of point of view.

With respect to point of view, usually the issue of who is telling the story is determined by reference to the verbal text only, but the question of ‘who sees’, or from whose point of view are we experiencing the story, can apply to both the verbal text and the images. The images can position the viewer to assume different viewing personas. One option is to position the viewer as an outside observer, but the viewer can also be positioned as if s/he were one of the characters in the story, or as if s/he had a visual perspective that was not identical with, but was nevertheless similar to that of a character so that the viewer sees ‘along with’ the character.

There are a number of methods by which viewers can be positioned as if they were one of the characters in the image (Painter, 2007; Painter et al., 2013). One that is relevant to the discussion in this paper is by depicting just the part of the body that could be seen by the focalising character (such as the hands or feet out in front of the unseen body). Since the reader can see only that part of the body (such as the hands or feet) that would be visible to the focalising character, then the reader is positioned as if s/he were the focalising character – with that character’s point of view (see also Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, pp. 143–144)).

It is also possible for the reader to share a character’s point of view rather than being positioned as the character. The reader’s view subsumes that of the character. The reader sees the character (or part of the character) while also seeing what the character sees from that character’s perspective. This is achieved by having the reader view what is depicted ‘along with’ or ‘over

the shoulder' of the focalising character. The 'over the shoulder' view can be achieved by positioning the reader's point of view as being from slightly to the rear and to one side of the focalising character. This is frequently achieved in the movie of *The Lost Thing* through a close-up foreground image of the right side and rear of the boy's head and shoulder, constructing our point of view as 'over the shoulder', but can also be achieved through a rear view of the character, provided it is not a very distant view, as we will suggest in our discussion of the 'departure' segment of *The Lost Thing* movie.

There appears to be a significant difference between the book and movie versions of *The Lost Thing* in relation to the expression of affect in images and in language. A systematic account of the verbal construction of affect has been provided by Martin and White (2005) as part of their framework for describing evaluative resources in English. They indicate the range of vocabulary and grammatical expressions that can be used to construct three broad categories of affect: un/happiness; dis/satisfaction; and in/security. These categories can be sub-divided to describe more delicate choices such as, within un/happiness, for example: affection or cheer on the one hand, and antipathy or misery, on the other hand. Typical realisations in language would include love, adore, joyous, jolly, hate, detest, gloomy, depressing – and gradations along continua from, say 'adore' to 'love' to 'like' and 'loathe' to 'hate' to 'dislike'. Such a framework in language facilitates quite a comprehensive and exhaustive account of the linguistic expression of affect. Within images, the main form of expression of affect is facial expression. We know that we can discern un/happiness; dis/satisfaction; and in/security, to a certain extent from well-known corresponding facial expressions, but this communication of affect cannot be as nuanced as a corresponding linguistic expression. At this point in time analysing visual affect in images has been on a somewhat informal basis, but as more work is emerging in this field in relation to picture books the bases for analyses will be able to be further refined (Painter et al., 2013; Tian, 2011; Welch, 2005). In *The Lost Thing*, the thing does not speak and does not have a face, so affect can only be conveyed extremely indirectly through gesture, positioning and sound effects. The examination of affect, and reciprocation indicating interpersonal bonding, in this paper is therefore largely dependent on the analysis of the language, facial expression and to some extent gesture, posture and positioning of the boy character.

The influence of music on image interpretation

Research in psychomusicology has shown that background music affects respondents' interpretation of abstract paintings and geometric figures and that faster tempo in both visual and audio presentation is related to perceptions of positive mood (Bolivar, Cohen & Fentress, 1994). Others have explored the impact of music on physiological activity such as facial muscle activity, heart rate and electrodermal activity (Ellis & Simons, 2005; Parke, Chew & Kyriakakis, 2007). These studies, all conducted with adults, found that both visual and musical stimuli can be viewed through a 'dimensional framework of emotion' (Ellis & Simons, 2005, p. 17). The Ellis and Simons study reported three findings about the influence of music on image interpretation:

Both filmic and musical stimuli elicit physiological changes;

- An additive relationship exists between simultaneously presented film and music stimuli on some self-report measures;
- The ability of music to bind to the visual narrative of a film may play an important role in enabling music to modulate the subsequent emotional response;
- This study also proposed musical features that aligned with particular emotional effects as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1. The relationship between musical structure and perceived emotion (Ellis and Simons 2005, p. 18).

Structural features	Rated emotion
Major key, consonant harmonies	Positive valence
Minor key, dissonant harmonies	Negative valence
Slow tempo, regular rhythm or meter	Low arousal
Fast tempo, irregular rhythm	High arousal

What is important about these observations is that there can be constant musical triggers that evoke particular emotions and feelings when combined with visual stimuli. This table however, fails to consider other elements that can be manipulated in music to influence the interpretation of simultaneously presented images. Aspects such as timbral qualities, dynamic levels, articulation methods, melodic and harmonic compositional devices have not been represented here. The exclusion of these features limits an overall understanding of how music can influence visual meaning (Darke, 2005).

While these observations have concerned the influence of music on interpretive meaning it has to be

acknowledged that they are culturally specific in that terms such as major and minor tonality follow a western art music tradition. However, in the research of Balkwill and Thompson (1999) on perception of emotion through audio cues, responses from those who were 'unfamiliar' with the genre of music played were similar to the responses from listeners familiar with the genre. This means that despite cultural nuances there are universal psychophysical cues to emotive response to culturally diverse audio tracks. It is important though to note that ultimately it is the audience who interpret, on the basis of their prior knowledge and experiences, visual image and audio soundtracks and their relationship to each other in multimodal texts (Darke, 2005; Duncum, 2004).

Analysing the music track meanings in digital animated narratives

Here we focus on the animated movie (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010) of the picture book, *The Lost Thing* (Tan, 2000). The book and the movie tell a story about a boy who, while out collecting bottle-tops at a beach, discovers an extremely large bizarre-looking creature, which is part animal and part machine. Concluding that it is lost, he tries to find out where it belongs, but nobody seems to care about the situation of the lost thing. No one actually provides any real help. Strangers and parents are unwilling to entertain this uninvited interruption to day-to-day life. Even the boy's friend is unable to help despite some interest. The boy persists in trying to find out where the lost thing belongs and eventually is led to a haven for similar creatures, and the two part company.

Drawing on the relationships among musical structure and perceived emotion proposed by Ellis and Simons (2005, p. 18) as indicated in Table 1, an analytical framework (see Appendix A) was developed, incorporating additional musical elements, to analyse the contribution of the music track to interpretive possibilities of an animated movie version of a children's picture book. Identifying the tonal quality and tempo as per Ellis and Simons' work, are just two aspects of a sound file that contribute to meaning. Other integral factors, such as timbral quality (choice of instruments, technical use of instruments), use of dynamics, articulation and other expressive markings, other tonal features such as intervallic relations, suspensions and resolutions, and rhythmic devices including motifs, intensity and repetition, play a large part in portraying meaning and supporting visual imagery for the listener.

The nature of the music throughout the movie was closely examined and then three significant segments, where music was an integral part of the 'story-telling',

were selected for extensive analysis: the feeding of the lost thing; the searching for a place for the lost thing to belong; and finding Utopia and saying goodbye (see Appendix B). The tonal, rhythmic, timbral and expressive features that contributed to the music were identified in the notated music score as well as aurally through viewing the movie. In conjunction with this analytical deconstruction the intended meaning behind the text, including the visuality, was related to the meaning produced through the music score. As early as 1935 Gundlach wrote about the characterisation of musical phrases noting that there are typical musical characteristics that evoke similar emotional responses from a number of subjects. This work along with Ellis and Simons' account informed the identification and naming of three distinct musical motifs in the short film: *friendship*, *caring* and *belonging*. At the beginning of the story the two main characters are playing on the beach and it is here that the *friendship* motif is introduced. The use of a major key, large intervallic leaps and syncopated rhythms implies a *friendly* playful tune. In the segment dealing with the feeding of the lost thing, certain musical aspects such as warmth of sound (through use of long sustained notes and stringed instruments), smooth rhythmic and tonal features and small intervallic range alongside the visual action suggest a *caring* intent. And in the segment of the movie where the boy and the lost thing find where it belongs the composer has used elements from both of these musical motifs – the *friendship* and *caring* motifs – to create the *belonging* motif. Further analysis and explanation of the three musical motifs is provided throughout the paper.

The *friendship* motif (see Excerpt 1) is first introduced on the beach where the lost thing initiates playing with the boy by ejecting a beach ball from one of its upper metal hatches. The *friendship motif* is heard as the boy and the lost thing play together with the beach ball.



Excerpt 1

The *caring* motif is heard as the boy is on top of his ladder feeding the lost thing in the shed at the home of the boy's parents, and the *belonging* motif is heard as the boy and the lost thing find where the lost thing belongs and they say goodbye to each other.

A key difference between the book and movie versions of this story is the nature of the relationship that is built up between the boy and the lost thing. What is

common to both story versions is that, although no one else seems to care that the lost thing is in fact lost, the boy is committed to finding a place where the lost thing could belong. In the book, the boy's commitment seems to involve rather minimal emotional attachment. Despite the time they spend together and the joint search for a place for the lost thing to belong, there is little indication of emotional bonding and there is limited affective response on the part of the boy. In the movie this is very different. A sense of the building of companionship is conveyed and affective responses from the boy are portrayed, particularly in the form of some overt indication of regret at the need to part when the lost thing eventually enters its haven. We will indicate how these differences are constructed through the language and the images in the story segment involving the feeding of the lost thing and then in the segment where the lost thing finds a place where it can belong and the boy and the lost thing say goodbye. We will also show how the music in the movie version strongly supports the interpretation of the bonding and strong emotional relationship between the boy and the lost thing in the movie.

Feeding the lost thing

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



Figure 1. Feeding the lost thing

The narration in the corresponding book and movie segments dealing with feeding the lost thing in the back shed are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2. Book and movie segment narration for feeding the lost thing

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

The grey print in the book column on the left hand side of Table 2 indicates that this narration from the book version was omitted in the movie. The upper case print shows the narration that occurred in the movie only, and the upper case italics shows the sections of narration in the movie that have some grammatical variation from the narration in the book.

In the book the verbal account of the feeding indicates that only the boy was agentic ('I gave ... I found out ...') and implies that the lost thing was entirely passive. In the image also the boy is clearly shown to be the one taking action, by feeding the lost thing, who is simply the willing recipient. The image is a very long distance view (Figure 1). The boy is so small that we cannot see if his face is displaying any affect or not. The narration suggests some affective concern by the boy when he says that the lost thing was 'a bit happier', but this is diminished somewhat by his qualification of 'a bit' and his use of the verb 'seemed'. In this segment of the book then, the boy's response to the lost thing seems to be one of concern but with minimal emotional expression, and the lost thing appears to be the impasive beneficiary.

In the movie the feeding of the lost thing is depicted visually and musically but the language does not deal with the feeding at all. It is important therefore to note firstly just what is shown to constitute the feeding segment of the story visually: From a high angle distant view outside the boy is shown entering the shed. Then

16

128 $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{4}{4}$ Cl $L \text{ } \dot{=} 90$ (Feeding)

Gtr 1

Cl

Solo Vln

Solo Vla

Marimba

134 arco mp *molto vib* arco *sempre legato* p

Solo Vln

Solo Vla

Marimba p

Use of long sustained notes and waves of volume – indicating a change is about to happen

Excerpt 2. The opening of the feeding scene

Excerpt 3: The caring theme

47 $\dot{=} 104$ G 9

Mba p

50

Mba

Excerpt 3

from the first view when he is inside the shed the lost thing is shown moving, with its tentacles exploring various items on the shelves along the shed wall until it pulls a box of what appears to be brightly coloured baubles off the shelf right in front of the boy so that, as it falls, the boy catches the box in his arms. The lost thing then gestures with his tentacle to the boy to follow it. The lost thing moves backwards from the boy at the same time opening the lid on its top extremity with more tentacles emanating from inside it to reveal a bright yellow light. It then uses its large pincers to manipulate a ladder against its side, which the boy climbs until he can look inside the top of the lost thing at a brightly lit swirling of tentacles in a compartment of dials and levers.

Up to this point the first of two quite distinct sections of the music soundtrack are heard. This opens with soft, high pitched and sustained notes that act like a melodic

drone (see Excerpt 2). The use of very soft dynamics, waves of volume through the use of crescendo and decrescendo, articulation markings such as *sempre legato* – always smoothly, and *molto vibrato*, much vibrating suggests the feeling of warmth and calmness until the piece gradually gets louder. Using these indicators of articulation enables the sound to be more fuller in expression and are often used to imply that something important is about to happen.

Then into this dynamic combination of the organic and the mechanical beneath the raised top of the lost thing, the boy throws the baubles from the box selected by the lost thing. At this moment a new melodic motif, the *caring* motif, is heard. This musical motif suggests happiness and features the marimba as the solo instrument. It consists of a repeated rhythmic pattern that changes melodically in each of its four bars of music. Both the rhythm and melodic content combined suggest

a happy feeling as the boy has shown caring towards the lost thing. The wooden sound of the marimba represents the ‘clunky’ mechanical nature of the lost thing. This musical motif can be seen as representing the bond between the boy and the lost thing as the boy has shown *caring* towards the lost thing (see Excerpt 3). The repeated rhythmic pattern featured here, as well as what is happening melodically (descending sequences), assists in suggesting a sense of movement – pushing the music and the events forward – as the characters still need to find where the lost thing belongs. This small motif may be heard as implying a sense of playfulness and innocence that the lost thing brings to the story as well as its satisfaction at the success of the joint effort in bringing it something to eat. The tonal, rhythmic and timbral elements all contribute to the feeling of content for the lost thing and it is here that the boy narrates ‘The lost thing seemed happy then’.

In this visual and musical account in the movie, the lost thing is clearly agentive, taking the initiative in looking for food, and facilitating the boy being able to feed it by arranging the ladder. In the movie then the feeding episode is one of close collaborative action emphasised by the combination of the visual representation and the *caring* motif in the music, as it is introduced at the exact moment when the boy places ‘food’ into the lost thing’s ‘mouth’. While the event of feeding is the same, the movie commits more meaning visually and this increased commitment provides additional visual information to inform viewer interpretation of the character of the lost thing – and of the boy, and correspondingly, the visual and verbal basis for interpretation of the emerging relationship between them is significantly different from that provided by the image and language of the book. In the movie what is emerging is a theme of caring, collaboration and close companionship as the two characters are committed to finding the place of belonging.

Through both language and image the movie tends to provide entre into the boy’s thoughts and feelings that does not occur in this section in the book. Hence in the movie we see the boy becoming mentally involved with the lost thing. The narration in the movie builds this ‘interiority’ into the characterisation of the boy. This is achieved through the use of the mental verbs ‘decided’ and ‘figure out’ and the boy’s indication that his sense of moral obligation was alerted by the situation of the lost thing ‘... I couldn’t just leave it wandering the streets.’ No such interiority is built in the narration of the book version of this segment. In fact, it appears that this is starkly excluded. For example, the narration in the book simply states ‘I hid the thing in our back shed ...’ as opposed to the inclusion of the interior

oriented mental process ‘I decided to hide ...’.

Interiority cannot be inscribed in images but it can be inferred from movement, gesture, expressions of facial affect and music. In the movie the beginning of this segment shows the rear view of the boy’s head moving as he appears to be tracking the movement of the tentacles of the lost thing along the shelves of the shed, and this might suggest that he is wondering what the lost thing is trying to do or is looking for. Similar head movements from the boy occur when the lost thing seems to be gesturing to him, when the lid of the lost thing opens, and when it begins to move the ladder. Once he is at the top of the ladder the relatively close-up view is of the face of the boy looking directly at us over the brightly illuminated top of the lost thing. The facial expression is one of amazement. The ambience of the yellow tones representing bright light emanating from the lost thing convey warmth, satisfaction and security (Painter, 2008), and this is complemented by the warm and comforting sustained notes that are played on strings (Excerpt 2) and also the *caring* motif (Excerpt 3) – where the lost thing, represented by the marimba, is happy and satisfied because the boy has fed it. This is very different indeed from the image of the boy and the lost thing in the feeding image in the book (Figure 1). In the book this image is very distant, so it is not possible to discern affect in the face of the boy. In the book also the limited yellow light emanates from a single light bulb, whereas in the movie the pervasive light emanates from the top interior of the lost thing itself, hence the view in the book is comparatively dull compared with the more encompassing bright yellow light in the movie, invoking much greater interpersonal warmth in the ambience of the movie image.

In this section of the movie then, the representational or ideational meanings convey the agentive role of the lost thing and the collaborative actions of the boy and the lost thing in making the feeding of the lost thing possible, whereas in the book these representational meanings are confined to the boy’s action in providing something for the lost thing to eat. In the movie the interactive meanings create contact with the viewer and the interpersonal distance is close so that we can see the depictions of affect on the face of the boy, whereas in the book the image of the boy feeding the lost thing is a very distant one that does not involve contact with the viewer and does not allow the viewer to discern any facial expression of affect. In the movie the music supports the communication of the emerging collaborative affective bonding of the boy and the lost thing. The following discussion of the boy and the lost thing parting company at the end of the story again indicates the manner in which additional visual representational

6

34

Gtr

Cl.

Mba

Vln

Vla

Use of rhythmic features from *friendship* theme

Use of tonal features from *caring* theme on clarinet

Excerpt 4

meanings in the movie concerning immediately prior and subsequent action by the boy and the lost thing, in combination with interactive meanings achieved by close-up images and depiction of facial affect, and supported by the interpersonal meaning of musical themes, construct interpretive possibilities of the parting that are very different from those constructed in the book by the single long distance, observe view of the boy and the lost thing in profile as they gesture goodbye.

Finding Utopia and saying goodbye

In the movie the boy and the lost thing finally come to a place where the boy as narrator says:

Eventually we found what seemed to be the right place in a dark little gap off some anonymous little street.

Here the shift is from a dark depressed kind of world to a brightly coloured pastel scene – Utopia. A door slowly rises emitting a most brilliant light that makes the boy squint. At this moment the new musical motif of *belonging* begins (Excerpt 4). Interestingly, the *belonging* motif has borrowed aspects from both the *friendship* and *caring* motifs. The rhythmic features prominent in the *friendship* motif are seen in a number of the instrumental parts. Disjointed and syncopated rhythms return aligning with many of Utopia's inhabitants' awkward movements. Additionally, the composer has used similar rhythmic and melodic aspects of the *caring* motif in the clarinet part as a reminder that the boy and the lost thing have found the place of *belonging* and are about to say goodbye to each other.

A number of other melodic lines appear throughout the viewing of Utopia. A panning of Utopia shows the viewer many unique biological and mechanical creatures. In a number of places the music directly

complements the movement of these creatures. For example, when the creature that sweeps its pencil legs around and around in circles a warm bowed string sound occurs adding a newer textual level in the sound. Also when one of the smaller creatures 'bounces' up the hill towards the sky, the pitch raises and the rhythm is more detached. Utopia is presented as a sparse area, open and welcoming with many characters, and the music has been scored orchestrally with the largest range and number of instruments used in the entire soundtrack.

As the merging of the two previous musical motifs ends, the camera pans back to the boy who then looks sadly up at the lost thing – realising he has to say goodbye. In the book this departure segment is shown in just one image (Figure 2). The text above the image on this page reads:

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

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

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

In the book the verbal text commits minimally to saying goodbye. It simply indicates that saying goodbye occurred, with no indication of what was said or how it was said. The use of the elliptical sentence 'So we did' suggests how inconsequential the saying goodbye was, and this is emphasised by the next sentence indicating that the boy then immediately went home to classify his bottle top collection. There is a complete



Figure 2. Saying goodbye

lack of verbal commitment to any emotional involvement in the departure, and the image also commits to only a fairly routine, unemotional waving gesture. This departure segment in the book is quite consistent with the earlier segment on feeding the lost thing in that the theme of unfeeling indifference is played out as the boy's emotionless concern and the impassive acceptance of the lost thing.

In the movie, this narration accompanying the 'departure' image is omitted. The entire 'goodbye' segment in the movie is conveyed through the images and music and there is no narration at all. At the beginning of this departure segment in the movie the music changes with the score returning to just two instruments – a guitar and marimba – the boy and the lost thing. The boy is depicted in close up contact images looking straight out at the viewer as the door of the strange creatures' sanctuary opens (Figure 3, top left). After these, there are two long distance observe images showing the boy and the lost thing beside each other facing out towards the viewer (Figure 3, top right). These suggest the collaborative relation of companionship between the two characters. Subsequently the boy turns to look up at the lost thing. His mouth opens to a half smile in profile view. The view then shifts to a more social distance view of the boy's upper body and head in profile – but with the just discernible smile sustained and still looking at the lost thing. There is greater visual commitment to the depiction in the movie of the actions that occurred immediately prior to this 'waving goodbye' scene. These images tend to support the perception of positive affect and collaborative companionship between the two characters.

Both the *friendship* and *caring* motifs are re-visited as the lost thing faces the boy to wave goodbye with its bells. Here initially the *friendship* motif is heard, just briefly (eight notes in total). Previously used when the boy and the lost thing were playing on the beach, this musical motif is played, as a reminder that the lost thing and the boy have consolidated their relationship from playing together to close collaboration and friendship,



Figure 3. Saying goodbye silently in the movie of the *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010)

and now they must say goodbye. After hearing the first bar of the *friendship* motif on the guitar, the marimba then enters returning back to the motif heard during the feeding of the lost thing – the *caring* motif. This is played identically to how it was presented as the lost thing was being fed, with the instrumentation remaining the same, the marimba and guitar and the pitch and rhythm also the same. The music, through the use of expressive, melodic, rhythmic and timbral features, accumulates the key moments of emotional contact and growing interactive emotional commitment between the boy and the lost thing. It is here in the context of this musical affective consolidation that the boy and the lost thing are depicted very poignantly saying goodbye to each other.

There is also greater commitment in the movie to the actions that occurred immediately following this common ‘waving’ scene. This is where the movie shows the full rear view of the boy parallel to the frontal plane of the viewer with the boy facing the door of the sanctuary as the lost thing departs through it (Figure 3 bottom left). The camera lingers on this rear view of the boy for some seconds, and as the sanctuary door closes, the boy’s head is tilted to one side so that he can maintain his view through the remaining opening (Figure 3 bottom right). Collectively these images strongly imply a very significant affective bond of companionship between the boy and the lost thing. While the parting of the boy and the lost thing is ostensibly similar in the book and movie versions of the story, the difference in the visual and verbal commitment to affect privilege very different interpretive possibilities in the experience of this segment of the story in the book and in the movie. Far from the emotionless concern and impassive acceptance in the book, the movie (with moving visuals and audio) contrasts the unfeeling apathy and indifference of people with the caring, collaborative companionship of the lost thing and the boy.

Conclusions and implications for teaching

Our experience of literary narratives for children, adolescents and adults in the contemporary digital multimedia world is increasingly one of multiple versions of ostensibly the same story in book and digital multimedia formats (Mackey, 2001a, 2001b, 2002). It is important that students learn to appreciate the construction of the distinctive interpretive possibilities of the different versions of such stories (Unsworth, 2007, 2008). In some cases there are radical differences, such as the departures of the *Shrek* movies (Elliott, 2001) and e-books (Ashby, 2001) from the original picture book by William Steig (1990), and sometimes the interpretive differences are more subtle as in the 1973 movie

version (Deitch, 1973) of *Where the Wild Things Are* (Sendak, 1962). It can be seen from the discussion of the book and movie versions of *The Lost Thing* that the complementary analyses of language based on systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) and recent functional social semiotic accounts of the meaning-making resources of images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Painter et al., 2013) can significantly inform an understanding of variation in the interpretive possibilities of the same story in different media. With the sustained popular culture adaptation of literary picture books as movies (Unsworth, in press) and the explicit requirements of multimodal literacy in the new Australian Curriculum: English (<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au>), it is clear that the important role of music in constructing the interpretive possibilities of digital multimedia versions of stories such as *The Lost Thing* (Ruhemann & Tan, 2010) will also need to become a significant aspect of the pedagogic agenda.

Not only will children need to understand the interpretive possibilities of language and image in literary meaning but it is also important that they are able to value the place and impact that sound and music has in this meaning. Having an awareness and understanding of a variety of tonal, rhythmic, expressive and timbral features (as shown in Appendix A) is important in being able to optimally appreciate multimodal texts involving sound and music. We have noted that the Australian Curriculum: English indicates that across several year levels students need to comprehend, compose and critically analyse multimodal texts. The question then is how can teachers assist their students in understanding the role of music and sound in these types of texts? If students are introduced to basic elements of music, including melody, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, timbre, and harmony, they can then be shown how to manipulate these elements to contribute to overall intent and meaning in multimodal stories. Aligning with the new Australian Curriculum: The Arts (currently in draft form) students not only listen to and observe others’ musical works but also create their own, drawing on knowledge and inspiration from these works. Specific activities in the making strand include both composing and performing, while in the responding strand, students critically listen and/or watch works and performances. In listening activities such as identifying relevant elements and compositional techniques in *The Lost Thing* teachers could ask questions such as:

What types of patterns can you hear in the music?

How many times do you hear these patterns?

Are they different when you hear them repeated?

How are they different?

What instruments do you hear?

How are the sounds being produced? (bowed, plucked, struck, shaken etc.)

What kind of feeling/effect does this create?

What is the range of the pitch?

Does it stay relatively the same, get higher/lower or change a lot throughout the music?

If it goes higher/lower where does this occur? What is happening in the visual action of the work?

Is the music loud or soft?

Does it increase/decrease in volume?

Where does it do this?

Why do you think it does this?

Are there any places in the music where you hear unusual or different sound effects? (an attack, shorter notes, longer notes)

How does this relate to the visual action of the work?

Other activities such as looking at music scores or versions of sound waves, such as those encountered in software programs such as Garageband and Audacity, could also be 'read' by students and discussed in terms of sound contour, positioning and layering.

After watching and working with the movie, teachers could have students listen to excerpts from the music track without seeing the images, and ask them to identify the corresponding story segments and discuss whether/how the music could be related to their recall of these segments. Subsequently students could watch selected movie segments with the sub-titles turned on and the sound turned down, and then discuss what the effect was of watching the movie without the music. There may well be more and more effective learning experiences that could be generated, but the important issue is to begin working on including music in multi-modal literacy pedagogy.

As compositional pedagogy moves from the logocentric practices of the past to include the creation of digital multimodal texts (Chandler, 2010; Chandler, O'Brien & Unsworth, 2010; O'Brien, Chandler & Unsworth, 2010), music will need to be included in the repertoire of compositional resources drawn upon using animation software and movie making, game making as well as in multimodal webpage design and new forms of multimedia communication. Just as educators continue to investigate what kind of knowledge about language and image are facilitative of the teaching of established and new literacy practices (Macken-Horarik, Love & Unsworth, 2011), it is important to include in such

investigations, what kind of knowledge about music will be needed to optimise the effectiveness of students' multimodal literacies development, and how the development of metasemiotic understanding more broadly, can be accommodated within our conceptualisations of multimodal literacy learning and teaching.

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Appendix A – Analytical framework for music soundtracks

Tonal features

- Includes Ellis and Simons’
 - Major key – positive valence
 - Minor key – negative valence
- Intervallic relationship – 2nd, 3rd – close proximity; 4th, 5th – open sparse effect; 6th – harmonic consonance; 7th – harmonic dissonance
- Melodic suspension and resolution
- Melodic motifs (with the use of the above)
- Repetition

Rhythmic features

- Includes Ellis and Simons’
 - Slow tempo – low arousal
 - Regular rhythm or meter – low arousal
 - Fast tempo – high arousal
 - Irregular rhythm – low arousal
- Repetition
- Rhythmic motifs
- Increase in tempo
- Intensity
- Layering
- Uneven
- Smooth (Gundrach, 1935)

Articulation and dynamics

- Attacks/releases
- short
- sustained
- flowing
- disjointed
- irregular/regular
- soft
- loud
- increase in volume
- decrease in volume
- layering
- intensity

Timbral features

- instrumentation and sound quality (Gundrach, 1935)
- wooden, metallic, shimmering, breathy
- techniques on instruments
 - sustained chords/notes
 - muted
 - types of mallets
 - combination of
 - spatial organisation (Rahn, 1998)
 - vibrato/tremolo

*Appendix B – Analyses of three segments of the movie***Segment 1: Feeding the lost thing**

Time code	Description	Tonal features – pitch and melody	Rhythmic features	Timbral features	Expressive features – Articulation/ dynamics
5:40	The boy decides to hide the thing in his back shed	High pitched	long notes	Synth sounds, guitar chords	Sustained Very soft
5:44	Inside the shed – TLT is looking through stuff; gives the boy a box	Long sustained high pitched note; bell sound of TLT	Long notes	Synth sounds, guitar chords	Very soft
5:56	TLT indicates to boy to place the things in the box in his open lid	Long sustained note + slow tempo and	Long notes	Guitar and synth sounds	Sustained soft
6:01	TLT thing opens its lid further and moves the ladder for the boy to climb	with added guitar chords major tonality High pitched	Chords change on beat	Guitar – plucked intermittently	Still long sustained notes (drone)
6:19	The boy starts to climb the ladder	Guitar notes high pitch – major key	Chords change on beat	Guitar – plucked on beat	Still long sustained notes (drone)
6:24	Boy looks into TLT's mouth	Guitar chords	Chords change on beat	Guitar – plucked intermittently	Still long sustained notes (drone)
6:29		Guitar chords get more frequent Drone continues	Drone Chords change on beat	Guitar – plucked intermittently	Still long sustained notes (drone)
6:32	The boy starts to put the things into TLT's mouth	The Marimba caring motif – major and minor tonality as chords change (excerpt 2) The musical motif starts to slow as the boy completes the feeding	Rhythmic motif of caring motif More detailed rhythmic features	Marimba – main motif and guitar notes every two beats	Soft and smooth
6:52	The shed is shown again 'TLT seemed happy then'	Major tonality	Sustained chord	Smooth	Soft and starts to slow down – sustained chord

Segment 2: Searching for a place to belong

Time code	Description	Tonal features – pitch and melody	Rhythmic features	Timbral features	Expressive features – Articulation/ dynamics
10:15	The boy and TLT are looking for a sign	Minor and major seconds in the melody Use of elements of the friendship (from the beach) and caring motifs – but some dissonance and quirkiness	Irregular rhythms Rhythmic percussive beat Layered	Marimba Dissonant sound	Short and irregular soft
10:32	The boy and TLT are walking in all directions following the sign	Marimba part continues		Warm sustained string chords	Smooth accompaniment Irregular melodic part and disjointed
10:54	‘Eventually we found what seemed to be the right place in a dark little gap off some anonymous little street	The music changes to a long sustained wavering sound (high pitched) Music stops (11:07)	Long	Drone	Long sustained

Segment 3: Finding Utopia and saying goodbye

Time code	Description	Tonal features – pitch and melody	Rhythmic features	Timbral features	Expressive features – Articulation/ dynamics
11:26	The boy turns the key		Sustained	Wavering sound	Drone
11:30	Mechanical creature flies through a smaller door that allows a stream of light to flow through	Medium pitch	Sustained	Wavering sound	Drone
11:38	The larger door starts to open	Chord wave – synth sound	Sustained		
11:48	The boy and TLT look into Utopia, many creatures moving around happily	High pitched guitar chords		Guitar chords (as featured before in feeding the lost thing and introduction)	Underlying drone
12:02	Numerous creatures are happily moving through Utopia	Guitar melody Major tonality	Dotted rhythm	Warm	Louder
12:13	Utopia	Counter melody played on marimba/glock in higher pitch	Steady beat Dotted rhythm	Marimba and glock Happy feeling – creatures movement	Medium loud
12:23	Utopia	Sustained strings with own melody underneath main melody	Dotted rhythm with long string notes	Sustained strings – warm sound	Sustained notes

12:35		Back to guitar motif and more warm strings chords accompanying the melody	Dotted rhythm with steady beat Synth part added	Strings – warm full chords (when creature spins around)	Layered – some parts smooth and others accent on beats 2 and 4 on guitar
12:56	Robotic creatures jump up hill	Higher pitched marimba/glock notes added	Dotted rhythm	Happy	
13:05	View on boy and TLT looking out to Utopia	Tempo slows slightly	Rhythm slows down – rubato	Marimba slows	
13:08	Boy looks up at TLT	Both tempo slows and dynamics get softer	Slower tempo – more sustained notes	Guitar plucks on the beat	Sustained notes/chords
13:12	TLT talks with the boy through sounds of bells	Medium pitch	Long notes		sustained
13:18	TLT walks through the door	Friendship motif – indicating search is finally over		Guitar plays the searching motif	
13:23	TLT turns around and shakes its bells to say goodbye. The boy waves with both hands	Marimba caring motif Bells – saying goodbye	Repeated rhythmic pattern in motif	Marimba with guitar	Soft and slower
13:48	The door slowly closes	Caring motif starts to slow and softens, wavering sound from the beginning returns	Repeated pattern still until sustained chord at tend	Warm – guitar and marimba	Gets softer and slower as the door lowers