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# THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION IN PICTURE BOOKS

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Submitted by **Penni Cotton** to the University of Durham as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education in the School of Education, December 1997.



12 MAY 1998

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis considers European picture books and how they can be used by trainee teachers in upper primary classrooms. It is divided into two parts.

**Part One**, Chapters 1-4, develops a theoretical rationale for creating picture book material which will both implement a European dimension in education and meet the requirements of the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for English in England. Chapter One explains the notion of a European dimension in Education; Chapter Two traces European influences on the picture book since the time of Comenius, the first picture book creator; Chapter Three discusses the 'travelability' of picture books plus their role within the learning process; and Chapter Four concludes the first part of the thesis, with a literature review, by drawing the strands of the first three chapters together to create a rationale for using European picture books at Key Stage Two.

**Part Two**, Chapters 5-8, presents the study which was devised to put this rationale into practice for initial teacher training. It establishes the core questions of the thesis: Which books might form a European collection? How can such a collection of picture books facilitate a European dimension in primary education? How can this collection enable trainee teachers to implement a European dimension at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English? Chapter Five outlines the development of the European Picture Book Collection (EPBC); Chapter Six presents a brief overview of semiotic, discourse and text analysis methodologies, suggesting why a Semiotic Text Analysis (STA) is appropriate for this research; Chapter Seven applies the STA to the EPBC; and Chapter Eight explores, through a number of activities, how trainee teachers might use the EPBC materials to implement a European dimension whilst meeting National Curriculum requirements.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### THE EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION

The research was funded by the European Commission.

It was also supported, and recognised, by the European Committee of the International Reading Association, from whom it received the award of:

#### **'Innovative Reading Promotion in Europe - 1996/7'**

I should like to thank all my European colleagues, in the field of Children's Literature, who so generously gave their time, expertise and enthusiasm to the project. It has been an invaluable experience, from which I have made many friends and learned a great deal.  
PC

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## INTRODUCTION

### 0.1 European Picture Books

Chambers (1996: 9), in his introduction to a European companion of children's authors, suggests that 'Books are only ink on paper. But more than ink on paper, books are people'. I personally, have always considered books to be my 'friends' but, in my role both as teacher and teacher educator, I have found children's books in particular have become the friends of many children and trainee teachers, too; none more so than within a European context.

The origin of my ideas for this study stems from a variety of educational experience in schools and teacher training establishments. Having worked in Europe and, subsequently, been responsible for student exchanges in a number of European countries, I have visited many primary schools within the European Community. What became immediately apparent in all these countries was the immediacy of communication between pupils and students through the medium of picture books. Sharing picture books became an entrée into the children's world for many students. Spoken language did not appear to be a barrier; indeed it was the visual narratives of these well-chosen books and the universality of themes that enabled these texts to become a catalyst within the communication process.

I also enjoyed these shared experiences. In all countries I visited, young children were to be seen immersed in their picture books. If I showed an interest in what they were reading, the children began to point to the pictures and tell me the story. Of course it was easier in the countries where communication was through a Latin-based language, where my ability to speak French and Spanish was a great asset but, even in others, the books facilitated understanding and communication. In Sweden, for example, I was able to draw on my general knowledge of how language works and the structure of stories. It was, however, the visual

narratives to which the children were referring, when they verbally recounted these familiarly thematic stories, that were crucial to my understanding. Thus I became absorbed not only in the stories of this country but also in the language and culture. In doing so, I began to reflect on what I personally was learning from this experience.

## 0.2 Linguistic and Cultural Awareness

In Sweden, simultaneously looking at and listening to a new language enabled me initially to see the similarities between Swedish and other languages, especially my own. Then, with the visuals to reinforce this auditory input plus my own understanding of likely story narratives and language, I noticed that I was approaching these texts in much the same way that very young children first learn to read. They use all the visual and auditory clues possible, plus a developing sense of how language works. Many of the books were quite different in style and content and I began to realise that some of these texts which, at the time seemed quite unusual and often gave insights into the culture, should be made available to English children. If I had experienced an understanding whilst sharing these stories with young Europeans, perhaps it would be possible for older primary children, as well as trainee teachers, to use the books, too. This would be not only with stories from other European countries, but also with other European languages.

## 0.3 Initial Teacher Training

Through my European student exchange link with ERASMUS, I was invited to a conference in Belgium (1993), organised by the European Commission. It was designed to encourage teacher educators to develop materials which would implement a European dimension in their courses. This presented the opportunity for my somewhat tentative suggestion of using European children's literature, to implement a European dimension in primary education, to be put forward. The idea received much support and a proposal was, therefore, submitted which

would involve specialists in children's literature from teacher training establishments in all member states of the European Union. It was accepted and the finances made available to set up a research project which would investigate the possibilities of using European picture books to help children within the European Community to understand more about Europe.

Initially, it was necessary to create an opportunity for the specialists in children's literature to meet. A symposium was therefore organised at which each participant gave a paper relating to children's literature in his/her country and focused on a number of culturally representative picture books which could be used in a proposed European Picture Book Collection.

Subsequently, the books were analyzed and one from each country selected, together with a cassette in the original language, written translations into English and practical activities. The materials were designed to be used with trainee teachers in upper primary classrooms; the process of which is detailed in Part Two of the research.

#### 0.4 The National Curricula

Although the European Picture Book Collection was originally designed to be used in all member states of the European Union, for the purposes of this study, focus is placed on its relevance to classrooms in England. The implementation of a European dimension through these books is essential yet, due to the requirements of the National Curricula for primary English (1995 and 1997) in England, it is of paramount importance to consider how these materials can also be used to teach English. To this end, activities have been designed, for use alongside the books, which will not only concentrate on the cultural aspects but linguistic and literary elements, too. It is the visual narratives, from each of the member states of the European Union (analyzed in Chapter Seven), that are the core of the research. This study proposes ways in which these narratives can enable trainee teachers to implement a European dimension at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English in England.

## 0.5 Structure of the Thesis

In Part One, chapters 1-4, a theoretical rationale is developed for creating picture book material which will both implement a European dimension in education and meet the requirements of the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for English. Part Two, chapters 5-8, presents the study which was devised in order to put this rationale into practice for initial teacher training within primary, Key Stage Two, classrooms.

### *Part One:*

**Chapter One** traces the development of the concept 'European Dimension', placing it within historical, geographical, political, religious, cultural and linguistic contexts. It then attempts to formulate a workable definition for this notion of a European dimension, and its implementation within the primary curriculum. Policy directives emanating from the European Commission are analyzed, alongside documents produced by the Department of Education in London. The chapter explains why a European dimension is necessary for both the 1995 (Schools) and 1997 (Initial Teacher Training) National Curricula in England. It argues that, whilst many educationalists and politicians have put forward the notion of a European dimension in primary education, the majority of school policies developed, and materials produced, have focused mainly on secondary education; relatively few have been concerned with primary level. Where they do exist, little, if any, emphasis has been placed on contemporary European children's literature. On the rare occasions when European stories for primary children are mentioned, they tend to be folktales, rather than picture books that reflect the culture of today or universal childhood themes.

**Chapter Two** presents an overview European influences on the picture book, taking as its starting point *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, the first known picture book, created by Comenius in 1658. It points out that, since the time of Comenius, philosophers and

educationalists have been extolling the value of picture books within the learning process. The progression of these ideas is explored, alongside specific influential texts that have become known as landmarks in the history of European picture books during the 17th, 18th, 19th and first half of the 20th Century. A framework is developed showing the stages which characterise the progression throughout this period and how the influence of philosophers and educationalists such as Locke (1693), Rousseau (1762), Pestalozzi (1781), Kay (1900), Hazard (1932) and Neill (1950) have shaped the thinking behind the role of the picture book today. Influential picture book styles are inherent within this framework, exemplified in works of Basedow (1770), Bertuch (1796), Hoffman (1844), Busch (1864), Beskow (1901), Potter (1901), Castor (1932), Lindgren (1945), de Silva (1952) and Lamorisse (1956).

**Chapter Three** endorses the important role that European picture books have to play in the learning process, and focuses on contributory elements that facilitate a good picture book. Drawing on issues raised in Chapter Two, it focuses on the last decades of the 20th Century where the European picture book is becoming established within educational literature. Elements which go together to make a good picture book are discussed in terms of: visual communication; the creation of secondary worlds; a European community of readers; linguistic diversity and translations. The recent emergence/popularity of picture books, with their polysemic nature and the interdependency of picture/text plus a universality of themes, is highlighted; these books are now beginning to speak across nations. Most European countries over the last thirty years have been producing picture books of very good quality. Unfortunately, the excellence of these texts has not been readily available to English speaking children. An argument is therefore put forward which emphasises the importance of the 'travelability' of picture books and their ability to enhance the learning process.

**Chapter Four** considers the value of picture books in creating wider cultural awareness for

older, primary-aged readers. Initially the picture book is defined and its place located within the historical development of European children's literature. Focus is then placed on the importance of semiotics, ideology, metafiction and intertextuality in relation to the concept of childhood and children's ability to interpret texts. Moving between a multiplicity of secondary worlds, represented through fantasy/reality and linked to a plethora of universal childhood themes, leads to characterisation being analyzed, together with relationships/emotions. The value of pictures and the crucial importance of the interplay between pictures and text are then related to reading of these texts and classroom activities, especially for older, readers. Part One concludes by making a case for using European picture books not only to facilitate the European dimension in initial teacher education at Key Stage Two, but also to develop an understanding of how language works. Specific reference is made to DfE policy and implementation of the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for English.

#### *Part Two:*

**Chapter Five** outlines the development of the European Picture Book Collection (EPBC), from its conception in 1993 through to the development of materials, designed in response to the first research question: Which books might form a European Collection? The preparatory stages of the project are discussed ie: the symposium on European children's literature at which picture books were presented; the selection of participants to present papers; and the establishment of a European picture book collection which forms the materials analyzed in this study. Finally, the criteria for selection of European picture books is set out and the choice of stories for the EPBC presented.

**Chapter Six** presents a critical overview of semiotic, discourse and text analysis research methods. Initially research paradigms are discussed, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of these orientations and placing them within the context of the current research. The

approach chosen for this study is explained with justification for a 'semiotic text analysis' (STA) methodology being made. This is in order to try to develop more systematic knowledge and understanding of textual factors which influence trainee teachers' professional practice and the learning of their pupils in school. It is in response to the second research question: How can such a collection of picture books facilitate a European dimension in primary education?

In **Chapter Seven** the semiotic text analysis framework (STA) is applied to all the books in the EPBC. Each book is set within this evaluative framework which discusses the visual narratives that can be offered to young, European readers. The analytical framework provides a structure whereby the texts can be analyzed as material produced for discourse which enables the mimetic function of messages, discussed in Section 6.3, to go back and forth between picture book and reader. The three categories of visual narratives: character, setting and story, discussed within the thematic framework, suggest that children's responses to illustrations are likely to be an inseparable part of their response to a text.

**Chapter Eight** develops the previously considered notion of visual narratives within the EPBC and explores the possible interplay between picture and multi-lingual texts when older primary children are extending their literacy skills. Analysis of the books is made in terms of the potential for their use with trainee teachers, working in Key Stage Two classrooms, for both implementing a European dimension through the use of the EPBC and meeting the needs of the National Curriculums (1995 and 1997). Emphasis is placed on an understanding of the similarities between languages and cultures, rather than the differences which separate them. To this end, the argument is put forward that the EPBC, as well as helping children place the picture books within a European setting, also facilitates close scrutiny of linguistic, literary and cultural elements relating to language, literature and storytelling generally. Thus it

responds to the third research question: How can this collection enable trainee teachers to implement a European dimension at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English?

**Chapter Nine** reviews the study set out in previous chapters and considers the additional benefits for trainee teachers in using European, rather than solely UK produced, picture books in Key Stage Two classrooms. Further issues are discussed, as well as possible directions for future research.

**PART ONE:**

**THEORETICAL RATIONALE UNDERPINNING**

**A EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION (EPBC)**

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE NOTION OF A EUROPEAN DIMENSION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

#### 1.0 Introduction

Chapter One outlines the development of the European dimension in education from its conception in 1957 to date. It provides a background to this study, which argues that primary children's understanding/awareness of Europe can be enhanced by using picture books from member states of the European Union. Directives from the European Commission and recommendations by the Department of Education in London are analyzed, outlining why a European dimension is necessary for the English National Curriculum. Focus is placed those aspects of these documents which emphasise the importance of developing materials, for use in both teacher training establishments and schools. These materials should, the chapter argues, reflect not only the national and cultural identity of each country but also a universal world of childhood with which children throughout the European Community can identify and empathise as Europeans.

Initially, the notion of a European dimension is discussed, with its implications for primary Education in England, the part of the UK to be studied in this research. The responsibility for the implementation of the European dimension in the UK rests 'primarily with local education authorities' and the Government provides 'a legislative framework ... to ensure that the European dimension is adequately covered in the National Curriculum.' (DfE, 1991: 3). This framework has developed alongside the individual policies of the Curriculum Councils in England (NCC), Wales (CCW),

Scotland (SCCC) and Northern Ireland (NICC).

Documentary evidence leading to current teacher training/school/teacher initiatives, concerning the European dimension in Education, is explored in detail, with the majority of source material emanating from the European Commission (comprising representatives from some fifteen countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK) and from European law. The Department for Education (DfE) in England, however, has produced some relevant documentation on this subject which is cited. It puts the notion of a European dimension into the context of English primary education of the 1990s, both at national and local levels, and draws out themes which are relevant to pedagogical innovation and educational change.

Educational change does not just happen. For schools to be able to implement new directives, there is a need for a change in the thinking of teachers/teacher educators in terms of providing expertise and advice as well as materials; at local, regional and national levels. This chapter discusses some of the possible ways forward that might be considered, referring to EU funded projects which use literature and the arts to facilitate the European dimension; focusing particularly on the opportunities provided by children's books. In conclusion, it makes links with one of the very first 17th Century picture book creators, Comenius - a true European, who saw the linking of pictures and text as a way of helping children learn independently.

### 1.1 The European Dimension

The notion of a European dimension in education is particularly difficult to define as it can cover many disciplines and many individual points of view/perceptions. Definitions vary, indicative of the professional base line from which they originate, be it historical, geographical, political, cultural or linguistic. Indeed it is unlikely that, even if one precise term were possible, many educationalists could:

'agree on such a definition... yet for anyone engaged in introducing a European dimension into schools and developing work with children, a clear vision of the nature of the theme is important to provide a coherence to work undertaken.'  
(Central Bureau, 1993: 11).

In a summary of the Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, 5.11.91, Yves Beernaert, however, focuses on a number of specific parameters which are likely to clarify, to some extent, relevant educational issues. He suggests that the 'contours' which define the European dimension are:

- Europe in the curriculum
- the training of teachers
- cooperation between institutions
- the central importance of language
- student mobility
- recognition of qualifications and periods of study
- the international role of higher education
- information and policy analysis
- dialogue with the higher education sector

(Beernaert, Van Dijk, & Sander, 1993: 210)

Whilst these 'contours' highlight the way forward for educational policies, the actual content, aims and objectives still remain rather vague. In the same document, several definitions of the specific notion of a European dimension in education are posited, and it is David Hellawell's perception which encapsulates much of the thinking behind this research project:

'The European dimension in education consists of all those curricular and extra curricular elements which heighten the pupils' awareness of themselves as Europeans.'

(in: Beernaert, Van Dijk, & Sander, 1993: 54)

For the 'clear vision' mentioned by the Central Bureau (1993: 11) to be realised, Beernaert's 'contours' and Hellawell's perceptions of the notion are crucial when considering the implementation of a European dimension in primary education. Europe in the Curriculum can only become a reality if teachers have a genuine desire to include it and are given support and advice. Carefully devised programmes providing materials, used sensitively in the classroom, are likely to be instrumental in creating greater European understanding. Appropriate materials, therefore, need to be developed in order to: (i) give teachers/trainee teachers sufficient knowledge/understanding of the concept, and (ii) provide support in school. This thesis puts forward the proposal that such materials can be developed through the use of contemporary European picture books.

## 1.2 A European Dimension in 'Concrete' Terms

Inherent within the notion of a European dimension is an underlying concern about what is really meant by Europe. In classical mythology, Europa was the daughter of the king of Phoenicia, and was carried off by Jupiter to be his wife. Etymologically, 'Europe', seems to be derived from an Assyrian or Phoenician word 'Ereb', which means sunset. Seen from the ancient Near-East, Europe was that part of the known world where the sun goes down. At the end of the sixth century before Christ, the Greek geographer Hecataeus divided the world into two continents: Asia and Europe. Later Herodotus, and other Greek historians/geographers mentioned Europe as being one of three continents. The surface areas and borders of Europe continued to remain

rather vague for the Greeks and, even though today it is possible to define Europe as a geographical whole, it is less easy to define just exactly where are the borders of Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern and Central Europe. Moreover, the divisions within Europe, however, are not just geographical, but highly founded upon geopolitical or cultural entities and concepts.

For this reason, any definition of what it means to be a 'European' is extremely difficult to deduce. The Oxford Dictionary suggests: 'European - a native or inhabitant of Europe; a person interested in Europe as a whole rather than its individual countries'. This rather simplistic definition, however, does not allude to (nor is it possible to do so within the constraints of a dictionary) the knowledge and understanding of political, religious or cultural beliefs and values. Even though the geographical unity of Europe has, to a certain extent, a conventional base, the political and nationalist concepts gave rise to many centuries of civil wars within that geographical whole and a religious viewpoint indicating divisions but with some unity and identity, suggesting a European separateness.

Voltaire, along with other philosophers contrasted culture, education and 'esprit et raison humaine' with wars and politics; identifying science and culture as the bright side of human history, whereas wars, politics, invasions and diversions were the dark side of it. De Schiver (1993: 85) believes that it might be possible to find more European unity and common heritage by focusing on this 'brighter' side. European history does, however, lack an overall cultural unity and a common identity but, De Schiver suggests, 'cultural and scientific history are what united Europe and now gives

it its brightest and deepest identity'. It would appear, therefore, that to implement a European dimension, with particular stress on culture and civilisation, would be one of the best ways to discover a common European identity. This will, therefore, be the research focus, linked to European directives, national statements and local policies.

In terms of economics, Europe can be seen in more concrete terms. After World War Two, several European countries began to look for ways to ensure peace. In 1950, two Frenchmen Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman proposed that France, Germany and any other interested countries should sign an economic agreement for the production of coal and steel. This resulted in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and the establishment of the *Treaty of Paris*, in 1951; signed by France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. In 1957 these countries further developed their economic links with the *Treaty of Rome* and created the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) and the European Economic Community (EEC) - known first as the Common Market and, subsequently the EC (Lamb, 1997: 2).

In 1973, Denmark, Ireland and the UK joined the EC. They were then followed by Greece in 1981; Portugal and Spain in 1986; and Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995 (Lamb, 1997: 2). The fifteen countries of the EC which were Members States in 1995 are those financed by the European Commission to take part in this project.

### 1.3 Policy Statements

Unlike unravelling the specific notion of the European dimension, tracing its development historically, within an educational context, is relatively straight forward.

Documents suggesting the implementation of a European dimension are freely available from the European Commission. They give insights into the concept and the instruments for enforcement, discussed in Section 1.4 and summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: The Development of A European Dimension at Community Level.

| Year       | Document   | Outcome  |
|------------|--|--|
| 1957       | Treaty of Rome   | Begins cooperation between member states                                       |
| 1976       | Council of Ministers   | Programme of action for education  |
| 1983       | Stuttgart Declaration  | Recommends cooperation between HE institutions                                 |
| 1984       | Fontainebleau Declaration  | Promotion of 'Community' identity  |
| 1985       | 'Ad Hoc' Committee   | Languages for the very young in school   |
| 1986       | Single European Act  | European dimension in education a necessity                                    |
| 1988       | Resolution on the European dimension in education                          | Series of concerned measures for 1988-1992                                     |
| 1989       | Council of Europe Recommendation 1111                                      | Emphasis on a European dimension in teacher training/ development of materials |
| 1991 (Oct) | Council of Europe: Resolution No. 1 on the European dimension in education | Teaching and curriculum content  |
| 1991 (Nov) | European Task Force  | Memorandum on HE in the European Community                                     |
| 1992       | Treaty of Maastricht   | A legal framework now in existence for European cooperation in education       |
| 1993       | EC Green Paper (Article 126)   | Sets out main objectives of the <b>European Dimension</b> in education.        |
| 1997       | Revised Treaty of European Union.  | No relevant references to education.   |

#### 1.4 The European Level

The stages in the development of the European dimension in education, at the European Community level, began with the **Treaty of Rome on 25th March 1957** which opened up the possibilities for cooperation between member states concerning education. It was not, however, until the 1970s that any real educational focus was discernable and concrete references were made in the **Resolution of the Council and Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 9th February 1976 concerning a programme of action on education**. This resolution represented the first real foundation stone of cooperation between Member States:

'It marked the start of community work which has been progressively extended through the adoption of new texts, but which already called for improved information on education systems and their comparability, and the improvement of language teaching, as the foundation stone for better mutual understanding'.

(Commission of The European Union, 1993: Annex B).

In the 1980s focus moved onto higher education when the **Stuttgart Declaration of 19th June, 1983** recommended cooperation between H.E. institutions and the improvement of European awareness concerning history and culture. The **Fontainebleau Declaration of 25-26 June, 1984** went even further by stressing the importance of promoting a Community identity. 'With these two Declarations, the concept of the European Citizen gradually emerged' (Commission of The European Union, 1993: Annex B). The teaching of languages to the very young in school plus the concept of school exchanges and transnational cooperation initiatives were suggested by the '**Ad Hoc**' **Committee for a people's Europe in March, 1985** and, 'with the adoption of the **Single European Act (1986)**, the inclusion of a European dimension in education became a necessity'. (Commission of The European Union, 1993: Annex B)

A huge step forward was made on **24th May, 1988** when **the European Community (EC) Council and the Ministers of Education met within the Council and adopted a Resolution on the European dimension in Education**. The purpose of this resolution was to strengthen the European dimension in Education by launching a series of concerned measures for the period 1988 to 1992; these measures should help to:

- \* strengthen in young people a sense of European identity...
- \* improve their knowledge of the Community of its member states in their historical, cultural, economical and social aspects...
- \* prepare young people to take part in the economic and social development of the Community...
- \* make them aware of the advantages the Community presents

(Beernaert, Van Dijk, & Sander, 1993: 194).

At the level of the Member States, **The Resolution** made specific suggestions which are relevant to this study:

Para.3. To include the European dimension explicitly in school curricula in all appropriate disciplines, for example literature, languages, history, geography, social sciences, and the arts.

Para.4. To make arrangements so that teaching material takes account of the common objectives of promoting the European dimension.

Para.5. To give greater emphasis to the European dimension in teachers' initial and in-service training.

The following can contribute to achieving this objective:

- \* making suitable teaching materials available
- \* cooperation with teacher training institutions in other Member States...
- \* making provision in the framework of in-service teacher training for specific activities to enhance serving teacher awareness of the European dimension in education...

At the level of the Community, **The Resolution** made specific suggestions which are relevant to this study:

Para. 9. To facilitate the exchange of information on teaching material aimed at strengthening the European dimension in teaching... and ... to make authors and publishers of teaching materials more aware of the need to include the European dimension in their production.

Para. 12. To support cooperation by institutions of initial and further training for teachers of several member states in the development of teaching materials promoting the European dimension in education.

This resolution has many implications for teacher training and, subsequently, the European Commission was invited to organise a series of Summer Universities, between 1988 and 1992, through which teacher trainers would be able to exchange experiences and identify new ways of improving the introduction of a European dimension in teacher education. Details of how these summer universities presented opportunities for the development of a European children's picture book network are discussed in Section 1.9.

Following the Resolution of 1988 there were a number of supplementary recommendations made to strengthen existing proposals.

**In 1989 the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Recommendation 1111 on the European dimension of Education:**

Para. 8. noted that, despite the emphasis placed by the Council of Europe on the European dimension in education, the idea still had to be more effectively integrated into teacher training in practice.

Para. 9. stressed the need to include knowledge of other European countries in teacher training; and

Para. 12. endorsed the need for publishing houses to be encouraged to take account of the European dimension in their books and materials.

**In 1991 (17th October) the Council of Europe Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, Resolution no. 1 on 'The European Dimension of Education: -**

**Teaching and Curriculum Content'** adopted a number of guidelines to further intensify the European dimension of school education. Relevant sections include:

Para. 9. ...help make the younger generation conscious of their common European identity without losing sight of their global responsibilities or their national, regional and local roots;

Para. 10. ... receptiveness of different cultures whilst preserving their own roots;

Para. 11. ... encourage awareness of the patterns of development and characteristic features of European culture in its unity and diversity...curriculum subjects eg literature, art, music should represent part of a common European heritage;

Para. 17. ... projects should be developed which will promote innovative forms of schooling... designed to give pupils greater exposure to the European dimension.

On 5th November of the same year the **Commission of the European Community Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth**, produced the first document specifically related to the training of teachers. The **Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community (5, November, 1991)** respected the fact that teacher education is organised in different ways throughout the Community, reflecting the historic circumstances, cultures and perceived needs of the education systems in member states (134) and, although it spends a great deal of time emphasising the importance of student/teacher mobility and the importance of second language learning, does in fact suggest that:

'as a European experience remains an essential feature of the professional education of all teachers, it will be necessary to seek ways of providing this experience for all student teachers and, in particular, for those who do not have the opportunity of a study period abroad. '

This is discussed later in Section 1.10, Intellectual mobility.

The document goes on to suggest that teachers'/trainee teachers' experience of Europe should be such as to enable them to 'properly interpret Europe' to their pupils by providing a European frame of reference for their work in various aspects of the school curricula. The concluding comments stress the importance of teacher training institutions across Europe working together to create:

'opportunities for joint action and for sharing knowledge and expertise in the definition and development of curriculum, in the production of curricular materials and in the evolution of new approaches to learning. Involving both schools and teacher education institutions should be encouraged and promoted at both member state and Community level' (139).

It is to this end that the current project, using contemporary European picture books chosen by educators in the 15 Member States, has been devised and is the focus for Chapter Five, Seven and Eight.

Clearly, the document shows that a European dimension in education is perceived as a practical and economic necessity as well as desirable on cultural and political grounds. Higher education is seen as playing an important role not only in safeguarding and developing European cultural heritage, but also in ensuring that this heritage is transmitted and shared more widely among the children across the boundaries of member states - meaning, inevitably, a number of challenges for teacher training establishments in terms of contributing to social and cultural progress and cohesiveness throughout the Community.

This directive goes beyond those already in existence and emphasises the need to ensure that the European dimension becomes much more a feature of the planning and functioning of higher education throughout the Community. The central element being

for institutions to develop policies which incorporate cooperation between institutions at European level. Policies of this nature can lead to joint programmes of teaching and curriculum development. These would involve staff exchanges and other means of extending the European experience of those students who do not have the opportunity to study abroad. Cooperation between H.E. institutions is an integral element within this research project and is discussed in Chapter Five.

One of the most important documents to date is the **European Community Treaty on the Foundation of the European Community (7th February, 1992, Maastricht)**. This treaty (Article 126) meant that, for the first time, 'a legal framework existed which allowed the Community to propose cooperative actions in the area of education'.

(European Commission Green Paper, 1993: 2). The treaty succinctly summarised, into what is now European law, much of the theoretical rationale underpinning previous directives, stating that :

- (i) 'the Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between member states' and that
- (ii) 'Community action shall be aimed at:
  - \* developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the member states;
  - \* encouraging mobility of students and teachers, inter alia by encouraging the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;
  - \* promoting cooperation between educational establishments;
  - \* developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States;
  - \* encouraging the development of distance education.'

The interpretation of these directives at national and local level is discussed in Sections 1.5 and 1.8.

The most recent Community document is the **Commission for the European Communities' Green Paper on the European Dimension in Education (29.9.93)** which comments on the 1992 Maastricht Treaty and (i) places article 126 in the context of the cooperation actions undertaken since 1976; (ii) sets out the theme of the European dimension and its main objectives; (iii) attempts to identify possibilities for complementary action, describing the instruments and strategies as well as the people involved.

The most pertinent sections for this thesis are sections two and three. The former in terms of contributing to European citizenship where: i) there should be respect for different cultural and ethnic identities; ii) Europe should not be seen as a dimension which replaces others but which enhances them; iii) the European dimension should be experienced through learning languages, working on joint transnational projects, obtaining knowledge of other countries and through information given as the basis for thought/teaching materials. The last of these is seen in terms of the relationship between: schools, teacher trainers/inspectors, universities/research teams, and the staff of libraries/other sources of information.

The Green Paper sees teacher training as 'the main tool' in the development of teachers' pedagogical practices. It therefore should be in the 'forefront of action to promote *pedagogical innovation*' as well as to develop the European dimension in teaching.

(1993: 9) The aims of this research project to develop pedagogical innovation through European picture book usage are discussed in Chapters Three and Four.

**The Revised Treaty of European Union (1997)** makes no relevant references to education.

### 1.5 National Level in England

Until enacted by the English parliament, English ministers and other subordinate legislative authorities may make legislative rules pursuant to and within the authority granted to them by statute. If a European directive has not been adopted into English law by its date for implementation, rights under the directive are available to subjects of the English state. For the first time, *Education* has been included in these directives which should be adhered to by all member states (NICC, 1992: i).

To date, however, there has been no UK statement responding to the European law of 1992 (Maastricht) and only two governmental documents relating to the E.C. 1988 resolution:

**i) The European Dimension in Education (DfE February, 1991):** A statement of the U.K. government's policy and report of activities undertaken to implement the EC resolution of 24 May 1988 on the European dimension in Education. It addresses the seven required actions, covering: government policy, the European dimension, the school curriculum, teaching material, teacher training, contacts between teachers and pupils from different countries, and complementary measures ie the organisation of specific events.

The document suggests that the Government 'has been and will continue to be active in promoting the objectives of the EC resolution on the European dimension in education' and policies, relevant to this study, are aimed at:

- \* helping pupils and students to acquire a view of Europe as a multi-cultural, multi-lingual community which includes the U.K.
- \* encouraging awareness of the variety of European histories, geographies and cultures;
- \* encouraging competence in other European languages;
- \* promoting a sense of European identity, through first hand experience of other countries where appropriate (DfE, 1991: 2).

The document continues by saying that 'The European dimension impacts on overall curriculum content, specific subject courses, teacher training courses and on the range of support activities for pupils, students and teachers'. The impact of these issues is the focus for the research project. A rationale for developing materials to be used by class teachers and with trainee teachers, is discussed in Chapter Nine and related to the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for English in England..

As already discussed, the functions of the Government are to provide a legislative framework to ensure that the European dimension is adequately covered in the National Curriculum. (DfE, 1991: 6) and the responsibility for the implementation of the European dimension in the UK education system rests primarily with local authorities. This actually allows a great deal of flexibility for schools and initial teacher training institutions whilst, at the same time, setting legal boundaries within which progress can be made. In the document, it is suggested that the Government 'encourages the development of the European dimension in all sectors of education' and particularly stresses the importance of school provision and initial teacher training.

It is the Government's view that the 'European dimension needs to permeate and be integrated into all relevant parts of the curriculum itself to be most effective...and is one of several cross-curricular themes' (DfE, 1991: 4). From the documentation, it

would appear the Government has borne in mind many of the requirements of the 1988 Resolution in terms of not only the curriculum but also implications for initial teacher training. Here it is intended that students will focus on the needs of the National Curriculum in terms of cross-curricular elements which demand 'an awareness of the links and common ground between subjects and an understanding of the changing world in which pupils are growing up'. Emphasis is also placed on language learning and in-service training.

Part Two of the document addresses progress on actions 2 - 7 of the resolution and mentions a number of initiatives in place at the time of writing. Sadly, from the point of view of primary education, many of these relate to secondary and tertiary education. In fact, when discussing the school curriculum, specific reference is only made to opportunities 'being taken for appropriate elements of the European dimension to be integrated into subjects such as history, geography, modern foreign languages' (DfE, 1991: 9) although, later, some reference is made to a *pilot experiment* to reintroduce modern languages into the primary sector.

As there is no central control of teaching materials in the UK, it is suggested that 'where the European dimension forms part of the National Curriculum subject or is otherwise included in the school curriculum, the texts books and other materials for the subjects concerned would also reflect the European dimension' (1991: 11). This has implications for the primary English curriculum where contemporary European picture books have the potential to enhance European understanding. An analysis of these stories should also help to facilitate student teachers' European awareness and link with

work they are doing in primary schools, especially as:

'From January 1990, teacher training institutions should have had regard to the EC Resolution on the European dimension in Education and to have amended the content and organisation of their courses accordingly.'

(DfE, 1991: 11).

**ii) Policy Models: A Guide to developing and implementing European dimension policies in LEAs, schools and colleges (DfE, March, 1992)** aims to 'help local education authorities, and individual schools and colleges plan for and implement policies for the European dimension in education, consistent with Government policies'. It emphasises that the European dimension is 'important for young people of all abilities in all phases of education' and should not be viewed as the concern of one particular phase or stage of education but as 'the shared responsibility of all educational establishments' as 'it will also enrich the curriculum by deepening understanding of other people and other countries' (DfE, 1992: 4). The document goes even further in stressing the importance of European awareness through the years of education, stating that:

'the European dimension is concerned with helping young people to examine and clarify their values and their attitudes towards Europe, and with recognising the similarities as well as the differences in a Europe made up of people from many ethnic, linguistic and cultural backgrounds'.

A detailed discussion, in Chapters Seven of this study, develops these points in relation to contemporary children's picture books and universal childhood themes.

Most of the 1992 document endorses the 1991 DfE statement and suggests guidelines for developing policies for LEAs, schools, colleges and teacher training institutions in terms of: i) linking the European dimension to the National Curriculum; ii) making

resources available for teaching about Europe; iii) disseminating good practice and evaluating the development of European work throughout institutions. A school's policy should include, for example:

- \* knowledge and understanding of Europe, its people and its place in the world;
  - \* positive but critical attitudes towards other peoples and cultures;
  - \* respect for different ways of life, beliefs, opinions and ideas;
  - \* enhanced language capability to facilitate communication and co-operation
- (DfE, 1992: 3.14).

A policy for teacher training, on the other hand, might include:

- \* the need for flexibility, in order to provide continuity of experience for students;
  - \* the diversity of training routes, giving rise to the need for varying approaches;
  - \* the availability of EC programmes which may provide...funds to support transnational co-operative developments;
  - \* enhancement of the European dimension in LEA full-time and part-time long courses
  - \* the opportunities provided by the induction of new teachers to exchange good practice on the European dimension between teacher training institutions and schools.
- (DfE, 1992: 3.18/19)

Later in the document, more specific reference is made to the effective implementation of policies. Schools are directed to the 1990 National Curriculum which the DfE suggest:

'provides the framework for a co-ordinated approach to integrating the European dimension into the curriculum for pupils from five to sixteen. By linking aspects of the European dimension to the statutory attainment targets and programmes of study it will be possible to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to develop the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills.'

(4.29)

It is, however, quite difficult to find evidence of this in the 1990 National Curriculum for English, apart from one DfE (1992) example: 'Many folk tales form part of our shared European heritage and listening and responding to stories from a variety of cultural sources could help to develop English AT1 **Speaking and Listening**, for younger pupils' (4.28).

Some suggestions for Initial Teacher Training are:

- \* make available suitable teaching materials and information about Europe;
- \* co-operate more closely with similar teacher education and training institutions in other member states;
- \* bear in mind that successful implementation often depends on the impetus given by a particular individual or group.

(DfE, 1992: 4.73)

In conclusion, the document states that 'the effectiveness of initial teacher education and training courses which focus on the European dimension will ultimately depend on what happens in the classroom'. It is for this reason that the materials developed in the current project are closely linked to the requirements of the National Curriculums for both primary schools (1995) and teacher training institutions (1997).

#### 1.6 The National Curriculum - Schools

The Secretaries of State for Education in England & Wales, anticipating an Order being made by them under section 4 of the Education Reform Act, 1988, prepared a document containing provisions relating to attainment targets and programmes of study in English for pupils in key stages 1 to 4. The **1990 English in the National Curriculum** document is a result of this Order, making its contents law, but *no specific references are made concerning the implementation of a European dimension into primary Education*. The Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges in their booklet The European Dimension in Education (1994: 76), however, suggest a number of ways in which the N.C. guidelines could be interpreted and thus enable teachers to begin to implement the European dimension in their classrooms. For example:

- \***Speaking & Listening** - levels 1&2: Opportunity to respond to stories from a variety of cultures and sources/role play.
- \***Reading** - levels 1,2,3: Using stories from a variety of cultural sources/information books about other countries.
- \***Writing** - levels 1,2,3: depict European stories in pictorial and written form/write to European pen pals.

The Post Dearing, revised **National Curriculum for English (1995)**, now includes 'Range' in the programmes of study for Speaking & Listening; Reading and Writing. This allows teachers to consider the range of situations and purposes for which children need to understand a variety of forms of communication. The **speaking and listening/writing** sections for Key Stages 1 and 2 suggest a range of purposes; none of which are directly related to the European dimension but many could be adapted, such as those discussed in Chapter Nine, following the example of the Central Bureau. The programmes of study for **reading**, however, allow a little more scope and are more relevant to this project:

#### **Key Stage One:**

- 1a Pupils should be given **extensive experience of children's literature**
- 1c The materials read and discussed should be used to stimulate pupils' imagination and enthusiasm... and should include interesting subject matter and settings, which may be related to pupils' own experience or **extend beyond their knowledge of the everyday;**
- 1d The literature read should cover: books and poems written by **significant authors; retellings of traditional folk and fairy stories; stories and poems from a range of cultures.**

#### **Key Stage Two:**

- 1a Pupils should be introduced to a **wide range of literature;**
- 1c Pupils' reading should include texts with challenging subject matter that **broadens perspectives and extends thinking;**
- 1d The literature read should cover: **a range of modern fiction by significant children's authors; texts drawn from variety of cultures and traditions; myths, legends and traditional stories.**

A discussion of ways in which the 1995 National Curriculum for English might be interpreted, in order to facilitate the European dimension in primary education, is detailed in Chapter Eight.

### 1.7 The National Curriculum - Initial Teacher Training

In June, 1997 the Government specified an essential core of knowledge, understanding and skills which all primary trainees, on all courses of initial teacher training in England, must be taught. The **Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English (1997)** document states that the requirements come into force for all courses from 1st September 1998 and that trainees must demonstrate that they know, understand and can apply this knowledge when teaching Key Stages 1 and 2.

The document is set out in three sections relating to 'A' knowledge and understanding required by trainee teachers to secure pupils' progress; 'B' effective teaching and assessment methods and 'C' trainees own knowledge and understanding.

At no point in this text is reference made to the requirements of the 1991 DfE document, mentioned in Section 1.5, which states that from 1990, teacher training institutions should have had regard to the EC resolution on the European dimension in Education and to have amended the content and organisation of their courses accordingly. In order to facilitate this, the European dimension must be seen as one which is able to enhance all curriculum subjects and, in the case of English, the argument put forward in this thesis is that European picture books have the ability to reinforce the required understanding and skills.

Details of how the materials developed in this project can be used to this effect are discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight, particularly in relation to visual narrative structure within the European picture book..

### 1.8 Local Education Authority Level

Many LEAs have implemented European policies into their curricula and a number of these are outlined in the DfE document (1993: 24). Unfortunately, in terms of primary education, out of 14 projects, only one solely concerns primary schools, three are primary/secondary and the remainder are secondary/tertiary. A number of LEAs have been trying to redress the balance, some with the help of EU funding such as Kent, Mid-Glamorgan, Newcastle, Sheffield, and South Tyneside (Central Bureau 1992: 32/35/38/40/42). Efforts do, however, continue to be made to encourage primary involvement and, in 1996, The European Primary Schools Association was set up to promote the interests and activities of primary schools throughout the European Union. (Sanders, 1996) Similar initiatives are slowly developing in primary teacher education, many of which, including this research project, are funded by the Commission and began with the R.I.F. Networks/Summer Universities.

### 1.9 Educational Change

#### **Initial Teacher Training:**

The Summer Universities, set up after the 1988 resolution to introduce a European dimension in Education was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Education, focused on different aspects of initial teacher training. The first, in 1989 (Nijmegen, The Netherlands) set up the R.I.F. network (Reseau d'Institutions de Formation des

enseignants) which established a focus on teacher training and professional aspects of didactic practice. The second, in 1990 (Frascati, Italy) focused on European citizenship. The third, in 1991 (Nantes, France) took as its theme the teaching of foreign languages, and the fourth in 1992 (Pau, France and Santiago de Compostela, Spain) looked at 'cultural itineraries'.

The fifth meeting was the 'RIF Symposium, 1993' at which much of the research from the previous Summer Universities was presented to both primary and secondary teacher educators. The objectives were to further develop materials in schools, leading towards the implementation of a European dimension in education. It was at this meeting that using children's literature was first discussed. The specific focus being on children's picture books ie books where much of the storyline can be drawn from the 'pictures' (cultural imagery) yet supplemented by a small amount of text (linguistic awareness).

As a result of these summer schools, there is now more documentation available through which it is possible to focus specifically on the notion of a European dimension in Education and what it means for individual teachers as well as the school as an organisation. Vandenberghe (in Janssens and Loly-Smets, 1994: 71) suggests that given recent developments, it should be possible to 'create situations where people can experience the value of one particular culture and to share values of other cultures', and that teachers and the educational system have an important role to play in supporting the development of a European dimension.

**Individual Teachers:**

For teachers/prospective teachers to be able to implement the ideas presented in the official documents, they need to be aware of the underlying values and aims of the European dimension. They also need to be motivated to think and talk about the European dimension and to explore the educational consequences for each country through the creation of projects which might transform the idea into reality. 'You cannot mandate what matters' (Fullen 1993: 22). In terms of the European dimension, teachers need to understand, believe in and truly want to implement it into the curriculum for this aspect of educational change to take place.

Fullen and Steigelbauer (1991) also point out that almost all educational changes require new skills, new behaviour and changes in beliefs and understanding, which then develop over time. These are usually facilitated by knowledge and understanding as well as through opportunities to develop and use new materials in school. It is this development of materials which supports teachers not only in the classroom but also in thinking through and developing their ideas with colleagues and tutors, especially in relation to their own perceptions of the European dimension and the needs of their pupils.

**The School:**

Through developing materials for use in school, alongside support and help for teachers, it is possible to introduce a degree of instrumentality into these establishments. Louis and Miles (1990) suggest that temporary structures, or the revitalization of existing ones, are characteristic of successful schools, thus making

possible generalisations about their own beliefs and values. For example: 'In our school we believe that we are able to implement the European dimension through . . .'. In this way the ethos of a school may be changed.

Vandenberghe and Van der Vegt (in Janssens and Loly-Smets, 1994: 76), in their study of primary schools in the Dutch speaking part of Belgium, found that four steering functions were necessary for successful facilitation of new ideas: direction/concept clarification; directional pressure; latitude definition; assistance/support. Their findings suggested that the three main intervention strategies which give schools support are:

- \* facility support = materials/funding;
- \* technical assistance = providing the 'know-how';
- \* operational-administrative support = removing hurdles of out-dated practice.

It would appear that emphasising the importance of steering functions creates an environment in which the characteristics of a school culture can be emphasised and new ideas can be broached. The first of these intervention strategies is built into the research project; the second and third are discussed in Chapter Nine.

### 1.10 Intellectual Mobility

The European dimension does not 'exist - it has to be created, worked out through debate and collaboration' (Ogden, 1994: 111). In the 1992 Treaty on the European Union (Maastricht), Article 126/2 states that the 'Community action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education and encouraging mobility of students and teachers'. This mobility is defined both physically and intellectually. Ogden (1994: 108) points out that physical mobility can be seen in quite concrete terms, but the EC

target of 10% student and teacher mobility 'can only be of benefit more widely if these experiences are shared and recognised in the home country'. The focus, therefore needs to be on the 90% who may never in practice be able to travel, and for whom an understanding of Europe is just as important. This is why intellectual mobility is seen as an extremely important factor within the European dimension in education.

Intellectual mobility appears to be a laudable target as it empowers citizens and has the flexibility to take advantage of the various member states. It means understanding the concept of Europe with its similarities and differences, and being able to discern and use, where appropriate, suggestions from other European colleagues. It also means feeling at home in a new European environment, as well as belonging to a particular locality. Mobility, therefore, needs a context and a purpose and it is for these reasons that children's picture books have been used as a vehicle by which children throughout Europe may be able to learn more about each other.

The European dimension has been possible because Education has now been brought centre-stage, and the need to create a social Europe seems to have replaced a purely economic alliance. In addition, one of the key areas for Community intervention is for teacher training with a European dimension which includes the study of languages, cultural heritage, and a universal recognition of common issues. It would appear that education is currently seen as a means to achieve the policies of the EC and teachers have an extremely important role to play. In order to be able to do this, however, they need guidance and relevant materials for use in the classroom.

Creating a new environment for teachers would help them to shape the understanding of future generations and make the link between current/future initiatives/transfer of knowledge. Mobility in the Community context should stimulate activity which will be of benefit to all through implementing a European dimension in curricula. It could be further encouraged by developing joint transnational projects. Here, students, teachers and teacher educators would have opportunities to work together with partners from different member states to explore innovative approaches to education, training and, specifically, working out the European dimension within the context of courses.

#### 1.11 Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

The European dimension concerns both linguistic and cultural diversity and, for teachers to begin to understand 'Europe', exploration of this diversity is vital. Language learning is now considered a priority within teacher education (Commission of The European Union, 1991: 212) which requires both physical and mental mobility. It is, however, more than a physical act; it is a state of mind and a willingness to work together. Teachers might, for example, discuss the ways in which television is used throughout the European Union to promote linguistic and cultural mores. Belgium, undoubtedly, has the advantage of transmitting television/radio programmes in a number of European languages which not only allow young people to gain linguistic awareness/understanding but also, almost sub-consciously, acquire insights into several different cultures.

In contrast with England, many European countries do appear to have more access to linguistic/cultural variation. Children in the Catalan area of Spain, for example, can take advantage of programmes in both Catalan and Spanish. Young people in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain and most member states are also exposed to more than one language on their television screens or local radio stations. A recent survey in Finland (Frostrup, 1996) even goes so far as to say that children's reading standards in this country are high, due to the limited number of Finnish children's programmes available. Those which are transmitted are imported and subtitled, giving the children not only the opportunity/motivation to read, but also to listen to other languages and absorb other cultures.

Findings from the RIF (1993: 81) conference stress the importance of a regionalistic approach to Europe where reference is made to ethnic/linguistic minorities and regional cultures (eg U.K./Wales; France /Brittany; Spain/Catalunia). Here, 'culture' is used in its ethnographical or anthropological sense as a complex entity including manners, customs, religion, language, law, arts, music etc. Europe, in fact, offers a variety of cultures which should be retained at all costs, placing emphasis on finding out about/sharing our linguistic and cultural differences, rather than becoming monolingual/cultural. There is no one European culture, but universal cultural/linguistic awareness should be available to all, through the implementation of the European dimension in Education..

### 1.12 Socrates

Since the 1988 Resolution, the European Commission has financed and set up a number of Community programmes designed to help teachers/teacher educators to implement the European dimension in Education. One of the most recent of these is 'Socrates', which came into being in March, 1995, following a decision by the European parliament and council. It launched the second generation of European programmes in education and draws, in both concept and development on 'experience gained from the first Community programmes - Erasmus, Lingua and Comett - which were pioneers of transnational cooperation in the field of education' (Le Magazine, 1996: 17).

Socrates aims to: (i) develop the European dimension; (ii) promote cooperation between schools/colleges/universities in different European countries; and (iii) improve language skills. It is not an attempt to harmonise education in Europe, in fact it is quite the opposite. It promotes variety in education by enabling teachers and pupils to benefit from other methods of learning originating across member states.

Some current EU funded programmes in the field of Education, designed to implement the European dimension, do already focus on the artistic and cultural heritages within Europe. This research project, therefore, is not unique in that respect; its objective is to complement existing programmes but at the primary level, with the help of Socrates. The Commission hopes that, through the Socrates programme, educationalists will be able not only to enhance European awareness but also to promote cooperation and improve linguistic competence.

'Energy in the City' one such project, originating at Leeds University, involved 400 students from 12 countries within Europe (Central Bureau Television Programme 9.10.96). It was designed to share current European educational initiatives through the arts and culture, and demonstrated the importance of young people from throughout Europe getting together to share their cultural similarities and differences through visually creating cultural landmarks from their own cities. Paul Kesserman, the programme leader, explained that the project was 'a vision and a belief that this non-competitive encounter would be instrumental in beginning to implement the European dimension in education'. Enveloped in a non-threatening situation, students worked together to create **joint outcomes** through the exchange of cultural ideas. This necessitated understanding, acceptance and differentiation. Without necessarily agreeing, participants worked together through a medium which made this co-operation possible. 'The Arts', Kesserman suggested, 'communicate and may well contribute to a sense of European identity and unity'.

### 1.13 Children's Literature

DeSchryver (1993: 80) asks 'Is it possible to have one unity, one culture, one European identity? Maybe Europe is a country which exists only in our dreams'. If the world of reality is so complex, perhaps the fantasy world of literature, or more specifically children's literature, might act as a catalyst in bridging the gaps between cultures.

Defourny (1993: 141) believes that 'through children's literature it is possible to go beyond the borders of stereotype, culture, religion and language'. Children's books provide an opportunity for young people to escape into secondary worlds and *live a*

wide variety of experiences in a multiplicity of situations. 'Children's literature is automatically universal' (Nières, 1992: 9) and if used appropriately could provide a basis from which it would be possible to introduce a European dimension into Education. Many European books have traditionally been translated into a number of languages, for example, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *Pinocchio*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Barbar*, *Tintin* and *Asterix*. There are also many well known authors, including Enid Blyton, Roald Dahl, Gianni Rodari and Reiner Zimick, whose works are available in translations. It is possible, however, that numerous children, possibly teachers too, are not aware of the cultural origins of these stories and fail to see the cross-cultural literary links which are already in place. These links have to be pointed out.

The classics of children's literature are 'frequently regarded and spoken of as products of an international culture of childhood ... in which international understanding is the order of the day' (O'Sullivan, 1992: 54). The aim of this research project is to build on the idea of an international childhood culture, through devising a programme using contemporary children's books from all countries within the Europe Union. Emphasis is placed on making children's implicit knowledge of Europe explicit, by facilitating the European dimension into primary education through contemporary stories, based on the lives, experiences and aspirations of children living and experiencing the Europe of today.

Defourny (1993: 131) supports this idea but asks four main questions, in relation to European children's literature, which are very relevant to this thesis:

- \*Which books should be used?
- \*What should be the concept of childhood?
- \*What should be the concept of Europe?
- \*What of the future?

These points are addressed in Chapters Three and Four relating to the 'travelability' of European picture books and universal childhood themes; whilst Chapters Seven and Eight discuss the potential of visual texts to facilitate European understanding in young children. The focus in this study is on contemporary picture books but Defourny's final quote, which pays homage to the very first picture book creator, is surprisingly pertinent:

'Sans doute faut-il se souvenir que le premier imagier, le premier véritable livre européen pour l'enfance, paru à Nüremberg en 1658, *Orbis pictus sensualis*, Le monde en images, était bilingue et immédiatement après quadrilingue, latin, allemand, tchèque et hongrois. Il était l'œuvre de **Comenius, Jan Komensky**, éducateur partisan de méthodes douces et ardent défenseur de la paix. Né en Moravie, mort à Amsterdam, et enterré dans l'église wallonne de Naarden. L'ambition fraternelle de ce grand humaniste européen, véritable modèle de tolérance, était universelle (1993: 138).

#### 1.14 Comenius

As mentioned by Defourny, Comenius, a Czech, was a great teacher and educator of the 17th century who created what is thought to be the first real picture book - a dictionary with a picture on each verso page to illustrate the text on the recto. This was a very revolutionary concept devised by Comenius as he wanted pupils to be able to learn about words independently, rather than relying on the teacher to teach them.

Very appropriately, the name of Comenius is linked to this research project in two

ways. Firstly, EU funding received to implement a European dimension in primary teacher education, under the Socrates umbrella, comes from **Comenius Action 3: The Professional Updating of Education Staff**. Secondly the project focuses on European children's picture books, the very notion that was begun by Comenius so many years ago.

### 1.15 Summary

This chapter traced the development of the *European Dimension*, placing it within historical, geographical, political, economic, cultural and linguistic contexts. Policy directives emanating from the European Commission were analyzed, alongside documents produced by the Department of Education in London, relating to both schools and initial teacher training. A workable definition for the notion and its implementation within primary education was formulated, outlining why a European dimension is necessary for the English National Curriculum.

It was then pointed out that, whilst many educationalists and politicians have supported the notion of a European dimension in primary education, the majority of school policies developed, and materials produced, have focused on pupils at secondary school and beyond. Little attention has been given to the primary sector or contemporary children's literature. If books for primary children are included, they tend to be European folktales rather than stories that reflect today's universal childhood themes or European cultures.

The chapter concluded with a discussion of EU funding available for developing projects which will implement a European dimension in primary education and referred to the reasons why children's literature, particularly European picture books, have been chosen as a focus for this Comenius funded project. Chapter Two discusses the development of the picture book within Europe, since the time of Comenius, the first picture book creator.

## CHAPTER TWO

### AFTER COMENIUS: AN OVERVIEW OF EUROPEAN INFLUENCES ON THE PICTURE BOOK

#### 2.0 Introduction

The picture book, as we know it today, has resulted from many European influences since the first visual text created by Comenius in 1658. As the concept of using pictures to illustrate a story is a defining feature of children's literature, this chapter traces developments in children's literature since the 17th Century. It focuses particularly on pedagogic and literary changes that have taken place; paying particular attention to political, social, linguistic and cultural effects on the picture book genre. Throughout history, European authors/illustrators have been developing 'machines for creating possible worlds' (Eco, 1981: 264), enabling readers to be transported into literary, secondary worlds which have been shared across nations. The discussion here focuses on many of these influential developments, setting them within the context of contemporary picture book evolution since the time of Comenius, defining at specific stages what constitutes a good picture book.

#### 2.1 Historical Background

Although most European countries can claim one or two isolated examples of books published specifically for children in the 16th Century, it was not until shortly after Comenius' first picture book that the influence of the philosopher John Locke was realised. At this time, his *Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) created the possibility of combining pleasure with instruction in literature, and the ideas of Rousseau/the later Romantics began to permeate children's literature throughout Europe.

European children's literature, however, really began to flourish in the 19th Century when

populations were beginning to grow rapidly, educational opportunities were increasing and technological developments, were becoming economically viable. Many European countries, eg England, France and Germany, developed the concept of books for children soon after the invention of the printing press, with the widespread use of traditional folk tales, such as those of Perrault/The Brothers Grimm, and the existence of creative and imaginative literature by the mid/late nineteenth century. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a move was discerned towards universal education. Developments in modern technology during this period created the possibility for more sophisticated illustrations to embellish the picture book genre; it was at this time that the growing middle classes began to travel. Becoming familiar with the major European languages and receptive to more new ideas, the developing 'reading class' accepted, quite naturally, the translation of illustrated children's books.

In the twentieth century, children's literature in Europe has been more seriously affected by politics and war. The effects of the First World War were slight, but the dictatorships which followed in Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal have had serious effects on children's literature in these countries. In Portugal, for example, between 1928 and 1974, topics in children's picture books were greatly limited by a strong and always present dictatorial power (Rocha, 1996; 2). The earlier struggles for independence in Finland and Norway have also affected picture book content (Westin, 1996: 1). In addition, in England after the Second World War, a more child-centred approach to education, prompted by such figures as Bertrand Russell and A.S. Neill, gained widespread acceptance. This meant that, in children's books, the world was now beginning to be seen through the eyes of children.

## 2.2 The Use of Pictures

One of the defining features of children's literature is its ability to incorporate pictures into the narrative. The concept of using pictures to illustrate a story is well established, although the

picture book as we know it has a relatively short history. The British illustrator Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886) is widely credited as the first author/artist to develop the level of interplay between picture and text. Credit also goes to the printer Edmund Evans (1826-1905) who did much to raise standards in colour printing through his work with Randolph Caldecott, Kate Greenaway (1846-1901), and Walter Crane (1845-1915). In Britain the picture book rose to a new level with artists such as Brian Wildsmith and Charles Keeping who, by the 1970s, found their talents served by the new developments in colour printing. Understatement and irony became something of a stock in trade for many of the best picture artists in Britain, and the 'possibilities of transforming seemingly straightforward text into rich comedy was, and still is for most European author/illustrators of the nineties, fully exploited' (Coghlan, 1996: 30).

### 2.3 Comenius



Jon Amos Comenius, deemed to be the first picture book creator, was first and foremost an educational reformer and a campaigner of education for all. He produced a systematic curriculum which included an empirical method of instruction together with physical training. It was whilst working as a master in a Hungarian poor-school that he conceived *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658) and, through his interest in teaching languages by a direct method, the revolutionary 'picture book' vocabulary of Latin was born. This method, which he learned from philosophers of the time, was based upon the observation of the actual world - an idea which was contrary to the purely

Figure 1: A page from *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, (Keiffer, 1995: 83)

abstract method of teaching being used. Children whose minds had been crammed with facts that bore no relation to their everyday lives could relate to Comenius' little book, with its attractive woodcuts. 'Even Goethe, who was a child 100 years after its first appearance, mentions *Orbis Pictus* as the first picture book he was to treasure' (Hürlimann, 1967: 132).

#### 2.4 European Translations

*Orbis Sensualium Pictus* was read throughout Europe and translated from the original Latin into many other languages. The English version reached England only a year after its first publication. Perrault's tales (1697) swiftly followed, with translations from the French permeating Europe. The Brothers Grimm (1812-14) reworked many of these French tales into German, adapting and adding to an already rich source of children's stories; their works also traversed the continent, with stories such as *Little Red Riding Hood* reaching England by 1823. About this time a reverse trade was also occurring, with the earlier novels of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) written by England's Daniel Defoe, and *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by the Irish writer Jonathan Swift, being translated from the English in the mid nineteenth century.

#### 2.5 Early European Influences

Many European educationalists, since Comenius, have considerably influenced the development of the contemporary picture book but, even before *Orbis Pictus* was conceived, writers, illustrators, artists and story-tellers created their tales. In 1550, for example, Europe's earliest illustrated fairy stories *Piacevoli notti* were set down on paper in Italy by Giovan Francesco Strapola. Prior to this, during the ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine eras, and during the Turkish domination of Greece (1453-1821), stories were initially transmitted orally and later written down for posterity (Anagnostopoulos 1996: 1). Tales, such as these, express every nation's feelings for stories, they also embody an international European literature, which has been made possible through the increasing involvement of translators.

## 2.6 17th Century Influences

The 17th Century saw the arrival of Giambattista Basile's *Lo cunto de li cunti*, first appearing in the Neapolitan dialect of Italy between 1634 and 1636. These fairy stories, which began in the oral storytelling tradition, were only printed after Basile's death in 1632 in order to preserve the cultural mores of that time. They were primitive, entirely original tales told by the women of the district to their children. These stories were an expression of the Baroque Age and portrayed the truth of the period through dialogue which alluded to contemporary life. Although filled with complicated intrigue, 'right' always triumphed in the end.

Whilst these stories were being told in Italy, in the German speaking part of Switzerland old customs led to the production of a very different kind of picture book from *Orbis Pictus*. In 1645, a New Year's custom in Zürich of giving sweetmeats in return for wine at local drinking houses was changed. Instead of sweetmeats, a copperplate engraving with a short poem underneath - the very first *Neujahrsstücke* - was given. As the years passed other Swiss communities followed the tradition, and in 1657 Conrad Meyer, a Zürich painter, issued a complete book of engravings and poems. He was the first person in Switzerland to create a picture book for children. Like *Orbis Pictus*, a year later, the book was the beginning of many such picture books to be produced, and which continued to be developed until the middle of the 19th Century.

Charles Perrault may not have been the first to write down fairy tales, but he was the first writer of consequence to recognise that they belonged to the world of children. During the 17th Century, however, the telling of fairy tales was predominantly the occupation of women and, after the publication in 1697 of his famous *Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passé avec les Moralités*, Perrault seems to have caused himself some embarrassment, and registered the book under the name of his son, Pierre d'Armancourt. Some recent researchers (Hürlimann,

1967: 30) even believe that it may have been the seventeen year old boy, himself, who actually wrote the stories, due to their 'youthful freshness'. Perrault's language is concise but lucid; his heroines show courage and understanding, yet can often be disobedient, and his stories frequently have an unhappy ending. His fairy tales have kept their youthfulness and even today are popular throughout Europe. *Red Riding Hood*, based on *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*, for example, has been translated into numerous languages and a plethora of versions are to be found in contemporary bookshops.

By the end of the 17th Century *The Arabian Nights* of 1545 found their way into European literature through a young French scholar from Picardy. These stories, which led back to Persia and even India were translated as *The Thousand and One Nights*, have influenced many European writers such as Perrault, the Brothers Grimm and the Dane, Hans Christian Andersen.

## 2.7. 18th Century Influences

In 1719 Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was published depicting, in the form of a novel, the life of a young man who is wicked, lazy and disregards his parent's authority. He is, however, brought back to good fortune through twenty eight years of loneliness. The book was to become one of the greatest favourites among children's books of all time and Defoe was probably the first truly significant English novelist to become the founder of an international literary genre. 'Robinsonades' was not only of importance to children. The French philosopher, Rousseau raised the firmly established fame of 'Robinson' to new heights through his book *Emile* in 1761. This book was to have a great many consequences for both children's literature and education, notably through the belief that it was the power of images which was crucial in holding children's attention. Rousseau's outlook on the world of pictures allowed children to pass 'from the world of nature to that of culture' (Perrot, 1996a: 4).

After *Orbis Pictus* there followed a number of similarly enjoyable and instructive picture books which brought a completely new world for children into the home. One very important addition to this genre was *Elementarwerk* by Johann Bernhard Basedow, published in 1770 and influenced by the writings of Rousseau. Each sheet in the three volumes of text contained between two and four pictures, presenting things of specific interest to children which included games, drama, historical and biblical stories. Several educational institutions in both Germany and Switzerland later used Basedow's material; including German teacher Joachim Heinrich Campe. A devotee of *Emile*, Campe tended to embody Rousseau's thinking and was a model example of natural education. His writing of *Robinson der Jüngere*, in 1779, which turned the figure of Robinson into a hero of children's books, symbolized both philosophical thinking and practical application. Unlike the English *Robinson Crusoe*, Campe's protagonist finally becomes a useful citizen in his own home town, after 28 years of solitude. The popularity of this book secured its author an international position within the world of children's literature.

Between 1782 and 1786, a penniless schoolmaster, I.K.A. Musäus, published a number of volumes in his collection *Die Volksmärchen der Deutschen*, a series of fairy stories. With the success of these stories, he then published his picture book series *Folktales, a Story Book for Children Great and Small* which brought the world of the Middle Ages to life. Each story is told with a cheerfulness not found in the tales of Perrault. A decade later, in 1796, Bertuch's *Bilderbuch* was made available. This picture book for children returned to the more naturalistic approach of the earlier part of the century and contained collections of animals, fruits, minerals, and a plethora of materials from the realms of nature, art and science. With text in German, French, English and Italian this was a truly European picture book. The reader, however, was only expected to read one page at a time lest s/he should be overburdened with visual stimuli.



Figure 2: Bilderbuch für Kinder, Friedrich Johann Justin BERTUCH, Weimar, 1796. A hand-coloured engraving on 'Air Transport' (in Hürlimann, 1967: 87).

2.8 Resumé: 1550 - 1800 As can be seen in Table 2, throughout this period, fairy tales were being recorded and later acknowledged as belonging to the world of children. The dominant feature during this time, however, was the possibility of combining pleasure with instruction, in the form of picture books such as *Orbis Sensualis Pictus*. By the end of the 18th Century, therefore, what constituted a good picture book in European terms could be exemplified in Bertuch's multilingual visual text. It focused on both learning and enjoyment, where the power of the images was crucial to holding children's attention.

TABLE 2: European Influences on the Picture Book: 1550 - 1800

| Year    | Title  | Author/Country                         | Influence   |
|---------|--|--|---|
| 1550    | Piacevoli Notti                                      | Giovan Francesco Strapola/<br>Italy    | Europe's earliest fairy stories set down on paper |
| 1634-6  | Lo Cunto de li Cunti                                 | Giambattista Basile/ Italy             | Early tales of period; where right triumphs       |
| 1657    | Neujahrsstücke Poems                                 | Conrad Meyer/ Switzerland              | First book of poems/engravings                    |
| 1658    | Orbis Sensualium Pictus                              | John Amos Comenius/<br>Moravia/Belgium | First picture book                                |
| 1693    | Thoughts Concerning Education                        | John Locke/<br>England                 | Theory of combining pleasure/ instruction         |
| 1697    | Histoires ou Contes du Temps Passés...               | Charles Perrault/ France               | Fairy tales belonged to the world of children     |
| 1690s   | The Thousand and One Nights                          | Young anonymous French Scholar         | Arabian Nights of 1545 written down               |
| 1719    | Robinson Crusoe                                      | Daniel Defoe/ England                  | Images crucial to holding children's attention    |
| 1726    | Gulliver's Travels                                   | Jonathan Swift/ Ireland                | First Irish children's novel                      |
| 1762    | Émile  | Jean Jacques Rousseau                  | Learning through the natural world                |
| 1770    | Elementawerk   | Johann Basedow/ Germany                | Picture Sheets for children                       |
| 1779    | Robinson der Jüngere                                 | Heinrich Campe/ Germany                | Turned Robinson into a hero of children's books   |
| 1781    | Lienhard und Gertrud                                 | Heinrich Pestalozzi/<br>Switzerland    | Theory of social improvements                     |
| 1782-86 | Folktales, a Story Book for Children Great and Small | I.K.A. Musäus/ Germany                 | New 'cheerfulness' in children's stories          |
| 1796    | Bilderbuch   | Bertuch/ Germany                       | First truly 'European' picture book               |

## 2.9 19th Century Influences

Rousseau's influence on important educationalists and writers for children in the 18th century, such as Basedow and Campe, is mentioned in Section 2.7. At the beginning of the 19th Century in Switzerland, however, Heinrich Pestalozzi began to sway educational thinking after he had presented his model of economic and social improvements; especially in educational writings for the young, in his *Lienhard und Gertrud* (1781) (Rutschmann 1996: 1). His Swiss colleague, Johannes Fröbel, did the same. Their theories on mother-child relationships and pre-school education were to influence much early education in the following centuries and, in turn, led to the production of many educational picture books which supported their philosophies of Education.

It is not therefore surprising that the first Swiss children's book to gain international acclaim, was Johann David Wyss's *Swiss Family Robinson* (1812). Wyss, a much travelled army chaplain and later pastor, spent much of his time writing stories to educate his four sons. The exceptional success of this children's story stems largely from the fact that it is children and their exciting adventures which predominate. In addition, however, Wyss uses comic imagination to portray many Swiss practicalities and, unlike Defoe's or even Campe's realism, this new 'Robinson', as a product of the Romantic movement, turns his desert island into a creative nature reserve, where the necessities of life with suitable dangers abound.

Also in 1812, The Brothers Grimm published *Kinder und Hausmärchen* which was described as 'butterfly catching' by the French literary historian Paul Hazard (1932) who realised that it was important for the brothers to capture their specimens alive. In the case of the renowned stories of these two erudite men, this was very much the way that they collected their tales, many of them from a busy farmer's wife in a local German village. They really did see themselves as collectors, writing their 1812 version for an adult audience. It was not until

1814 that the children's edition was published, transmitting a patriotic fervour through their stories and creating part of their nation's heritage, as well as laying the foundations for worldwide acclaim. Alongside the success of the German brothers, a lesser known Scandinavian writer, Peter Christian Asbjørnsen, was also successful worldwide with his Norwegian classic *East of the Sun, West of the Moon*, which has been translated into many languages.

## 2.10 Pictures Without Pictures

Hans Christian Andersen, a now universally renowned storyteller, was much influenced by the Brothers Grimm, and the three men did in fact meet on a number of occasions. Andersen travelled widely and had many literary contacts in France and England, where he gained great popularity. Charles Dickens, seven years his junior was a friend and colleague, as was Charles Kingsley whose *Water Babies* shows influences from Andersen's fairy tale world.

Andersen's stories, based on his own somewhat impoverished childhood memories, are said to create pictures without pictures; capturing the imagination of the young and inviting them into his 'vividly drawn' secondary worlds through the language of his prose. These 'visual' tales also relate to the animals and nature of his homeland. Andersen was very fond of the wild flying swans of his native Denmark and, in a short story *The Swan's Nest*, likened Denmark to the nest of these beautiful creatures; allusions to these swans are also made in one of his most famous stories, *The Ugly Duckling*, published in 1827. Andersen brought to the European fairy tale an irony and psychological subtlety; the way in which dead things are invested with a soul, learn to speak and become creatures in their own right, has greatly influenced European story-telling. He is also one of the first writers for children to include tragic endings. For example, the tin soldier in *The Little Match Girl* melts and the eponymous heroine freezes.

### 2.11 Significant Books

In spite of the fact that Andersen's stories were becoming popular in Germany, they were not yet readily available throughout Europe, especially in picture book format. It was not until 1871, that they were available in countries such as Spain (Surrallés et al, 1996: 1). In 1844, therefore, when the German doctor, Heinrich Hoffman went out to look for a picture book for his three year old son's Christmas present, he could find nothing suitable. As a consequence, he returned home with a blank exercise book and, just in time for the festivities, completed the writing and illustrations of his now famous picture book *Struwwelpeter*. The eponymous main character in this tale is a figure of great importance whose bedtime antics have made him popular with parents and children throughout Europe. The originality of drawings, combined with this novel character, who could be quite naughty at times, show a directness of expression that had not been seen before in children's picture books. Hoffman created many other picture books for his children and grandchildren, but none of them achieved the international acclaim of his first, maybe because they did not stem from real situations.

For the same reason that Hoffman wrote *Struwwelpeter*, so too did Jeremias Gotthelf write *Der Knabe des Tells*, in the Switzerland of 1846. He felt sorry for children who had to read the moralistic books of the time and, as a consequence, wrote his saga; a family story within the context of contemporary European history. With the relationship of father and son, set in the Swiss mountainside, the story came alive in a way not previously known. The myth of Tell, whose famous shot at the apple had always been exciting for children worldwide, was now transferred to his son.

In the same year, 1846, Edward Lear's *A Book of Nonsense* was first published in England. The particular appeal of his verse-stories lies in their illustrations, which show Lear to be a great connoisseur and portrayer of nature. What he is most respected for, however, is the high

linguistic quality of his verse and his extraordinarily expressive vocabulary, particularly when read aloud. His greatest achievement, however, is probably the limerick; nonsense literature which provides animals, people and things with a crazy life of their own enabling him to lead the reader away from reality into a fantasy world. Three years later, in 1849, *Münchener Bilderbogen*, the first comic picture book for children, was written in Germany. Many contemporary 'picture-sheets' developed from this throughout Europe, but its greatest influence was in France.

In 1862, eighteen years after Hoffman had written *Struwwelpeter*, Charles Ludwig Dodgson, was persuaded by Alice, the youngest daughter of his Dean of Mathematics at Oxford, to write down the many stories that he had told her. Their success needs no discussion. Dodgson/Lewis Carroll's 'nonsense' tales of *Alice in Wonderland* have been analyzed academically throughout Europe and have undoubtedly influenced much contemporary illustrating/storytelling for young children. Unlike Andersen, whose poetic use of language enabled him to relate his many tales to the children around him, Dodgson wrote his stories for for one child. These books, as with Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter*, are the work of a great man who, although not significant as a poet, was a strong and radiant personality. An intensity of thought and feeling found his expression, resulting in stories with the most remarkable sense of penetration.

In the following year, 1863, Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies* was published, which has as its hero the antipathy of Alice. Its main character is a destitute little chimney sweep, who takes centre stage and moves young readers to pity through his actions which transcend the traditional fairy tale. Nevertheless, the book has become a European classic. Intended to have political repercussions, as children were often sold or hired out by their parents or simply sent to the workhouse, Kingsley's story appears to have been influenced by the earlier novels of

Dickens, such as *Oliver Twist*, published in 1838. Dicken's child characters also confronted his readers with the great social problems presented by the industrial revolution, the growth of cities and the treatment and status of children.

Just one year later, in the Germany of 1864, a picture style was created that was very different in tone. *Max und Moritz* depicted, for the first time in pictures, a crazy series of antics which many children wanted to copy. It was quite a surprise to Wilhelm Busch, their creator and renowned artist, when his two good-for-nothing characters were so successful. This element of malice had not appeared before in children's books, yet it was more successful than any of his other books. The tales of these two characters have become prize possessions in many German households, and have undoubtedly influenced the development of today's contemporary picture books. It is probably no coincidence that the influential work of Frantz Pocci (1807-76), based on the literature of the Punch and Judy shows, was then at its height.

One of the most popular and significantly 'travelled' stories of the 19th Century is Carlo Collodi's *L'Avventure di Pinocchio*, first published about 1883 and universally known as *Pinocchio*. This animated wooden puppet tale has now been translated into most languages of the world. The ethics of translations are discussed further in Chapter Three. *Pinocchio* is a southern European variant of the nonsense theme, where a wooden puppet comes to life in a world where poverty and riches, ugliness and beauty can all be found. The story is set in a real world but this imaginary character can be seen as a symbol of down to earth understanding, providing an exaggerated plot, not too far from removed from the world of reality. It is, in fact, the mixture of reality, cheekiness and imagination which give the book its universal appeal, especially within Europe. In its native Italy, however, the book has enjoyed enormous fame as its hero reflects many characteristics of the Italian people.

Another very influential book which reflects national qualities is *Heidi*, written by Johanna Spyri and published in Switzerland about 1880. It was, in fact, only after the universal acclaim received by Spyri's book, that Swiss children's literature began to cross the borders of Switzerland into wider Europe and further afield. *Heidi* became an attraction for children all over the world through its sensitive portrayal of its young heroine, its treatment of homesickness and its superb descriptions of Swiss scenery. What in Johanna Spyri had been new and unique now became a general Swiss style.

Although not as universally well known as *Heidi* or *Pinocchio*, one of the most important Italian books written for children towards the end of the 19th Century was *Cuore* written by Edmondo de Amicis in 1886. Amicis, whose name now fronts one of the most important children's libraries in Genoa, was 'a militant socialist who had the task of encouraging the spread of reading in nineteenth century Italy' (Kreyder, 1996: 2). He wrote this children's book with the intention of raising political awareness amongst young Italians and it portrays the experiences of children in a Turin state school at the time of Italy's newly won unity. A new boy from Calabria joins a class and the teacher explains how the country had to fight for fifty years and thirty thousand Italians had to die, so that this boy could attend their school. Even though totally patriotic, it also preaches tolerance towards differences within a nation, and has become a classic of children's literature.

## 2.12 Resumé: 1800 - 1900

As can be seen in Table 3, focus on the pre-school approach to education began in a century which was to be dominated by fairy tales and in-depth portrayals of characters. Irony and subtlety was brought into European children's stories and more realistic themes, laced with humour and nonsense were in evidence. Some books occasionally touched on socio/political issues. By the end of the 19th Century, therefore, what constituted a representative picture book could be exemplified by the interplay between picture and text, showing depth of character stemming from real life/fantasy and tinged with humour; rather like Hoffman's *Stuw welpeter*.

TABLE 3: European Influences on the Picture Book: 1800-1900

| Year      | Title                  | Author/Country                          | Influence   |
|-----------|------------------------|---|---|
| 1800s     |                        | Johannes Fröbel and Heinrich Pestalozzi | Influence on pre-school education                 |
| 1812      | Swiss Family Robinson  | Johann David Wyss/<br>Switzerland       | First Swiss book to gain international acclaim    |
| 1814      | Kinder und Hausmärchen | Brothers Grimm/ Germany                 | Famous collection of tales for children           |
| 1827      | The Ugly Duckling      | Hans Christian Andersen/<br>Denmark     | Brought irony/subtlety to European fairy tales    |
| 1838      | Oliver Twist           | Charles Dickens/ England                | Confronted reader with social problems            |
| 1844      | Struwwelpeter          | Heinrich Hoffman/<br>Germany            | One of first picture books to stem from real life |
| 1846      | Der Knabe des Tells    | Jeremias Gotthelf/<br>Switzerland       | Family saga/context of European history           |
| 1846      | Book of Nonsense       | Edward Lear/ England                    | Verse stories/limericks with appeal in pictures   |
| 1849      | Münchener Bilderbogen  | Germany                                 | First comic picture book                          |
| 1862      | Alice in Wonderland    | Lewis Carroll/ England                  | Nonsense tales, universally acclaimed             |
| 1863      | The Water Babies       | Charles Kingsley/ England               | Intended to have political repercussions          |
| 1864      | Max and Moritz         | Wilhelm Busch/ Germany                  | First time crazy antics seen in picture format    |
| 1880      | Heidi                  | Johanna Spyri/Switzerland               | First Swiss children's book to travel             |
| 1883      | Pinocchio              | Carlo Collodi/ Italy                    | Southern European variant of nonsense theme       |
| 1886      | Cuore                  | Edmondo de Amicas/ Italy                | Raised political awareness in children            |
| 1846-86   |                        | Randolf Caldecott/ England              | Interplay between picture and text                |
| 1826-1905 |                        | Edmund Evans/England                    | Improved colour printing                          |

### 2.13 Early 20th Century Influences

It was not until the 20th Century that children's literature began to appeal to the needs of children rather than adults in a number of European countries, especially Sweden. The turn of the Century was marked in this Scandinavian country by Ellen Kay's famous manifesto, significantly entitled *Barnets århundrade (The Year of the Child)* where 'A more artistic and literary approach to children's books now becomes discernable' (Westin, 1991: 17). After its publication, in fact, teachers throughout the country launched various projects to promote reading (Westin, 1996: 9). One of the most prolific and influential Swedish picture book creators of this period was Elsa Beskow. Her naturalistic picture books were unrivalled in her own country and became a landmark in the picture book world with titles such as *Putte i blåbärsskogen* published in 1901. Ironically it was in the same year that Beatrix Potter's first picture book was published privately and, after its success, Frederick Warne & Co. took on the responsibility of her stories. Although her tales depicted animals in their natural settings, she often allowed them to behave as humans but, at each stories conclusion almost every animal loses its disguise, thus returning to nature.

The following year, 1902, *Die Wiesenzwerge* was published in Switzerland which was to fulfil the demands of the revolutionary educationalist Walter Crane. This was the picture book which made Ernst Kreidorf, a sickly painter from Berne, famous. There is scarcely a picture book from Switzerland which does not reflect the beauty of its natural, mountainous countryside and Kreidorf's dynamic illustrations were very successful. The early work of Kreidorf depicts human qualities in the character of a dwarf, living in the natural world, complementing his poetic text with a clarity in the pictures that greatly influenced the picture book world.

Not all early 20th Century picture books reflected nature. In 1903, Paula Dehmel's *Rumpumpel* proved to be of special significance as it mirrored artistic developments in Germany prior to the first world war. The pictures are an expression of the child's most intimate world and, although they appear to be more directed towards mothers than children, the oversized illustrated pages retain a feeling for childhood. Similarly Carl Larssen, whose 1904 picture book *Ett Hem* (At Home), published in Stockholm, became a household possession for many European families. This large format picture book told amusing tales of a typical Swedish family, with a progression of pictures reminiscent of Busch. The same year, 1904, in France saw another family character develop through the artistic skill of M. Boutet de Monvel. This time it was *Anatole*, the now universally acclaimed mouse. Through Monvel's bold line drawings with their pastel colouring *Anatole* has received international acclaim, especially in Europe.

Early 20th Century Britain, however, began in a no-man's-land between fantasy and reality. *Peter Pan*, written in 1906 by J.M. Barrie, a Scottish writer whose view of childhood and the psychological dimensions in his life are explored in a number of biographies (Hannabus, 1996: 1), takes place in a recognisable world but 'real' people are seen only on the rarest occasions. What happens at night, the time when Peter Pan's life begins, is the world of the eternal child who never grows up, and who can experience to the full a secret world which lies beneath external appearances. Another Scottish writer, Kenneth Grahame, had his *Wind in the Willows* published in 1908. He also created an 'in-between' world with its tales of the river bank and, in the style of Peter Pan, revealed what lies behind the visible world. Both books remain universally popular today.

Two titles published slightly later in 1920 and 1926 respectively. *Doctor Dolittle* by Hugh Lofting and *Winnie the Pooh* by A.A. Milne continue this duality of worlds. In the former Dr Dolittle undergoes adventures which are crazy and exciting, yet he is always ready to help and can always cope with all the extraordinary things that happen to him. Winnie the Pooh, on the other hand, is a series of tales in which both child and teddy bear are able to inhabit the same unusual, yet natural world, and is as universally popular today as when it was first written.

One of the most universally respected books to be published in Germany during the 20th Century, with a very different flavour, came out in 1929. It was written by Eric Kästner who often made the political education of young people an integral part of his stories, as he wanted to awaken a socio-political responsibility. In *Emile und die Detektive*, however, a book about city children, Kästner merely includes political undertones. These books would not have been such an international success without Kästner's humour and vivid plots, alongside a serious 'core' reminiscent of Dickens.

#### 2.14 Resumé: 1900 - 1930

As can be seen in Table 4, during the first three decades of the 20th Century a much more artistic/literary approach to children's books was discernable. The picture book now became more naturalistic/humanistic in style, with the dynamism of illustrations prevailing. The eternal world of the child became a feature, and often traversed dual worlds of fantasy and reality, not unlike that represented in the stories of A.A. Milne.

TABLE 4: European Influences on the Picture Book: 1900-1930

| Year | Title                   | Author/Country              | Influence  |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1900 | Barnets Århundrade      | Ellen Kay/ Sweden           | Artistic/literary approach to children's books discernable         |
| 1901 | Putte i Blåbärsskogen   | Elsa Beskow/ Sweden         | Very naturalistic picture book                                     |
| 1901 | Beatrix Potter Books    | Beatrix Potter/ England     | Animals with human characteristics                                 |
| 1902 | Die Wiesenzwerg         | Ernst Kreidorf/ Switzerland | Dynamic illustrations/ human characteristics/ dwarf-like character |
| 1903 | Rumpumpel               | Paula Dehmel/ Germany       | Mirrored pre-war artistic developments                             |
| 1904 | Ett Hem                 | Carl Larssen/ Sweden        | Large format/ amusing homely tales                                 |
| 1904 | Anatole                 | M. Boutet de Monvel/ France | Style-bold lines/pastel drawings                                   |
| 1906 | Peter Pan               | J.M. Barrie/ Scotland       | The world of the eternal child                                     |
| 1908 | Wind in the Willows     | Kenneth Grahame/ England    | Life behind the visible world                                      |
| 1920 | Doctor Dolittle         | Hugh Lofting/ England       | Crazy adventures in dual world                                     |
| 1926 | Winnie the Pooh         | A.A.Milne/ England          | Child and bear inhabit the same world                              |
| 1929 | Emile und die Detektive | Eric Kästner/ Germany       | Depiction of childhood with slight political undertones            |

Three years later, in 1932, *The Albums of Père Castor* were published in France. The principle of guiding and educating children through pictures, which had passed through many stages since Comenius, was now reinstated through these post war stories. Castor had an inestimable influence on the development of the modern children's picture book; his tales are told using language of the child with modern, for the time, illustrative techniques which hold the reader's attention. He began by recounting numerous animal stories but later developed books which related to children from different countries, as he was keen that children should learn about other cultures at an early age. His books were aimed at young children who were just beginning to read, because he felt this was a very receptive period when the foundations of intellectual development were laid. In his own words:

'Je crois que la lecture intelligente, celle qui éclaire et enrichit *esprit*, dépend non seulement de l'acquisition du mécanisme de la lecture, mais de toute une "éducation préalable". Cette éducation préalable, cette pré-lecture est précisément la raison d'être de certain de nos albums.'

(Hürlimann, 1967: 137/8)

Here Castor is suggesting that the intelligent reader, the one who wishes to improve his mind, depends not only on the mechanic acquisition of reading skills but on preliminary education. This preliminary education, in the form of pre-reading activities, is precisely the reason for his picture books.

Castor's fellow countryman, Paul Hazard, also published a very influential book in 1932: *Les Livres, Les Enfants et Les Hommes* which, although not a children's book, was about children's books and has contributed considerably to the development of literary criticism.

Undoubtedly one of the most popular French children's picture book creators is Jean de Brunhoff. His *L'histoire de Babar* (1931), *Le Voyage de Babar* (1932) and *Le Roi Babar*

(1933) are French creations of the thirties. In *King Babar*, Babar rules his welfare state for elephants and is beset by every kind of disaster; his kingdom is not the France of 1933, the year when the first book appeared, nor the France of today, but a never-never land (not unlike that of Peter Pan) where goodness triumphs over disaster. In *Babar en Famille* (1938), the last of the books written by Jean de Brunhoff before he died at the age of 38, Brunhoff creates what is probably the most intimate of his books as it reflects his own family life. His son, Laurent, continued in his father's footsteps, but there is a clear difference both in the quality of artistic style and the storytelling. In spite of this, Babar (Père et fils) are still acclaimed internationally and have certainly been a milestone in the development of European picture books.

In 1934 *Les Contes du Chat Perché* were first published. These stories, written by Marcel Aymé, were a mixture of fable, fairy tale and straight story and have had a popularity in France similar to that of King Barbar. They are some of the most widely read books in France where, as in many of the books already discussed, the children and animals speak the same language. *Mary Poppins*, by P.L. Travers, also published in 1934, is a mixture of fairy tale and straight story, too. With her combined capacities as magician and strict children's nurse, the protagonist in this tale is a possible descendant of characters from *Alice in Wonderland*.

Having similar success, yet a complete contrast in theme, is *Ferdinand*, an unusual picture book by Munroe Leaf, published in about 1935. By his refusal as a prize bull to enter the ring, Ferdinand becomes a symbol for the hatred of war, and was very popular after World War One. This important book was followed in 1937 by *Das Wunderhaus* (The house of wonders), a picture book with more overtly pedagogic intentions conceived, by Seidmann-Freud. It was a picture-play book where each activity was backed up by a suitable text in

which children could learn through play; a concept taken up by Père Castor.

The 1940s received an injection of dynamite with the arrival of *Pippi Langstrump* in 1945. Astrid Lindgren's Swedish creation of this unusual character gave children worldwide enjoyment from her unorthodox antics, whilst many adults repudiated her behaviour. Teachers also found it difficult to accept her non-attendance at school, even though she fulfilled many suppressed childhood dreams and possessed other qualities which are said to have had an almost therapeutic effect on some children. Her pranks, however, are neither stupid or damaging, she is always willing to help people weaker than herself and, above all, she is never boring! In contrast to the 'eternal child' of *Peter Pan*, *Pippi* tends to represent a 'super-child' enabling her readers to see childhood as an exciting experience to be enjoyed. Another very popular children's writer in the 1940s was, Tove Jansson, whose *Moomin* books have been read, translated and adapted for radio and television world wide. Jansson's dwarf-like creatures distinguish themselves from traditional fairy stories about trolls by their origins, which lie neither in reality or tradition but simply in the mind of their Finnish creator. Originally very popular in Scandinavia, these books have travelled well and are widely read in most European countries.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Le Petit Prince* has also traversed Europe. This fascinating picture book appeared in 1945, although its conception dates back to 1940, the year when France lost its freedom. The little prince was born in a year of darkness and sadness, when his creator's country was occupied; it is no coincidence, therefore, that he came from a planet which had never been occupied. The little prince is a figure of courage who has given up his life to save his soul. There is a sadness which pervades the book, recognised throughout Europe, especially when the young prince speaks of his own death. Saint Exupéry has clearly been

influenced by the tales of Andersen in creating a tragic ending; yet there are elements in his writing which mirror the improbability of Lewis Carroll.

In *Marcelino, Pan y Vino*, written by Sanchez-Silva (Spain, 1952) acceptance of death is taken up in a way that is both modern and also rooted in popular tradition. Marcelino, an orphan, keeps small creatures and displays a love of blood and death in the elaborate way that he kills them; an expression perhaps of early preliminaries to bullfighting. He also tells lies, and finally steals, in order to bring bread and wine to a Christ figure which comes to life before the child's eyes; finally taking him to death - the door to true life. A truly Spanish concept, conveyed through both imagery and dialogue between Christ and the child.

This picture book, only paralleled by *Le Petit Prince*, has achieved international fame and become part of the Spanish heritage, bringing transcendental meaning to everyday life. In early writings for children, good conduct was the easiest way of getting to heaven; life did not count for much and heaven for everything. An early death meant entry into paradise, and this idea prevailed in puritan England/most European countries until the 19th century. In Catholic countries such as Spain, however, the concept lingered longer; *Marcelino, Pan y Vino* was, therefore, quite revolutionary as, through its protagonist's rather suspect actions, God was reached.

During the 1940s and 1950s, a number of countries began to receive monies from their governments to improve the status of children's literature. Wales, for example, established Welsh medium primary schools in 1940, which created a new demand for Welsh language picture books, and the response to this demand can be seen in the pattern of publishing over the last forty years (Williams, 1996: 1). After the Second World War, an increasing interest in children's books was evident in the Netherlands. There was concern about cultural and social

'decay' among children and young people which led to the setting up of the 'Bureau Boek en Jeugd' (Book and Youth Bureau) to supply information about children's books (de Vries, 1996: 3). Germany, however, in the 1950s was beginning to catch up with all elements of children's literature, in the philanthropic or reforming educational trend, that it had so far missed. The work of literary scholar Anna Krüger was, at this time, very influential in developing one of the most productive periods of writing for German children (Ewars, 1996: 7). In Austria, too, children's literature began to flourish, especially artistic picture books (Binder, 1996: 4).

Throughout the remainder of the 1950s and into the 1960s, a number of Southern European countries, including Spain, were stifled with dictatorships which controlled both education and children's book production considerably. Northern Europe, on the other hand, became quite prolific in picture book output. In 1955, for example, a Norwegian, Thorbjørn, revived the genre with his *Robbers of Cardemon*, which even found its way into school libraries. In the same year *Vevi* by German storyteller Erika Lillegg, highlighting rich potentialities in children's lives after the war, became a classic. Switzerland had much to contribute during this period, for in 1956, *Die Märchen des Barba Plasch*, stories by a contemporary Swiss storyteller were recorded by Leza Uffer in German in Zürich. Barba Plasch, whose father had been a celebrated storyteller before him, continued the tradition, plying his cobbler's trade from house to house and telling fairy stories, laced with both the specific characteristics of his mountainous locality and the modern world.

A year later (1956) one of a series of picture books adapted from films, was published in France, creating visual reality from photographs, for example, Albert Lamorrisset's *Le Balon Rouge* which tells a delightful visual story of a young boy who is befriended by a red balloon.

In addition, Maurice Druon's *Tistou* (1957) provided French children with a character to match *Le Petit Prince*, *Peter Pan* and *Pippi Longstocking* in a naturalistic picture book which showed the benefits of having green fingers. *Mein Urgrossvater und Ich*, published in Germany, in 1959, and written by James Krüss, is yet another popular book which lets children play with words, alongside the visual images. Krüss's last book *Timm Thaler* (1962) has as its theme a child who sells not his shadow but his laughter. Although rather sombre in tone, this story has received universal acclaim and has recently been adapted for British television.

#### 2.16 Resumé: 1930 - 60

As can be seen in Table 5, by the 1930s development in literary criticism now saw the picture book as facilitating children's education, frequently setting real life situations in a fantasy world. Characters, predominantly those of animals, were seen through the eyes of children and often the themes explored were universally those of a childhood portrayed through stunning visuals. The over-riding feature, however, was not only the need for interplay between picture and text but also the ways in which children could play with language alongside the visual images. These ideas are exemplified in works by Astrid Lindgren whose character of Pippi Langstrump also demonstrates how powerful it is to be a child.

TABLE 5: European Influences on the Picture Book: 1930-1960

| Year   | Title                                 | Author/Country                   | Influence   |
|--------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1932   | The Albums of Père Castor             | Père Castor/ France              | Educating children through pictures                         |
| 1932   | Les Livres, Les Enfants et Les Hommes | Paul Hazard/ France              | Theory: development in literary criticism                   |
| 1931-8 | Babar Books                           | Jean de Brunhoff/ France         | Stories where good triumphs over disaster                   |
| 1934   | Les Contes du Chat Perché             | Marcel Aymé/ France              | Humans & animals speak same language                        |
| 1934   | Mary Poppins                          | P.L. Travers                     | Magician/nurse  |
| 1935   | Ferdinand                             | Munroe Leaf                      | Symbol: hatred of war                                       |
| 1940   | Pippi Langstrump                      | Astrid Lindgren/ Sweden          | Possible strengths of childhood                             |
| 1940s  | Moomin Books                          | Tove Jansson/ Finland            | Universal themes  |
| 1945   | Le Petit Prince                       | Antoine de Saint-Exupéry/ France | Sadness reflecting the aftermath of war                     |
| 1950   | Summerhill                            | A.S. Neill/England               | Theory: children's literature through the eyes of children. |
| 1952   | Marcelino, Pan y Vino                 | Sanchez de Silva/ Spain          | Unconventional behaviour rewarded                           |
| 1955   | Robbers of Cardemon                   | Thorbjørn/ Norway                | Influenced libraries  |
| 1955   | Vevi                                  | Erika Lillegg/ Germany           | Children's lives after war                                  |
| 1956   | Märchen des B. Plasch                 | Leza Uffer/Switzerland           | Modern Swiss childhood                                      |
| 1956   | Le Balon Rouge                        | Albert Lamorrisse/ France        | Visual, cinematic story                                     |
| 1957   | Tistou                                | Maurice Druon/ France            | Rebellious childhood  |
| 1959   | Mein Urgrossvater und Ich             | James Krüss/ Germany             | Playing with words/ visual images                           |

## 2.17 1960s - 1990s

Throughout Europe, since the 1960s, efforts have been made to render the whole of the visual world in pictorial terms. The passion for pictures and for graphic representation has given rise to many superb achievements in the world of education, and the vast number of quality picture books produced is likely to provide a unifying element for the European dimension. The picture book, now a recognised genre, has become part of a universal childhood heritage which is widely available throughout Europe. A picture book such as *Die Geburtstagsreise* (Walter Grieder, 1961), for example, tells of a birthday journey along the Rhine; its illustrations strongly emphasise a theme which helps to create unity among different countries and is representative of possibilities for creating greater European understanding through the picture book medium. This theme, a more detailed analysis of the development of the picture book over the last two decades, and a framework for determining what makes a good picture book are discussed in Chapter Three.

## 2.18 Summary

This chapter has outlined significant European influences on the contemporary picture book, both in terms of the many writers and illustrators whose creativity has been so much a part of children's literature generally, and developments relating to the concept of the picture book itself. The secondary worlds created by storytellers such as Basile (300 years ago), Perrault (250 years ago), and the Brothers Grimm (150 years ago) are still alive in contemporary picture books, as is the original thinking of Comenius, the first picture book creator. He is remembered both as a teacher and great originator, and his popularisation of contemporary, philosophical ideas gave the starting signal for a development which seems to have reached its climax this century, with the popularity of the picture book in a visually technological age. Comenius' thinking has not however, always been to the forefront of the minds of educationalists. Even though frequent attempts were made right up to the middle of the 19th

century to revive *Orbis Pictus*, it was fairy stories which held sway far more impressively than children's books full of factual information.

The beginning of the 20th Century, however, began a re-thinking in the teachings of Comenius, thereby greatly advancing the possibilities of, yet again, teaching through picture books. This thinking has continued to develop throughout the century, where fresh use has been made of picture book language, and the interaction between picture and text is seen to have a crucial role in the development of young readers. Only looking at one picture per day, as expected in the time of Comenius, however, would seem a nonsense in the technologically literate world of the late 20th Century, inhabited by so many visual machines for creating possible worlds. Chapter Three, therefore, draws on these historical developments when moving towards a definition of the picture book and its future role within European education.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK AND CHILDREN'S LEARNING

#### 3.0 Introduction

Drawing on the issues raised in Chapter Two, this chapter focuses on the last decades of the 20th Century when the European picture book has become more established within educational literature in its own right. Elements or criteria which go together to make a good picture book are discussed in terms of: visual communication, the creation of secondary worlds, a European community of readers, linguistic diversity and the role of translation. Finally, a case is made for the importance of the travelability of picture books and for recognition of their ability to enhance the learning process.

#### 3.1 The Contemporary European Picture Book

Over the last three decades, there has been a resurgence of picture books in practically all member states within the European Community which have found a new voice, a way of communicating with young children of today and inviting them into secondary worlds. Often, it is within these worlds that children begin to learn more about themselves and the countries in which they live. Within the picture books' textual and visual imagery there is an opportunity for children to absorb and consider a plethora of cultural beliefs and expectations which lay the foundations of their own personal and cultural identity. The more successful picture books are those which show recognisable aspects of the world that children know as well as those outside their own experiences. They are a mixture of the known and unknown portrayed through interaction of picture and text to create new secondary worlds to which both children, and the adults with whom they share the books, can relate.

Visual images dominate children's early learning in all societies, capturing their

emotions/imaginings and helping them develop understanding of their own specific culture. Children's growth in literacy is bound up with how they learn to look and what they expect to see (Meek, 1991). Picture books, therefore, are representations of reality and children's early reading development depends on how they have come to read these pictorial representations in conjunction with the text. It is the interaction of picture and text, the polysemic nature of picture books and their very heterogeneity/flexibility (Lewis, 1996) that make them such powerful aids to learning. Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick's *The Sleeping Giant*, published in Ireland in 1991, is probably one of the most representative in this field. It looks at the island off the Kerry coast which, legend has it, is really a giant asleep. The twentieth century awakening of the giant shows the old Ireland meeting the new in a series of cartoon-style pictures. Books such as this are necessary for children, as they not only capture the familiar, but also show that it is changing (Coghlan, 1996:30).

### 3.2 Visual Literacy

Of paramount importance in the possible worlds depicted through European picture books is their visual magnetism, as well as the diversity of languages and cultural beliefs/values, therein. Visual literacy and the value of picture books has been widely acknowledged (Moebius, 1986; Nodelman, 1988, Doonan, 1993). The possibilities of a real narrative interaction between text and pictures are enormously exciting, but we have to understand how it works (Pullman, 1989). Pictures need to be seen as part of the whole literary experience for, within the picture book, they give children what Doonan calls an 'affective visual experience'. Through their expressive powers, she argues, pictures enable the book to function as an object, something which gives focus to ideas and to which we can attach personal thoughts ... by playing with these ideas we create a society of our own (Doonan, 1993). Picture books positively invite a personal exploration by each reader in order to reach an interpretation imbued with their life experiences and the resonance of their own previous reading (Wallen,

1990). Young children are very capable of successfully identifying intertextual links of both a written and illustrative nature (Bromley, 1996) and it is on this ability that the truly great writers and illustrators rely. In the best picture books different or complementary messages can be tracked in word and picture, giving many layers of meaning (Gibbs, 1986). It is these multi-layers that invite the reader to create a personal world of literary surprises (Perrot, 1996) and extend their experiences/ knowledge of life through other kinds of people, places, periods and situations (Marriott, 1991), especially in relation to Europe. Picture books also help to develop children's thinking and often concern emotions/personal relationships such as jealousy, fear, anger, friendship, family conflict and death; as discussed in Chapter Two. All of these experiences are universally relevant to the rationale which is the main focus of this chapter.

At best, text and pictures are integral to one another. In the more successful and acknowledged books neither text nor picture predominates, rather one complements the other and together they express meaning which could not be conveyed by words or pictures alone. One might say that the pictures should nudge the plot along, to *show* that which might not easily be *told*, but in a manner which demonstrates respect for the reader. In many European countries, as discussed in Chapter Two, the picture book eventually became established as something of an art form. In general, less attention was paid to the text and the story was frequently told through techniques borrowed from the cinema and cartoon art. Currently, however, the importance of the interaction between these two fundamental elements of picture books is becoming recognised as integral to the reading process.

### 3.3 A European Community of Readers

Children are capable of sophisticated interpretations of picture books, reading between the lines and pictures, understanding layers of meaning, absorbing a wide range of cultural meaning, cross referring to other texts, filling in the gaps and generally handling various

shades of complexity with apparent ease (Watson and Styles, 1996). Assuming that cultural ways of seeing are shared and that visual representations are common in a society, children are normally attracted by images which reflect both their immediate and unknown worlds (Graham, 1990). From this visual imagery, they begin to make sense of the world around them and absorb the norms of their own culture. If we are to begin to create a European community of young readers who will learn from each other, can we assume that all children share the same ways of seeing? Certainly it depends on the texts that are selected and the ways in which the books are shared. Elaine Moss, in an interview with Janet and Allan Ahlberg asks 'Did anyone ever tell you that nowadays picture books must have a universality about them in order to invite the oh-so-necessary sale of international rights; that local colour is therefore a disaster?'. Thus intimating a need, for publishers to suppress cultural identity in favour of the more lucrative international market. Why then has *Peepo*, set in working-class wartime Britain, become such a truly international success? It is, Elaine Moss suggests, because part of the book's charm resides in what Allan Ahlberg calls *a certain particularity*, an invitation into a complete, secondary world (Moss, 1990).

It is this certain peculiarity; this invitation to enter into complete worlds exemplified in well chosen and powerful picture books, which is integral to a rationale for using picture books at Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum for English, discussed in Chapter Four. The stories we tell our children and the narratives we give them to make sense of their cultural experience, suggests Watkins (1992: 194), constitute a 'kind of mapping, maps of meaning that enable our children to make sense of the world. Such stories contribute to children's sense of identity, an identity that is simultaneously personal and social'. Pictures as a whole can express moods and meanings, whole periods or cultures, and can evoke not just what they might have meant for their original viewers, but also, what those individuals or periods of culture have come to mean. The starting point for young, European readers is, however, likely

to depend very much on the intertextual knowledge, visual/textual/cultural/linguistic, brought to the picture book, which might mean different things for young readers coming from different countries within the European Community. For example, the 'Englishness of English books', with which Meek (in Cotton 1996: xiv) is so concerned, might well be lost if young readers from other European countries are not alerted to it.

### 3.4 Linguistic Diversity

Chambers (1995) suggests it is important for children to have access to European cultures and literature whilst they are still children, and Dunn (1995) argues that children should have access to other European languages at a very early age, too. Traditionally, picture book translation has only been available in some parts of Europe, thus giving a limited access to their stories. The problem for the U.K, however, has been that the 'traffic' of children's picture books has not been 'two-way'. Whilst other European countries have been publishing up to 35% of picture books from fellow member states, the UK translates only about 1% (Brennan 1996). In addition, the few translations available are often not seen as emanating from other parts of Europe; publishers like Klaus Flugge of Andersen Press (1995), for example, bemoan the insular attitude of the British who, he says, will not buy 'foreign' books unless the name has been anglicized. Many English children are not in fact aware that 'their' traditional stories are not English in origin, for example: *Pinocchio* (Italy); *Red Riding Hood* (France); *Heidi* (Switzerland); *Pippi Longstocking* (Sweden), or that the stories of Hans Christian Andersen are Danish and that the Brothers Grimm were German.

### 3.5 Language and Culture

'Learning a second language is part of a multi-faceted intercultural learning process which takes place by learning with and from those of other cultures and which relates to every aspect of culture', suggest Satzke and Wolf (1993). These words introduce the chapter in the

Austrian National Curriculum on the teaching of German to 'non-German mother tongue speakers'. The introduction goes on to focus on the importance of the school in fostering respect amongst children for other languages and cultures and the need to prepare children for life (Gregory, 1996: 174). Respect for language and culture is very much the concern of children's picture books, for they are about children as well as for children and reveal what a nation believes childhood is, as well as what is right and proper for the young to know! Through the visual storyline of books, children are 'cued in' to the culturally based 'reading secrets' as Meek (1988) calls them, and quickly use new-found skills to decipher the text.

Universal childhood themes are important, too, when choosing books to foster language learning and cultural awareness. Chambers (1996:11) believes that children can not only cope with brutal realities but that they should consider them precisely because they are *there* - cruelly present in life. Children, he feels, need 'the kind of assistance to understanding that only the redescriptive, the redemptive capacity of narrative can provide', which means exercise of the right to know as well as protection from abuse and exploitation. Children's books are different from books for adults, but they are as equal in value and just as influential in shaping the culture. Through books, children can become aware that they are a nation family. For example in Finland, once it gained independence from Sweden, it was the Finnish language used in children's books which began to strengthen the country's identity. Similarly, Luxembourg has been using a newly found Luxembourgish children's writer to bring back the nation's language and identity to its people (Cotton, 1996). The desire to maintain a dialogue with tradition and pass on a cultural heritage is an important feature of modern children's literature (Westin, 1991:22) and this has been particularly noticeable since the 1980s when many picture books began mixing older texts with new.

### 3.6 Translation

Literature in translation can enrich our lives by providing sensitive glimpses into the lives and actions of young people located in other parts of the world. Translated books become windows, allowing readers to gain insights into the reality of their own lives through the actions of characters in other cultures but like themselves. 'They frame experiences' suggests Jobe (1996:411) 'in other cultures vastly different from their own'. Although, it could be argued that in the case of childhood experiences, these do not vary significantly from one European culture to another. Access to European literature/picture books, therefore is likely to enable young Europeans to realise the similarities between their childhood cultures as well as the culturally based differences.

Translations form a major part of our Western literary heritage and European children's literature has been highly influenced by a significant variety of cultures, as discussed in Chapter Two. The Greek and Norse myths and legends have been very influential, as have: *The Arabian Nights* (from the Arabic: 1712); *The Swiss Family Robinson* (from the German: 1814); Grimm's Stories (from the German: 1823); Andersen's Fairy Tales (from the Danish: 1846); and *Heidi* (from the German: 1884). More recently, the antics of Lindgren's *Pippi Longstocking*; the itchy nose of Collodi's *Pinocchio*; the blunderings of Preussler's *Robber Hotzenplotz* and the foibles of Prøsen's *Mrs Pepperpot* have made their contribution. The tradition of translating literature for young people is a long-standing one in Europe. Those Europeans who are surrounded by many languages, for example those from Belgium, Holland, and Luxembourg, accept translations as a daily part of their life; between 30 and 70 % of the children's books published in Europe, in fact, are translated. This is not the case, however, in English speaking countries. Europe generally, considers it important to have books from many countries available for children to read; the same welcoming tradition of translations has not been evident in the UK member state.

### 3.7 The Complexities of the Translation Process

One of the reasons why publishers are reluctant to include books in translation on their lists is the complex nature of the translation process and the difficulty of finding highly qualified people to translate the literature successfully. In the present form, translating literature for children presents a complex challenge wherein the translator tries to retain the original sense and meaning of the story but in another language. Anthea Bell, one of the U.K.'s most prestigious translators, having been responsible for *Asterix* and more recently having won the Marsh Award for books in translation, suggests that she always tries to think: 'what would the author have said if s/he had been writing in English in the first place?' (Jobe, 1996: 413). She makes a point of only translating into English, as she feels it important to write in your mother tongue, thus choosing the very best language possible for the audience (telephone conversation: 2/96).

Bell discussed the fact that picture books present a real challenge for the translator as 'every word counts' and the correct choice is paramount in conveying what the author really wanted to say. Rita Oittinan, a Finnish translator, agrees that picture books provide an additional challenge but, in her case, it is because when the translator sees the original text with certain illustrations, the pictures influence the solutions. This affects not only the choice of words, but also the style of writing throughout the book (Oittinan, 1991:15). Picture books, therefore, although short by novel standards, require an especially accomplished translator to glean the essence of the writer's and illustrator's intent. Words are at a premium and each must be precise enough to convert the nuances of the story and meaning. This is not unlike the problem facing writers of early reading scheme books or indeed authors of the picture books themselves, who have obviously selected the language specifically so that each word and its contextual position conveys a precise meaning.

One side effect of the dramatic increase in co-production of picture books from other countries is the fear that writers and illustrators will lower their cultural standards and create works for children so general in nature that they require little or no editorial change from one culture to another. Martin Waddell, for example is Irish, yet writes 'universally' (Dunbar, 1996). In some cases, writers omit specific place references, and local character names, are careful use of everyday objects, and make only limited specifics to cultural customs; as in *Johnny My Friend* by Peter Pohl, when translated into English from the Swedish (Chambers, 1994). Similarly, there is concern that artists will produce illustrations so bland that they do not offend any reader - unfortunately, neither will they be enriching or stimulating!

### 3.8 The Progress of Translations

Translations into English were very sparse until the 19th Century; the major contributors having been : Comenius (1658); Perrault (1697/1729); *The Arabian Nights* (1712); Grimm (1823); Andersen (1846); Hoffmann (1848); Verne (1870/2); Spyri (1894), Collodi (1891). The years following the second world war marked a period of intense upheaval, international frustration, inward-focused reconstruction policies, and a general lack of literary communication. The construction of the Berlin wall, a post-war iron curtain, halted the sharing of information about life between the West and many Eastern European countries as well as consideration of their viewpoints regarding the struggles during the war years. The continuing effects of the war, therefore, brought a need for titles that related to the concerns of the people. The 1970s was the beginning of a golden era and saw the rise of professionally translated picture books as an art form. Unfortunately, things changed in the mid-1980s. Although, in most areas of Europe, the exchange of titles in translation continued, in English speaking countries the interchange was almost entirely with other English speaking countries.

The political changes of the 1990s created not only uncertainty in the world among adults, but

a sense of uneasiness in young people. It is difficult to comprehend and understand, suggests Jobe (1996: 414) 'the strong sense of nationalism which exists at the same time when market economies are insisting on larger and larger political units'. How do young people, he asks, 'learn to experience what it is like to live in other cultural areas of the world and how will children learn what it is like to live in a more global community?' Never has there been a time when children need to be able to read books from other areas of the world yet, as Kerrigan (1993: 15) points out, of the 67,704 books published in Britain in 1991, only 1,689 were translations; just 2.4%! We remain, it seems to Kerrigan, 'a nation of cultural Euro-sceptics with little interest in looking outward for our reading matter'. Ideally, according to Jobe (1996: 410) 'children need to read the best literature other countries have to offer'.

### 3.9 The 'Travelability' of Picture Books

In her article *Does Pinocchio have an Italian Passport?* O'Sullivan (1992) suggests that translation is one of the ways in which texts can be adapted to reach a different culture. She questions, however, the ethics in this, and wonders how children will learn from each other if this continually happens. She points out that, for example, that in one translation of Pinocchio from the Italian to the German even the food changes, plus the climate and the air of magic (1992: 84) and considers a number of other 'Classics' such as *Robinson Crusoe*, '*Don Quixote*', '*Peter Pan*' and '*Heidi*', which have all received similar fates. Translation, O' Sullivan (1992: 81) suggests, is the 'central moment, the pivot between cultures when a work passes from one into the other' and the story is then accepted into the receiving country's canon of literature. Problems do tend to arise, however, as to the literary status of these books; whether they are to be seen as creative works in their own right or simply secondary products which may penetrate the world of childhood.

An awareness of childhood as being intrinsically different from adulthood, and thus requiring

special treatment has been a concern of translators for a numbers of years. Children are affected by the images of childhood they encounter, whether in real life or in various forms of story, suggests Hollindale (1997:14); they need, therefore to meet children outside their actual lives and cultures in order to understand their own position within a wider European context. The potential 'travelability' of stories across Europe, therefore, has to be considered carefully when choosing books to be shared across cultures, especially if the expression of a culture is so closely bound to its linguistic means of expression that it is impossible to achieve a correspondence in another.

One special characteristic of children's literature, discussed in Chapter Two, is that it is not only governed by literary norms; it also belongs to the changing educational world. This has to be taken into account during the translation process, as often changes are made which take the reader away from the original cultural text. Nières (1992) believes that whilst all texts are unquestionably culturally specific in terms of their own origin, some reveal themselves to be more so than others - especially when the culture is made explicit in the book. It is rare that such books get an international readership, however, except in the case of a children's novel such as *Heidi* which, unmistakeably, reflects the Swiss countryside. In order to implement a European dimension in education through picture books, therefore, it is the universal themes which permeate these texts that are likely to provide the stimulus for creative teachers to further children's education, together with specific classroom activities which will direct children's attention towards their European neighbours.

### 3.10 Children's Learning

The history of children's literature is also a history of the formulation of childhood images present within both classic children's literature and the contemporary picture books of today. O' Sullivan's concern about the loss of national identity through translation is precisely why it

is important for teachers, particularly in England, to discuss the origins of each book they read to their class as well as pointing out the cultures they represent. Educationalists, especially classroom teachers, in all countries, have been so vital to the development of children's literature, throughout history, that we have now reached a point where teachers/teacher trainers must take responsibility for allowing a European awareness of other cultures to permeate the school systems. In this way, it is less likely that there will be the watering down of cultural identity, and make it easier to distinguish traits in picture books which relate to their countries of origin. Interchanges of ideas from different cultures may bring many interesting developments and improvements in overall standards, in relation to technique and production, but it would be a great loss if the characteristics which make for interesting cultural differences in picture books are lost in a general blurring into an amorphous, albeit high quality, pan European style (Coghlan, 1996: 31).

### 3.11 Summary

Chapter Three discussed the recent emergence/popularity of the picture book, with its polysemic nature, interdependency of picture/text plus a universality of themes, and that it is beginning to speak across nations. Most European countries over the last thirty years have been producing picture books of high quality. Unfortunately, the excellence of these texts has not been readily available to English speaking children. This chapter outlined the important role that the visual literacy and linguistic diversity of European picture books have to play in the learning process, and focused on contributory elements that facilitate a good picture book. The next chapter sets these features within the learning processes of older primary children and examines the potential of the picture book at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English in England.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### LITERATURE REVIEW:

#### THE POTENTIAL OF THE PICTURE BOOK AT KEY STAGE TWO

##### 4.0 Introduction

Since the introduction of the first picture book by Comenius in the 17th Century, illustrated texts have been seen to be very much the domain of young children who often share them with a parent, as a precursor to reading alone. The National Curriculum for English (1995), in fact, only mentions these literary texts at Key Stage One. Currently, however, there has been a move towards seeing the potential of picture books for older readers, at Key Stage Two and beyond. Moss (1981:4), several years ago, was making a case for using picture books with 9-13 year olds, suggesting that:

'young people must come to terms with their world which is largely conditioned by the mass media. But opportunities to explore issues raised in those startlingly brief flashes of pictures accompanied by clipped commentary are essential if the adolescent viewer is to become a discerning adult'.

In choosing picture books for older readers, Key Stage Two National Curriculum for English suggests that texts should be drawn from a variety of cultures and traditions (1995:15).

Unfortunately, apart from the traditional folk and fairy tales that are truly European and long established, there are very few picture books, especially for older children, available in translation; thus limiting the choice and ability for young people to share the contemporary experiences of other cultures and other literatures.

This literature review looks at definitions of the picture book, its origins and how it works; focusing on the concepts of childhood and the universal themes that permeate the form. Semiotics, ideology, metafiction and intertextuality are discussed in terms of picture book culture; and the reader's entry into possible secondary worlds of fantasy/reality highlighted, together with characterisation, relationships and emotional issues. The chapter concludes with an exploration of how picture books may be read, focusing on the importance of the interplay

between text and pictures and making suggestions about using books in the classroom. Finally a case is made for making more use of European picture books which meet the needs of the National Curriculum for English at Key Stage Two.

#### 4.1 The Picture Book : A Definition

There is general agreement that picture books exemplify and adorn the domain of children's literature (Meek, 1996:7). Definitions abound, however, as to what actually constitutes the picture book, ranging from those seen as toys, which can be manipulated in a of variety ways, to others which develop concepts, inform the reader or tell stories. Whatever the definition, it is clear that pictures have an important role to play, either alone or supported by different levels of texts. Shulevitz (1985:15) argues that a true picture book tells a story mainly or entirely with pictures and when words are there, they have an entirely auxiliary role. Cooney (in Keiffer, 1995: 6) on the other hand, likens the picture book to a string of pearls, suggesting that the pearls represent illustrations, the string - printed text; creating an interdependency between the two. Bader (1976:1) supports this as a 'total design'; the picture book for her is a social, cultural and historic document but, most importantly, a complete 'experience' for the child.

Keiffer (1995: 6), however, takes these ideas further and sees the picture book as 'a unique art object, a combination of image and idea, that allows the reader to come away with more than the sum of the parts'. Doonan (1996) concurs, suggesting, in her discussion of the modern picture book, that it exploits the potential of the independent complexities within the form itself, that is: words, pictures, layout and the physical object from cover to cover with its turning pages. Doonan further intimates that the contemporary picture book is capable of engaging children well above the age of infancy and learner-reader, a concept endorsed by many other educationalists, including: Fox (1996), Graham (1990), Badderly & Eddershaw

(1994). For the purposes of this study, the term *picture book* will refer to books, suitable for Upper Key Stage Two pupils (10-11year olds), which provide the storyline through visual imagery but are accompanied by small amounts of texts complementing each visual counterpart.

#### 4.2 The Development of the Picture Book

##### a) Presentation and Layout:

Until the late 17th Century, most schoolchildren had little by way of diversion through their school books (Kinnell, 1996: 142). One of the most significant changes to this, she suggests, can be seen in the publication in English of John Amos Comenius's *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* (1658). Although not a children's picture book by modern standards, this was the first lavishly illustrated picture encyclopedia written for children and is evidence of a new acceptance that children learn best through books designed to stimulate them. As mentioned in Chapter Two, this Latin text book was to change the face of literature for children. Before *Orbis Sensualium Pictus*, there had been many Latin text books but Comenius, an educationalist from Moravia, was among the first to realise that children best remember things they have *seen* rather than merely read. Translated into English by Charles Hoole, this revolutionary text consisted of a picture at the top of every page with the name of each object printed below. A variety of topics were covered, both familiar and unfamiliar, providing the widest range of pictures for the young available at that time. The book was popular throughout Europe and remained in use in schools for many years (Whalley, 1996: 220).

##### b) Suitable Topics and Content:

By the beginning of the 18th Century books were becoming more child oriented in tone, language and subject matter. While death and damnation were still important issues, so too were the more prosaic concerns of family life (Kinnell, 1996: 145 - 148). The relationship

between religious principles, morality and child-centred literature, which begun with the Puritan writers, continued well into the 18th Century when the idea of illustrated books for children had become quite established, focusing mainly on themes related to social issues. Early 19th Century works for 'middle class' children, however, turned to more factual themes whilst, for the poorer, semi-literate members of the population, the *chapbook* came into being. Scorned by many, these crudely illustrated, pocket-sized booklets, distributed by *chapmen* (pedlars), probably were the beginning of a revolution in children's books. Their content ranged from folktales, nursery rhymes, and riddles to short, moral tales, and they continued to flourish as a substratum of literature until 'a change had taken place in children's reading' and 'fairy tales, folktales and nursery rhymes were once again permitted in the nursery' (Whalley, 1996: 222). The 1860s saw the peak of English book illustration for both children and adults as, by now, illustrators were working equally for both the adult and juvenile market. This mid 19th century period, suggests Moebius (1986), was the Golden Age of children's picture books. It was, in fact, during the 1860s, thanks to the artistic flair of designer Edmund Evans, mentioned in Chapter Two, that the picture book became the unity of pictures and text that it is today.

### c) Post World War One

During the mid 1920s, the characteristics of the modern picture book began to take shape throughout Europe. Picture and narrative were unified by paralleling events, and a deepening treatment of themes was also becoming apparent. In France, Jean de Brunhoff, through his six *Babar* books produced between 1931 and 1937, for example, explored the themes of family relationships as well as political ones and, in 1936, *The Story of Ferdinand*, in Spain, took a pacifist stance, set against the political background of Europe at that time. In this picture book, about a bull who preferred flowers to fighting, Ferdinand was a subversive model for children. It was also about this time that Hergé's *Tin Tin*, begun in 1929 in Belgium, showed

sustained, well plotted pictorial stories; whilst in England the adventures of *Rupert Bear*, created by Mary Tourtel in 1920 in cartoon form, were reissued a decade later as a children's annual. The structure of these two forms, pictorial story and cartoon format, are now combined, reworked and expanded for the modern picture book (Doonan, 1996: 232).

#### d) Post World War Two:

After the second world war there was a gradual refinement in techniques of production and, by the late 1950s, the full possibilities of how technology might serve in the development of picture books were realised in Britain. The artistic talents of artist Brian Wildsmith, a daring colourist, who was commissioned to produce an edition of *Arabian Nights*, resulted in a book which has now come to be seen as a milestone in the development of the modern picture book. In the 1970s and 1980s, unfortunately, the picture book suffered from massive overproduction resulting, Doonan (1996:233) suggests, in far too many undistinguished products. The 1990s, however, appear to be producing some very exciting material from across Europe. The picture book itself may well have changed over time, due to social, cultural and technological factors, but the experience of it seems remarkably unchanged. It still remains, according to Keiffer (1995: 70) a work of art that speaks to our imagination and we respond to it with the deepest reaches of our emotions as well as our intellect. The picture book, as described here, has never been the sole product of any one particular culture, it has seemed to develop independently across cultures and around the world.

#### 4.3. How the Picture Book Works

The picture book is a combination of visual images and verbal text which enables, what may appear to be, a simple story to be extended and deepened by skilfully blending pictures with spoken language. The reciprocity between visuals and text enables the child to enter more fully into the experience of stories which have the potential to bridge the gap between the

recognizably oral-tradition and autonomous written expositions. Baker and Freebody (1989: 185-6) suggest that picture books appear to be 'transitional between oral conventions and written conventions of communication' where reported talk represents 'a reshaping of natural oral interaction'. The picture book tradition, they suggest, in spite of its encyclopedic beginnings through Comenius, shows 'preference towards story form, which has antecedents in pre-literate oral cultures, as a type of discourse recruited for literary instruction'.

Picture book stories are, however, to be enjoyed and discussed, at a number of levels, rather than specifically for information to be learned or instruction given. Although, at face value, many picture books may seem quite simplistic, they are not always as straightforward as they appear. Nodelman (1996: 144), in fact, points out that a general understanding of what pictures are, is necessary before a child can read marks on the page as being a character within the story. Previous knowledge of pictorial conventions is, therefore, necessary in order to be able to translate these qualities of the image into the objects that they represent. Complex and highly sophisticated assumptions about what pictures do and how viewers should respond to them, he continues, underlie any picture book reading. The child must know the conventions of picture captioning to realise that the words are pointing him/her towards a perusal of the contents of the image. Prior knowledge of the literary conventions of picture books, for example, leads readers to assume that the speaker is not the character in the story but someone else, a narrator.

Such complexities have led many theorists like Moss (1981), Benton & Fox (1985), Graham (1990), Baddeley and Eddershaw (1994) to suggest that picture books are not only for the very young. Good picture books, in fact, deal with important human issues and can convey quite complex ideas despite their economic use of words, making them eminently suitable texts for teaching Key Stage Two children literary conventions which appear in adult fiction; a



theme further discussed in Section 4.18. Picture books, believe Baddeley and Eddershaw (1994: 19) are an effective way of

'moving children towards an appreciation of sub-text and irony... they make visual what more sophisticated texts use language to imply... and give children access to a device which deepens their appreciation of story at a level they can understand'.

Often it is possible to make *cinematic comparisons*. Children frequently scan a picture, like the screen, with 'equal attention to all parts' (Nodelman, 1996: 117); the ability, therefore, to pick out and focus on a character at the centre is a learned activity, and one that reinforces important cultural assumptions that objects and people have different values and require different degrees of attention. Because picture books use pictures as well as words, their subject positions have much in common with what Metz (1982) outlines as those that films offer their viewers. The pictures in both media offer 'readers' a position of power and exist only so that we can look at them: they invite us to observe. In much the same way that a film editor chooses the shots and viewpoint to be seen, so the picture book illustrator presents salient snapshots of the story with carefully chosen close-ups, mid-shots, and long shots to convey empathy with the characters or tension in the plot. Philippe Dupasquier's *Going West* exemplifies this; he sets the scene in long shot: wagon train participants preparing to set off 'West'. The main family is then introduced; first in close-up then, as the story unfolds, the cleverly chosen visual formats convey movement across double page spreads as well as intimacy and distance.

Like the actors in a play or film, the characters in most picture books are presented in series of visual images; it is up to the reader to make the personal intertextual links (as discussed in Sections 4.7 and 4.17). The power such pictures offer, however, is illusory. We are encouraged to absorb the codes and conventions, the signs that make them meaningful yet, through our own observation, we are enmeshed in a net of cultural constraints. The way in which children make sense of pictures, according to Arnheim (1974), is through the interplay

of tensions between objects which could be seen as 'culturally engendered codes'. He points out (Arnheim 1969: 49) that the film artist, like the picture book illustrator, 'quite definitely guides the spectator's attention, gives him directions, indicates the interpretation he is to put upon objects'. In films, endorses Perkins, (1972: 71) 'We have to accept the point of view given to us ... We can watch. We can listen. All the rest is in the mind'. Similarly, picture books very much depend on the thought processes involved during the interplay of visual and auditory images. They convey enjoyment through surprisingly complex means, and communicate only within a network of conventions and assumptions about visual/verbal representations and the real objects they represent. Picture books in general, plus their various components, are what semioticians call 'signs': in Umberto Eco's words (1985:76) 'something (which) stands ... for something else in some respect or capacity'.

#### 4.4 Semiotics

Many picture books for children enable readers to take up ways of meaning relevant to literary readings of text, through the patterning of semiotic resources in both language and visual image. The devices that storytellers use are inventive, subtle, require concentration, interpretation, a knowledge of symbols, an eye for detail and an understanding of certain conventions. To fully appreciate the ways that these pictures 'tell' the story, Meek (1996: 5) believes that young children will need the sensitive help of an adult who can help them to extract meaning from the pictures. This is almost a universally accepted concept for first language literacy learning; the possibilities of using picture books to develop wider linguistic and cultural awareness within the European Community, however, is discussed in Chapter Eight. Making ourselves and our children more conscious of picture book semiotics will enable them to see their world/themselves/the worlds of others with greater perception. Nodelman (1996: 123) suggests that this allows us to give young readers 'the power to negotiate their own subjectivities'. Close attention to picture books automatically turns readers

into semioticians, it encourages appreciation of the cleverness of both the visual and verbal artists, plus an awareness of signs and symbols and, moreover, in the ways in which picture book fictions can, at times, misrepresent the world. Blonsky (1985: vii) sees the world as an immense message, replete with signs that can and do deceive us and lie about the world's condition. Because we assume that pictures, as iconic signs, do in some significant way actually resemble what they depict, they invite us to see objects as the pictures depict them - to see the actual in terms of the fictional visualisation of it, thus making the secondary worlds of Benton and Fox (1985) appear more concrete.

The hallmark of a good picture book is that it invites response at the symbolic level and is open to interpretation (Baddeley and Eddershaw, 1994: 65). The symbolic nature of the images allows the reader to appreciate the deeper meaning of a text, often with the help of a parent or teacher, and to recognise examples of stereotypes breaking down. The semiotic patterning of visual texts, frequently using anthropomorphism, helps children to understand, immediately, that this is not simply a story, but is saying something about life on earth (Cott, 1984). Children's knowledge of semiotic design generally, but specifically the visual, is an important base for further insight into how literary texts work. In recent analysis of the semiotic resources of visual images, Kress and van Leeuwen (1990), for example, describe the direct gaze from the depicted figure to the viewer as the means through which demands, in comparison with offers, are made. What follows may, therefore, have some particular significance for the narrative development; direct gaze from the depicted character to the reader being but one of the techniques contributing to a sense of plot. As in Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things are*: the significance for narrative development being that Max 'begins to act in the transformed world of his own room' (Williams G., 1996: 575). Variation/vertical angle at which characters are depicted can also be a significant semiotic tactic whereby the angle of view is the primary means through which a relation of power

between reader/viewer and represented image is constructed. These visual devices parallel many of the great works of the Cinema. Films such as *Citizen Kane*, directed by Orson Welles in 1941, would not have created the dominant character of Kane, or his empire, without the angle of view frequently emanating from below to suggest and create his overpowering world.

#### 4.5 Ideology

The intended audiences for picture books are, by definition, relatively inexperienced and in need of learning how to think about their world and how to see/understand themselves/others. Consequently, suggests Nodelman, (1996:116) 'picture books are a significant means by which we integrate young children into the ideology of our culture'. Hollindale (1988: 10) believes that ideology is an 'inevitable, untameable and largely uncontrollable factor in the transaction between books and children', it follows, therefore that the ideological content of early reading books can be treated as preparation for adult citizenship where consideration and discussion of social and cultural values can take place (Sarland,1996: 43). Picture books can, however, and often do encourage children to take for granted views of reality that many adults find too fantastic or indeed objectionable or difficult to comprehend.

Sarland (1996: 45) believes that consideration of ideology in children's fiction would not be complete without a glance at the current developments by which children's fiction is becoming a commodity in a global market, controlled by a relatively small number of international publishers. Doonan (1996: 233) suggests that this has resulted from the growing demands of international cooperation in the book market, where pictures can be printed in one single large print run and sold to different countries where texts in the relevant languages are then attached. She goes on to say that there are two advantages to this process: firstly, it is cheaper for the publishers and, secondly, the 'originality of vision' of most creative artists, writers and designers is made available to all. Moss (G.1990), however, feels that publishers

are now beginning to 'suppress cultural identity in favour of more lucrative international marketing' and is supported by Jobe (1996: 569) who worries that:

'writers and illustrators will lower their cultural standards and create works for children so general in nature that they require little, if any, editorial change from one culture edition to another'.

Iser (1978), when discussing textual devices through which an implied reader is written into the narrative, draws attention to the fact that texts bring with them a cultural repertoire which has to be matched by the reader. Eco (1981: 264), too, stresses that all texts carry ideological assumptions, suggesting that readers have three options whilst interacting with a text: they can assume the ideology of the text and subsume it into their own reading; they can miss or ignore the ideology of the text and import their own; or they can question the text in order to reveal the underlying ideology. Barthes (1974) supports the notion that texts operate a plurality of codes that leave them open to a plurality of readings and, in the case of the picture book, it is the interaction of picture and texts, their polysemic nature and very heterogeneity/ flexibility (Lewis 1996) that make them such a powerful read. Writers and illustrators throughout Europe are becoming increasingly aware of this and realise that, for the child, a book is a source of satisfaction that derives from identification and participation, as an expansion of his/her own experience.

#### 4.6 Metafiction

Metafiction is a game which eventually young readers play skilfully argues Lewis (1990). Writers and illustrators, therefore, deliberately exploit the bookish nature of books which can be described as 'metafictive' (Meek, 1996: 5) and teachers act as mediators between pupils and texts by providing the running of metatextual commentary (Luke, 1983). This is done through

the asking of questions; the reception of pupils' answers and the pointing out of specific textual features. The contexts teachers establish to invoke the course of discussing the text, suggests Heap (1985:267), makes teaching reading look 'much like teaching cultural conventions'. The running metalinguistic commentary builds an emotional component into the reading of the story; such a commentary, however, does not merely parallel the text but penetrates and shapes it. Thus it is a metacommentary not only on the text itself but on the social relations which develop within it; children draw not only on the text as source, but on their own cultural knowledge, too.

The metafictional elements found in contemporary fiction have their picture book counterparts, as writers and artists question notions of how stories are told and meanings, conventions and techniques are subverted (Doonan, 1996: 231). Often boundaries are broken between fictional characters and the picture books in which they appear, as well as between the writer/illustrator and reader. One European tale exemplifies this well. In *Zoem, de Zebra*, a delightful picture book from Flemish speaking Belgium, both writer and illustrator have an ongoing commentary with the reader. Zoem, eyes front, immediately addresses the reader 'Hello! My name is Zoem!'. As he begins to describe himself, his stripes start to disappear and he calls in the artist to re-paint them. Unfortunately, this illustrator is not well versed in the ways of zebra stripes, and Zoem becomes quite distraught by her ineptitude. At the book's conclusion, however, the artist finally manages to paint the stripes correctly; allowing the reader to reflect on the metafictional game that had been played, not only concerning the 'bookishness' of the story but the crucial role played by the illustrator, too.

Picture book makers are clearly alert to the fact that, for their primary audience, little needs to be taken for granted. They respond with displays of fluid invention that writers of prose narrative for older, more experienced readers, find hard to match (Lewis 1990:143). Many

metafictive picture books 'prize open the gap' between words and pictures, suggests Lewis (1990: 141), pushing them apart and forcing the reader/viewer to work hard to forge the relationship between them. There is, therefore, a need for readers to be sensitive to the ways in which meaning is represented in picture books and McCallum (1996: 398) points out that by involving readers in the production of textual meanings, metafiction can:

'implicitly teach literary and cultural codes and conventions as well as specific interpretive strategies, and hence empower readers to read more competently'.

In metafiction the ontological gap between fiction and reality is made explicit. McCallum (1996: 399-408) goes on to explain that the fictionality of events, characters and objects referred to is foregrounded and metafictional dialogue can 'show readers how representations of reality are similarly constructed and ascribed with meanings'.

Metafiction is a mode of writing which has recently flourished within a broader cultural movement referred to as 'postmodernism' (Waugh, 1984: 21) sharing such features as narrative fragmentation/ discontinuity, disorder/chaos, and code mixing/absurdity with the picture books of author/illustrators like Anthony Brown or John Burningham. Postmodern features in contemporary picture books show a tendency towards parody, playfulness and openness (Moss G., 1990) and, in many recent publications, constitute a metafictional potential. Picture books comprise two inherently different modes of representation, verbal and visual, the relations between which are always to some extent more or less dialogical. Words and pictures interact to construct (and defer) meanings, rather than simply reflecting or illustrating each other. The visual and verbal components of picture books can thus imply a dialogue between text and picture for readers. This combination verbal and visual sign systems provides a way of foregrounding the ways in which the relation between signs and things are structured by culturally inscribed codes of representation and signification. McCallum (1996: 400) describes this as:

'a bricolage' of visual quotations, which interplay with the text, producing realistic pictorial conventions to represent fantastical situations, blurring textual distinctions between fantasy and reality'.

#### 4.7 Intertextuality

Texts of quotation are probably the simplest level at which child readers can recognise intertextuality, suggests Wilkie (1996:133); all of which function and are recognised by their allusive qualities because they make explicit assumptions about previously read stories or fairytales. Intertextuality is a condition of much writing in English, believes Meek (1996) who discusses *The Englishness of English Books* in Cotton (1996). The author points out that successful English writers for children, such as the Ahlbergs are 'counting on the readers' acquaintance with other commonly known stories in English - it is a game for insiders', she suggests (in Cotton 1996: xiv). Young children are very capable of successfully identifying intertextual links of both written and illustrative nature, and it is on this ability that the truly great writers and illustrators rely. Bromley (1996) exemplifies Meek's point when she explores intertextuality with her Key Stage 1 class of six year olds, and considers whether young children are able to make explicit their knowledge about intertextual links. For this to be determined, careful consideration, she stresses, has to be given not only to the teacher's role but also to the books selected.

Intertextual links discovered by children are not simply those of a literary nature, reading now applies to a greater number of representational forms than at any other time in the past: pictures, maps, screens, design graphics and photographs are all regarded as vehicles for text. Learning about textuality with young students should, therefore, be encouraged in order to rebuild and reshape stories and expositions, either orally recounting experiences, or writing from a personal perspective, or focusing on other, imagined perspectives. These visual and textual 'clues' can then be used, heuristically, as a device for shaping discussions which create

relations between children and culture in texts. Through explicit knowledge of intertexts, children will have noticeably different experiences of reading and are likely to experience what Barthes (1975: 36) describes as the 'circular memory of reading'. They will begin to relate not only to images which function as the equivalent of simile and metaphor but also intertextuality, returning again and again to characters and actions previously discovered in other literary childhood worlds.

#### 4.8 The Concept of Childhood

Children's fiction rests on the idea that there is a child who is simply out there to be addressed; this, however, has not always been the case. Prior to Comenius' introduction of the first picture book for children, in the 17th Century, picture books were created with an adult audience in mind; children were not considered as a group apart. Further back into the 10/11th centuries, images of childhood were not dwelt upon at all (Ariés, 1973: 34). The insistence that childhood is a separate and unique category of human existence is itself an historically relative notion: in medieval society, the idea of childhood did not exist (Ariés, 1982: 36) and, over the centuries, adult theorizations about childhood have varied remarkably (De Mause, 1982). Ariés (1973:125) points out that definitions of 'childhood' have differed throughout history, and from culture to culture. He suggests that the 'family' and 'childhood' are ideas that function within cultural and social frameworks as carriers of changeable, social, moral and ethical values. The idea of childhood is not natural but a social construct (Jenks, 1982: 230) and the study of how it is built and used as a category within picture books makes explicit, as Jenks (1982: 230) suggests, one of the most 'pervasive tacit features of the materials and of culture generally', where reliance is placed on assumptions concerning commonsense constructs of 'child' and 'adult'.

There is a commonality of experience of childhood throughout contemporary European

cultures, and European picture books illustrate similar theories and constructions of this theme. They invite tacit acceptance by child readers of particular cultural images of childhood but, sometimes, young children, whose identities as children differ considerably from these embedded images, may have difficulties in relating seriously to the books. For this reason, animals are often used as a metaphor for childhood, with allegorical descriptions treating animals as participants in human-like worlds and thus creating part of contemporary constructions of childhood. The attitude a picture book implies about whether children should act like the animals they naturally are, or the civilised social beings adults want them to be, depends on whether the book is to be pleasurable ie encourage children how to be child-like or didactic, with instructive examples of acceptable behaviour (Nodelman, 1996: 120). Books written by adults necessarily portray an adult construction of childhood, this may be in part through conveying an apparently child-like construction of adulthood. This construction is constrained by social distinctions such as cultural background, class and gender where adult writers/illustrators view the textual construction of childhood itself to be fundamental to the design and use of books.

Childhood can be discerned in materials for young children where books serve as both obvious and covert socialising processes and contemporary constructions of childhood (Baker and Freebody, 1989: 23-24). Picture books present a portrayal of childhood which the child readers of these texts may or may not recognise but, in general, the aim of the texts is to achieve some parallel between children's everyday lives and the material they encounter in books. Picture book creators view the child as a social rather than as a natural construct, and it is important to note how a version of the nature of contemporary childhood is itself embedded in the content of these texts. It is also necessary to consider whether any children might encounter difficulties in agreeing with versions of childhood that they, as readers, find reflected back to them through the way that the social world is presented.

Drawing attention to characteristics, activities and events by adults can address issues of whether portrayals of social life concur with other available descriptions of childhood culture. For the child reader, such an interpretation would involve not an only immersion in child-culture but possibly an appreciation of how adults view children. MacKay (1974) feels quite strongly that the interpretive capabilities children must use to participate in their own socialisation are not always acknowledged in contemporary constructions of children, although Baker and Freebody (1989: 152) stress that, today, children can participate in many facets of adult culture, shaped for them by adults, no matter how distinctly these categories may be defined. The texts are, in complex and subtle ways, part of each culture's organisation of age relations not only a reflection of childhood itself. It is the freshness that comes from the picture book creators' understanding of who the child is, point out Glazer and Williams (1979), and the ways in which they construct images that become part of every child's encounters with adult views of how 'children' speak, act and perceive the world, which enable young readers, universally, to relate to picture books. A mixture of reality and fantasy in stories apparently about recognisably ordinary people is, therefore, a particularly powerful device for informing children about adult definitions of what it is to be a child.

#### 4.9 Secondary/Possible Worlds

By their very nature, picture books work to make their audiences aware of the limitations and distortions of their representations of the world. Mulkay (1985: 73) believes that: 'we construct the meaning of the world, we construct what we take that world to be, through our organised use of words and other symbolic resources', for example, through picture books. He points out that all discourse may be viewed as the product of versions of the world obtained through worlds represented by selective and artful use of language and visual imagery. Education, itself, is a form of socialisation and acculturation and often schools treat books as 'repositories of knowledge, facts and information rather than as cultural products whose origins and

methods are themselves to be investigated' bemoan Luke et al (1983: 74). Books which seek to describe, in story form, however, and present the everyday lives of child characters, or express, in first person mode, experiences and observations of children in their everyday worlds are capable of bridging the gap between known and unknown events in either real or imagined worlds.

Heap (1985:264) points out that students need to 'sort out what kind of possible world the story is to be taken to represent. It is possible for both teachers and students to alternate between invoking the world of fiction or the world of fact from the same text'. Texts can present many possible worlds inhabited by diverse kinds of characters, many of them children and many of them humanized animal-characters. Invitations to compare oneself with the text-characters is a transitional phase, which assists child-adult relations as possible inhabitants of the fictional world. Heap (1985:265/6) sees this as taking the text 'off the page and into the culture, to turn 'boring maps' into meaningful texts'; where comprehension is building bridges between the new and known' (Pearson and Johnson, 1978: 24). Students, consequently, need to be in tune culturally and intellectually with the text and willing to search for a 'cultural logic'.

Benton and Fox (1985: 10-15) address the question of what happens when we read stories, and consider that the process of responding involves the reader in creating a secondary world. The reading experience is characterised in two ways, they suggest. First, a Four phase process of: feeling like reading; getting into the story; being lost in the book; having an increasing sense of an ending; and second, as an activity consisting of more four elements - picturing, anticipating/retrospecting, interacting, and evaluating. For immersion into this secondary world, however, children need to be presented with stimulating texts which will make the journey possible. An intermingling of picture and myth, narrative and image, plus

the inclusion of both fantasy and everyday stories will address the child who is familiar with and receptive to reading both primary and secondary worlds.

#### 4.10 Fantasy and Reality

Some texts unambiguously enter into a fantasy world as does Sendak's *Where the Wild Things are* or Burningham's *Come Away from the Water, Shirley*, others contain brief, unsignalled and unpredictable sorties into fantasy, often without any subsequent implications for the plot. The fantasy which is credible of Anthony Browne's work is exemplary; his creative visual portrayals of family life, as in *The Tunnel*, always have a fantasy element just beneath the surface. His devotees have now come to expect this, and their readings of these real/fantasy worlds become more sophisticated as the intertextuality of his work is discussed. Taking on the role of narrator, Browne reworks an apparently real 'sound' into a fantastic 'utterance'. The epistemological status of fantasy/reality and everyday content, therefore, present interpretive puzzles to the reader. The blending of realistic and fantastic elements in everyday settings in picture books, generally, challenges the viewer/reader considerably, often interleaving fantasy and reality elements around the activities of animal characters, who can talk and are part of this fictional everyday life.

Alongside these elements, the narrator also mixes realistic/fantastic language into the reported direct utterances of animal characters. Children know that pets do not talk, except in stories or other fantasies, so, in order to interpret and to appreciate books they join in with the adult construction of child-like playfulness. This playfulness arises due to the obviously fantastic and unreal nature of reported events. If the reader actually 'believed' in this 'reality', then the stories would lose their playful value. The child needs to know that 'talking animals', for example, are an element of child culture, generally created by adults, and therefore it is necessary to collude in this fantasy, secondary world.

Folk and fairy stories containing speaking animals do seem to have been considered a significant part of child culture but Myers (1988: 35) argues that notions of 'the child', 'childhood', and 'children's literature' are contingent, not essentialist. They embody the social construction of a particular historical context and are useful fictions used to redress reality as much as reflect it. Nothing endorses more this point than the re-workings of many folk and fairy tales delighting in parodic/satirical practice and supporting, dramatising and amplifying the redressing of reality, as in *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra*, discussed in Chapter Seven. Folk and fairy tales deal with powerful human emotions that we all have to come to terms with in our lives: jealousy, insecurity, sibling rivalry, usurpation, feelings of inadequacy and the transforming power of love, to name but a few. It is through these stories that children are helped to come to terms with their own feelings and those of others, much as great literature can illumine the lives of more adult readers. In the words of Bettelheim (1976: 5), a hard taskmaster when arguing the case for meaningful stories which relate to the needs of individual children:

'For a story truly to hold the child's attention, it must entertain him and arouse his curiosity. But to enrich his life, it must stimulate his imagination; help him to develop his intellect and to clarify his emotions; be attuned to his anxieties and aspirations; give full recognition to his difficulties, while at the same time suggesting solutions to the problems which perturb him'.

#### 4.11 Universal Childhood Themes

The magical property of books is universal (Olmert, 1992: 23) and the fact that different cultures have stories in which the same elements occur indicates that certain themes have basic human appeal. Repetitions link children with events and, as language develops, young people learn to discover how their culture endows experience with meaning. Stories read to them become part of their own memories and book characters emerge in early dramatic play,

as young readers anticipate the possibilities of their own futures. They borrow characters in order to insert themselves into the continuous 'storying' of everyday events (Meek, 1996:2/3) and also expect some tales to cast light on what they are unsure about: the dark, the unexpected, the repetitious and the way adults behave. Narrative is a 'primary act of mind transferred to art from life' says Hardy (1977:12), supported by Lurie (1990) and Barthes (1974), and is reflected in picture books which deal with life-subjects in a wide range of styles and presentations. Topics are generally of current social/moral concern and might include themes such as sex, poverty, illness, crime, family styles and disruptions... boundaries that deal with actualities are not fixed but usually blurred. Picture book topics can often engage young readers at a deeper level than their language will express but which their feelings recognise, allowing development, through imaginative play, towards an understanding of their own culture and changes in their own lives.

Mills (1996: 378) points out that children are no longer seen as passive recipients of adult knowledge but as active agents, learning about their environment through a continuous process of assimilation and adjustment to novel experiences and emotions. Powerful in their content, picture books are capable of dealing with themes of archetypal significance: feelings and fantasies that are part of the inner experience of childhood. The best picture books turn into art the action, sounds and feelings of childhood. It is universal experiences like birthdays, starting school, having a baby brother or sister, losing a tooth, being left awake at night (shown to be the same for everyone) which help the child reader to develop a personal cultural awareness. In the USA, during the 1960s and 1970s, there was a strong feeling that children's books could, in some way, be a cure for childhood problems, that they should somehow socialise children and deal with the more complex aspects of young children's lives. This feeling is still held to some extent in the 1990s, but the dynamic nature of friendships and the domestic can still be an appropriate setting for children's stories.

Picture book themes range from matters of life and death to the survival of the planet; they explore family relationships as well as political ones and contain complex ideas capable of being interpreted in a variety of ways. The theme of a book, its setting in time and place, and its overall effect is strengthened by the artists's choice of certain historical or cultural conventions. Artists and writers of picture books for children create a shared cultural understanding in the secondary worlds which they provide for their young readers. Many of the books display an apparent reflection of the child-reader's routine everyday activities; a powerful systematic recastings of the child's natural world. Books about school, for example, serve to introduce children to the culture of schooling; whilst those concerning sibling rivalry have often been used to help children to examine their own feelings.

Animal stories appear to relate to children, and to adults, cross-culturally; they are able to adapt to contemporary cultural preoccupations as well as themes featured in folk and fairy tales. Even though it is unlikely that children will encounter as many animals as they do humans, these creatures do seem to be relevant culturally (Baker and Freebody, 1989: 136) and appear frequently in picture books for the young; and not so young - exemplified in Anthony Browne's *Piggy Book*. As well as attempting to deal with the actual dramas and mysteries of childhood experience that concerned Jerome Bruner (1966), many picture books of the 1990s also focus on themes that are less visible to adults eg cross-age, cross gender, cross-racial communication, and the maintenance of positive social relations within a socially complex and changeable world. For example, Heath (1982: 74) suggests that 'literacy events' must be interpreted in relation to the larger socio-cultural patterns which they may exemplify or reflect; now, towards the end of the 20th Century, the most distinctive differences in children's books are those which reflect changes in social attitudes, understandings and relationships between children and adults. Nina Bawden (1976: 86), in fact, when discussing her childhood reading, recalls that for her books left out the adult world and, even if adults

were included, they were not presented as children really see them.

#### 4.12 Characterisation

Picture books frequently depict the everyday world of the child which is conveyed by the presence and activities of familiar character-types in the stories. Providing child-readers with a definition of what their identities, interests, attitudes and experiences are conventionally deemed to be, and constructing particular images of children as characters in both human and animal stories, can be seen to invite comparison with social life and the child's psychological world. In identifying with characters, specific stereotypes do provide a certain recognition and reliability because they invite comparisons and are interesting in themselves. The author/illustrator determine(s) which categories of character will be described and how membership of those categories will be elaborated on within the text which, in turn, establishes the quality of experience to be 'lived'. The nature of the social world depicted in children's picture books can be seen from an examination of the types of characters which most frequently appear in them. Human society is conveyed primarily through home and school, where the interaction between characters encourages children to reflect on their own experiences and make moral judgements when trying to understand each character's behaviour.

In the conventional world of children's picture books, suggests Nodelman (1996: 120), the state of the animals who talk like humans is:

'a metaphor for the state of human childhood, in which children must learn to negotiate between the animal like urges of their bodily desires and the demands of adults that they repress desire and behave in socially acceptable ways - that is as adult humans do'

... merely creating a version of the confusing world children actually live in.

Europe, and especially England, takes a far more sentimental attitude to animals than other parts of the world and, in recent centuries, animals and children have been linked together in

terms of their privileged and protected cultural position. Since the 19th century, in fact, children's books have strongly featured animal characters either exhibiting strong human characteristics or showing empathy for such traits. Writers such as Kipling created realistic situations in the animal kingdom whilst also adopting the fantasy of animals talking and communicating with humans. Beatrix Potter, too, through certain ambiguity, enabled characters to flit between human and animal roles, according to the needs of the plot (Tucker 1981: 62-3). Dick King-Smith, however, allows his creatures to communicate with each other in words, but otherwise they are animals, living short and often bloody lives. 'You've got to be careful you don't cross the invisible dividing line and make the animal do things it couldn't possibly do', he says (Powling 1987:13). These books work for young children because, as Lurie (1990: 94-5) points out, they need a 'clarity of focus that is physiologically possible for most of us in early childhood'.

The most frequent encounters with animals in modern children's literature are through the picture book and, almost invariably, these animals are used in an anthropomorphic way to mirror children's own behaviour. Frequently, however, animals appear as pets and are usually treated as sources of fun and surprise, often motivated by human-like objectives, particularly in interaction with other family members as in Jill Murphy's *Peace at Last*; although they also appear in fairy stories where they invariably bear the brunt of negative emotion, as does the wolf in *Little Red Riding Hood*.

One of the earliest works, celebrated by children, which uses animals to convey to young readers messages about life is *Aesop's Fables*, named after a Greek slave who lived around 550 BC. Fables which bear his name were first translated into English by Caxton in 1484. La Fontaine's French fables, written in the 17th Century, also comprise mainly animal protagonists and have become universally popular with children; although the moralistic tone of these tales

has been appreciated by adults, too!

Many early children's books used animals as a device which is still employed in modern writing for children. They are often seen by authors and illustrators as vehicles for portraying human characteristics to young readers in a way that will not be threatening or disturbing, but will give them a lesson in human (rather than animal) behaviour. The animals are intended to explain human foibles and virtues to a child audience, and this approach features prominently in later Victorian and Edwardian stories. Whilst animals in contemporary illustrations tend to take on a somewhat different role today, they almost always require a great deal of the reader and raise questions about childhood relationships.

#### 4.13 Relationships

Picture books are not neutral or content free; they portray characters in social relationships in distinct ways, locating the child-reader in a particular relationship with book-knowledge and, more broadly, with school learning (Baker and Freebody, 1989: xvii). Once children enter the secondary world of picture books, they become totally involved with interactions between the characters and can reflect on their own experiences, empathising with the actions and feelings of others. In general, the relationships which permeate these imaginary worlds are concerned with generation and kinship, featuring a high frequency of parents, grandparents, siblings and friends. Professional adult models such as teachers appear much less; the salient relationships appearing to be within the culture or varieties of family life, covering three generations.

Picture books often convey a child's gaze on the world and delineate an apparent perspective on the scenes in stories from a specific position within the family.

Persistent use of character types from the world of children, and categories of age relations, are clearly marked as basic terms of the social world; a world presented in texts which

provide for self-definition by child readers as members of this special cultural community. Social identity is, therefore, made accessible to children through the membership categories to which they belong. The selection of relevant categories facilitating actions and statements are central to the acquisition of a sense of social structure (Cicourel, 1974), and basic to a sense of social organization in everyday life. Social order is represented through social categories which are worked into materials and relate to children and the adults/animals within their immediate environment. Thinking and feeling is simultaneously learning about endorsed versions of the social world, as it comes to be on paper. All texts, therefore, produced in and for adult-child contact, can be interpreted as documents of acculturation. Speier (1976), in fact, suggests that relations in picture books can be viewed as analogous to the colonizing process, in that adults define and enforce both the needs and the nature of the children.

According to Baker and Freebody (1989), however, representation of adult life in picture books is highly constrained; parents, for example, express their likes infrequently. Children, on the other hand, show much more expression of emotion and evaluation in a positive manner through being good/happy/brave as opposed to showing negative emotions such as badness/sadness/happiness or fear. In many picture books, Baker and Freebody (1989: 65-67) suggest, it is mainly the non-humans who express the more negative emotions, which may account for the prevalence of animals in books for young readers, yet it is often pets that are the recipients of kindness and love. The most positive and negative feelings, their 1989 research discovered, are laughter and crying; crying being a fairly intense experience denoting despair and dependency. Since we construct our representations of the world out of results and implications from our past experiences, it is not surprising to find these positive and negative extremes in evident in many picture books; often very much reliant on the interplay between visual and textual imagery.

#### 4.14 The Power of Pictures

Today, children live in a highly complex visual world and are bombarded with visual stimuli more intensely than most preceding generations. In recent years, therefore, researchers have realised the potential for the picture book in developing visual learning strategies which can give rise to a variety of intellectual and emotional responses. Children seem to scan pictures differently from adults, Coles, Sigman and Chessel (1977: 126/7) point out, possibly due to their constant immersion in visual imagery. This may be simply that the children are answering different questions from adults, and why they ask for repeated readings of favourite storybooks. Often, we as adults miss many of the visual subtleties that immediately catch the eye of today's young readers, their acute awareness of visual imagery seems to add another dimension to the 'reading' of pictures. Through pictures, it is often possible to indicate things that are difficult to say in words, the power of the illustrations, therefore, enables children to appreciate a familiar story in a new way and find deeper layers of meaning. The need for familiarity with conventions, which is vital to the meaning of the book, often exploits the possibilities for complex narrative inherent in images: painterly styles: expressionism, symbolism, surrealism, romanticism, pop art and collage being just a few of the mediums through which visual ideas are expressed.

The experience of Cushla, multiply handicapped yet able to develop her visual literacy from the age of about 18 months (Butler, 1979), is but one example the of power of visual imagery on the young mind when exploring picture sequences. The powerful quality of the visual art in picture books may be its greatest potential, considers Keiffer (1995: 12), as it responds most deeply to the emotional needs of the child in addition to the ability to instruct and inform. Painting has developed throughout the centuries as the result of a cultural need; it is the cultural and social underpinning of these needs which have provided the basis, throughout history, for the individual's response to 'image and idea' now found in picture

books. The child's ability as meaning maker is brought to bear on the visual imagery and linked to personal experience and other intertextual aspects of the enveloping world; children generally are now becoming quite astute analysts of these visual narratives. Studies undertaken in the 1970s and earlier, however, show quite a naive approach when discussing children's picture book preferences, suggesting that children choose colour rather than black and white, realism rather than abstraction, humour rather than seriousness, and familiar rather than fantastic or unfamiliar subject matter (Smerdon, 1976). Keiffer (1995) however points out that these studies often used very restricted variables, lacked an understanding of the integrated nature of picture/text and did not consider its social, cultural and intertextual nature which is part of children's experience with the texts (Heath, 1983).

Issues which may arise concerning these texts depend on the extent to which excursions into picture book understanding, background and vocabulary elaborate the story, and the importance of pictures within the class lesson. Instructional practices with young children, suggest Baker and Freebody (1989: 162), are likely to involve more talk about pictures than print. This talk can then 'see the text' in four respects : to settle the issue of how a particular story should be read; to establish that textual interpretation is a closed affair; to demonstrate the kind of discourse about texts that can occur in conditions of teacher-student interaction; and to serve to illustrate the different identity and status of teachers and pupils. When interacting with picture books, the teacher's main emphasis is to indicate the importance of interpreting pictures. Langer (1953:372) agrees :

'By virtue of our thoughts and imagination we have not only our feeling but a life of feeling. The energy of the artist's imagination, as well as the energy of the book experience, thus illuminates our view of ourselves and our feelings about our world'.

#### 4.15 The Interplay between Picture and Text

Children can learn from a picture book that illustrations and words complement and enhance

each other. Mitchell (1986:44), however, suggests that the relationship between pictures and accompanying texts is 'a complex one of mutual translation, interpretation, illustration and enlightenment'. Sometimes, for example, illustrators depict two events simultaneously; children therefore need to be alert and able to see the relationship between the two narratives. Philippe Dumasquier uses this technique frequently; his picture book *Dear Daddy* relates the tale of a child's father going off to sea, yet the visuals follow the lives of both characters in parallel worlds, during the voyage. It is only in the concluding 'frame', the homecoming, that father and son inhabit the same world. Children need to 'read' the pictures and text together, carefully, to be aware of the interplay between the two simultaneous 'life experiences'. The pictures provide information about the actions described in the words. Words in picture books frequently tell us that things are not simply as they appear in the pictures; picture books are inherently ironic and a key pleasure they offer is a perception of the differences in the information offered by visual and auditory 'text' ... only the words, for example, reveal that animals can talk!

An awareness of possible tensions between what the pictures actually show and what the text says, the subtext, is crucial to any 'reading' of picture books and is further discussed in Section 4.17. The relationships between words and pictures range from an obvious congruency to that of a highly ironic one, in which words and images may seem to be sending contradictory messages. The classic, in the latter category, is, of course, the much quoted *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins, whose analysis began in Margaret Meek's *How Texts Teach What Readers Learn* (1988). The text tells us that Rosie the hen simply goes for a walk through the farmyard. It is the illustrations, however, that embellish the tale, showing the many accidents that befall a predatory fox. The challenge here lies in resolving the differences/difficulties to make a composite text with a satisfying conclusion. Words and pictures are interactive and the position of the words is crucial to their meaning. Picture books

are not necessarily lightweight; the brief text can suggest layers of meaning through the interaction of words and pictures; economy is a strength not a limitation, especially when the story is told in the words of the characters. John Burningham's *Come Away from the Water, Shirley*, using dual reality in a sensitive way, takes the mother's dialogue as text for the 'real' world, whilst visually Shirley's imagination transports her to a plethora of 'imagined' worlds, alongside her more mundane life. Authors/illustrators, like Burningham, are able to exploit and manipulate the interplay between picture and text but they carefully, almost 'musically', interweave them, as Maurice Sendak (1988: 185) relates:

'You must leave a space in the text so that the pictures can do the work. Then you must come back with the word, and now the word does its best and the picture beats time'.

#### 4.16 Reading Picture Books

Picture books evoke a highly personal, aesthetic response in readers (Olmert, 1992: 23) and fully understanding the story in quality picture books depends mainly upon the reader's ability to interpret the pictures (Meek, 1996: 5). Empathy and moral issues can be involved in exploration of some picture books and the same story may be read in different ways, often creating a new learning experience. There is also the possibility to wrestle with meaning rather than simply taking things at face value (Benton, 1996: 75); which makes many illustrated texts suitable for older, Key Stage Two, readers. Lewis (1990: 131-146), in fact, observes how picture books 'anticipate certain *avant-garde* adult novels by questioning the way reality is normally presented in fiction', thus making many illustrated texts suitable for more experienced readers. This is further discussed in Section 4.17. The importance of the experience that picture books offer can, therefore, be explored through the reader's awareness of how books work and how children engage with the characters and situations depicted. (Meek, 1996: 19) invites: 'Read them with your most adult awareness of life and literature and text, and you will see that the invitations they offer to young readers are far from infantile'.

Benton (1996) is concerned that we should explore the ways in which we can learn from each other how children's responses to literature are mediated by the cultural context in which they occur. Picture recognition, for example, is a cultural convention, and the seeds of learning may well lie in the nightly reading event (Sigal, 1978: 93). Difficulties in comprehending pictures might, however, be encountered when children misinterpret relationships and activities depicted visually. If, as Mandler and Robinson (1978) suggest, the schemata for comprehension are not formed during life experiences with stories, then the deepest understanding of pictures would not be able to develop through real life experiences with picture books. Each re-reading of a text is an act of re-interpretation and therefore interesting as a development in thinking but, in learning how children read their world, the great variety of its texts go beyond print and pictures. In order to gain a greater understanding of the ways in which literature works for children, it is also necessary to probe the development of children's grasp of the sorts of textual devices that writers use; children's comprehension of rituals within stories build upon their prior reading, and this in turn can lead to more sophisticated texts; building the foundations of critical/metafictive awareness mentioned in Section 4.7. In most of the best picture books there is often a metaphor beneath the hilarious surface. Michael Foreman's *War and Peas*, for example, is a thinly disguised pictorial parable about surplus food enjoyed by a rich nation, whilst its poorer neighbours starve, and concludes with the question: 'What is the recipe for peace?'

Books contain a form of social theory about the nature and position of childhood within the adult-defined social world. Such theory is embedded in the 'textual' methods used in picture books which encompass the presence and activities of the narrator and, by inference, practical reasoning required by the reader. This is a powerful device for assembling the child reader socially, emotionally and cognitively (Bottigheimer, 1996: 152). Reading is a communicative technology that has come to characterize those cultures that need and wish to exchange ideas

and information across time and space and, for this reason, it is of vital importance to consider the ways in which children respond to the materials presented to them. Protherough (1983) suggests five major ways in which children see the process of reading fiction: projection into a character; projection into the situation; association between book and reader; the distanced viewer; and detached evaluation. There is a developmental dimension, he argues, that maturity in reading is connected with the ability to operate in an increasing number of modes. For an adult-author/child-reader relationship to be sustained, however, development within the text of *interdependency gaps* must be filled by the reader in order to generate cohesive, literary meaning.

Baker & Freebody (1989: x) view literacy as a cultural accomplishment, believing that literacy itself is best regarded not as a unitary abstraction but rather as sets of practical activities engaged in by many different people in many different interpersonal and cultural contexts. Members of any given culture may, they say, operate largely as if the set of literary practices directly reflects a single-faceted 'essence' that is literacy. Literacy is crucial to personal/cultural growth/enlightenment, and books play a central role in the child's introduction to the culture of schooling. They also invite analysis both as informative records of pedagogical theory and as sources of socialization. The reader, therefore, needs to determine what kind of world the world of story is to be taken to represent (Heap, 1985), and the use of materials specific to time and culture is vital within the 'enculturation' process. Williams (G.,1996: 575), in fact, considers the ways in which specific metafictional techniques can enable the reader to make sense of the represented world, and asks questions concerning how the visual image itself expects something new of the reader.

#### 4.17 Books in the Classroom

The 'golden rule for teachers' is that 'everything should, as far as possible, be placed before

the senses', suggested Comenius, 17th century creator of the first picture book mentioned in Section 4.2. He felt quite strongly that proper presentation and explanation of pictures, which implies the use of language so that children will always associate words with objects, would help to make the intimate connection between reality and language. Now, some three hundred years later, children are still encouraged to look, feel and listen in order to make contact with the world around them. The very nature of picture books, with their interplay between text and picture and their economic use of words can, over a period of time, give the teacher an opportunity to develop children's awareness of the complexity of these narratives, especially their subtext. The approach taken up by teachers who include explorations of the nature of literacy in the classroom, using texts which enable them to encourage children to investigate literary meaning-making as textual practice, is therefore crucial to the child's development as an individual. Children do appear to be able to learn in various ways: for pleasure and for exploration of meaning. Barthes (1974) suggests that children can learn to read on the one hand, and on the other behave as though there was nothing but the patterning of language which was the source of their pleasure. It is the integration of these two forms of pleasure which makes pedagogic practice, including how meanings are made, so important.

People with an interest in various facets of children's literature learn more about the nature of textuality by using a range of metasemiotic tools, Doonan (1993) points out, and wonders if it possible that children might also learn to participate in such exploration through accessible metafictional awareness. Williams (G.,1996: 579-582), too, considers that language to talk about language or other meaning systems ie a metasemiotic tool, could enhance literary understanding in the classroom. He has developed such tools - derived from a functional grammar of English (Halliday, 1994) which describes English from the perspective of language as a source for meaning, rather than as a set of prescribed grammatical rules - and has used them with upper primary teachers. *The Piggy Book*, he suggests is but one example

picture book text which allows the teacher to interrogate language structure with Key Stage Two children and ask such linguistically pertinent questions as: How does variation in the language itself make the family relations at the end of the book different from those at the beginning? Williams also considers the role of each image within the illustrations, suggesting that specific visual stances might create a variety of literary effects. Characters looking directly at the viewer/reader, in contrast with those whose gaze is directed within the represented world, ask something different of the reader, he believes.

Picture books which require the reader to work hard offer much to students of all ages. For older pupils they raise certain issues about reading with particular clarity: the relationship between author and reader, how readers come to know what kind of a text they are handling, how readers need to move back and forth within a text and how endings are anticipated. They can also give insights into the way that texts are structured; for example, that irony emerges as the reader puts words and pictures together. Many picture books, in fact, require a reading not unlike that of shorter, complex poems; where visual images prompt verbal interpretations, often provoking differences of opinion which can be developed through small group discussions. The book is 'out there', a focus away from the pupils, and argument is thus 'safer' or less confrontational; indeed, there is usually a sense of shared exploration, leading to the creation of an agreed reading.

Picture books in the early years, maintain Baker and Freebody (1989) are 'cultural' devices for introducing children to some conventions that govern contemporary schooling. The Ahlberg's *Starting School*, being one of most obvious texts to illustrate this point. Its major attribute is the visual context provided for learning which stimulates oral language development, linking the child's everyday experiences to visual 'clues', thus creating opportunities for intellectual and emotional development. Baker and Freebody (1989: 201)

suggest many practical examples for children to interact with picture books, these include: experimenting with format; exploring multiple beginnings and endings; discussing stories from a variety of perspectives; varying temporal sequencing of events; changing personal identity; analysing sequences of events; interrogating characters; using picture books as information texts; and contrasting real and fantasy worlds.

#### 4.18 The Value of Picture Books for Older Readers

Many modern picture books are intellectually sophisticated and may demand a range of experience and developmental understanding that are beyond very young children. They can, therefore, be visually engaging for older children, as well as those beginning to read, and can change with each reading. Children at Key Stage Two, for example, have been immersed in the visual images of today's world for a number of years; picture books for them can create opportunities for developing literacy/literary and aesthetic understanding at a level which might not be possible with more dense texts. Fox (1996: 599), however, believes that the potential value of picture books in the classroom remains 'far short of full realisation'. The belief in the worth of picture books in upper primary, and secondary schools, he suggests, is more honoured in theory than practice. Teachers of younger children sometimes have such a commitment to 'enjoyment' that the idea of studying picture books is greeted with misplaced hostility. These 'texts' have, therefore, tended to suffer from a lack of critical exposition, especially the interrelationship of words and pictures; and from a failure of experts in pedagogy to suggest how they might be best explored. Goldman's research (in Hunt, 1996: 93), when looking at the function of story and its purpose in transmitting the rules of conduct and moral conventions/values of society, concludes that 'external perceptions of story require more than simply exposure to the narrative form'; implying that the writer/reader relationship needs more guided effort on the part of the Key Stage Two teacher.

The simplest form of picture book can be less simple than it appears, and older children should be encouraged to return to this genre at time when their own sense of humour is sufficiently developed. The best picture books are open to interpretation because they leave so much unsaid; coming to terms with the subtext, however, demands from children a high level of thinking because, although the texts of these books seem straightforward, the meaning behind them is not, and the older the child the greater will be the insight. Quality of illustrations, too, can excite and challenge older children to think about their own and other people's experiences, reflecting on possibilities about characters/events and motives for actions. In fact, older children are often enabled to think more deeply about the issues raised through stimulating visuals and minimal, well chosen, text. This brevity of text is one of the most important advantages for older children working with picture books, as it allows swift comprehension and overview that they seldom achieve when reading novels. It is this overview that enables them to discuss the books in arguably, a more sophisticated and satisfying way. In addition, the relative ease with which reference can be made to specific elements in the picture book facilitates referring to the text in support of a specific point being made.

Good picture books can contribute to the development of children's thinking throughout the primary years, point out Baddeley and Eddershaw (1994: 75). When working with ten and eleven year olds, these researchers felt that their pupils sometimes approached a level of attainment comparable with what is required for the study of adult literature, not to picture books; and emphasise that the potential of certain picture books for stimulating early development of sophisticated reading skills should not be lost. Much of the sharpest and wittiest content has appeared in picture books over the last 20 years, throughout Europe. Gifted artists have shown that the form is no longer the preserve of very young children, demonstrating its particular ability to catch the irony and the tang of contemporary childhood.

During the mid 1980s and into the 1990s writers for Key Stage Two children showed signs of interest in new forms of challenging content, combining visual and verbal techniques in a highly original way. Commercially successful books for children have demonstrated that children can appreciate sophisticated interplays between writer and reader. In the hands of talented and resourceful teachers, older readers are now becoming far more sophisticated in their understanding of how texts work and relationships within the secondary worlds inherent within them, especially if the picture books are open to interpretation, have more complex stories and no specific point of view.

#### 4.19 The 1995 National Curriculum

The National Curriculum for English (1995), discussed in Chapter One, makes no specific reference to 'picture books' in its documentation; it does however state that at Key Stage One, materials used should include 'illustrations that are visually stimulating and enhance the words of texts' (Reading 1c: 6), an endorsement of the genre's value. At Key Stage Two, however, no reference is made to the use of picture books at all, yet clearly, as Section 4.17 demonstrates, picture books can be very valuable within the Key Stage Two curriculum, especially those from other European countries, as they can facilitate the European dimension, desired by the Department for Education (1991).

The statement of the UK government's policy and report of activities undertaken to implement the EC Resolution of 24th May 1988 on the European dimension in Education (1991) suggests that: 'With the introduction of the National Curriculum in England and Wales, the opportunity is being taken for appropriate elements of the European dimension to be integrated'.

Unfortunately, there are no specific references to the European dimension in the 1995 document for English, but in the *General Requirements* there are two statements which open a window of opportunity: (i) 'To develop as effective readers, pupils should be taught to read,

analyze and evaluate a wide range of texts, including literature from the English literary heritage and from other cultures and traditions' (1b:2), and (ii) 'The richness of dialects and other languages can make an important contribution to pupil's understanding of standard English. Where, appropriate, pupils should be encouraged to make use of their understanding and skills in other languages when learning English' (2:2). These two requirements form the starting point for looking at the benefits which could be gained by trainee teachers when using picture books to facilitate the European dimension within the National Curriculum for English but, as is evident from the discussion in this chapter, good picture books do far more than simply satisfy the needs of the National Curriculum document.

#### 4.20 Summary

Chapter Four began by defining the picture book and locating it within the historical development of European children's literature. Focus was then placed on the importance of semiotics, ideology, metafiction and intertextuality in relation to the concept of childhood and children's ability to interpret texts. Moving between a multiplicity of secondary worlds, represented through fantasy/reality and linked to a plethora of universal childhood themes, led to characterisation being analyzed, together with relationships/emotions. The importance of the interplay between pictures and text were then related to reading of these texts and classroom activities, especially for older, primary-age children. Having established the potential of picture books for Key Stage Two readers, in this chapter, Chapter Five goes on to explain the setting up of the research project, designed to elicit how trainee teachers can use European picture books to teach English at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English in England.

## Summary of Part One

**Part One** developed a theoretical rationale for creating picture book material which could both implement a European dimension in education and meet the requirements of the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for English in England. Chapter One explained the notion of a European dimension in Education; Chapter Two traced the influences on the picture book within Europe since the time of Comenius, the first picture book creator; Chapter Three discussed the 'travelability' of picture books plus their role within the learning process; and Chapter Four concluded the first part of the thesis, with a literature review, by drawing the strands of the first three chapters together to create a rationale for using European picture books at Key Stage Two.

**PART TWO**

**USING EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOKS TO TEACH ENGLISH**

**AT KEY STAGE TWO OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM**

CHAPTER FIVE  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A  
EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION (EPBC)

5.0 Introduction

In **Part One** a theoretical rationale was developed for collecting picture book material which would both implement a European dimension in education and meet the requirements of the English National Curriculum at Key Stage Two for English. **Part Two**, presents the study which has been devised to enable trainee teachers to put this rationale into practice within primary classrooms.

Chapter Five outlines the project, from its inception in 1993 through to the final development of suitable materials, which was designed in response to my first research question:

'Which books might form a European Collection?'

This chapter contains details of the preparatory stages of the project: the symposium on European children's literature at which picture books were first discussed; the selection of appropriate participants to present papers; and the subsequent establishment of a European picture book collection which forms the materials analyzed in this study.

5.1 The Context

The stimulus for this study came from a symposium held in Belgium in 1993. This was designed to encourage its participants to consider the implementation of a European dimension in teacher education. Sixteen papers were presented on projects

existing in various member states, linked to aspects of the European dimension (detailed in Chapter One). At the plenary session, delegates new to the concept of such European projects were invited to consider and suggest further ways in which European knowledge/awareness could be facilitated at both primary and secondary levels. When the idea of using children's literature was raised, it was very well received by the organising body of the Belgian symposium and an outline of such a project was requested by Señor Lenarduzzi, director of the European Task Force for Education, Training and Youth. I submitted this, together with contact names (listed in Section 5.5) from educational establishments in the 15 European member states, and the proposed project was approved. Funding was then received amounting to some 15,000 Ecus (£12,000 approximately).

## 5.2 The Project

The first stage of the project was to hold a meeting with experts on children's literature from all 15 member states of the European Union. It was decided, by myself, the originator of the project, that this would take the form of a symposium at which papers would be presented outlining the participants' ideas on the development of children's literature in their own countries. Specific focus was to be placed on picture books, with a view to choosing representative examples which could be included in a European picture book collection. The aim of this set of books would be to fulfil the needs of the E.U. recommendations (detailed in Chapter One); namely, to implement a European dimension in primary education.

The IUFM (Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres) in Douai was chosen as a

venue for the symposium for the following reasons: (i) I had visited the institution on a number of occasions, knew the venue well and thought it extremely suitable in terms of facilities; (ii) Erasmus exchanges were already taking place there with students from Kingston University, and students from both universities were likely to be using materials at a later date; (iii) the symposium would coincide with a 'Salon du Livre' organised by Douai university staff, and participants would have the additional opportunity of reviewing a wide range French of children's books; iv) Douai was a reasonably central location for all potential participants.

### 5.3 The Douai Symposium

The objectives of the Douai symposium were to invite selected colleagues, from each member state of the European Community, to present a paper on the development and status of children's literature within their own countries. These papers would try to consider the importance of children's literature not only in helping to facilitate learning to read but also in the development of European cultural awareness and a love of literature. This gathering of expertise on children's literature was the beginning of a project which aimed to develop a collection of material which would enable trainee teachers to facilitate a European dimension in primary education; as a response to the first question quoted in Section 5.0. The aims of the symposium were:

- \* to bring together specialists on children's literature from all member states
- \* to engage in dialogue which could lead to a greater understanding of children's literature throughout Europe;
- \* to facilitate the sharing of children's picture books throughout the member states
- \* to discuss the promotion of a European dimension in education through children's literature
- \* to develop materials which would enable trainee teachers to implement a European dimension in primary classrooms, thus giving children a greater literary, linguistic and cultural awareness.

#### 5.4 The Douai Symposium: Conditions to Participate

Due to the fact that all potential European participants would be funded for involvement in the symposium, it was possible to state overall criteria for the papers and this would enable particular selection of themes. The suggested guidelines for the presentations limited participants to:

- \* detail current research/theory/historical development of children's literature in their own country (with emphasis on picture books for primary children)
- \* if possible, relate this to children's learning in school terms of :
  - i) learning to read
  - ii) enhancing a knowledge and love of literature
  - iii) developing cultural awareness/identity
- \* where possible, to discuss:
  - i) the ways in which national stereotypes and ethnocentrisms persist in modern texts
  - ii) the influence of oral storytelling traditions
  - iii) the encouragement of bilingual texts
  - iv) the importance of translations/translators;
  - v) the popularity, worldwide, of specific characters/books;
  - vi) children reading a variety of European children's literature, whilst still children.
- \* consider the benefits for trainee teachers of using picture books in the original language with minimal text, rather than more densely written stories in translation
- \* refer to a small number of picture books (3-5) which could be brought to the symposium and discussed amongst the group in terms of exchanging/developing ideas for use with trainee teachers in primary schools in their own countries.

#### 5.5 The Selection of Participants

The names of possible participants were obtained from two main sources: Michel Defourney, a member of a European children's literature group who had given a presentation in Belgium (1993); and Greg Brooks, a European Committee Member of U.K.R.A. (United Kingdom Reading Association). Both were able to supply names

from most member states but neither were sure of the individual suitability of their contacts. It was, therefore, decided that a letter of enquiry (Appendix 1) should be sent to each named person, to elicit:

- (i) their interest in the EPBC project;
- (ii) their suitability to participate in the project or in the selection of books;
- (iii) their availability in Spring, 1996.

After this initial interest was established, further communication was made in order to find out more about individual expertise, in terms of:

- \* current role within the field of education/children's literature;
- \* previous experience in terms of books/articles written, conferences organised,
- \* teaching of children's literature/working in schools;
- \* specific interest in Europe/European children's literature.

Information was also sought in terms of involvement with the project, concerning their:

- \* interest in selecting and contributing materials which would help to implement a European dimension in primary education;
- \* willingness to present a paper outlining the development of children's literature in their own countries.

Additionally, views were specifically sought on:

- \* how picture books were currently used in schools in their own countries;
- \* which picture books they would recommend to be included in a European picture book collection (EPBC) and why?

After several months of communication, one participant from each member state was finally selected to present a paper at the Douai Symposium, 6-9th February 1996, financed by the European Commission. The named participants, who all had agreed to include selected books as part of their presentations, are listed in Table 6, together with their institutions and titles of papers given.

Table 6: Participants Selected for The Douai Symposium

| Name                 | Institution   | Paper Presented (Cotton, 1996)                               |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Maria Pia Alignani   | International Children's Library,<br>Genova, ITALY                | Excerpts from the Italian<br>Children's Bookworld            |
| Bregje Boonstra*     | International Children's Library,<br>Amsterdam, NETHERLANDS       |  |
| Michel Defourny      | University de Liège,<br>BELGIUM(Francophone)                      | A Better Understanding of<br>Children's Literature in Europe |
| Robert Dunbar        | Church of Ireland College of Education,<br>Dublin, IRELAND        | The Contemporary Irish<br>Dimension                          |
| Juan José Fernandez  | Centro de Profesores, Oviedo, SPAIN                               | The Promotion of Reading<br>Activities in Spain              |
| Liliane Forsman      | Cygnaeus School, Turku, FINLAND                                   | How Can Literature Be<br>Motivating?                         |
| Alan Hill            | Herriott Watt University, Edinburgh,<br>SCOTLAND                  | Talking About Reading in<br>Scotland                         |
| Morgens Jansen*      | Danish National Reading Association,<br>Holte, DENMARK            |  |
| Winfred Kaminski     | Fachhochschule, Goethe University,<br>Frankfurt, GERMANY          | Two Concepts of Children's<br>Literature: A German P.O.V.    |
| Lena Kåreland        | University of Uppsala, SWEDEN                                     | Swedish Children's Literature                                |
| Annemie Leysen*      | Dept. Lerarenopleiding, University of<br>Leuven, BELGIUM(Flamand) |  |
| Stuart Marriott      | University of Ulster, UK: N. IRELAND                              | Culture, Identity and<br>Children's Literature in N.I.       |
| Margaret Meek        | University of London, Institute of<br>Education, UK: ENGLAND      | The Englishness of English<br>Children's Books               |
| Jean Perrot          | Université de Paris-Nord, FRANCE                                  | French Pop-Up Books  |
| Denni Turp*          | University of Wales, Bangor,<br>UK: WALES                         |  |
| Romain Sahr          | Institute Supérieur d'Etudes/Recherches,<br>LUXEMBOURG            | Language & Children's<br>Literature in Luxembourg            |
| Peter Schneck*       | Vienna Federal Ministry:Arts/Children's<br>Literature, AUSTRIA    |  |
| Gella Varnva Skoura* | Thessaloniki University, GREECE                                   |  |
| Isabel Vila Maior    | Escola Superior de Educação,<br>Portalegre, PORTUGAL              | Children's Literature in<br>Portugal                         |

\* These participants, although unable to attend the Symposium, provided selections of books from which a choice could be made for inclusion in the EPBC.

### 5.6 Summary of Symposium Papers

The papers, in general, outlined the historical development of children's literature in each member state. Sweden, for example, has a long history of children's literature which has influenced other countries considerably. In contrast, Portugal, has only recently begun to develop a cultural literacy in terms of children's picture books, due mainly to a long period of dictatorship. Politics have often had considerable influence on the development and role of children's literature in many countries. The recent unification of Germany, for example, has spawned a new generation of former East German writers for children who are beginning to influence the themes and language used within German children's literature. Social and cultural aspects of European life, such as languages, artistic references, geographical locations and customs have also had varying levels of influence, but their foci vary considerably. Luxembourg, for example, is trying hard to develop a body of children's literature which will reinforce the importance of the *Luxembourgish* language. In contrast, the U.K. rarely includes books from other cultures, even in translation.

The content of the picture books which the papers discussed were remarkably similar. Dunbar (Ireland) focused on contemporary universal themes of childhood; these appear to be moving away from the secure home environment of earlier 20th Century stories towards what Kåreland (Sweden) suggested is a world of childhood responsibilities. Perrot (France) discussed the importance of these secondary worlds, especially those that relate to the fears and concerns of all European children; in which the relationships between parents and children are often dominant, as are more specific themes of fear/loneliness expressed by Forsman (Finland). The influence of

authors/illustrators on the development of children's literature within Europe was emphasized by both Defourny (Belgium) and Kåreland (Sweden) amongst others. It was Meek (UK: England), however, who focused on the important role played by specific writers, such as the Ahlbergs, in creating a world which reflects the 'Englishness of the English', yet travels well in terms of their work being universally acknowledged throughout Europe. Illustrations, too, have a part to play, and Spain's contribution focused on the use of references to Dali and Velasquez in one particular picture book, although this was by no means the only visual, intertextual reference.

All participants referred to picture books which they felt were particularly relevant to promoting cultural identity and a love of reading. Only Meek (England), however, supported by Hill (Scotland) and Marriott (N. Ireland), discussed the importance of the books themselves in facilitating the reading process, an issue which she has felt important for many years (Meek, 1988). This appears to be uniquely a U.K. theme, although the French participant did point out the importance of the rolling biscuit in *Roule Gallette* (Cotton, 1996) which moves from left to right, hence guiding the young reader in the reading direction. Participants from Sweden, Finland, Italy and Luxembourg, however, suggested that their countries do now appear to be focusing more on the idea of the importance of the book itself within the reading process. Certainly, from the papers, it was evident that all participants were beginning to discuss the central role that picture books have in the enjoyment of reading and learning about other cultures. Thus they were all able to contribute to, and aid in the selection of, picture books for the EPBC.

### 5.7 Outcomes of the Douai Symposium

The concluding discussions, after all the papers had been presented, focused on the final choice of books for a European picture book collection, plus any additional materials that might be made available. This discussion was conducted fairly informally in order that final decisions could be made democratically. It was agreed that the EPBC should be based upon the following rationale:

- \* it should comprise one picture book from each country and reflect a universal childhood theme;
- \* where possible, this should be within a specific cultural setting;
- \* the priority should be from the viewpoint of the child and the experiences of childhood that countries have in common, rather than what separates them;
- \* each book should be accompanied by a cassette in the original language, to enable children to become aware of the linguistic diversity within the European Union;
- \* a short rationale for choosing each book should be written, plus a translation/re-telling of the story in English, and three ideas to enable trainee teachers to use the books in school.

### 5.8 The European Picture Book Collection (EPBC)

The European Picture Book Collection now comprises some 19 books, listed in Table 7. There is ONE book from each of the 15 member states; with the exception of the UK where four books represent England, Scotland, N. Ireland and Wales, respectively. In addition, there are two books from Belgium, one in French and one in Flemish, to represent the language diversity of that country. The final choice was made because each book:

- (i) is considered amongst the very best from that country;
- (ii) is used widely in primary schools;
- (iii) depicts a universal childhood theme;
- (iv) reflects the culture of that country, where possible.

Table 7: The European Picture Book Collection

| Country        | Language                      | Book                                       | Author/Illustrator                  |
|----------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Austria        | German                        | Das Land der Ecken                         | Irene Ulitzka & Gerhard Gepp        |
| Belgium        | Flemish                       | Lotje Is Jarig                             | Lieve Baeten                        |
| Belgium        | French                        | Un jour Mon Prince Viendra                 | Andréa Nève & Kitty Crowther        |
| Denmark        | Danish                        | Mosekonens Bryg                            | Ib Spang Olsen                      |
| Finland        | Finnish/Swedish               | VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet                     | Tove Jansson                        |
| France         | French                        | Une Nit, Un Chat ...                       | Yvan Pommaux                        |
| Germany        | German                        | Hallo, Kleiner Wal                         | Gisela Kalow & Achim Bröger         |
| Greece         | Greek                         | The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-Wizard   | A. Kyritsopoulos                    |
| Ireland        | Gaelic                        | Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh               | Gabriel Rosenstock & Piet Sluis     |
| Italy          | Italian                       | La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire | Pinin Carpi                         |
| Luxembourg     | Luxembourgish; French; German | D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad      | Anne-Marie Theis & Mariette Ries    |
| Netherlands    | Dutch                         | Kees en Keetje                             | Jantien Buisman                     |
| Portugal       | Portuguese                    | A Olvelha Negra                            | Christina Malaquias                 |
| Spain          | Spanish                       | El Guardian del Olvido                     | Joan Manuel Gisbert & Alfonso Ruano |
| Sweden         | Swedish                       | Kan du Vissla Johanna?                     | Ulf Stark & Anna Höglund            |
| UK: England    | English                       | Starting School                            | Janet and Allan Ahlberg             |
| UK: N. Ireland | English                       | War and Peas                               | Michael Foreman                     |
| UK: Scotland   | English                       | Katie Morag and the New Pier               | Mairi Hedderwick                    |
| UK: Wales      | Welsh                         | Cantre'r Gwaelod                           | Siân Lewis & Jackie Morris          |

## 5.9 Rationale for the European Picture Book Selection

After the Symposium, a request was made to all participants (Appendix 3), thanking them and asking if they would supply a brief rationale for their final choice of book for the EPBC. An overview of the responses is set out in Table 8.

Table 8: Rationale for Choosing Each Book

| Country           | Rationale for Choice of Book   |
|-------------------|--|
| Austria           | Example of possible harmony within differences that exist between countries                |
| Belgium (Flemish) | Reflects the cosiness of Flemish homes   |
| Belgium (French)  | Addresses the theme of 'witches'; common in many Belgian books                             |
| Denmark           | Engagement of fantasy and feeling from a Danish point of view                              |
| Finland           | Well known Finnish author; addresses theme of loneliness and shyness                       |
| France            | Popular French author; theme of growing up and going out alone                             |
| Germany           | Universal theme: friendship between adults and animals                                     |
| Greece            | A Greek fantasy tale, tinged with elements of reality ie 'having too much of a good thing' |
| Ireland           | An Irish folktale which involves elements of culture and manners                           |
| Italy             | An Italian tale of a little girl who wants to hear stories rather than go to bed           |
| Luxembourg        | A Luxembourgish story which reflects the diversity of languages used in this country       |
| Netherlands       | A tale of friendship and losing it; reflecting aspects of Dutch culture                    |
| Portugal          | Quality of illustrations/link between imagery, animism and fantasy                         |
| Spain             | Reflects light and shade of Spanish life/visual intertextuality                            |
| Sweden            | Children's unconventional ways of solving problems, in a Swedish setting                   |
| UK: England       | Relates to the world of school as seen through the eyes of children                        |
| UK: N. Ireland    | Moral tale about the relationship between a rich country and a poor one                    |
| UK: Scotland      | The theme of 'change', where the child is supportive, within a Scottish setting            |
| UK: Wales         | Well-loved Welsh story which has echoes of other cultures                                  |

In addition to the rationale, three final requests were made of the symposium participants which would help considerably with developing the materials for use in school, as discussed in Chapter Eight. These were:

- \* A short, written summary of the contents of each book in English;
- \* A cassette of the story in its original language;
- \* Three ideas of how the books might be used with upper primary children.

#### 5.10 Summary

Chapter Five presented a summary of the process involved in the evolution of a European Picture Book Collection (EPBC); as a response to the first research question in this study: 'Which books might form a European collection?'. Initially, a rationale for the holding of a children's literature symposium was given. Secondly, the selection of participants to attend the symposium was outlined. Thirdly, the symposium papers were discussed and, finally, the choice of books for the EPBC plus a rationale for their selection was presented. The methodology of analysis for these books is set out in Chapter Six; it is applied in Chapter Seven; and practical implications for the classroom are discussed in Chapter Eight.

CHAPTER SIX  
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR A  
THEMATIC, SEMIOTIC TEXT ANALYSIS (STA) OF THE EPBC

6.0 Introduction

Chapter Six describes a thematic, semiotic text analysis (STA) of the 19 books chosen for inclusion in the European Picture Book Collection (EPBC), discussed in Chapter Five, in response to the second research question:

'How can a collection of picture books facilitate a European dimension in primary education?'

Each text is set within an evaluative framework which discusses the visual narratives that can be offered to young, European readers who, through using these European picture books, will meet new literary friends. In so doing, they are likely to learn more about children in other member states, their cultures, their stories and their mutual interests. The suggestion being that they have more in common, because of their childhood, than the differences in cultures which separate them.

The chapter begins by outlining the nature of the texts to be analyzed and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of semiotic, discourse and text analysis methodologies. It then focuses on a modified semiotic text analysis approach which is then applied to the European picture books in this study. Finally, a framework for analysis is proposed, demonstrating the ability of the EPBC to teach the European dimension at Key stage Two of the National Curriculum.

### 6.1 The Texts

Throughout this chapter, any discussion of texts refers to the visual narratives presented in the EPBC. Each of the nineteen books included in this collection have been selected because they represent a universal childhood theme through a coherent visual narrative storyline. Although each picture is accompanied with a small amount of text, visual attributes will be the primary focus; it cannot be assumed or expected that upper primary children, or indeed trainee teachers, in every member state will be able to understand all the languages in which the books are written. Once an understanding of the beliefs and values underlying the texts, as well as the characterisation, setting and plot of the story, are understood, then linguistic links can be made and the polysemic nature of the texts utilised in primary classrooms by trainee teachers.

### 6.2 The Analytical Approach

An analytical framework is proposed for this research which has its roots in both semiotics and discourse/text analysis methodologies. The rationale for which is set out in Section 6.6. It provides a framework for eliciting the thematic universality of these books and their relevance for study at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English in England. A semiotic text analysis approach has been chosen, as it focuses on the visual narratives of the European picture books and discusses the ability of each text to communicate empathy and understanding across the European Union.

### 6.3 Semiotic Analysis

Semiotic analysis, suggests Blonsky (1985: 466) is the science or theory of signs

whose subject matter is the exchange of any messages whatever, and of the system of signs which underlie them. He believes that semiotics is the pivotal branch of communication concerned with: the formulation and encoding of messages; their transmission; their decoding and interpretation; and their signification. Semiotics is seen as central to systemic linguistics and to that approach to written discourse or text analysis. The two scholars who foretold the official birth of this discipline were Saussure and Peirce. According to Saussure's linguistics (1916) everything in a culture can be seen as a form of communication, organised in ways akin to verbal language, to be understood in terms of a common set of fundamental rules or principles. Pierce (1931), adds to this by suggesting that the sign can turn into a new element/object and induct a new sign; this is what he calls semiosis: an action/influence which is, or involves, a co-operation of three subjects ie: a sign, its object and its interpretant. According to Peirce a sign is 'something which stands to somebody for something in some respects or capacity' (Blonsky 1985: 15).

Morris (1938), extended this thinking with his view that there could be possible interpretations by possible interpreters. For him, something is a sign only because it is interpreted as a sign of something by an interpreter, and semiotics is concerned with ordinary objects only in so far as they participate in semiosis. The suggestion being that culture must be studied as a semiotic phenomenon and all aspects of a culture can be studied as the content of a semiotic activity. Eco (1979: 28) believes that the laws of signification are the laws of culture and, for this reason, culture allows a continuous process of communicative exchanges.

Barthes (1957: 110/11) when building on the ideas of Saussure and Peirce suggests that 'Pictures become a kind of writing as soon as they are meaningful' and, like writing, require a lexis. He takes language to mean any significant unit or synthesis, whether verbal or visual, and suggests that 'a picture will be a kind of speech for us in the same way as a newspaper article; even objects will become speech, if they mean something'. His ideas are integral to the analytic framework developed in this study, which draws on semiotic rationale in relation to text/discourse analysis.

Barthes, together with a number of other Europeans (Blonsky, 1985: 11) used the linguistic sign to analyze social symbols. Everything non-linguistic: images, objects, bodily stance, was treated as if it were a language, communicating meaning.

Eco (1979: 7) endorses this thinking, believing that semiotics is concerned with 'everything that can be *taken* as a sign' and a sign is 'everything which can be taken as significantly substituting something else'. For him semiotics studies all cultural processes as *processes of communication*, and he defines the communicative process as 'the passage of a signal from a source through a transmitter, along a channel to a destination'. Blonsky (1985: 150) suggests that, through these signs, 'we can grasp the culture's bloodstream', and supports Eco's belief (1979: 28) that 'culture can be studied completely under a semiotic profile'.

Signs, both oral and visual, which influence everyday life are part of cultural communication systems studied within the field of semiotics. This communication process, which requires a sender, a message, a medium and a receiver, is also present in the picture book. Here it is the author/illustrator (sender) who transmits the narrative

(message) through the picture/text (medium) to the reader (receiver), where the semiotic image is a mixture of visual information and mental absorbing. The optical information has the potential for facilitating meaning, whilst the cognitive interpretation takes place within a cultural frame of reference (Velders, 1992: 24). Together they determine the value of an image as a sign which can be either denotative (visual) or connotative (mental). Both of these elements depend on the capability of the reader to interpret the denotation which is literal (what is shown) with the connotation which is implied (the symbolic value).

As developed by Barthes (1957), the message in any given text lies in the underlying system of rules that structure the text as a whole. The task of the reader is in unlocking these rules and decoding the underlying, hidden meaning that the text carries. Readers bring to a text: knowledge, assumptions, cultural differences, experience and insights all of which affect their interpretation. In order to investigate the possibilities of universality of themes within the EPBC, a framework has been developed which draws on the principles of semiotics. This science of life signs in society, goes beneath the surface of the language to the underlying deep sign systems themselves.

The smallest semiotic form is the message, which has a source, a goal, a context and a purpose. It is connected, and refers, to a specific world where meaning derives from the representative function it performs. Hodge and Kress (1988: 5) refer to this as the mimetic function where messages pass back and forth between participants in a semiotic relationship with the text. Text in this case refers to ideas woven together and

is the material object produced in a discourse; discourse being the social process in which the text is embedded. The primary orientation of the text is to the mimetic plane, where it has meaning, in so far as it projects a version of reality. For the purpose of this analysis, it is the visual ideas woven together within the picture book texts, and their projected versions of reality, that are the focus.

#### 6.4 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis covers a wide range of activities, but mainly refers to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring, connected spoken or written discourse (Stubbs, 1985: 1). Sociolinguists are particularly concerned with the structure of social interaction manifested in conversation; psycholinguists with language comprehension; philosophical linguists with semantic and syntactic elements of texts. Brown and Yule, (1988: ix), however, suggest that whichever approach is the focus, discourse analysis puts the speaker/writer at the centre of the process of communication. They also point out that discourse analysis treats data as the record (text) of a dynamic process in which language is used as an instrument of communication in a context by a speaker/writer to express meanings and achieve intentions (discourse) (1988:26).

Social interaction is of particular relevance to this study in terms of the interaction between picture book and reader. In analysing the role that context plays in sociolinguistic discourse, Lewis (1972: 173) suggests an index against which truth can be judged. The co-ordinates for this index are described as those of: possible worlds; time; place; speaker; audience; indicated object; previous discourse and assignment or sequence; as such they parallel the contexts of many picture book texts.

## 6.5 Text Analysis

The terms text and discourse imply slight differences in emphasis; one often refers to written text the other to spoken discourse. Van Dijk (1972), however, believes that text refers to an abstract theoretical construct which is realised in discourse ie: text is to discourse as sentence is to utterance. Text analysis, suggests Stubbs (1985: 10) implies work done within a particular European tradition, represented for example in van Dijk's work, whilst Brown and Yule (1988: 190) define it as a verbal record of a communicative event. Other authors have, however, been concerned to provide a more formal account of how speakers come to identify a text as forming a text (van Dijk, 1972; Gutwinski, 1976; Halliday and Hasan, 1976; de Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981). These authors are concerned with the principles which bind the text together ie: the cohesive elements. Cohesion is an important constituent in the narrative structure of picture book texts and it is for this reason that text analysis is part of the framework applied to the EPBC.

Metz (1970) advanced the hypothesis that in every case of communication we are not dealing with the message but the text, where the text represents the result of the coexistence of many codes. His plurality of codes which, linguistically, works on a number of levels within the written text can also be applied to picture books where readers interpret things differently. For example, he talks about the denotive codes of getting the meaning across, and courtesy codes which are embedded in culturally specific language eg 'Voulez vous...' or 'would you be so good as to ...' in addition to the specific request. The parallel with the picture book would be a specific action eg the young cat in *Une nuit, un chat...* arriving home after his long night out (denotative)

and the concerned expressions on his parents' faces contrasting with the delight on his own (connotative), (Chapter Seven: 7.3).

Eco (1979: 57) suggests that there can be at least three codes, a denotative and one or two connotative ones. He says that 'usually a single sign vehicle conveys many intertwined contexts and therefore what is commonly called a message is in fact a text whose content is multi-levelled discourse. In *Une nuit un chat...* it is the lines and colour, rather than specific language that convey the connotative codes related to the feelings of both the young cat and his parents.

#### 6.6 Semiotic Text Analysis (STA)

Social interaction via language is part of a general acculturation and underpins not only discourse but almost every aspect of personal experience. De Beaugrande (1980: 30) believes that 'the question of how people know what is going on in a text is a special case of the question of how people know what is going on in the world at all'. The interpretation of text/discourse, however, is based to a large extent on past experience and one way of representing background knowledge which is used in the understanding of discourse is suggested by Minsky (1975). He proposes that our knowledge is stored in memory in the form of data structures, which he calls 'frames', and represent stereotypical situations. His theory is particularly relevant to the semiotic text analysis (STA) applied in this study because his discussion is not primarily an investigation of linguistic phenomena. Much of his 'frame' theory is concerned with visual perception and visual memory as a way of representing knowledge. The basic structure of a frame contains labelled slots which can be filled with expression as a

fixed representation of the world, where the notion of frame provides a metaphor for thinking about discourse/text understanding and draws together the underlying features of semiotics and text analysis.

The semiotic text analysis (STA) framework developed in this study has its roots in both semiotics and discourse/text analysis methodologies. It has been developed so that it can be applied to the EPBC in order to establish the feasibility of communication across cultures through the reading of these books. Semiotic text analysis appears to be the most appropriate analytic instrument for data collection in this research as it allows an interpretation of visual texts; where the meaning conveyed in the stories lies not in individual words and phrases, but in the underlying system of rules that structures the text as a whole (Barthes, 1957: 112). This is particularly relevant to picture books from member state countries which, even though the text is minimal, are printed in a number of different languages. The STA framework, enables analysis of the EPBC elements which are immediately recognisable by all children, regardless of culture or language.

#### 6.7 Weaknesses of Semiotic Text Analysis

Because readers bring to a text: knowledge, assumptions, cultural differences, experiences and insights which affect their interpretation, the problem with a semiotic research approach is that it often fails to provide a firm basis for distinguishing between different readings. It therefore raises questions about the validity of one reading against another, and the fact that individual interpretations may be different from what the author intended. This explains why it is possible to read/re-read texts

and find new meanings with every reading; each of which is likely to be uniquely individual. Such uniqueness can present a certain amount of bias within interpretations on the part of the researcher. In this study, in fact, the message which the visual text of the European picture books conveys to the reader/researcher may well be different from that which the author intended, as meanings are culturally located (Bruner, 1992) and generally accepted as central to the reading process (Protherough, 1983; Meek, 1988; Benton, 1996; Forsman L. in Cotton, 1996).

Text analysis, too, is problematic as according to Stubbs (1985: 3) it seems to be dealing with some kind of theory of social action, and meaningful views cannot be restricted to matters of logic, as many linguists have tried to do. The basic difficulties are (i) how speakers can say or write one thing and mean another; (ii) how hearers or readers may perform long strings of interpretations on any utterance they hear, attempting to make sense of it in relation to their own knowledge and understanding. The parallel difficulty with applying the STA to the EPBC is that of (i) possible duality of meanings drawn from the visuals and (ii) the interpretations made by the reader in the light of personal cultural experience.

Another serious problem for analysts of text/discourse is the range of different functions that language can serve, be it: promising, asserting, describing, impressing, intimidating, persuading, comforting, gossiping, arguing, complaining etc. In addition, utterances can serve more than one function at a time. This is also possible in visual narratives which have similar roles. Stubbs (1985: 5), suggests that many children in Western cultures are protected from social situations in which taboo subjects such as

death are discussed. They are often not present at funerals, yet are expected to act appropriately when the occasion arises. Picture books can often facilitate this difficulty, as can be seen in the Swedish contribution to the EPBC: *Kan du Vissla Johanna?* (7.4). When the young protagonist learns eventually to whistle, he can only do so at his grandfather's funeral. The interpretation of this visual text by young Europeans, however, is likely to be quite complex in terms of analysis. In addition, the data studied in discourse/text analysis is always a fragment of discourse and the discourse analyst always has to decide where the fragment begins and ends. In the case of the picture book, it is which pictures to choose.

The Proposed STA Framework, based on existing research methodologies, has been devised for this study but has the potential to be applied by other researchers to other texts. Individual interpretations may differ, but the framework itself aims to set out specific criteria for analysis which enable triangulation of the data from three different viewpoints: *people*, *setting* and *story*, in order to try to eliminate bias and establish some reliability and validity. Although Cicourel (1973: 24) emphasises that however much we triangulate, the result will always be indefinite. Thus, different kinds of evidence may be combined, but the account will always depend on the reader filling in knowledge.

#### 6.8 The Semiotic Approach to Text Analysis and Visual Literacy

Hodge and Kress (1988: 1) argue that semiotics offers 'the promise of a systematic, comprehensive and coherent study of communications phenomena as a whole' and, as justified in the previous sections, an approach to text analysis such as this can be

applied to the visual literacy of the EPBC. Visual literacy, described by Debes (1969: 26-7), requires a hierarchy of skills which range from being able to understand the nuances of colour and perspective to acquiring the skills for interpreting bodily gestures and narrative sequences. The main principles of visual literacy, as set out by Ausburn and Ausburn (1978: 291-297) are: (i) visuals are a language and (ii) a visually literate person should be able to read visual language. In addition, Hortin (1983:92-106) believes that a visually literate person should be able to process information visually in order to think visually.

Visual language, as spoken, has its own principles of grammar and syntax (Thompson, 1994: 165-82) which include simplicity, clarity, balance, harmony, organisation, emphasis, legibility, unity, perspective, point of view and framing. Many of these specific principles are reflected in the STA, which is based on theoreticians analysis of picture books. Visual language also has its own vocabulary of written discourse ie : point, line, shape, form, space, texture, light, colour, motion. In addition, the visual codes of images, such as: expression, gesture, clothing/accessories, activity, objects, background and technique are included. It is this grammar, syntax and vocabulary that enables interpretations of visual narratives to take place.

Interpretations are answers to questions (Velders, 1992:25) and the interpreted image (picture) stands between the maker (illustrator) and the viewer (reader). When discussing the denotative aspect of visual texts he suggests that an *icon* is a sign based on the immediate reality - a stylized representation or image of what is seen. A *symbol*, on the other hand, is a sign referring to an object/idea based on

association or agreement, without necessarily having any similarity with it. The connotative aspect, however, refers to *index* as a sign with a representative value which is mainly founded upon relations between two or more ideas. *Trope*, however, is a sign comparable with surrealistic images and is used to evoke new meaning.

Velders (1992: 26) suggests that the personal involvement with the image depends on four visual narrative techniques, for which he has developed an analytic framework based on: i) Distance - a long distance view increases concern and decreases the narrative character; a close-up shows the reverse; ii) Place - the positioning behind a person or act evokes identification with it; positioning facing a person or act evokes confrontation; iii) Level - a viewpoint which is higher or lower than a person or object evokes emotions of superiority or dread; iv) Time - depicted through sequences of images or a montage of shots, with the possibility of a 'flash back' or 'flash forward'.

The established analytic approaches for spoken, written and visual texts, discussed so far, have all contributed to the development of the STA used in this study. None of these on its own, however, provides a suitable framework for analysis of the EPBC. A framework is, therefore, proposed which draws not only on these established approaches but also on the knowledge and expertise of theorists working with picture books. Although data bases are available for text analysis which would accommodate a corpus for such a large data set as the EPBC, unfortunately nothing appears to be suitable for the semiotic text analysis required in this study. A framework for comparison and evaluation, therefore, needed to be developed in order to ascertain a methodology which would build on existing picture book expertise.

## 6.9 The Proposed Framework for Semiotic Analysis of Texts

As mentioned in the previous section, the proposed framework for semiotic text analysis, used in this study, draws on established approaches to the analysis of semiotics, discourse/text analysis and visual literacy. It has, however, been modified appropriately for application to picture book narratives, and builds on concepts developed by theorists working in the discipline of picture book analysis.

The theoretical rationale underpinning the proposed thematic framework comprises:

- (i) A universal theme (Douai Symposium, 1996);
- (ii) A classification of picture books (Graham, 1990):  
A: People; B: Setting; C: Story;
- (iii) Four interrelated categories:
  - 1. Visual Codes (Moebius, 1986; Nodelman, 1988; Doonan, 1993)
  - 2. Visual Narrative Techniques (Thomas, 1994; Bromley, 1996)
  - 3. Types and Kinds of Picture Books (Lewis, 1994)
  - 4. Picture Book Ingredients (Cotton, 1997, Chapter 4)

Each category contributes to the semiotic text analysis, explained in the following sections, which is applied to individual EPBC books in Chapter Seven. This STA presents the visual ingredients which make the picture book narrative immediately accessible to European children, regardless of their first language. Once empathy is established with other children through the visual text, further interrogation of the interaction between pictures and written text is possible - by means of discussion and activities such as those detailed in Chapter Eight. This analytical framework provides a structure whereby texts can be analyzed as material produced for discourse which enables the mimetic function of messages, mentioned in Section 6.3, to go back and forth between picture book and reader.

## 6.10 General Application of the STA Framework

(i) *Theme*: The first section of the analytic framework requires that a cohesive link between all the picture book texts in a collection be made. *A universal childhood theme*, suggested as a unifying link by the participants at the Douai symposium, therefore, needs to permeate any chosen collection of European books.

(ii) *Classification of Picture Books*: Once the texts have been chosen, the second section classifies the picture books under one of three headings: *People*; *Setting*; *Story*; as suggested by Graham, 1990. Graham's fourth classification, that of *theme* (above), has been given a section on its own, as a consequence of the Douai requirements.

(iii) *Categories*: Each classification can then be analyzed under four separate categories: *Category 1: Visual Codes*, based on the work of Moebius (1986), Nodelman (1988) and Doonan (1993) which demonstrates ways in which the concept of *people*, *setting* and *story* can be visually transmitted.

*Category 2: Visual Narrative Techniques*, extends the ideas of Thomas (1994) and Bromley (1996), and focuses on the ways in which visual techniques can use visual codes to support cohesion of the narrative structure (Section 6.5).

*Category 3: Types and Kinds of Picture Book*, is used to further classify texts in terms of how their metafictional, narrative qualities, discussed by Lewis (1994), can facilitate greater understanding of narrative at Key Stage Two.

*Category 4: Picture Book Ingredients*, allows for reflection on the texts in terms of how they can encourage universal readings that work on a number of levels, and is based on the rationale developed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

These sections are now detailed more fully:

#### 6.11 (i) Universal Childhood Theme

The universal childhood theme of *friendship* was chosen for the EPBC because colleagues at the Douai symposium felt that this could be a unifying element within the European context. Peter Schneck (Chapter Five), for example, suggested that, as there are so many conflicting European issues, it was important to help children in member states to empathise with each other through friendship themes. His Austrian choice, *Das Land der Ecken*, explores how two children from very different worlds become friends (7.5)

Friendship can often be represented in picture books more broadly, and more deeply, than it is normally encountered in everyday lives. Some of the stories in the EPBC locate readers in situations which allow self-reflection, others convey messages which concern human issues. Their special visual accessibility has the potential to give children early encounters with what literary texts will effect in their later literary and real lives. A variety of humanity's concerns are discussed that are ageless and universal: growing up, meeting change, separating from parents, developing a sense of being one's own person, becoming aware of social expectations and personal responsibilities. Many children, from a very young age, often experience disruptive emotions, where fear and anxiety can sometimes be an intrinsic part of their everyday lives. It is through the kinds of everyday experiences, represented in the stories to which the thematic STA is applied in Chapter Seven, that children's learning and understanding of the world in which they live may be facilitated.

## 6.12 (ii) Classification of Picture Book

Three of Graham's (1990) picture book headings have been adopted to classify the EPBC texts, in this STA, because they will enable a focused analysis of one narrative element in each book. *People, setting and story*, are major elements in any narrative, and in depth picture book analysis is likely to facilitate a number of literary competencies (see Chapter Eight). In this analysis, each book in the EPBC has been assigned to the classification which is most appropriate, and a rationale given. For example, the visual characterisation of the protagonist in *VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet*, from Finland (Figure 2), changes and develops throughout the book; the setting of *Kan Du Vissla Johanna?* (Figure 7) visually reflects certain facets of Swedish life; and *Kees en Keetje*, from the Netherlands (Figure 13), presents a clear and well set out visual narrative storyline. The 19 picture books in the EPBC have been classified as follows:

- A: People:     *VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet* (Finland)  
                  *Une Nuit, Un Chat...* (France)  
                  *La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire* (Italy)  
                  *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra* (Belgium - Francophone)  
                  *Lotje Is Jarig* (Belgium - Flamand)
- B: Setting:     *Kan Du Vissla Johanna?* (Sweden)  
                  *Katie Morag and the New Pier* ( UK: Scotland)  
                  *El Guardian del Olvido* (Spain)  
                  *Mosekonens Bryg* (Denmark)  
                  *Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh* (Ireland)  
                  *Cantre'r Gwaelod* (UK: Wales)
- C: Story:       *Kees en Keetje* (Netherlands)  
                  *War and Peas* (UK: Northern Ireland)  
                  *The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard* (Greece)  
                  *Hallo, Kleiner Wal* (Germany)  
                  *D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad* (Luxembourg)  
                  *Das Land der Ecken* (Austria)  
                  *A Olvelha Negra* (Portugal)  
                  *Starting School* (UK: England)

### 6.12.1 A: People

The picture book is one of the first places that young children encounter fictional characters where, Graham (1990: 27) suggests, convincing portraits are given by creative illustrators. What children are then able to do is read the pictures much as they interpret behaviour in real life. As children's learning progresses, and they begin to read the visual world around them, they can take on more complex issues and begin to understand how texts work as well as how characters develop and respond to each other. A child with a firm grounding in his/her own culture is then ready to move further afield and begin to become familiar with the childhood worlds of other countries, through literature. This, however, is not always easy, due to a dearth of accessible material in the UK in other languages, especially European, and the problems of translation (see Chapter Three).

For reading to be successful, attention must be paid to the individuality of people in stories. When this happens, involvement with the characters occurs, children want to know what happens to these people and what are the outcomes of the tale. Graham (1990: 41) suggests that involvement with characters can be taught through 'good illustrations'. She does in fact refer to three books from France by Gabrielle Vincent, as well as one or two by other European authors such as: Dick Bruna (Netherlands), Hergé (Belgium), and Roberto Innocenti (Italy). She also comments on 'a splendid Parisian busker's broad black hat and flamboyant yellow scarf' (1990: 41) but, as it is not her remit, makes no specific cultural references or discusses the origins of the stories. Had she done so, a further dimension would be added to her comment that many layers of meaning are only accessible through the illustrations.

### 6.12.2 B: Setting

Meaning is also conveyed through the settings in which stories are set, especially in picture books. Just as writers have various ways of creating a backdrop for their stories, so illustrators, with line, shape or colour, may suggest a lonely room or an enchanted garden. Using a mass of detail, they can create an impression which enables the reader to enter into many secondary worlds. When detail is lacking, suggests Graham (1990: 65/6), 'we have the opportunity to fill in, to authenticate a setting; when detail is abundant we can select with discretion, recognise with delight or learn with interest'. If, however, there are contradictions within the visuals, as with the setting of *El Guardian del Olvido* (7.4), reality and fantasy worlds combine. Through the illustrator's use of colour and light, the mood created facilitates a deeper understanding of the quest that the young protagonist undertakes.

### 6.12.3 C: Story

A visual story is a series of pictures, in sequence, which depends upon the ability to see relationships between objects and to draw inferences. Graham (1990: 67) suggests that children learn essential narrative structures, story shape and story schemata from pictures which both teach and demand 'literary literacy'. Wells G. (1985: 96) points out that through this literary knowledge readers can follow and construct narrative and expository sequences, recognise causes, anticipate consequences and consider the motives and emotions that are inextricably bound up with all human actions.

Part of the act of reading is knowing that the early stages of a story require a high level of toleration of uncertainty on the part of the reader. Iser (1978: 68) suggests that

we are confronted by narrative techniques that establish links between things we find difficult to connect; we are therefore forced to reconsider data we at first thought to be quite straightforward. When looking more closely at the overall structure of stories, Goodman (1958: 102) points out that: in the beginning anything is possible; in the middle things become more probable; in the ending everything is necessary.

By focusing on books with minimal or no text, the bones of narrative are more apparent. As texts become longer, illustrations may be used less to tell a continuous story and more to guide readers' grasp of significant points in the plot, in addition to creating character, setting and plot. Whilst there are visual conventions that have to be learned, as well as pictures that are often culturally specific, visual readings are not always straightforward. The fact that pictures can be understood from a relatively early age, as can be seen through their understanding of wordless picture books (Knudsen Lindauer, 1988; Keiffer, 1995), enables the illustrator to display a range of story-events, with or without text, which add to readers' growing command and understanding of narrative.

### 6.13 Category 1: Visual Codes

Visual codes have a significant role to play in terms of universal readings of *people*, *setting* and *story* within picture book narratives. The structure for this category is based on the work of Moebius (1986), Nodelman (1988) and Doonan (1993) who all have pertinent contributions to make to the STA in terms of the following visual codings inherent within the picture book.

#### 6.13.1 Positioning and Size

The positioning and size of a character on a page is often significant; whether it is high or low, right, left or centre of the page. Moebius (1986) suggests that height might be a mark of social status/power, or of a positive self image whereas a low position may denote low spirits or an unfavourable social status. These characters can be strengthened or weakened depending on whether the character is centred or in the margin, in close-up or long-shot (ie large or small). The more frequently the same character is depicted on the same or facing pages, the more likelihood there is that s/he is in a position of control; rather like Anna in *La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire* (7.3). A character that is on the margin, or near the bottom of the page, is likely to be more disadvantaged than one in the centre; whilst one shown on the left of the page is likely to be seen as more secure than one on the right where a thought is usually completed. In addition, over large characters could be a visual feature of an overblown ego, as depicted in the characterisation of the fat king in *War and Peas* (7.4) or the witch in *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra* (7.3). This power and influence, exhibited by many of the central characters in the EPBC texts, is further detailed in Chapter Seven.

#### 6.13.2 Perspective

Perspective, suggests Doonan ( 1993: 86), is a graphic technique which creates the impression of depth and three dimensions on a two dimensional surface. With perspective it is possible to follow the presence or absence of horizontals, vanishing points and contrasts between façades and depths (Moebius, 1986). The sudden absence of a horizon is likely to spell danger or, if there is sheer space above it, the reader is

led to question what lies beyond. A character with a two-dimensional façade, such as the institutionalised matron of the old people's home in *Kan Du Vissla Johanna?* (7.3), is likely to be less open minded, less able to give imaginative scope than a character given three-dimensional depth like the enigmatic guardian of lost things in *El Guardian del Olvido*(7.3).

### 6.13.3 Frame

A frame surrounds picture book visuals and can have a profound effect on the interpretations a reader makes of a visual text. Doonan (1993:84) suggests that the quality of the frame affects the psychology of meaning of what it surrounds. There are a number of different types of frames. A picture smaller than the page on which it appears is said to be framed by the white margins of the paper that surrounds it; Doonan calls this an air frame. Pictures can, however, be framed by decorative borders containing complementary images like, for example, the clouds in *A Olvelha Negra* (7.5) A rigid frame contains events but if, as in *D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad* (7.5), the frame is broken, empowerment of the central character is intensified. A free-hand, drawn line framing the picture, on the other hand, appears less formal and allows for a livelier effect - as if the frame itself is breathing to life the pictured events (Doonan, 1993: 84), as in *Lotje is Jarig* (7.3).

Frame also enables the reader to identify with a world inside and outside the story (Moebius, 1986). A framed illustration provides a limited glimpse into a world, whereas an unframed picture constitutes a total experience, a view from within. The frame usually marks a limit beyond which the text cannot go, or from which the image

cannot escape - for example, the young boy's problem in *VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet* (7.2). If the frame is broken, the image is likely to signify the forbidden or miraculous. In a circular frame, characters are likely to be more secure and content than in one that is rectangular, which often suggests a problem; both of which are exemplified in *Kan Du Vissla Johanna?* where *Grandfather* is both contained by the nursing home and free with the children. The picture book provides a temporal as well as a spatial frame. It has an opening and a closing page, a cover with two sides. What the front and back pages say is often mutually complementary, symmetrical and, given the presence of an outer frame, the heart of the book lies somewhere in the middle. This is particularly relevant in the case of *Das Land der Ecken* (7.5) where the angular and circular endpapers, at the front and back of the book, signify, respectively, the change in attitude that has taken place during the course of the story - a movement from egocentricity to an acceptance of difference!

#### 6.13.4 Line

The intensity of a character's experience may be represented by the thickness or thinness of lines, by their smoothness or jaggedness, by their sheer number or profusion, or by their spareness, and by whether they run parallel to each other or at sharp angles (Moebius, 1986). Spare lines may suggest mobility and speed, whereas thick, blurred ones tend to denote a comfortable status. Jagged lines and those at sharp angles usually accompany troubled emotions or endangered life, as in *Une nuit, un chat...*, (7.3); whilst squiggles often signify vitality or a surfeit of energy.

#### 6.13.5 Colour and Shape

Apart from the traditional associations of certain colours with certain moods, further discussed in Section 6.14.5, the reader needs to be sensitive to colour as a linkage among different objects (Moebius, 1986). Colour and shape often combine to create visual ideas and Nodelman (1988) suggests that we associate certain emotions with certain shapes. Squares and rectangles tend to be seen as stable, fixed and rigid, whereas rounded shapes appear to be more comfortable and accommodating, *Das Land der Ecken (The Land of Corners)* exemplifies this (7.5).

#### 6.13.6 Action and Movement

Many features of visual narrative can be evoked through action and movement; the passing of time, for example, or causes/effects/intentions. Hodge & Kress (1988: 27) suggest that pictures with 'high modality' (close fit between sign and meaning) tend to be far more static and immobile than those with 'low modality' which avoid realism and lean towards simplicity. Individual pictures, therefore, can depict not only objects and people but can convey motion - running, jumping, skipping etc. They do this through the position of legs and arms, speed marks and direction lines. In addition, a number of illustrators use cartoon format to show movement across the page, as seen in representations of the approaching army in *War and Peas* (7.4).

#### 6.13.7 Facial Expressions and Body Gestures

Other picture book elements, such as facial expressions and body gestures denote emotion and relationships between characters. The shape of the eyes and the curve of the mouth in the whale's face, shown in *Hallo, Kleiner Wal* (7.5), for example, suggest

through facial expression that this creature is indeed friendly, even though he is towering above his minute human friends. In contrast, the rigid body gestures issuing from Marguerite, the witch in *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra* (7.3), exhibit total hostility. Many of these visual signs are universally understood but, occasionally facial expression and body gestures which are culturally bound can introduce young readers to a new world. The physical movements and facial contortions of the old woman of the marsh, as she is brewing beer to welcome the Spring in *Mosekonens Bryg* (7.4), would be incomprehensible to English children without some form of explanation.

Body gestures can be suggested through an indication of direction and movement. Marguerite in *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra* (7.3) is an excellent example of how a character can be projected upwards into a position of power to show aggression. Similarly, the physical gestures of father and son as they move towards each other in *Cantr'r Gwaelod* (7.4) intimate possible conflict. The power of gesture, in fact, is used to great effect by picture book artists (Bromley, 1996). Characters not looking at each other, for example, depict sadness, whereas a smiling character is usually happy. Body language is, therefore, very important in supporting the meaning that readers get from a text; it is particularly important when children are trying to determine the relationship between one character and another; a solitary figure in a particular pose would be difficult to understand unless portrayed within the wider context of the story. It is the ability to read gestures, as well as facial expressions, that enables interpretation of a visual narrative text. In *Kees en Keetje* (7.5), for example, the hostile back to back positioning of the two main characters immediately denotes disharmony.

#### 6.13.8 Cinematic Devices

It has already been mentioned in Chapter Four that cinematic devices are readily used in picture books. Nodelman (1988), for example, discusses the *establishing shot* used at the beginning of stories to set the scene. Endpapers, too, at the beginning and end of the book, are rather like the filmic device of pre- and post credits, where the author/director allows a pre-view/extension of the actual story. Sometimes, picture book illustrators make use of *cutting* to link two pictures together, where the dominant shape from the first picture is reflected in the next. More common, however, is the use of cinematic framing, where the shape and size of the image is altered by the closing frame. Nodelman (1988) suggests that picture book illustrators tend to most frequently use mid-shots and long shots usually at eye level. More recent picture books, however, are beginning to utilize a wider variety of cinematic devices. *El Guardian del Olvido* (7.4), uses a sequence of close-ups to create the opening sequence of the book, as well as simultaneous action through *split-screens*.

#### 6.14 Category 2: Visual Narrative Techniques

Visual narrative techniques work alongside the other codes discussed in the previous section, adding further dimensions to universal reading of the picture book. The following artistic techniques discussed by Thomas (1994), and their practical application outlined by Bromley (1996), provide the structure for Category 3 of the STA. Like the codes, they can also facilitate children's understanding of *people*, *setting* and *story*.

#### 6.14.1 Cartoon format

The presentation of key images is central to the picture book format which often, especially in wordless picture books, uses a cartoon format as its structure (Doonan, 1996). This narrative element is crucial to the choice of texts selected for the EPBC as, initially, children will be required to read the visuals before encountering the written text. *Hallo, Kleiner Wal* (7.5) and *The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard* (7.5) are two books in the European collection which use this to effect, particularly in story sequencing and character development.

#### 6.14.2 Trigger Images

Picture book texts also contain trigger images which activate response to the whole narrative (Thomas, 1994); the signs and symbols which children use to identify different known themes or familiar situations. The spinning top on the fourth verso page of *El Guardian del Olvido* (7.4), for example, at first enables identification with the childhood character and then leads the reader into the story.

#### 6.14.3 Use of Icons

Closely linked to the trigger image is the use of icons (Bromley, 1996). Iconography is the technique where signs, symbols and colour are employed to identify individual figures and situations. Often the identification of icons encourages children to construct and test hypotheses about a narrative. As in the case of St Patrick in *Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh* (7.4) where the image of the saint's heavenly halo and cross on his mitre enable links to be made with the essence of the story.

#### 6.14.4 Circumstantial Details

The introduction of circumstantial details, which do not carry the story on their own but often play important supporting roles (Thomas. 1994), encourage the reader to scan the pages looking for clues; often reading the text many times because the pictures may be full of informative images. It is circumstantial detail that draws children back into picture books over and over again; the pictures seem to be constructed so that children will not notice every detail, initially, but will go back time and time again. The toy car on the first recto page of *Une Nuit, Un chat...*(7.3), for example, draws the reader's eye to small details which add to both character and setting as well as story.

#### 6.14.5 Expression of Emotion

Expressions of emotion created through slight nuances of detail, perhaps in the utilisation of light and colour to catch the mood, can greatly enhance visual narratives. Children, universally, become successful at reading pictures which use colour to depict emotions, because these images provide a context for such experiences. Differences in the lighting of scenes, reflecting the changes of mood of the characters, not unlike those of the cinema, are important contributory factors in the picture book narratives. Bright colours are associated with exhilaration and discovery, dark colours with disappointment and confusion. Dark or sombre colours are also synonymous with gloom and despondency; as in the greyness of the pictures surrounding the miserable Granny Island in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* (7.4). In contrast, the bright yellows and blues encircling the happy young witch in *Lotje Is Jarig* (7.3) exemplify a happier emotive aspect of narrative being portrayed.

### 6.15 Category 3: Types and Kinds of Picture Book

The theoretical discussion in the previous sections provides a background to Lewis's taxonomy (1994: 29) in which he parallels the unique features of the metafictional picture book with prose fiction. He points out that metafiction draws attention to the ways in which both fictional and real worlds are constructed through language, and considers the extent to which certain kinds of picture book might be metafictional; tentatively suggesting five types and kinds of picture books which exemplify the metafictional. Lewis believes that, despite the differences between prose text and the picture book, the kinds of rules that get broken are remarkably similar. It is possible, therefore, that focus on the possible metafictional elements within the EPBC texts might facilitate an understanding of the techniques used by writers/illustrators of European picture books, and prepare Key Stage Two children for the novels that they may need to read later in their school careers.

Category 3 of the STA applies the following aspects of Lewis's metafictional taxonomy to the EPBC, trying to extend his thinking in relation to a wider body of picture book texts. An important feature of the metafictional picture book, however, is the communication/interaction between picture and written text; a visual analysis is not always sufficient to completely understand this form. The importance of the written text is, therefore, discussed where appropriate, particularly as the metafictional, according to Lewis, would seem to make a difference to learning to read (1994: 42).

There are a number of metafictional strategies suggested by Lewis and these are now discussed.

#### 6.15.1 Boundary Breaking

In this type of picture book the central characters within the narrative have the ability to influence the story's development, usually stepping beyond the boundaries of the story itself. Often characters address the reader directly at the beginning of the story, or create new characters themselves, or even affect the direction of the story. Such is the case with *Zoem, de Zebra*, mentioned in Chapter Four, Section 4.6. Here the interaction of the animal with the storybook's illustrator results in a dialogue which creates the narrative storyline, thus moving away from conventional storytelling techniques. In *A Olvelha Negra* (7.5), too, the author discusses her own visual perceptions of the cloud formations and invites the reader to both interact and decide the outcome of the story.

#### 6.15.2 Excess

Excess, suggests, Lewis (1994: 30) is a common metafictional strategy used in picture books. It is where the incredible becomes plausible. Often picture books have an *over the top* quality; frequently testing literary norms. It is where, believes Lewis, thresholds are dissolved and decorum of what is adequate to the story ignored. In addition, the unthinkable or the unmentionable can often happen in picture books with increasingly extravagant imagery, that goes well beyond the bounds of realism, being used. This is very much the case with *Hello Kleiner Wal* (7.5) where the improbability of the relationship between an old couple and a young whale leads to the couple helping to rear the offspring of this creature.

### 6.15.3 Indeterminacy

Indeterminacy is the opposite of excess, in that the reader is provided with too little information. Lewis (1994:32) suggests that all stories are built upon absence. This is not unlike cinematic conventions, where today it is quite acceptable to jump from one scene to another without too much explanation. Some picture books, in fact, expose the gaps and reveal the comic absurdity of the situation; often there is no explicit authorization for a specific interpretation, the reader is allowed to construe his/her own meaning. This may be created through the juxtaposition of fantasy with reality. The fantasy setting for *Das Land der Ecken* is a land of corners where other shapes are not permitted. Through a series of quite unconnected visuals, however, a young child is seen to be trying to cope with the entry of an alien object into his world. The parallel with reality is acceptance of difference, but it is only through discussion of what is missing from the visual narrative that individual readings are possible.

### 6.15.4 Parody

Lewis (1994: 35) suggests that picture book makers are very adept at parodic transformations, where the aim is not to ridicule any particular author or style but to make the book into a joke by making fun of conventions. He goes on to say that parody is always subversive in that it refuses to accept that which is culturally determined. The problem in relation to European picture books is in the understanding of cross-cultural mores. Parody based on European folktale heritage such as *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra*, for example, is likely to be more widely acceptable than that of *War and Peas* which is more firmly based in one culture. The parodic features in these texts are further discussed in Chapter Eight.

#### 6.15.5 Performance

Many picture books are interactive and participatory and, on the whole, the makers of *movables* seem to be more concerned with what to do with the picture book as object, rather than the book as fiction (Lewis, 1994: 39). What *movables* share with the metafictional, suggests Lewis is a disrespect for rules and conventions and seem to assume a willingness on the part of their audience to engage in the forms of play they offer. He believes, therefore, that even though it has been argued that many *movables* are 'nothing more than a cynical exploitation of the propensity of the young to engage in forms of play', the phenomena need much more careful attention.

At the Douai symposium, two presentations were given which focused on the significant role that *movables* can play in the understanding of visual narratives. Fox, a guest speaker, proposed some directions which might be taken towards looking at movable books more analytically, without losing sight of the young readers themselves. He suggested that for *movables* to be true facilitators of the reading process there need to be interactive devices which 'are necessary for the plot to move forward'. Whilst Perrot pointed out that movable picture books allow the child to enter a world that is full of 'literary surprises' which lead to an initiation into 'cultural conventions and proficiency in intellectual autonomy' (Cotton, 1996: vii). It would appear that the performance aspect of the metafictional picture book is now being seriously considered.

#### 6.16 Category 4: Picture Book Ingredients

All the preceding categories have influenced the theoretical rationale developed in Chapter Four of this study. Category 4 of the proposed framework supports these

theoretical aspects; suggesting that they are the picture book *ingredients* which facilitate universal reading of texts which work on a number of levels (Chapter Four: 4.3). The hallmark of a good picture book is that it invites response at the symbolic level and is open to interpretation (4.4). Picture books are, therefore, a significant means by which we integrate young children into the ideology of our culture (4.5). In order to do this, writers and illustrators deliberately exploit the 'bookish' nature of books which can be described as 'metafictive' (4.6) as well as include visual intertextual clues which can be used, heuristically, as a device which for shaping discussions which encourage relations between children and culture in texts (4.7).

The universal theme of childhood can also be discerned in picture books for young children where the illustrations can serve as both obvious and covert socialising processes of childhood and contemporary constructions of childhood (4.8). Picture book texts can present many possible worlds inhabited by diverse kinds of characters (4.9) and the blending of realistic and fantastic elements in everyday settings generally challenges the viewer/reader considerably (4.10). The magical property of books is universal and the fact that different cultures have stories in which the same elements occur indicates that certain themes have basic human appeal (4.11). The nature of the social world depicted in picture books can be seen from an examination of the types of characters which most frequently appear in them (4.12), portrayed within specific social relationships (4.13). The picture book, therefore, has the potential for developing visual learning strategies which can give rise to a variety of intellectual and emotional responses (4.14), experienced through universal childhood themes. These are highlighted in Table 9.

Table 9: Thematic Picture Book Ingredients within the EPBC

| Country   | Concept of Childhood/<br>Universal Theme         | Secondary/<br>Possible Worlds/<br>Fantasy v. Reality | Characters/<br>Relationships                    | Power of Pictures/<br>Cultural References      |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <u>A. CHARACTER:</u><br><i>VEM Ska Trösta</i><br><i>Knyttet</i> (Finland) | loneliness/<br>being shy/ finding a friend       | a real situation set within a fantasy world          | child: no-one; distant fantasy character; child | Pictures contrast with dark of Finland         |
| <i>Une Nuit, Un Chat ...</i> (France)                                     | growing up/<br>a child's first adventure         | real situation set within a fantasy world of animals | child: parents; child; danger                   | colours/clothes/ architecture - French style   |
| <i>La Bambina ...</i> (Italy)   | the joy of bedtime stories                       | a real life setting with universal references        | child/adult                                     | visually refers to Italian lifestyle           |
| <i>Un Jour ...</i><br><i>Lotje Is Jarig</i> (Belgium)                     | importance of birthdays/<br>friends/magic        | real child in magical fantasy world                  | child: animal; caring adult witches             | warmth of colour/cosy Flemish homes            |
| <u>B. SETTING:</u> <i>Kan Du Vissla Johanna?</i> (Sweden)                 | family ties/<br>life/death/ role of grandparents | a very real situation                                | child: child; adopted grand-father; child       | Swedish setting/<br>links with death           |
| Katie Morag (UK:Scotland)   | change   | real experiences                                     | child: adults; grandmother                      | visually refers to Scottish Isles              |
| <i>El Guardian del Olvido</i> (Spain)                                     | losing things;<br>loneliness;<br>making friends  | reality which moves into fantasy                     | child: child; adult; mother; child              | visually refers to Spanish art/artists         |
| <i>Mosekonens Bryg</i> (Denmark)  | the coming of Spring                             | total fantasy to explain reality                     | family of troll-like characters                 | Danish folklore/<br>landscape                  |
| <i>Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh</i> (Ireland)                             | customs and manners                              | a fantasy depiction of folkloric 'reality'           | child: adult.<br>adult: adult                   | visually reflects an aspect of Irish folklore  |
| <i>Cantre'r Gwaelod</i> (UK: Wales)                                       | 'Pride comes before a fall'                      | folk-tale fantasy                                    | child:adult; child                              | pictures. reflect Celtic folk-tale             |
| <u>C. STORY</u><br><i>Kees en Keetje</i> (Netherlands)                    | breaking friends and making up again             | 'real' situation as seen by two animals              | friend:friend                                   | pictures depict a Dutch setting; focus on food |
| <i>War and Peas</i> (UK: N.Ireland)                                       | poverty v. greed/poor v. rich countries          | fantasy setting/reality undertones                   | adults: adults                                  | parallels with problems in N. Ireland          |
| <i>The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard</i> (Greece)                  | having too much of a good thing                  | a fantasy world which relates to human desires       | adult: adult/<br>grandmother                    | visually refers to Greek landscape             |
| <i>Hallo, Kleiner Wal</i> (Germany)                                       | an unlikely friendship                           | a fantasy set in real in real life situation         | friends: adults and animal                      | friendly dominance of visuals                  |
| <i>D'Grisette ...</i> (Luxembourg)  | being naughty                                    | 'real life' story seen through animal eyes           | child: child<br>children/adult                  | refers linguistically rather than visually     |
| <i>Das Land der Ecken</i> (Austria)                                       | accepting difference/<br>making friends          | everyday problems set in a bizarre fantasy world     | child: animal; distant adult; child             | focus on shapes                                |
| <i>A Olvelha Negra</i> (Portugal)   | coping with 'difference'                         | fantasy situation related to real life               | a herd of animals/<br>one stranger arrives      | Portuguese countryside                         |
| (UK: England)   | <i>Starting School</i>                           | real experiences                                     | 8 children + parents                            | English schools                                |

Under the umbrella theme of *friendship* a number of sub-themes permeate the collection. Those of growing up, family relationships, celebrations and change repeatedly occur; a substantiation and exemplification of ideas expressed in Category 4. Many of the secondary worlds represented stem from real life situations, set within a fantasy world, and these often include the personification of animals, used in an anthropomorphic way to mirror children's own behaviour. The majority of the relationships between the characters, however, do tend to centre around child:child and child:adult interactions, many of which are visually depicted through contrast in appropriate colour, shape and imagery, representative of each book's country of origin.

#### 6.17. A Proposed General Framework

Whilst the STA framework is particularly appropriate for European picture books, due to the predominantly visual focus, it has the potential to be used more widely. The semiotic text analysis was designed specifically for use with the EPBC as, when applied, it makes possible the classification of diverse aspects of visual narratives which appear to facilitate universal understanding. It could, however, be applied to further research, and Table 10 presents a proposed general STA Framework that others can use for a similar STA of other texts.

Table 10 : A Proposed General STA Framework

| i)                    | ii) Classification           | iii) Category 1:  | Category 2:  | Category 3:   | Category 4:   |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---|--|---|---|
|                       | Picture Books<br>(Graham'90) | Visual Codes<br>(Moebius '86;<br>Nodelman'88;<br>Doonan '93)        | Visual Narrative<br>Techniques<br>(Thomas '94;<br>Bromley '96) | Types and<br>Kinds of<br>Picture Book<br>(Lewis, '94)           | Picture Book<br>Ingredients<br>(Cotton, 1997,<br>Chapter 4)   |
| T<br>H<br>E<br>M<br>E | A: People                    | Position<br>Size<br>Perspective<br>Frame<br>Line<br>Colour<br>Shape | Cartoon Format<br><br>Trigger Images<br><br>Use of Icons       | Boundary<br>Breaking<br><br><br>Excess<br><br><br>Indeterminacy | How the Picture<br>Book Works<br><br>Semiotics<br><br>Ideology<br><br>Metafiction<br><br>Intertextuality<br><br>The Concept of<br>Childhood |
|                       | B: Setting                   | Action<br>Movement<br>Facial<br>Expressions<br>Body<br>Gestures     | Circumstantial<br>Details                                      |   | Secondary/<br>Possible<br>Worlds<br><br>Fantasy/Reality   |
|                       | C: Story                     | Cinematic<br>Devices  | Expression of<br>Emotion                                       | Parody<br><br><br>Performance                                   | Universal<br>Childhood<br>Themes<br><br>Characterisation<br><br>Relationships<br><br>The Power of<br>Pictures                               |

### 6.17 Summary

This chapter proposed a framework for a semiotic analysis of the picture book texts that are included in the EPBC. Initially the nature of the texts for analysis was explained and the semiotic, discourse and text analysis methodologies used in the study discussed. A framework for the semiotic text analysis (STA) approach to be applied to the European picture books in the collection was then outlined. The chapter concluded with a proposed general framework that other researchers can use for a similar STA of other texts.

The overriding universal childhood theme which unites all the books in the EPBC is that of *Friendship* on a number of different levels. The treatment of the themes in individual texts, however, is quite distinct; each country approaching the concept from a slightly different angle, using a variety of narrative techniques and visual codes. Chapter Seven presents an analysis of friendship in the EPBC.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### APPLYING THE PROPOSED SEMIOTIC TEXT ANALYSIS (STA)

#### FRAMEWORK TO THE EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION (EPBC)

##### 7.0 Introduction

Chapter Seven applies the semiotic text analysis framework (STA), discussed in Chapter Six, to the theme of *friendship* within the 19 books of the European Picture Book Collection (EPBC). Each category of the proposed framework is discussed in turn, focusing on the visual contributions that individual texts make to universal understandings of *people*, *setting* and *story* in European picture book narratives. The chapter concludes with an evaluation of the analysis, and suggests the implications for using such a collection to facilitate a European dimension in primary education.

##### 7.1 Applying the Semiotic Text Analysis Framework

Although all the EPBC books have the potential for being analyzed under any of the three classifications of *people*, *setting* and *story*, each has been assigned to that which facilitates the most detailed analysis, and a rationale given. Thematically linked, the EPBC texts are discussed in Sections: 7.3; 7.4; 7.5; and the semiotic text analysis framework (Chapter Six, Table 10) applied concurrently with references to each book's individual strengths of visual communication. Relevant connections are made with *Category 1: visual codes*, which feeds into, overlaps and is linked to *Category 2: visual narrative techniques*. The books are then considered against *Category 3: types and kinds of picture books* and *Category 4: picture book ingredients*, in terms of how much the visual representations contribute to universal understandings of these picture book narratives.

## 7.2 Theme

As discussed in Chapter Six, the overriding universal theme of this EPBC is that of *Friendship*, which presents itself on a number of different levels in individual texts.

The books are analyzed under three sub-themes: A: *Friendship in the Dark*; B: *Friendship and Responsibility*; C: *Friendship and Relationships*; which are considered under the three picture book Classifications: A: People; B: Setting ; C: Story. The overall theme of *friendship* in each picture book is treated quite distinctly; each country approaching the concept from a slightly different angle and using a wide range of visual codes and narrative techniques.

## 7.3 Classification A: People

### Sub-theme: Friendship in the Dark

Universal childhood themes can be depicted through characterisation. In this section, the picture books are analyzed in relation to the visual development of people within the stories, and the thematic link between them. Each book has been chosen for its intensive visual focus on the development of characterisation within the narratives. The ways in which illustrators use facial expressions and bodily stance, for example, are crucial to the development of the protagonists in the books from Finland, France, Italy and Belgium, all of whom have different, yet recognisable attitudes to finding friendship in the dark through: fear, confidence, reluctance, dominance and enjoyment.

The semiotic text analysis framework is now applied to each of these books in turn.

### 7.3.1 VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet? (Who will comfort Toffle?)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* In this Finnish book by Tove Jansson the diminutive figure of Toffle is introduced on the first page. This sorrowful creature is presented cowering, a black and white pen and ink child, looking out of his enclosed frame with wide eyes, expressing fear; fear of the dark, visually communicated through his clutching of a small lamp. Positioned in the lower-right half of the frame, in a subservient position, he is alone and seemingly helpless. The only colour in this setting is the yellow of the light bulbs which Toffle appears to be lighting to comfort him and perhaps, allay his fear of the dark. The sombreness of this lonely character is positioned very much in contrast with the blues, greens and blacks on the opposite page, where bats and other apparently menacing night creatures prowl around outside Toffle's home in an almost surreal way.

The mottled effect of this small character and his home is contrasted with the clear definite colours of the night creatures who, although they are obviously frightening to Toffle, do in fact have a slight air of fun about them. They are carrying umbrellas, portrayed in a dominating position at the top of the page, with no frame to restrict their power. The reader is invited to empathise with Toffle, yet is given visual encouragement to see that the night may not actually be as menacing as at first sight.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Throughout the book, the essence of narrative is shown through the emotion engendered in Toffle's characterisation. He is seen as an insignificant figure who almost disappears into the background as he tries to escape from his frightening world. The uncertainty of his existence is depicted in the

broken brush/pen strokes of Tove Jansson, and the reality seen by the reader is of clear definite colours. As daylight comes, brighter sweeps of colour, patterning and circumstantial details adorn the peripheral characters of the story, but Toffle remains grey. The turning point in the story comes, however, when the protagonist realises that he is not the only one in need of comfort. His night-time uncertainty, shown in broken black and white strokes, becomes solid colour. He can now frighten the awful 'groke' because he wants to comfort his new found friend. The profile and determined expression on his face, together with the movement of his little arms and legs, are trigger images which allow the reader to predict what is likely to happen and be prepared for the denouement of the story.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* In *VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet* much of the story is related by using alternate pages of almost completely black and white images with those that are brightly coloured. The former portraying the darkness of Toffle's world, the latter the bright life of those around him. It is up to the reader to make the link between the two sets of images, where eventually the frightened creature joins the colourful world of friendship. In so doing, any reading of this text would be to make use of its *indeterminate* features, jumping from one scene to another without too much explanation.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* The ingredients of this picture book contribute to an understanding of how texts can work on a number of levels. The universal theme is one of being lonely but finding out, in this secondary world, that there is often someone who feels even more lonely than you. The concept of childhood is expressed

through semiotic characterisation and fantasy relationships which draw on personal intertextual experiences, making this text an extremely powerful communicative tool. Whilst not being an overtly Finnish book, the darkness of the country for so many months of the year comes through in the illustrations, as does the quiet and unpretentious manner of many Finns.



Figure 3: in VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet? (Jansson, 1984: 1)  
A diminutive figure who is frightened of the dark.

### 7.3.2 Une Nuit, Un Chat... (One night, a cat...)

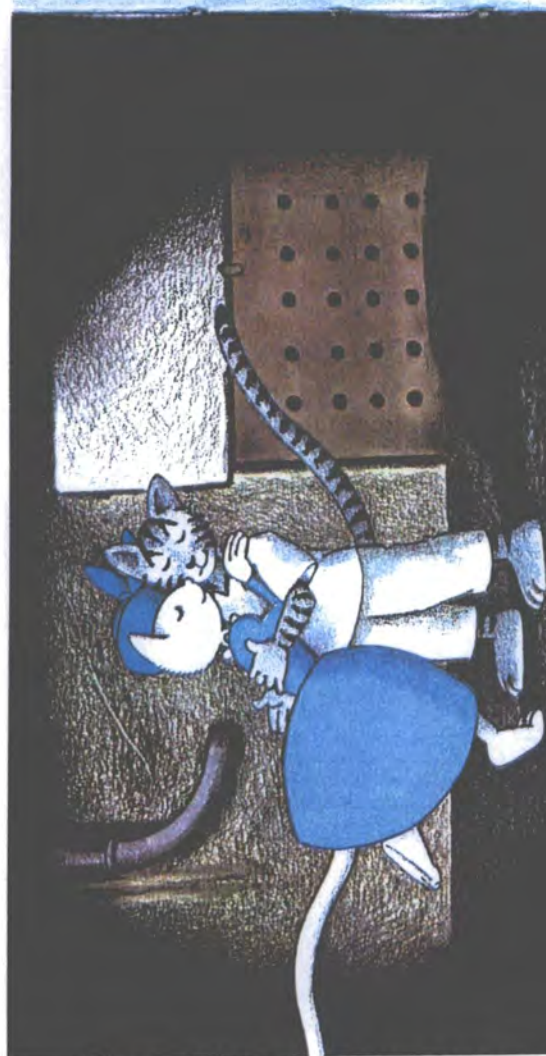
*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* As a contrast, the protagonist in Yvan Pommaux's French text possesses an air of self assurance and well being, circularly framed. He, too, is going out at night and is a little apprehensive, but the definite colours and shapes of Pommaux's illustrations suggest a cat with confidence, even though there may be apprehension behind this veneer. The reason for this bravado is that his parents are there to support him on his first night of adventure. With the backdrop of Parisian rooftops, Groucho, the hero, ventures forth out of the right side of the frame, leading the reader towards the cat's first adventure, whilst his anxious parents watch. Blues, blacks and greens again dominate the night-time scene, but the menace is the observer's concern for what might become of the kitten. Groucho's father, however, is ever ready to protect him, walking in the shadows along the roof tops, prepared to pounce on whatever enemy might be lurking in the darkness. These pages are in sharp contrast to those containing the lively youngster, depicted in carefree activities, unhindered by the constricting frames of the pictures in which his parents are contained.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Groucho is going out at night for the first time, leaving a very caring environment which has been emphasised by earlier circumstantial details such as his treasured belongings, for example a toy car, strategically placed on his bedroom floor. When the sewer rat appears in the darkness, however, the calmness of the scene disappears. Domination is assured by this alien creature's surprise appearance, from the bottom right-hand side of the double page spread; the zigzag bubble in which his name is printed, intimating anger, discord and

disharmony. More colour is added, too; red, in this case hinting at the possibility of bloodshed and potential conflict. The ensuing pages continue to engender emotion, cinematically, showing the speed of movement across a two page spread. Finally, a mere centimetre of tail shows that the light-hearted and carefree Groucho has returned home unharmed (Figure 4); yet the slight upward stroke, that depicts his mouth on the following page, smiles as he tells of his wish to go out the following night. A wish that is cosily framed in a circle of parental care and concern, not dissimilar from the protecting oval shell shape which engulfs Toffle in his new found security.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* Through fantasy, this tale plays on the ability of the picture book to exaggerate situations, whilst still retaining a certain level of credibility. The larger than life sewer rat, who provides the conflict in the story, could be seen as an element of *excess*, going beyond the bounds of realism as he leaps off the page. Alongside the more conformist felines, he provides extravagant imagery.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* A caring relationship between parents and children permeates this visual text, creating a fantasy character set within a very real situation, with which children universally can empathise. Drawing on personal childhood experiences the narrative explores picture book ingredients which create opportunities for discussion and development. The theme is not particularly French, yet the visuals, specifically the Parisian rooftops and the 'chic-ness' of Groucho's night-time friends, provide a stimulus for inter-cultural exploration.



Groucho et Kitty se donnent rendez-vous, se quittent,  
et Groucho, le cœur battant, regagne son toit.



« Mon enfant ! » dit sa mère.  
« Fiston ! » dit son père.  
« Tout va bien, mon chéri ? »  
« Mais oui ! »  
« Tu n'as rien de cassé ? »  
« Mais non ! »  
« Il ne t'est rien arrivé de grave ? »  
« Non, maman... »

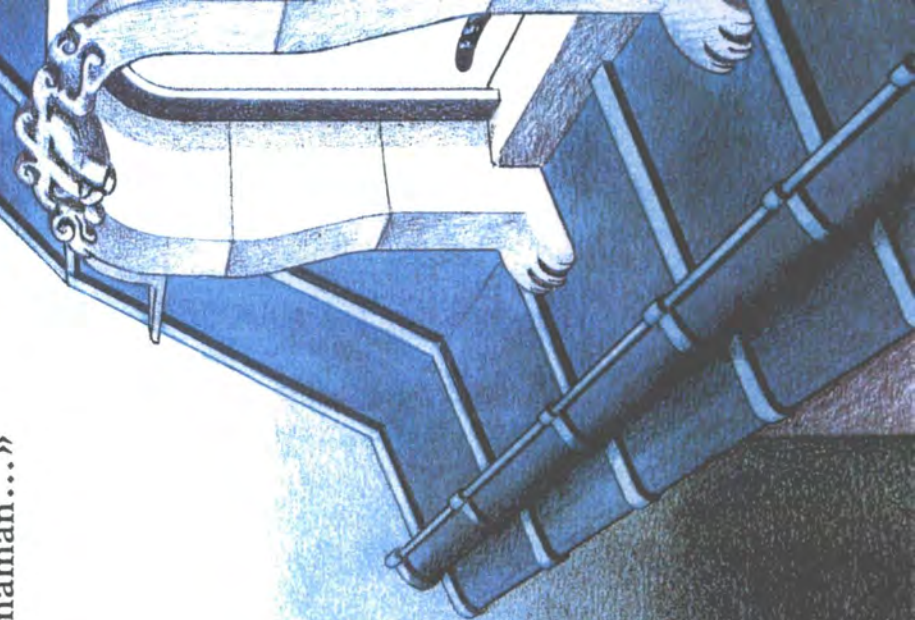


Figure 4: in Une Nuit, Un Chat... (Pommaux, 1994: 27)  
A cat with confidence!

### 7.3.3 La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (The little girl who didn't want to go to bed)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* A determination of character, not unlike that of Groucho, can be found in Pinin Carpi's Italian picture book. Anna is seen striding across the front page of this text, full of confidence. Like so many young children, she is reluctant to go to bed and proceeds, with all ruses possible, to try to delay the final moment when she will be alone in the darkness. Colour is used only on the front cover. All illustrations are black and white line drawings, yet they depict this child in both real and fantasy worlds where the colour is in the mind of the reader as his/her eye is drawn into each scene.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* In Anna's bedtime stories, however, she is always in a position of power, in much the same way as she is with her long suffering father who is telling the stories. She can be seen on a motor bike, racing against her father who is on a camel; or wielding a sword as her father is defeated in battle; or knightling him as one of her many subjects. The joy of these stories is in the intricate circumstantial details that are woven into a narrative simplicity, enabling each reader to bring personal experiences to the text.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* In Carpi's book there are individual opportunities for *boundary breaking* to occur within the narrative. It recounts the bed-times tales, as Anna tells them, but also provides space for the reader to write his/her own invented story, too. Thus the book can be read and re-read; each time including a personal contribution from the young reader, who becomes part of the story itself.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Through minutely detailed portrayals of Anna's many bedtime tales, in which she always has a star role to play, universal intertextual, iconic links such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Mickey Mouse* abound. Empathy with Anna is assured through the variety of semiotic picture book *ingredients* involved in this story. Reality is interwoven with private childhood fantasies, creating a variety of possible worlds to be shared by others. In addition, the Italian songs at the book's conclusion (recorded onto cassette), facilitate some cultural awareness of the music and language of young Italian children.



Figure 5: in La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Carpi, 1996: 10/14/16) - Anna, in a position of power.

#### 7.3.4 Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (One day my prince will come)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Power, too, is what Marguerite appears to have as she gallops across the fields in search of her prince in Andréa Nève's Belgian book, written in French. Framed within the orange hues of a setting sun against the sparse countryside, fine lines express her discontentment. Only a small frog in her cloak and her spindly hands clasping the horns of a ram tell the reader that this is no ordinary person. Marguerite is, in fact, a witch and her character unfolds through the somewhat menacing darkness of the illustrations. Her water-coloury unreal world, which is inhabited by frogs and toads, surrounds her as she makes her way home through the darkness to her solitary house.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Marguerite is lonely and longs, like Toffle, for a companion. A sequence of fine line drawings, reminiscent of Keeping's work, show her brown-hazed despair. Loneliness is everywhere, heightened by a plethora of circumstantial details, like the spider's web in her hair, to denote the passage of time as she waits. Power is all that Marguerite knows. Her only way of communicating being to hurl unspeakable demands at prospective suitors. This she does to an unsuspecting snowman, believing him to be her prince. Marguerite is visually elevated to the central position on the page through *movement* lines which push her up into the most dominant position possible. From here her spindly hand and pointed fingers can focus her demands; reinforced by the darkness of her semi-opened mouth and a forehead line signifying anger. In addition, her hair is propelled upwards with minute black lines that almost resemble fire-crackers. Hand on hip completes her dominant image, emotively conveying an essence of narrative unrestricted by any frame.



Quand le soir tomba, Marguerite  
sortit et hurla: «Pourquoi restes-tu là  
à me tourmenter? Tu ne réponds pas?  
pour toi! Marguerite la sorcière sait se venger  
qui ne veulent pas l'aimer... *Par le pouvoir  
d Caribou, que les loups t'avalent d'un coup!*»

Figure 6: in Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Nève & Crowther, 1995: 20)  
Marguerite hurls demands at her 'prince'.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* This is an amusing book because it makes fun of the conventional. It is a *parody* of normal tradition; usually it is the beautiful princess who finally finds her handsome prince. Lewis (1994) suggests, parody refuses to accept that which is culturally determined; in *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra*, the European fairytale heritage is being turned up-side down by a belligerent witch who finally ensnares the rather ordinary village baker.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* At the story's conclusion, however, Marguerite realises that she doesn't have to bully or dominate in order to find friendship. A universal theme which touches the lives of many children throughout Europe. The picture book ingredients which contribute to this parodic narrative encompass many of the attributes assigned to Category 4. The fantasy, secondary world of this picture book provides a backdrop for the characterisation of the protagonist which relies heavily on semiotic representations, intertextuality and the metafictional to create such powerful images.

#### 7.3.5 Lotje Is Jarig (Nicky's Birthday)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Annemie Leyson (in Cotton, 1996) when discussing Lieve Baeten's Belgian book, written in Flemish, suggests that witches have always been a popular ingredient of Belgian children's books (see also 7.2.4). Her choice, however, was made because she felt that the character of Lotje is represented within a world full of magic which reflects the cosiness of Flemish homes. Lotje is a cheerful apprentice witch who clearly has no fears of the dark, nor does she wish to dominate. It is her birthday and she wants to have fun, as suggest the bright, cheerful colours against a

background of the night sky. A sky which is full of lightness provided by the moon and a star which is hanging outside her tree-house. She is looking forward to the celebrations, made obvious by the pert little smile on her face. She is also very keen to conjure up a cake for her birthday but, being unsuccessful, simply enjoys the dark.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Night, in Baeten's book, is portrayed as a time of enjoyment and excitement; gone are the menacing, harsh blues and greens of Toffle's world, to be replaced by light pastel shades enhanced with the warmth of yellows, reds and oranges of the child herself. Even the door sheds light through its smiling face, a trigger image which activates a positive response to the whole narrative. Later the emotion engendered in this narrative is portrayed through shades of colouring, which becomes more poignant when the dejected figure of Lotje can be seen in a blue night with no light relief. The loss of the cat makes her sad, but help is near in the shape of protective aunts who swish through the sky above, allowing the perceptive reader to realise that rescue is imminent. Finally Lotje makes her spells work, as shown through a series of circumstantial details, and conjures up her lost cat.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* In a sense, this Belgian book is also a *parody*; a parody of birthdays. Conventionally children invite magicians to their parties as entertainment, but what if the birthday child herself is the entertainment? Lotje lives in a world of magic and excitement and all she wants for her birthday is to have a cake and be with her cat. Eventually both are possible ... only because she knows the words 'Hocus Pocus Pompelmoes', which have their equivalents in most European languages.



Figure 7: in Lotje Is Jarig (Baeten, 1996: 2)  
A carefree world of darkness, light and excitement.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* The carefree world of darkness, light and excitement contrasts with the dominance of Marguerite in the EPBC choice, from the French speaking part of Belgium. The theme of witches, however permeates the two books, as does the importance of friendship and belonging. The colours used in *Lotje Is Jarig* imply a warmth in the relationship of the characters, as an addition to the primary meaning of the pleasure of having a birthday. This specific connotation is not present in the other books in this section, yet it is part of the ideology of many European cultures and should be discussed with children, being an important visual ingredient of characterisation within the picture book.

#### 7.4 Classification B: Setting

##### Sub-theme: Friendship and Responsibility

The thematic analysis in this section is applied to books which present culturally different settings yet relate to a similar universal theme, that of children in roles of responsibility. The EPBC books from Sweden, Scotland, Spain, Denmark, Ireland and Wales all place their characters visually within cultural contexts that are interpreted by their creators. Although all the stories have their own distinctive settings, some of them make visual, cultural references which go beyond the world that all children inhabit.

##### 7.4.1 Kan Du Vissla Johanna ? (Can You Whistle Johanna)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Ulf Stark and Anna Höglund's Swedish picture book not only allows its characters to inhabit the world of children, but also that of old people. The contrast being seen when two boys, Beera and Jag, are outside a 'Konditori' (cake-shop), brightly coloured, signifying the 'alive' world of the children. Alongside the

cake-shop is a grey footpath which leads from the bottom of the verso page and meanders towards the top of the recto; passing on its way a grey church, a line of black hearses and a grey-brown nursing home. Here live the old people from whom Beera will adopt a grandfather; an old man who appears to be almost 'on a conveyor belt to death', suggests Olofson, who chose the book (Interview: 30.5.97). Even the birds cease to exist in the trees on the recto hand page, as do all signs of life.

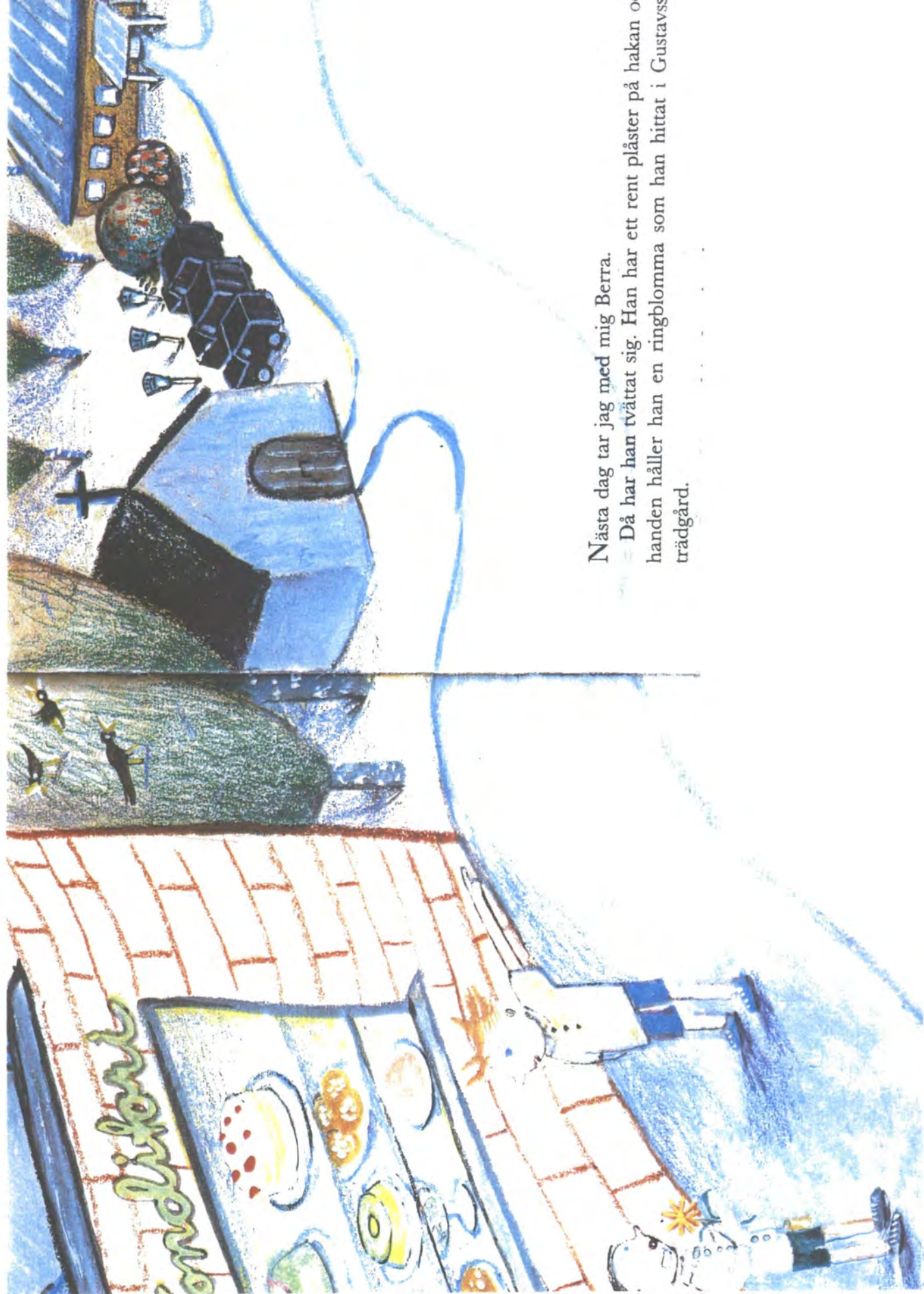
Once inside the old people's home, lines of institutionalisation come into play. The reader is taken away from the open, outside world into the framed, circular existence of the old. The regular lines of perspective draw the eye towards a nothingness at the end of a long corridor; all the doors are the same, save for the first, which the two boys are about to enter. One gets the impression that Grandpa will work his way along the corridor to his own nothingness or death. The lightness from the other side of his door, however, affords a little hope in the life of this old man, and for the children.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Everything in the nursing home is represented in two-dimensional, regular shapes/institutionalised lines, within which the old people conform. It is only when the children take Grandpa outside that the rigid framework ceases and the environment takes shape. As they leave the home, circumstantial details of a square, tiled floor and formidable, hands-on- hips, uniformed nurse are replaced by a winding path, green trees and birds; signifying life. Emotion is engendered in the narrative as life continues with the antics of the three 'children'. Even though darkness is falling, Grandpa still manages to climb trees, scrump cherries and sit on the floor in a circle eating round doughnuts, surrounded by the country side,

trees and stars. Smoking a cigar, he blows smoke rings; a circular icon of his contentment, before he is returned to the blackness of the path that leads him home.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* Visually, this picture book is presented rather like a film strip. It rarely uses cinematic conventions, yet the detailed images follow each other in such a way that the environment, which the children and Grandpa inhabit, evolves with every turn of the page. It is almost an *excess* of visuals which give so much information about the setting of this story. It could be said to be 'over the top' (Lewis, 1994: 30) in terms of detail, as the culturally specific, explicit visual references to the nursing home and funeral scenes may not be universally understood. Within the context of the narrative, however, this extravagant imagery highlights the poignancy, and importance, of the relationship between the children and Grandpa.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* *Kan du vissla Johanna?* deals with everyday life situations in Sweden, concerning human relationships. Insights are given into children's unconventional ways of thinking/problem solving and of how Swedish society treats old people. In spite of the rather bleak picture painted of old age in Sweden, this is a very humorous book, telling a universal story which shows how much fun is possible when you have a grandfather/grandson. It contains many picture book ingredients and depicts relationships between the generations in a very light hearted way, yet the fundamental social situation is never undervalued. It is the little things that are so important, like taking a flower/cigar to your grandfather or getting him to teach you to whistle. The underlying theme is that of friendship and its importance between generations.



Nästa dag tar jag med mig Berra.

Då har han tvättat sig. Han har ett rent plåster på hakan o  
handen håller han en ringblomma som han hittat i Gustavss  
trädgård.

Figure 8: in Kan du vissla Johanna? (Stark & Höglund, 1992: 6/7)  
The conveyor belt to death?

#### 7.4.2 Katie Morag and the New Pier

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Mairi Hedderwick's Scottish, UK, contribution to the EPBC also focuses on the relationship between the old and young. This time it is Katie Morag's real grandmother who fears the changes that are happening in her life. In contrast with the Swedish book, Mairi Hedderwick's illustrations are full of optimism in their lightness of colour and the detail which she includes. Alan Hill (in Cotton, 1996) suggests that one of the outstanding features of this book is the vivid life conveyed by the minutia of information in the pictures; no matter how many times one reads one of the pictures, it's always possible to find something new in them, due to the many circumstantial details that Hedderwick provides. The front-page of the book, as well as setting the scene with a lightness of brush strokes, grey/green hues and use of perspective, conveys the atmosphere of a sleepy fishing village. Centre stage, however, are Katie Morag, her grandmother and her dog; all looking rather glum. As Katie Morag puts a reassuring hand on her grandmother's knee, it is clear that it will be the child who plays an important comforting role in this story.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The new pier is Grannie Island's worry, and the divided loyalties between the old and the new are visually portrayed throughout the book. None better than in the village store, where the central page divides grandmother and grand-daughter. Katie Morag on the left, hands together, looking expectantly as the villagers discuss their future. Grannie Island, on the right, looks sceptical, with her arms folded in resignation; her dog appears to mirror her feelings; a trigger image which activates a response to the whole narrative. The busy islanders seem completely oblivious of this central vignette. Hedderwick pays such great

attention to circumstantial detail in this scene: everything is labelled; a young child shows his drawing to the postmistress; workers show their politeness and integration within the community; a baby plays in its cradle; a dog is sneakily fed a biscuit whilst nobody is looking; and conversations are generally shared. The epitome of Scottish, rural village life is depicted in these expressive visuals.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* The initial sequence of visuals in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* alternates between outdoor and indoor vignettes of life on the fictitious Scottish island of Struay. Here the reader is invited to make links between the images in order to build up an understanding of both setting and situation. This picture book could be classified under *indeterminacy* for, even though the pictures unfold rather like a film script, as the story progresses the reader still has to make connections between these events in order to create a narrative.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* At the point in the story where the pier is threatened, Hedderwick uses the double page spread to the full, as the sea waves swish and swirl across the pages. The tempestuous blues and greens practically envelope the small red ferryboat, steered by Granny Island who now realises that she can be part of the change. At the story's conclusion, when a variety of picture book ingredients have been exhibited, darkness calmly and serenely descends over the sleeping village. The new pier is in place and the greyness of night has a somewhat optimistic hue; the warmth of the yellows from the moon, the pier and one or two small houses suggesting a harmony between old and new.



Figure 9: in Katie Morag and the new pier (Hedderwick, 1993: 4/5)  
Attention to detail: The old and the new.

### 7.4.3 El Guardian Del Olvido (The guardian of lost things)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* The scene is set for Juan Manuel Gisbert and Alfonso Ruano's visually Spanish tale through a series of cinematic devices. A big close up of two small hands holding a spinning top give the focus for the story; a mid-close-up of the boy, Gabriel, then appears; followed by a larger mid-shot of Analisa, the enigmatic girl, framed by a window from which she is gazing. A long shot establishes the school playground, followed by a close-up of eyes; Anna's, watching, as Gabriel realises that his spinning top is missing. The ensuing long-shot shows both the journey of the two children to find the guardian of lost things, and their arrival at his mysterious house. The flatness of walls and regimented windows reflect the brown-ness of Spain's landscape and, when Gabriel is invited to find his lost toy in a room full of lost things, shuttered windows keep out the light. Later, as the boy searches for his mother's lost watch, the room is full of visual references to Spanish artists.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The surreal setting of this book is achieved not only through cinematic techniques and trigger images, such as the spinning top, but also in the way the illustrator uses light and shade. In the room of time, where Gabriel meets the work of artists such as Salvador Dali, he and the Guardian are bathed in white light, framed in the doorway of the room; almost as if a spell has been cast and escape is practically impossible from this unreal world filled with iconic images and circumstantial detail. It is in fact where later Gabriel, after a long search, manages to find Analisa. She was a lost thing but now has been found by a new friend.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* *El Guardian del Olvido* has a tendency towards *excess* as its surreal imagery could be described as an 'over the top' quality (Lewis, 1994: 30) which goes beyond the realms of realism. Gabriel is taken by, Analisa, from his secure school environment into an unbelievable world in which all lost things imaginable have been collected; the representations of which are a feast for the eyes and facilitate much intertextual activity.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* The smoothness of colour and line in this book create an unreal world, slightly tinged with mystery and fear. Gabriel does not really understand Analisa; nor does the reader, yet the ingredients of this picture book amalgamate to create a haunting story with a friendship theme that can be universally understood. Cultural references to both Spain's arid, brown environment and its artistic heritage are clearly evident in the illustrations; a marked contrast with the settings for both the Swedish and Scottish books.

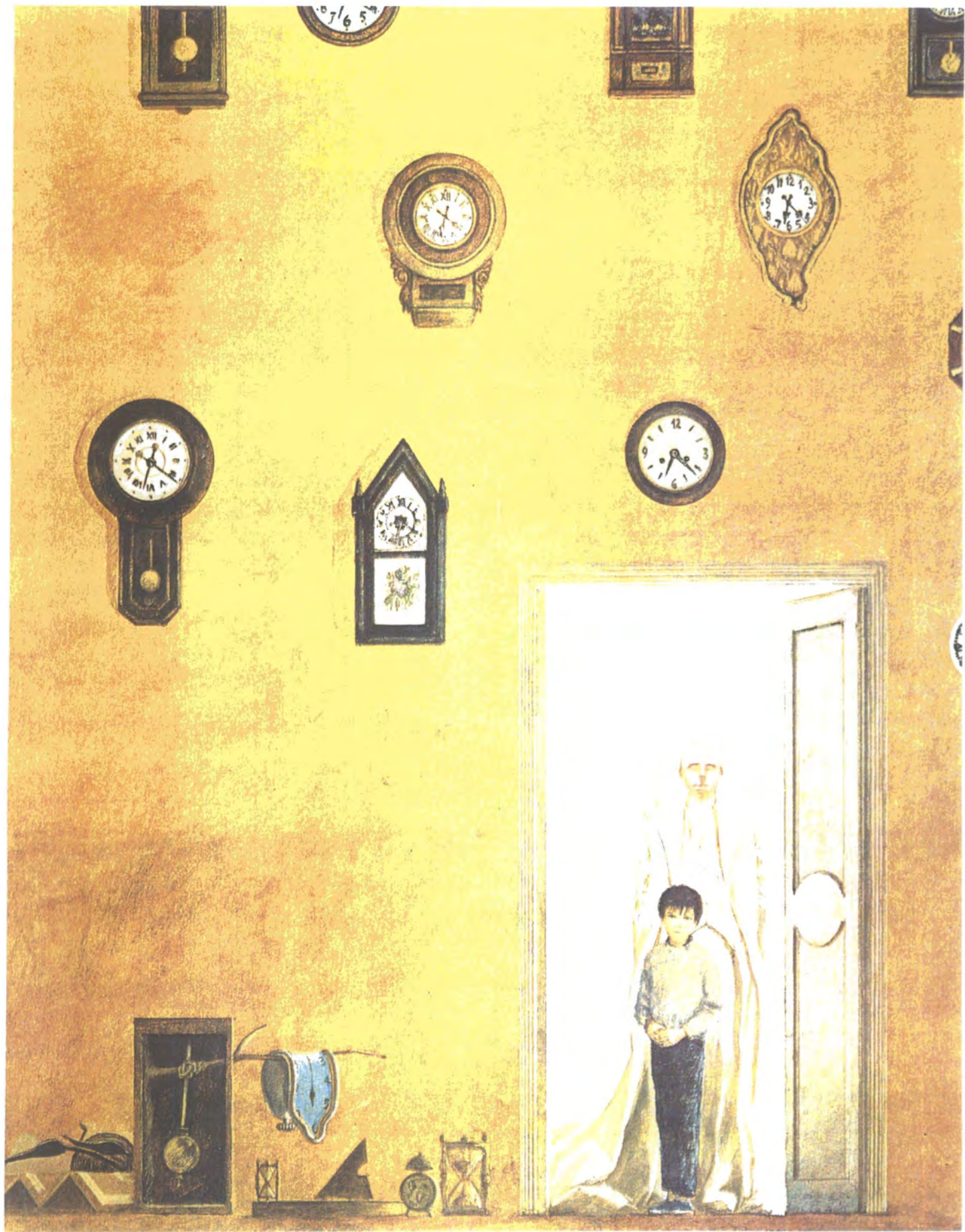


Figure 10: in El Guardian Del Olvido (Gisbert & Ruano, 1990: 18/19)  
Visual references to Spanish artists: Dalí.

#### 7.4.4 Mosekonens Bryg (The Marsh People)

*Category 1 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* Ib Spang Olsen's Danish folktale is also told through unique style and imagery. The entire story is depicted in varied shades of green, presenting an overwhelming sense of growth and fertility. The story is set in a very characteristic, Danish landscape, suggests Mogens Jansen (in Cotton, 1996), who explains that the fog is steaming above the marsh because the marsh people are boiling water for their beer. These folkloric characters sleep deep down in the earth and the children emerge only to help their parents with preparations for creating the Spring. The unusual illustrations produce a certain magical mystery around this event but, unlike the austere and distant Guardian in the previous book, the marsh children are not only down to earth but also of the earth.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* These children are depicted in earth colours, earth textures and appear almost part of the earth as their actions unfold in a cartoon-like series of interactions with other earthly creatures triggered by a variety of circumstantial details. They are only drawn into the light when the sun reaches its height in the sky. They can then cease their toiling and enjoy the warmth of the sun, in a setting where practically all traces of green have disappeared and a pinky haze sets above them. The Danish Spring has arrived.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* This book is quite problematic in terms of classification. By many cultures it could be said to be a *parody* of the arrival of Spring and almost makes fun of conventional beliefs. For Danish people, however, it is part of their heritage and, as such, needs considered explanation and discussion.



Figure 11: in Mosekonens Bryg (Olsen, 1994: 26/27)  
A sense of growth and fertility.

*Category 4: Picture Book Ingredients:* Although this book contains many picture book ingredients, it is probably the most difficult to comprehend in terms of a universal childhood theme. The fantasy setting, semiotically represented, reflects the secondary world ideology of a culture at one level, that of helping parents, which is easily recognisable. The concept of brewing beer to facilitate the Spring, however, is less comprehensible yet quite thought provoking in terms of cultural comparisons.

#### 7.4.5 Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (St Patrick and Crom Dubh)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Shades of green, not surprisingly, feature in this folktale by Gabriel Rosenstock and Piet Sluis from Ireland. Yet the story of a medieval pagan being converted to christianity, aided and abetted by his young servant, is predominantly illustrated with the use of bright colours. Yellows, particularly around the haloed head of St. Patrick, reflect the godliness of the subject. St Patrick is trying to convey to Crom Dubh, through his young messenger, the importance of God. He does this by rejecting three large hams offered and replacing them with the written words *Deo Gratias*, which he gives to the young boy. As Crom Dubh is unhappy with this exchange, he is forced to visit the saint himself, only to be shown that *Deo Gratias* written three times in black and white carries more weight than three large, brightly coloured hams.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* In this final scene, the upward sweeps of yellow move the three lines of *Deo Gratias* into an almost heavenly position whilst the three hams are pulled downwards; denoting the opposing directions of both the concrete objects and the thinking of St Patrick and Crom Dubh. The christian and pagan iconic images are, however, set against a background of heavenly blues and pinks, in cartoon style, with a dove flying from the pagan Crom Dubh towards the christian St Patrick; symbolic of the conversion in a world that is replete with circumstantial details.

*Category 3 - Picture Book Categories:* In this picture book, although the cartoon format suggests an *indeterminacy* which is built upon absence of information, the boy's initial journey to and from Crom Dubh is sequential. It is only when the second and third journeys, with the hams, are undertaken that the reader has to fill in the gaps to facilitate comprehension.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Confrontation and misunderstanding occurs within the lives of most children. This universal childhood theme, set in a secondary/fantasy world, reflects in its characterisation and relationships an ideology which permeates many catholic countries, yet relates to all cultures. The ways in which St Patrick avoids conflict, therefore, are particularly pertinent and are conveyed through a number of picture book ingredients which allow individual interpretations of the folktale

Ansin leag an naomh an píosa páipéir sin ar an scála eile.

Ba throime go mór an píosa páipéir ná na trí phíosa feola a bhí ag Crom Dubh!

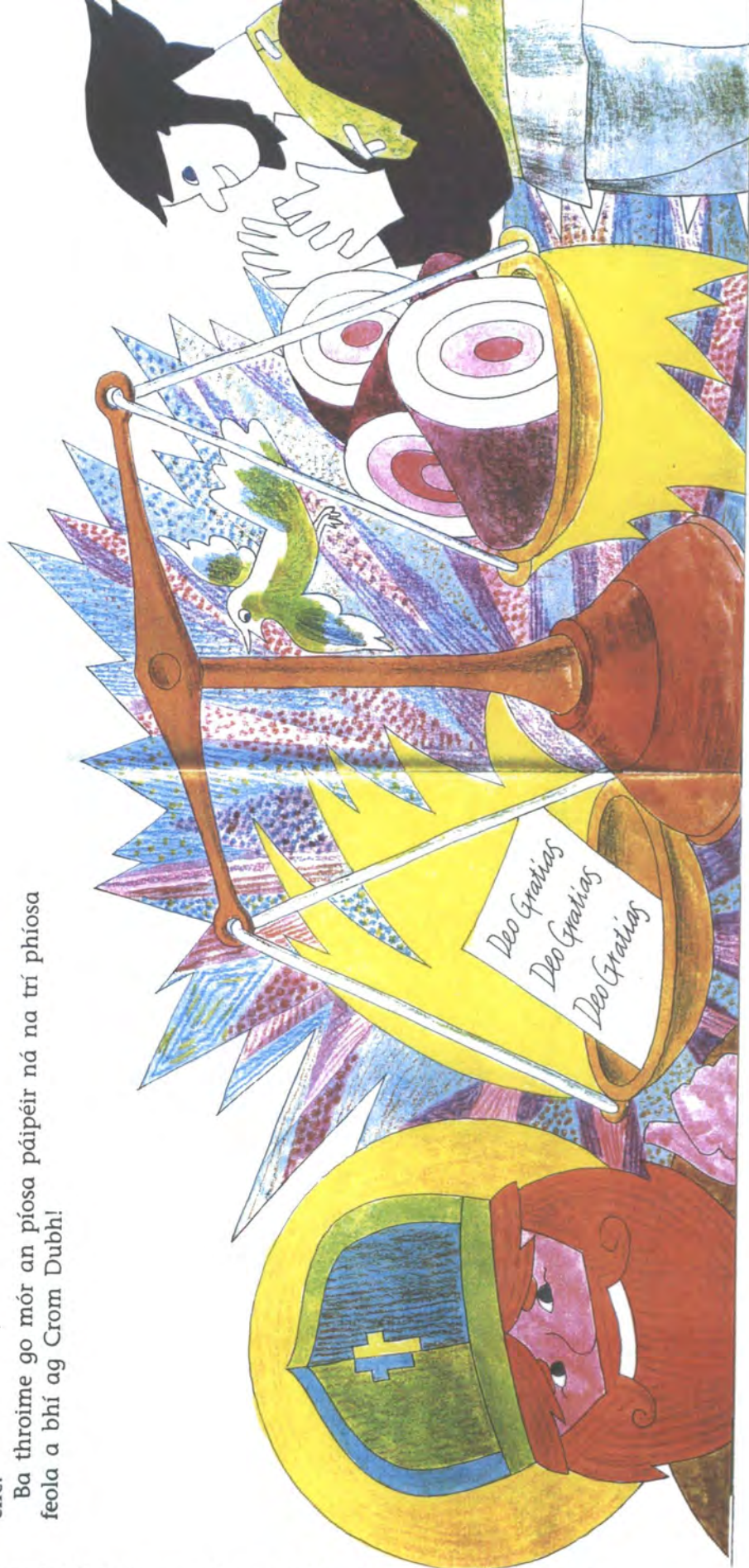


Figure 12: in Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Rosenstock, 1995: 26/7)  
*Deo Gratias* carries more weight.

#### 7.4.6 Cantre'r Gwaelod (Cities in the Sea)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Siân Lewis and Jackie Morris's Welsh, UK, folktale also addresses a universal theme: that of 'Pride comes before a fall' and of reneging on inherited responsibility. It has been chosen because this well-loved Welsh story is reflected in other cultures; especially the celtic imagery which echoes the *Cathédral Engloutie* (submerged cathedral), a Breton myth from the North West of France.

The watery landscapes of blues and greens are pictured in a medieval folkloric style, where the position of the characters defines the opening and closing of the tale. A royal father shows his son the lands that will one day be his: idyllic lands which cover a two page spread, give the impression that the inheritance is endless; the minute, finely detailed royal subjects working in harmony with this unspoiled vista. The downfall of the king and his people is due to an excess of imbibing; food and drink being portrayed in a number of active images as the community prepares for a night of feasting. The excitement and activity move across the pages as wild boar, sweetmeats and other fare are carried towards the banqueting hall. A mass of browns, reds and muted blues, express not only the seriousness of the eating but also focus in detail on the food that is to be consumed.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Unfortunately, the king and his subjects are so involved in the detailed festivities that they do not heed the warning from the young boy, who urges his father to close the city flood gates. Disharmony is reinforced by the positioning of the child on one side of a double page spread and the King on the other. Dominance is uncertain; although the boy is on the left, the height of the heads

remains equal. The lack of interest shown by the king, and his insistence in continuing the celebrations, is a trigger image for signalling the disaster which is to befall the city. As the revellers continue, the sea, unimpeded by man-made barriers, engulfs the city. The final iconic image is that of the father and son looking out to sea from right to left. Looking back and visually closing the story with a sea blue, calm, nothingness to replace the fertile, opening landscapes of their earlier realm. The initial and final imagery is not unlike the cinematic technique used by John Ford in his film *The Searchers* (1956), where the opening and closing of doors signifies the beginning and end of his story.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book: Indeterminacy* is the tentative category for this picture book whose cinematic tale jumps from one scene to another. As this occurs, the reader is invited to complete the narrative and become absorbed in the culturally representative visuals which depict this Celtic tale.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Immersion into a secondary, fantasy world of legendary folktale, through the ingredients of this picture book, creates a sense of what Bettelheim (1976:5) suggests will stimulate imagination, help to develop intellect and clarify emotions. The story creates empathy with both father and son, trying to develop an understanding of the actions of both. It is a universal theme which has no cultural preference.



Figure 13: in Cantre'r Gwaelod (Lewis & Morris, 1996: 20/21)  
Pride comes before a fall.

## 7.5 Classification C: Story -

### Sub-theme: Friendship and Relationships

Illustrative sequences which give the reader work to do are those which contribute to a greater understanding of narrative structure, especially at upper primary level. Analysis in this section focuses on books from the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Greece, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Portugal and England. All are of this nature and take as their universal theme the concept of relationships; both with friends and between nations.

#### 7.5.1 Kees en Keetje (Kees and Keetje)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Jantien Buisman's Dutch narrative from the Netherlands, exemplifies a picture sequence which depends upon the ability to see relationships between objects and to draw inferences. The pen and ink drawings of Buisman tell an uncluttered tale of a friendship which becomes stale, breaks up and comes together again due to specific needs from both parties. Although the book contains thirty detailed sketches, the beginning, middle and end (the bare bones of the story) can be highlighted in just three of the pictures. In the beginning of the visual narrative two friends, in this case hedgehogs (the female depicted as wearing a small brightly coloured headscarf which contrasts with the black and white of the remainder of the scene) are going about their household duties together, and anything is possible.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* As the story progresses the storyline becomes more probable, so the essence of narrative develops. It is apparent that the friends are not in accord when they are seen rejecting each others company in a

number of situations, including the archetypal avoidance strategy of sitting back to back at the breakfast table. Circumstantial details are the focus for this visual, where examples of traditional Dutch breakfast fare are to be seen. One can only speculate about what is said, but the effect on both characters can be determined because they are both visible; showing only one of them would have been insufficient to create the mood. They not only have their backs to each other but a large expanse of page lies between them, emphasising the enormity of the situation.

The friends, on the ensuing pages, continue life using avoidance strategies until, one day, they pass each other. Kees has a conical bag of chips and Keetje a jar of apple sauce. It is at this point they realise that, without being together, they cannot eat their favourite Dutch meal of chips and apple sauce. In the ending, therefore, everything is necessary and the two friends finally get back together again, in a simple visual narrative which engenders emotion and encompasses the trials and tribulations of relationships.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* As all stories are built upon absence (Lewis, 1994: 32) and could theoretically be assigned to the category of *indeterminacy*, this would appear to be the case for *Kees en Keetje*. In this little book, although there is a clarity within the picture sequencing, the visuals jump from one room in the house to another with such rapidity that the reader has to fill in the gaps and compensate for the lack of explicit cohesion.

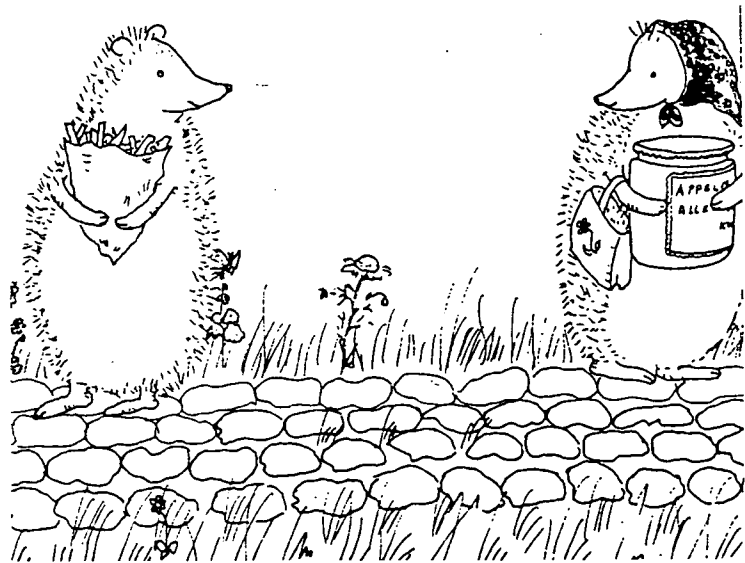
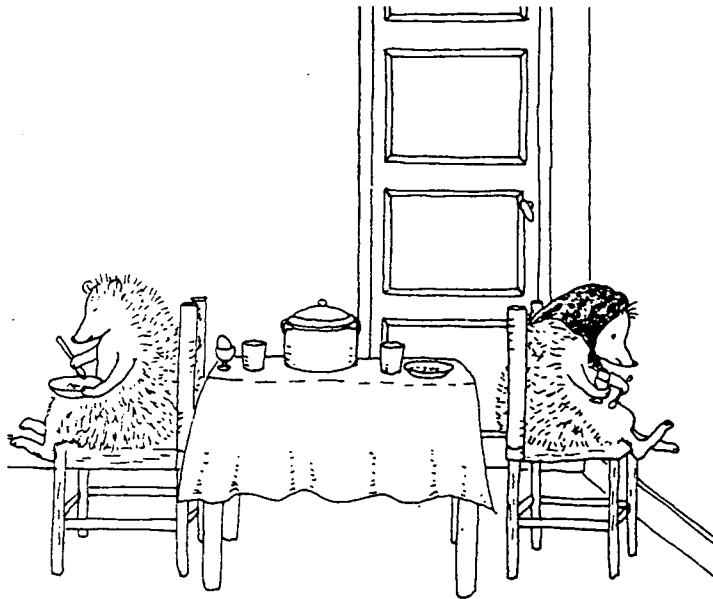
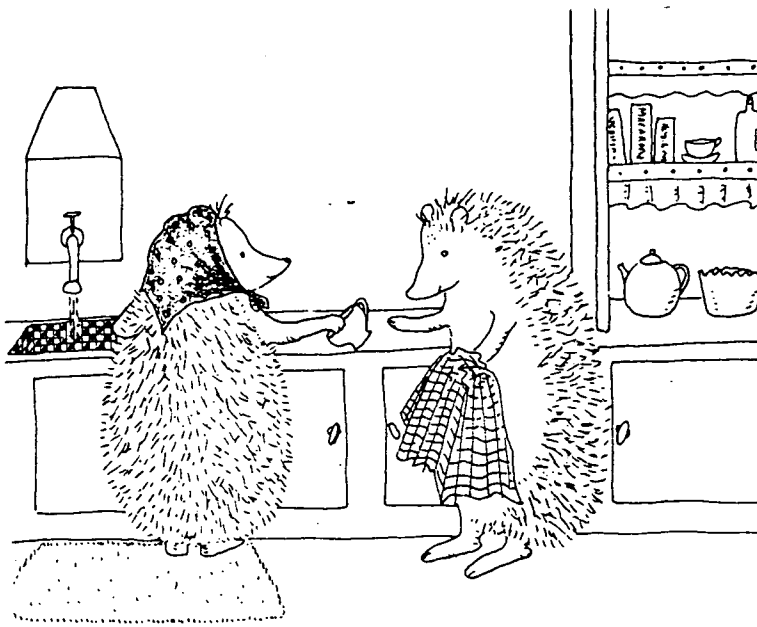


Figure 14: in Kees En Keetje (Buisman, 1976: 3/15/45)  
A simple visual narrative structure.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Specific attention, in *Kees en Keetje* is paid to fine details of character and plot. Through facial expressions, body movements and visual progression of the storyline, this picture book's ingredients have the potential to contribute to a reader's growing command and understanding of narrative.

#### 7.5.2 War and Peas

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Whilst portraying vivid characterisation through colour, size and movement, Michael Foreman's cartoon-like parody, selected for Northern Ireland UK, also achieves a clarity of narrative through visuals which exemplify a poor country seeking aid from a rich neighbour. In the opening 'shots', King Lion is seen as a washed-out character, facing his subjects with an air of resignation towards the plight of his country. His slightly lowered outstretched arms suggest the weight of the world is on his shoulders and he does not know what to do to help his subjects. Both he and his people are so lightly drawn, that they almost fade into insignificance on the white page. It is very difficult to know what he can do to save them from starvation.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The emotion engendered through this narrative is drawn from the visuals which cause the reader to empathise with King Lion. He obviously will need to seek help from a rich, colourful, prestigious and well fed, neighbour - Fat King. The lion's journey, through mountainous lands full of circumstantial details focusing on gluttony and food, paves the way for a first encounter with the overpowering monarch. Large and centre-left of the verso page, Fat King dominates a double spread as his robes flow onto the recto side where, almost unnoticed and blending in with the background, appears the quaking lion.

King Lion wants help, but the more probable outcome, as perceived by this visual portrayal of the scene, is that the cartoon-like Fat King and his armed, army guards are not likely to help. This is, in fact, the case. In the ensuing battle of green peas, cakes and jellies, however, Fat King and his fat army are hoisted by their own petard in a number of ways; leaving the lion and his country to benefit from the spoils of war. In the final frame, King Lion, strengthened by his colours, is seen victorious. He cycles home to his people; a semi-circular rainbow of hope, positioned towards the top right-hand side of the picture, to greet him. Fat King, on the other hand, sinks lower and lower out of the illustration, coloured in blacks and purples, possibly towards death.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* With the over-the-top quality of this picture book, in terms of the over-sized king, his army and his food, one might be tempted to classify this in terms of *excess*. The more likely category, however, is *parody* as the serious nature of the continuing friction between Great Britain and Northern Ireland is depicted in an allegorical fashion.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Fat King's actions, unintentionally, provide his neighbours with a means of helping themselves, and this book was chosen because it provides a way in which complex/difficult ideas about the relationship of nation states/different peoples might be understood by young children (Marriott in Cotton, 1996). Dealing with these concepts in an allegorical fashion, through a number of picture book ingredients, is made even more accessible by illustrations that use colour wash, line and page layout to suggest mood, honour and drama.



Suddenly the Lion and the Grocer were seized by guards and taken to the main square.

Figure 15: in War and Peas (Foreman, 1978: 10/11)  
Mountainous lands of food tower above King Lion.

### 7.5.3 The Story-spinner meets the Sugar-wizard

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Food, too, is the mechanism for the story line in

A. Kyritsopoulos's tale from Greece. Here, the pen and ink story-spinner distances himself from his home surroundings to explore the world of 'caramelos' - the sweets that can be seen in his thoughts. As he flies up out of the picture on his journey, this story is truly set within a young child's world. The sugar house which he leaves, with oval-shaped smoke coming from the roof, is an image that is reminiscent of childhood drawings in many European cultures, and with which most young people can identify. The winding path and rounded shape of the single tree reinforce this image. Anything is possible in this imaginary world, inhabited by the story-spinner. Although he is adult, the story-spinner's moustache, glasses and white hair verify this, he is truly living in the world of childhood - a suitable habitat for a teller of stories.

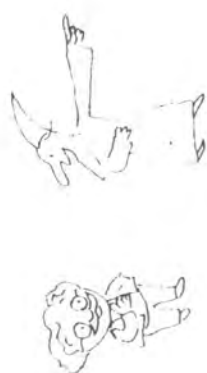
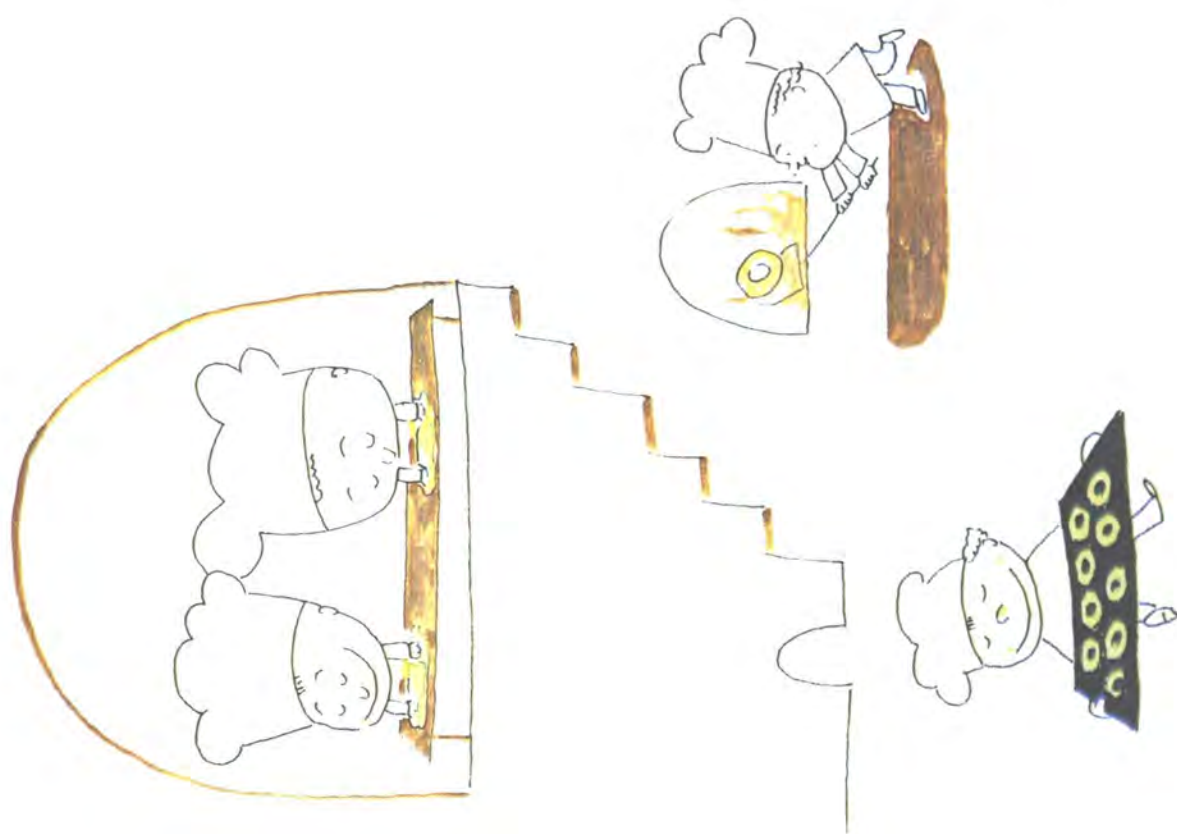
*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The sweets, of which the story-spinner is constantly thinking, are a thread running throughout the book and provide the emotional pull which is the essence of this narrative. The idea of longing for sweets and other sugary things (which can be provided by the sugar-wizard from another country) permeate the story and guide the reader through a number of adventures, highlighted through specific circumstantial details. Beginning with a tour around the factory, the two protagonists (story-spinner and sugar-wizard) are shown as diminutive black and white figures in contrast with the larger-than-life makers of manna from heaven. This central sequence, again in child-like images, is portrayed through a montage of shots depicting a progression in the making of sweets. On the first floor, however, shown through ink zig-zags, it is possible that all is not quite as idyllic as

was at first thought. Two chefs, one happier than the other, visible from their facial expressions, begin the process. More central on the page is the cooking of these delicacies, and below this the finished product.

As the story develops, the story-spinner becomes more relaxed in the cordial company of his host, the sugar-wizard, and his caramelos. Unfortunately, having eaten too many sweets, the story-spinner becomes ill and longs to be at home, eating normally again.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* Although set within a fantasy world, this text reflects a very real concept concerning greed and longing. The layout of the book lends itself to *indeterminacy*, as each page sees the story-spinner setting out on another adventure; leaving the reader, once again, to fill in the gaps.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* The theme of 'having too much of a good thing' is universal and not particularly unique to Greece, yet the book's inclusion in the EPBC affords an opportunity for comparison of this cultural similarity. In addition, through use of many of the picture book ingredients, and its focus on linguistic differences, the visual narrative structure is enhanced.



Πρώτα πρώτα τον οδήγησε  
στο φούρνο, όπου  
ετοιμάζαν ό,τι κείκ μπορεί  
να δάλει ο νους σου και  
λουκουμάδες και τσουρέκια  
και μπισκότα και κουλουράκια.

Figure 16: in The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Kyritsopoulos, 1985: 30/31)  
Larger than life factory workers.

#### 7.5.4 Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Hello, Little Whale)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Gisela Kalow and Achim Bröger's German picture book, in contrast with that from Greece, tells quite a complex tale. It is, however, made visually accessible through vivid colouring and clarity of images within the narrative. An old couple inhabit a North German village near the sea, where it snows often and many of the houses have a reddish hue. Their life is very quiet but, bi-annually, they are visited by a young whale. Unfortunately, the visits stop. The villagers try to help by building a snow-whale, but nothing can cheer the elderly pair. After about eighteen months, they set off, with a little boat on their sledge, across the frozen landscape in search of their friend. The poignancy of their journey and the enormity of the quest is depicted in the smallness of their mode of transport and the vastness of both the frozen, white landscape and, later, the deep-blue sea.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The essence of narrative in this tale is encapsulated in four cartoon-format images which illustrate how the friends are reunited. When the couple eventually reach the sea, they fall asleep and omit to see the predictive detail which the illustrator provides: water spouting out above the surface - an indication that the whale might be close. When they wake up, the dark blue of the sea which has carried the couple is suddenly replaced by what appears to be a large rock. On closer inspection, slightly higher in the sea, the rock has an eye. The fourth picture shows that the couple have actually landed on top of their old friend, but he's not quite so small now!

The visual sequencing, combined with trigger images relating to the whale, are vital to

an understanding of this and subsequent sequential patterning. These images, in which the smallness of the elderly people is in stark contrast to the large, greyness of the whale, continues as a female whale is introduced and their small offspring. The final iconographic image shows the two large mammals swimming alongside each other, with two minute shapes in-between ... one red and one grey. The couple have found the small whale.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* The cinematic conventions used in this book, which jump from one scene to another, as the old couple prepare for and undertake their journey, would seem to place this text within the category of *indeterminacy*. Although the visual narrative is, at first sight, quite clear, there are many circumstantial details that require the reader to keep re-reading the images to make sure that a complete, personal interpretation of the story has been gained.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* The picture book ingredients of this semiotic fantasy world create a narrative which focuses on friendship and trust between humans and animals. The integral underlying relationships are universal and, set within an unusual Germanic setting, provide an entrée into aspects of European life which may be unknown to a large number of young readers.

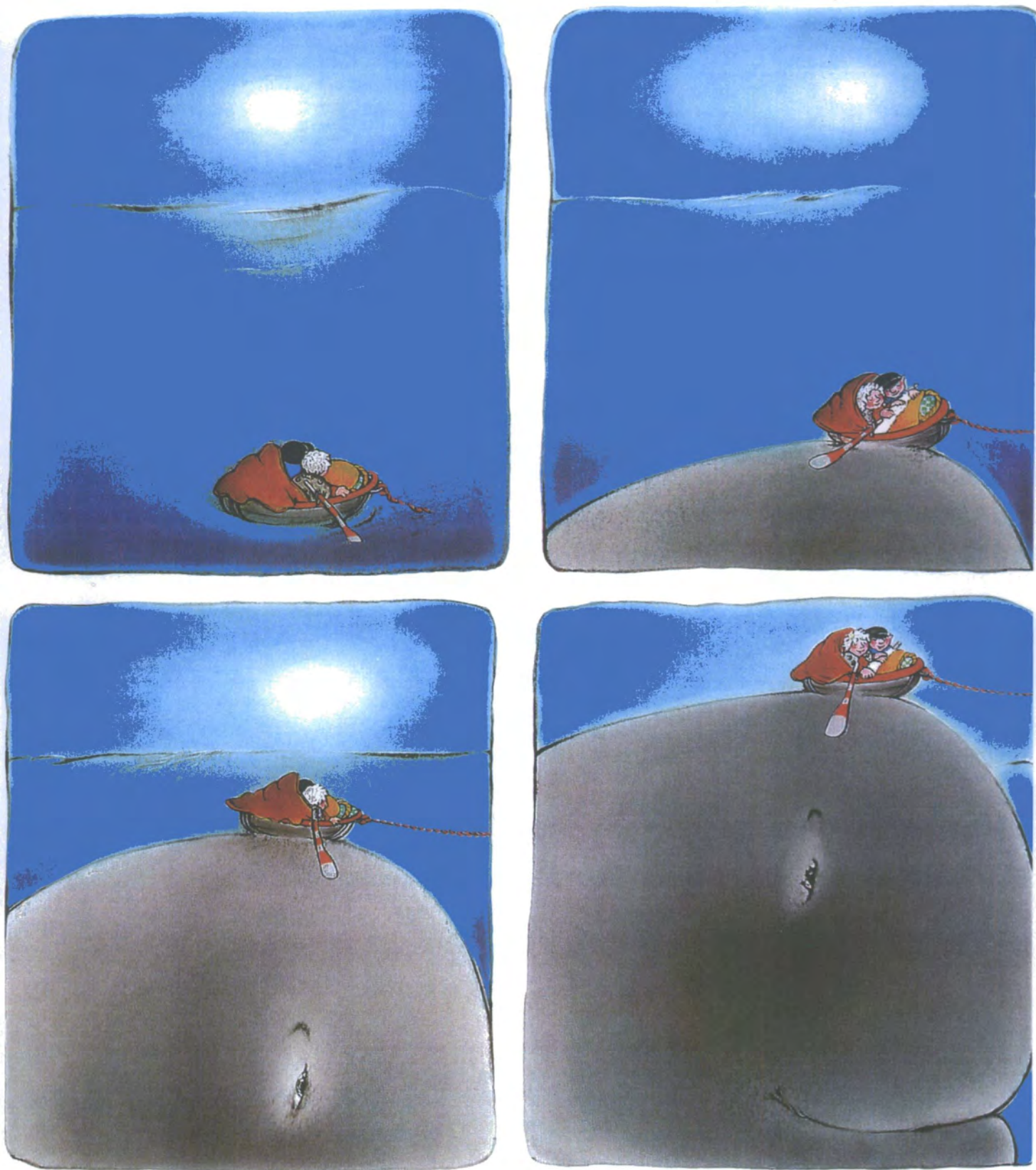


Figure 17: Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Kalow & Bröger, 1996: 17)  
A narrative encapsulated in four images.

#### 7.5.5 D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Grisette and Choupette on a motor cycle)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* In Anne-Marie Theis and Mariette Ries's picture book from Luxembourg, written in three languages: Luxembourgish/French/German, two young mice laze around, sprawled across the first page, not knowing what to do with themselves. Like many youngsters, they appear to be on holiday and at a loose end. Half-eaten, oversized fruit and vegetables are scattered across the floor, clothes are all over the place and a comic is opened at a universally recognised spread: the story of *Mickey Mouse*. Slightly on its own, in the top right hand corner of this frame, which signifies the enclosed world of the two creatures, is a shining red motorbike indicating a possible adventure. The ensuing pages follow the pair as they get up to numerous antics on their new found, two-wheeled, source of amusement. This vehicle takes them to diverse parts of their farmyard and through a duck-pond. Here the mice are frowned upon by many farmyard animals, who show concern at the speed, denoted by movement of water, with which the animals move.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* Once upon the open road, the excitement and emotion engendered in the narrative shows through, as the inevitability of the youngsters' fate is assured. Calamity occurs, they wreck the bike, damage themselves and have to be administered to by the owner of the bike. Surprisingly, however, the farmer does not chastise, but merely keeps them under tight control the next time they venture out on his bicycle. In the final illustration, this complete control of both the mice and the environment is emphasised through breaking the frame, in which the scene is set, with the adult's hand, knee and foot. The abundance of circumstantial detail here renews itself on each reading.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* There is a certain over-the-top quality in this text which can be detected in the visual portrayal of the characters of the two mice. The bright colours of their garments and the absurdity of their antics suggest *excess*. They move away from any decorum whatsoever that might be attributed to the story, and the tale is brought to a conclusion through the measures undertaken by the censorious adult.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Unlike the themes of other texts in this section, the focus on authoritarian friendship in this book brings together the world of the adult and child. Both inhabit the real world but often it is children or child-like characters who contribute to the fantasy narrative. In *D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad*, picture book ingredients are fully utilized and crazy ideas lead to trouble which ends in conflict resolution and a more restricted freedom; a universal occurrence within the world of childhood. The linguistic diversity of this country can be seen in the multi-lingual text - an especially significant factor for children in many European countries.



Figure 18: D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Theis & Ries, 1995: 21)  
A relationship of tight control!

### 7.5.6 Das Land der Ecken (The Land of Corners)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Irene Ulitzka and Gerhard Gepp's picture book from Austria, written in German, is a tale concerning the acceptance of difference. Stories often start with significant endpapers/important title pages, and this one is no exception. Opening with angular shapes and concluding with circular ones, their importance becomes evident as the story progresses. The initial shapes are pastel shaded triangles with slightly misted edges on one side, denoting the world of corners; yet the fuzziness of this one side suggests slight uncertainty.

In the beginning there is the world - a world of seven corners, which nothing else inhabits. Into this world of corners one day enters something round. Neither angular child nor triangular cat know what to do with it. So they take it to an adult who, being uncertain of this alien shape, takes it to his colleagues. Unable to fit it into their own worldly knowledge, these adults throw the object to the ground; breaking it and making it conform to their own familiar images. Having done this, the older generation rapidly depart, leaving both child and his pet cat rather disturbed, as can be seen by the way that the cat covers his eyes and the boy rests his head on his finger. The two then go off together. They see a balloon in the sky; trees that are round; the round sun; a scooter with round wheels and ... a boy with a round face. The two boys have no difficulty in communicating, and go off to play together on a round-wheeled scooter, followed by the cat, leaving the final endpapers with fuzzy round shapes rather than angular ones.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* These fuzzy images, of both triangles and circles, are the essence of this narrative; almost a mirror of each child's emotional point of contact. The theme of the story being that, even though there may be significant differences in communication, sharing is still possible. Children frequently have a greater ability to accept this than adults, both because of a lack of pre-conceived prejudices and because, often, they move in less polarised worlds, with other children of differing lifestyles. A variety of shapes and icons, depicting the many circumstantial details which reinforce this theme, are abundant.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Books:* This picture book presents a number of different semiotic images of life in the land of corners. If one takes each image separately, there is very little progression in the picture sequencing and it appears that the reader has to work extremely hard to work out the *indeterminacy* of the story line. On close inspection, however, the juxtaposition of images, such as the cat, in this fantasy world add a vital cohesive element.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* This secondary world of corners, Peter Schneck (in Cotton, 1996) suggests, is important because with so many diverse views within Europe it is often difficult to find peace and accord. This Austrian book, through a variety of picture book ingredients, intimates a possible harmony in spite of the differences that exist.



Figure 19: Das Land Der Ecken, (Ulitzka & Gepp, 1993: 24/25)  
Childhood Acceptance of Difference.

### 7.5.7 A Olvelha Negra (The Black Sheep)

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Christina Malaquias' book from Portugal mirrors Peter Schneck's thinking. Readers are asked to consider what would happen when something different enters their secure world. Malaquias' story begins in the Portuguese early morning countryside, when the sun is about to rise and the sky is dotted with white fluffy clouds. As the author looks closely at these clouds, she begins to see small faces with tiny eyes appear. These begin to unroll slowly, as if they had parachutes, and soon descend to land. Suddenly, into this serene world, falls a black sheep and a question mark. Leaving the reader to consider what might happen next.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* The essence of this narrative, initially written for very young children, has considerable potential for discussing aspects of tolerance with older children. The serenity of the countryside lulls one into a false sense of security and doesn't really prepare the reader for the harsh reality of this intrusion. In its apparent naivety, this little book, as suggested by Iser (1978), exposes narrative techniques which establish links between things that are difficult to connect. The reader is then forced to reconsider information s/he first thought to be quite straightforward, which is often triggered off by specific emotive, semiotic images.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book:* In this picture book, the author tells her story in the first person, as if in conversation, stepping *beyond the boundaries* of the narrative. She then invites her reader to shape the direction of the story, either alone or in discussion with others; the metafictional relationship between the visual and written texts being crucial.



Figure 20: A Olvelha Negra (Malaquias, 1988 11) - And then?

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Acceptance of difference is portrayed in this short text through a number of picture book ingredients which allow this fantasy world to impinge on the lives of its young readers. As the visual tale literally unfolds, the opportunity arises to consider personal relationships and reflect on those of others, perhaps from different cultures.

#### 7.5.8 Starting School

*Category 1 - Visual Codes:* Janet and Allan Ahlberg's contribution from England UK, is the last book in the EPBC to be analysed. It was selected by Margaret Meek ( in Cotton, 1996) as it was conceived in school, with pupil help, and reflects the world of school in England as seen through the eyes of children. Through a double spread and carefully sectioned pages, the reader is drawn into the lives of all who attend Riverside Primary School; from the moment they arrive on the first day; some on bikes, others in cars, and many on foot. The gay profusion of colours, plus Janet Ahlberg's perceptive illustrations, pave the way for an experience that is to be enjoyable! Moving left to right across the page, the protagonists meet a cheerful lollipop man, open mouthed and chatty, who shows the children across the road. They come from a variety of backgrounds/ethnic sources which, in addition, reflects a coming together of the themes mentioned in the previous two books.

*Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques:* As the children arrive at school, the excitement and emotion engendered through the essence of this narrative is brought about through minute circumstantial details. Where to hang coats; where to find the toilets; where to eat; which people are important; all are details that are likely to be vital for any children starting school. The illustrations here are interspersed with text, and can be read sequentially or at whichever point of interest catches the child's attention. The story follows children through their first term, and concludes with a Christmas play; where the real spirit of a school production is captured in the diversity of characters presented and the warmth of colours used for this traditionally English winter scene.

*Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Books:* As discussed in Chapter Six (6.14) an important feature of the metafictional picture book is communication between visual and written text. In the Ahlberg's book these two elements not only interact but are physically interwoven, almost stepping *beyond the boundaries* of conventional texts. The reader is drawn into the narrative and can take a personal journey through the book, stopping wherever there is a specific point of interest. The text or dialogue alone would not be sufficient to create this adventure; it is the interaction of the perceptive visual and written narratives that allows the reader to make this book his/her own.

*Category 4 - Picture Book Ingredients:* Several picture book ingredients contribute towards the intertextuality in the denouement of this story. Not only are well known nativity characters present but parents and teachers also have their place, encircling the angels - the very children who were seen entering school at the beginning of the book. The expressions on these young faces are simply shown, through the flick of a pencil line or the slight tilt of a head, and represent the variety of expressions shown by children of this age; most are happy, one or two are sad, one has forgotten his costume and one is waving to her mother. The 'Englishness' of this vignette is really captured, however, through the school scene: the stage, the piano, the teacher turning the pages of music and, finally, through the faces of the parents united in their cheerfulness and pride on this essentially festive occasion.



Figure 21: Starting School (Ahlberg & Ahlberg, 1990: 25) - United in Pride!

## 7.6 Discussion of the STA

Before any discussion of the STA can take place, it is important to address one of the concerns of this methodology pointed out in Chapter Six; that of subjectivity. As the framework has been applied by one person, the choice of focus in each book has been subjective, as have specific interpretations of the categories. The fact that only one individual has applied this STA could, however, be seen as bringing a certain amount of consistency to the analysis. To try to minimise bias, therefore, the likely consistency of one researcher's approach has been used to advantage, in order to facilitate triangulation of the data and thus add some validity to the findings. In order to do this, the STA has been applied to the three classifications in turn: A: People; B: Setting; C: Story. Each of these affords a slightly different perspective of the visual narratives, trying to make the STA sufficiently comprehensive for application to future texts by others considering using picture books to facilitate a European dimension in education.

The following sections very tentatively take each aspect of the STA in turn, in an attempt to find a way of providing comparisons within the framework.

### 7.6.1 Theme

Choosing one single universal childhood theme, that of *friendship*, whilst it united the European collection and gave it a focus was potentially restrictive. Once the books had been classified, however, under the headings of *people*, *setting* and *story*, the sub-themes of: *friendship in the dark*; *friendship and responsibility*; *friendship and relationships*; presented themselves quite naturally. Approximately a third of the books fell into each of these three classifications.

### 7.6.2 Classifications: A: People; B: Setting; C: Story

As stated in Chapter Five, all the books in the EPBC were chosen because they were recommended by educationalists in their country of origin, and visually represented a universal childhood theme. This STA framework focuses on specific aspects of their visual narratives which make them more universally understandable and, therefore, could enable mutual understanding within Europe to develop at the primary level. The five books selected under *people* presented the most visually defined central characters; those under *setting* placed the story within a cultural setting; those under *story* displayed a more obvious visual story structure. Although a basic list of these books is given in Chapter Six, the three book classifications are set out in Table 11.

Table 11: Classification - A: People; B: Setting; C: Story

| EPBC Texts   | A:People | B:Setting | C:Story |
|--|----------|-----------|---------|
| VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet (Finland)                   | X        |           |         |
| Une Nuit, Un Chat... (France)                      | X        |           |         |
| La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Italy) | X        |           |         |
| Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Belgium -Francophone)  | X        |           |         |
| Lotje Is Jarig (Belgium - Flamboyant)              | X        |           |         |
| Kan Du Vissla Johanna? (Sweden)                    |          | X         |         |
| Katie Morag and the New Pier ( UK: Scotland)       |          | X         |         |
| El Guardian del Olvido (Spain)                     |          | X         |         |
| Mosekonens Bryg (Denmark)                          |          | X         |         |
| Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Ireland)             |          | X         |         |
| Cantre'r Gwaelod (UK: Wales)                       |          | X         |         |
| Kees en Keetje (Netherlands)                       |          |           | X       |
| War and Peas (UK: Northern Ireland)                |          |           | X       |
| The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Greece)  |          |           | X       |
| Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Germany)                       |          |           | X       |
| D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Luxembourg) |          |           | X       |
| Das Land der Ecken (Austria)                       |          |           | X       |
| A Olvelha Negra (Portugal)                         |          |           | X       |
| Starting School (UK: England)                      |          |           | X       |

### 7.6.3 Category 1: Visual Codes

The analysis of visual codes was made possible throughout the EPBC by the detailed descriptions outlined by Moebius (1986), Nodelman (1988) and Doonan (1993). The combination of expertise from these three theorists enabled this category of the STA to be applied to all books, from every country. Although the interpretations are subjective, a certain amount of continuity within the codings is apparent and comparison of the three classifications does show differences of emphasis. The following points emerged and are set out in Table 12.

- (1) Visual codes have been used differently, according to each classification, although two visual codes, *position* and *line* appear to support all classifications and *colour* is fairly prominent throughout.
- (2) The biggest difference in the use of visual codes seems to be between *setting* and the two other classifications, *people* and *story*.
- (3) The visual codes used to portray *people* draw on a variety of visual techniques, especially: *position, line, movement and bodily gestures*.
- (4) The visual codes exhibited in *story* lean towards more active forms of visual representation ie: *action, movement, facial and bodily gestures*.
- (5) All books which have been classified according to their ability to convey a cultural *setting* are remarkably similar in the way that they portray this. They tend to use the more static aspects of visual codes ie: *position, size, perspective, frame, line, colour and shape*. *Setting* is the only classification to use the visual code of perspective.

Table 12: Category 1 - Visual Codes

| EPBC   | P | S | p | F | L | C | s | A | M | f | B | c |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Texts  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <u>A: CHARACTER:</u>                               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet (Finland)                   | X | X |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| Une Nuit, Un Chat... (France)                      | X |   |   | X | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X |
| La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Italy) | X | X |   |   | X |   |   | X | X |   | X |   |
| Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Belgium -Francophone)  | X | X |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| Lotje Is Jarig (Belgium - Flamboyant)              |   |   |   |   | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| <u>B: SETTING:</u>                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Kan Du Vissla Johanna? (Sweden)                    | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Katie Morag and the New Pier (UK: Scotland)        | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| El Guardian del Olvido (Spain)                     | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   | X |
| Mosekonens Bryg (Denmark)                          | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Ireland)             | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Cantre'r Gwaelod (UK: Wales)                       | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <u>C: STORY:</u>                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Kees en Keetje (Netherlands)                       | X |   |   |   | X |   |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| War and Peas (UK: Northern Ireland)                | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Greece)  | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   | X | X | X | X |
| Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Germany)                       | X | X |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X | X | X |
| D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Luxembourg) | X | X |   |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |   |
| Das Land der Ecken (Austria)                       | X |   |   |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| A Olvelha Negra (Portugal)                         | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |
| Starting School (UK: England)                      | X |   |   |   | X | X |   |   | X | X | X |   |

Key: P=position; S=size; p=perspective; F=frame; L=line; C=colour; s=shape; A=action; M=movement; f=facial expressions; b=bodily gestures; c=cinematic devices.

#### 7.6.4 Category 2: Visual Narrative Techniques

The visual narrative techniques set out by Bromley (1996) and Thomas (1994), utilise the variety of visual codes discussed in Category 1, and vary in their influence on the application of the STA to the EPBC. They, too, show a difference of emphasis within each classification, as shown in Table 13. The main points which emerge are:

- (1) *Cartoon format* appears to facilitate story sequencing more than the development of characters or portrayal of cultural settings.
- (2) *Trigger images* appear to be used more frequently to establish *setting* and *story*, rather than development of *character*.
- (3) The *use of icons* is very much in evidence when this category is applied to the visual *settings* of the books.
- (4) All books use *circumstantial details* which are integral to either characterisation of *people*, *setting* the scene; or developing the *story*.
- (5) The *expression of emotion*, clearly supports characterisation of *people* within the EPBC narratives, and also appears to be necessary within *story*. It does not, however, appear in the *setting* classification.

Table 13: Category 2 - Visual Narrative Techniques

| EPBC<br>Texts                                      | Cartoon<br>Format | Trigger<br>Images | Use<br>of<br>Icons | Circum-<br>stantial<br>Details | Expression<br>of<br>Emotion |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>A: CHARACTER:</u>                               |                   |                   |                    |                                |                             |
| VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet (Finland)                   |                   | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |
| Une Nuit, Un Chat... (France)                      | X                 |                   |                    | X                              | X                           |
| La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Italy) |                   |                   | X                  | X                              | X                           |
| Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Belgium -Francophone)  |                   |                   |                    | X                              | X                           |
| Lotje Is Jarig (Belgium - Flamboyant)              |                   | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |
| <u>B: SETTING:</u>                                 |                   |                   |                    |                                |                             |
| Kan Du Vissla Johanna? (Sweden)                    |                   |                   | X                  | X                              |                             |
| Katie Morag and the New Pier ( UK: Scotland)       |                   | X                 | X                  | X                              |                             |
| El Guardian del Olvido (Spain)                     |                   | X                 | X                  | X                              |                             |
| Mosekonens Bryg (Denmark)                          | X                 | X                 | X                  | X                              |                             |
| Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Ireland)             |                   |                   | X                  | X                              |                             |
| Cantre'r Gwaelod (UK: Wales)                       |                   | X                 | X                  | X                              |                             |
| <u>C: STORY:</u>                                   |                   |                   |                    |                                |                             |
| Kees en Keetje (Netherlands)                       |                   | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |
| War and Peas (UK: Northern Ireland)                | X                 |                   |                    | X                              | X                           |
| The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Greece)  | X                 |                   |                    | X                              | X                           |
| Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Germany)                       | X                 | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |
| D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Luxembourg) |                   | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |
| Das Land der Ecken (Austria)                       |                   |                   |                    | X                              | X                           |
| A Olvelha Negra (Portugal)                         |                   | X                 | X                  | X                              | X                           |
| Starting School (UK: England)                      |                   | X                 |                    | X                              | X                           |

### 7.6.5 Category 3: Types and Kinds of Picture Book

The ways in which picture books can be classified are very much influenced by the way that visual codes and visual techniques contribute to the narrative within a story. When applying Category 3 to the EPBC, it is necessary to take account of the fact that 'all stories are built upon gaps and absence' (Lewis 1994: 32). It is these gaps which provide opportunities for the reader to make personal cohesive links between individual images created through visual codes and techniques. Lewis (1994: 28) tentatively suggests five types and kinds of picture books which draw attention to the ways in which fictional worlds are constructed. In this section, even more tentatively, Category 3 of the STA is applied to the EPBC. Table 14 presents an overview of the analysis which shows that:

- (1) The classifications of *people*, *setting* and *story* do not appear to reflect vast differences overall in the types and kinds of picture book assigned to each of the items in Category 3.
- (2) *Boundary breaking* is only reflected in three texts, in that they break literary rules; two in *story* and one in *people*
- (3) *Excess* is reflected in five books, in terms of their 'over the top' qualities; one by *people* and two each by *setting* and *story*.
- (4) Seven books fall exclusively into the domain of *indeterminacy*, ; which includes more books from the *setting* and *story* than *people* classifications.
- (5) *Parody* is reflected in four books, in terms of their potential for satire and ridicule; two by *people* and one each by *setting* and *story*.
- (6) There are no books which can be assigned to the *performance* category; possibly a reflection of the discussion in Chapter Six (6.15.5).

Table 14: Category 3 - Types and Kinds of Picture Book

| EPBC Texts   | Boundary Breaking | Excess | Indeterminacy | Parody | Performance |
|--|-------------------|--------|---------------|--------|-------------|
| <u>A: CHARACTER:</u>                               |                   |        |               |        |             |
| VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet (Finland)                   |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| Une Nuit, Un Chat... (France)                      |                   | X      |               |        |             |
| La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Italy) | X                 |        |               |        |             |
| Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Belgium - Francophone) |                   |        |               | X      |             |
| Lotje Is Jarig (Belgium - Flamboyant)              |                   |        |               | X      |             |
| <u>B: SETTING:</u>                                 |                   |        |               |        |             |
| Kan Du Vissla Johanna? (Sweden)                    |                   | X      |               |        |             |
| Katie Morag and the New Pier (UK: Scotland)        |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| El Guardian del Olvido (Spain)                     |                   | X      |               |        |             |
| Mosekonens Bryg (Denmark)                          |                   |        |               | X      |             |
| Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Ireland)             |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| Cantre'r Gwaelod (UK: Wales)                       |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| <u>C: STORY:</u>                                   |                   |        |               |        |             |
| Kees en Keetje (Netherlands)                       |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| War and Peas (UK: Northern Ireland)                |                   | X      |               | X      |             |
| The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Greece)  |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Germany)                       |                   |        | X             |        |             |
| D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Luxembourg) |                   | X      |               |        |             |
| Das Land der Ecken (Austria)                       |                   |        |               |        |             |
| A Olvelha Negra (Portugal)                         | X                 |        |               |        |             |
| Starting School (UK: England)                      | X                 |        |               |        |             |

#### 7.6.6 Category 4: Picture Book Ingredients

In applying Category 4 to the EPBC, a considerable amount of consistency can be seen in the attributes for each text classification. The implication being that all pictures books from the European community have many similarities in the ways in which they communicate visual narratives to young children. Application of the STA, in Table 15, shows that:

- (1) Five of the twelve categories: *semiotics; metafiction; secondary/ possible worlds; fantasy/reality* could be applied to all books classified under *people, setting and story*;
- (2) *How the picture book works* is evident within the structure of all the books classified under *story*, as the mechanics for moving a story on are an integral part of the function of narrative;
- (3) *Ideology* appears to be more relevant to *setting* than *character* and *story*;
- (4) *Intertextuality* only appears overtly in relation to three texts; two in *people* and one in *setting*. It does however permeate most of the picture books in terms of individual experiences and, in relation to European picture books, is one of the most difficult aspects of the STA apply, as readings are culturally bound and founded on personal experience.
- (5) *The concept of childhood, universal childhood themes, and relationships* are more relevant to *people* and *story* than *setting*;
- (6) *Characterisation* only appears in the *people* classification;
- (7) *The power pictures* appears to only be discerned in *people* and *setting*, possibly where visual imagery is at its most forceful.

Table 15: Category 4 -Picture Book Ingredients

| EPBC Texts   | H | S | I | M | i | C | s | F | U | c | R | P |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <u>A: CHARACTER:</u>                               |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| VEM Ska Trösta Knyttet (Finland)                   |   | X | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Une Nuit, Un Chat... (France)                      |   | X | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire (Italy) |   | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra (Belgium -Francophone)  |   | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Lotje Is Jarig (Belgium - Flamboyant)              |   | X | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| <u>B: SETTING:</u>                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Kan Du Vissla Johanna? (Sweden)                    |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| Katie Morag and the New Pier UK: (Scotland)        |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| El Guardian del Olvido (Spain)                     |   | X | X | X | X |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| Mosekonens Bryg (Denmark)                          |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| Naomh Pádraig agus Crom Dubh (Ireland)             |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| Cantre'r Gwaelod (UK: Wales)                       |   | X | X | X |   |   | X | X |   |   |   | X |
| <u>C: STORY:</u>                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Kees en Keetje (Netherlands)                       | X | X |   | X |   | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| War and Peas (UK: Northern Ireland)                | X | X |   | X |   | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| The Story-spinner Meets the Sugar-wizard (Greece)  | X | X |   | X |   | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| Hallo, Kleiner Wal (Germany)                       | X | X |   | X |   | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| D'Grisette an D'Choupette um Motorrad (Luxembourg) | X | X |   | X |   | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| Das Land der Ecken (Austria)                       | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| A Olvelha Negra (Portugal)                         | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |
| Starting School (UK: England)                      | X | X |   | X | X | X | X | X | X |   | X |   |

Key: H=how the picture book works; S=semiotics; I=ideology; M=metafiction; i=intertextuality; C=the concept of childhood; s=secondary/possible worlds; F=fantasy/reality; U=universal childhood themes; c=characterisation; R=relationships; P=the power of pictures.

### 7.7 Evaluation of the STA

Whilst there are clearly problems and difficulties with any application of this STA framework, in terms of the subjectiveness of the interpretations, or mimesis, of the picture book narratives, it does have the potential to provide a structure for discussing picture book texts which could be used to focus on the similarities of themes which are likely to permeate any collection of European picture books. In addition, bringing together, into one analytic framework, the semiotic focus of a number of researchers in the field of picture books, would appear to demonstrate Barthes' (1957) belief that 'pictures, like writing require a lexis'.

In applying the STA to the EPBC, under the headings of *Theme*, *Classification* and *Category*, the proposed framework provides a method of evaluating a set of European picture books against a given set of criteria, namely Table 10; a rationale which other researchers are then able to consider and use.

Looking at the three categories in particular, the visual codes and visual techniques adopted by the EPBC texts appear to be strikingly similar for all books. This suggests that the STA is likely to provide a useful analytic tool for cross-checking the feasibility of universal readings of picture books. Category 1: visual codes, is where this is most obviously evident, as can be seen in Table 12. Whereas both the *people* and the *story* classifications exhibit a reasonable spread of occurrence across all elements, in the case of the *setting* classification, the spread is much more focused for every book. This means that all the books tend to use the more static visual aspects, in contrast with those of *story* and *people* which lean towards the more active forms of

visual representation. In Categories 2 ,3 and 4, however, the spread of occurrence across all three classifications is inconclusive. Given the nature of the triangulation, however, any conclusion based on it must, to some degree be tentative (Cicourel 1973:24).

The STA also provides the ability to draw parallels between visual narratives in picture books from member states of the European Union. As each picture book is analyzed, it is possible to see the connections that readers might make between visual, spoken and written narratives. Indeed, the static aspects of visual codes that are used to visually describe the *setting* of the books, in Category 1, could be equated with descriptive spoken/written language ie nouns/adjectives; the active visuals of *story* with active language; and a combination of both with *people*.

An analogy could also be made with written text analysis in that *people* might be seen as what Brown and Yule (1983: 126) call (i) theme: the starting point of an utterance; *setting* as (ii) rheme: everything else that follows in a sentence; and *story* as (iii) staging: the writer's cognitive structuring. The suggestion being that, using the notion of theme as main character, what the writer puts first, ie the subject or person, will influence the interpretation of everything that follows. As such, it is also possible to see visual narrative techniques as part of a wider discourse. Circumstantial details and icons, Category 2, might be seen as further linguistic embellishments ie the adjectival phrases that enhance a text; whereas trigger images and cartoon format could be seen as devices to move the narrative on, possibly equating with adverbial phrases and clauses.

The majority of picture book ingredients, Category 4, relate to *people* and *story* with a smaller number included in the *setting* classification. These elements compare with the thematic organisation of a narrative, which facilitate the coherence of a structure, due to the author trying to be meticulous in relating events to each other in time (Brown and Yule, 1983: 143). They are the parts of speech and the functions of language that create cohesion. In written text the physical anaphoric and cataphoric make the cohesive links; whereas visual texts provide the opportunities for readers of picture books to make sense of the narrative through their own cohesive acts. It is, however, the types and kinds of picture books, Category 3, that they read which enable this interaction, and introduce analogies with adult fiction.

From the above analysis it can be inferred that parallels can be drawn between visual and written stories. It is, therefore, conceivable that visual analysis could be used with Key Stage Two children to develop their knowledge and understanding of both spoken and written language, as well as to gain a deeper understanding of how narrative works on a number of levels

The analytical framework has attempted to provide a structure whereby the texts can be analyzed as material produced for discourse which enables the mimetic function of messages, discussed under semiotics in Section 6.3, to go back and forth between picture book and reader. As children's responses to illustrations are an inseparable part of their response to text, their thoughts, ideas and reactions, frequently stem from the reading of the pictures. They then draw inferences, putting cause and effect together in order to form and create the fundamental elements of plot structure. As in many of the

EPBC texts, readers can experience the ways in which characters themselves can sort out, frequently through fantasy, the difficult experiences of growing up and converting their surroundings into something real and manageable. This can be experienced through the secondary worlds of picture books, but the likelihood of a positive response to a serious message is only possible if the visual narrative is presented entertainingly and honestly. Illustrations, such as those in many European picture books, which are full of symbolism and use a comic format, frequently keep children in touch with popular culture and can also give them a feeling of autonomy.

This thematic analysis highlights the important role that picture books can play in facilitating a wider understanding of Europe, especially by using the universal childhood issues common to all cultures. Visual images in the texts can be seen as clues or symbols to be understood, initially without supportive text, and are all the more powerful because children have to bring their own personal meaning to them. The visual narratives presented here share the belief that children want to think as well as be entertained, and all texts have the ability to leave images in the mind which allow meaning to grow and develop. Key Stage Two children are likely to respond to the respect which the author/illustrators have accorded them and learn how to read the important messages that the books contain. Finally, the modern European picture book can be seen here to have an important role to play in the teaching of the literary, as well as cultural conventions, that all readers need to be aware of and to operate throughout their lives.

## 7.8 Summary

This chapter has applied the proposed analytical semiotic text analysis (STA) developed in Chapter Six, to the 19 books in the EPBC, and has discussed some of the problematic issues relating to the subjectivity of such a framework. Links have been made between visual, spoken and written discourse, and ways in which this analysis can facilitate a European dimension in primary education discussed. Finally, the suggestion is put forward that this STA could be applied to future texts from these and other countries, and be for use by researchers wishing to develop new collections.

The texts, themselves vary in the complexities of their narratives yet, through this semiotic text analysis, it is possible to determine the contribution each makes towards an understanding of universal childhood themes which have been found widely applicable across the European Community. Once an empathy is established with the visual text, further discussion of the written text is possible. How much a European dimension can be implemented in primary classrooms, however, is very much dependent on the ways in which the EPBC is presented to pupils. Possible use of the materials to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum for English at Key Stage Two, and the linguistic benefits of the interaction between visual and written texts, considered in more detail in Chapter Eight.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE EUROPEAN PICTURE BOOK COLLECTION (EPBC) AS SUPPORT FOR THE 1995 AND 1997 NATIONAL CURRICULA FOR ENGLISH

#### 8.0 Introduction

This chapter draws on the findings from the Semiotic Text Analysis (STA), discussed in the previous chapter, and focuses on the linguistic interaction between picture and text in response to the third research question:

'How can trainee teachers use European picture books to teach English at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum in England?'

The picture books analyzed in Chapter Seven were written as works in which illustrations and written text interact. As most of the EPBC texts are written in languages other than English, however, the focus in this study so far has been placed on the visual storytelling techniques of each one. Chapter eight outlines some of the ways in which it is possible to make links between the multi-lingual texts of these narratives, using as exemplars translations/retellings to complement the visual storylines.

The polysemic nature of the texts is discussed in relation to the ways in which trainee teachers might use specific book-related activities. This would be as a means of facilitating an understanding of the similarities between languages and cultures, rather than the differences which separate them. In addition, the ways in which trainees can be taught and subsequently teach literary forms, through using the EPBC, are highlighted. By the very nature of design, these activities support key areas of the National Curriculum for English (1995) and the Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English (1997). To this end, the argument is put forward that the EPBC, as well as enabling trainee teachers to place the picture books within a European setting, also facilitates close scrutiny of linguistic, literary and cultural elements relating to language, literature and storytelling generally.

### 8.1 Using the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two

The rationale developed in Part One of this study plays a crucial role in planning the use of the EPBC to teach English in Key Stage Two classrooms. The interplay between picture and text which enhances the value of reading picture books for upper primary children (Sections 4.15 -4.19) is a key element in the understanding of how texts work at a number of levels. It permeates the EPBC and, with guidance, upper primary children can learn to interrogate these texts through practical classroom activities. This chapter, using one EPBC book as an exemplary text, suggests ways in which the diversity of these texts can support the 1995 and 1997 curricula for both schools and initial teacher training.

Each of the books in the EPBC was originally intended for use in its country of origin but its inclusion in the collection means that it has been selected for a wider dimension, of which the author/illustrator may have been unaware. The approach to using these books is one of immersing trainee teachers into the language and culture of the books, whilst studying the literary forms of each text. It is hoped that from this they will gain greater literary and linguistic understanding which will, in turn, enable them to teach Key Stage Two children more about Europe, as well as literature and language, in their English lessons. Of the nineteen books in the collection, *Kees en Keetje* from The Netherlands is a representative example from which extension material can be developed; it has been chosen for the reasons set out in Section 8.5. Any one of the texts could, however, have been used as an exemplification of how European picture books can enable trainee teachers to both facilitate a European dimension, through insights/comparisons/evaluations, and meet National Curriculum requirements.

### 8.2 Using the EPBC to Implement The 1995 National Curriculum (Schools)

Since the time of Comenius, philosophers and educationalists have been extolling the value of

picture books within the learning process; details of their thinking are outlined in Chapters Two, Three and Four. Today, picture books are widely used in schools throughout Europe but there has not always been an exchange of ideas between member states which would allow the 'travelability' of picture books, mentioned in Section 3.9, to become a reality. Although, as discussed in Chapter One, no specific references are made to the implementation of a European dimension in the 1995 or 1997 National Curricula in England, there are many opportunities for European picture books to support the educational requirements of these documents as well as teach children about Europe. There is the potential for all books selected for the EPBC to be linked to elements within the Programmes of Study for Attainment Target 1: Speaking and Listening (AT1); Attainment Target 2: Reading (AT2) and Attainment Target 3: Writing (AT3).

When using the books, there is the opportunity for the languages and countries of origin to be explored, setting the context for using the EPBC by presenting both a geographic and linguistic dimension. Subsequently, stories can be visually sequenced, discussed/analyzed, and literary parallels drawn. The only specific cross-cultural requirement of the 1995 National Curriculum is that:

'the literature read should draw on texts from a variety of cultures and traditions'  
(KS2 Reading 1d:13).

In reality, however, when children are working with the EPBC, it is possible to cover nearly all aspects of the programmes of study for: Speaking and Listening (AT1); Reading (AT2) and Writing (AT3). Discussing the European languages, for example, allows for additional points to be covered by focusing on words that are similar in many cultures, eg those with Latin/Greek roots. This makes possible the study of:

- \* word families (KS2 Speaking and Listening 3b:12);
- \* phonic and graphic patterns (KS2 Reading 2a:13);
- \* the relevance of word families, roots and origins of words (KS2 Writing 2d:16);
- \* how words and parts of words are borrowed from other languages (KS3/4 Speaking and Listening 3b:18);

- \* texts whose language and ideas have been influential eg Greek myths (KS 3/4 Reading 2b:21);
- \* word derivations (KS3/4 Writing 2c: 24).

### 8.3 Using the EPBC to Implement The 1997 National Curriculum (ITT)

In June 1997, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) published a document which specifies:

'the essential core knowledge, understanding and skills which all primary trainees, on all courses of initial teacher training, must be taught and able to use in relation to English'.

(TTA, 1997: 1)

Whilst at no point does it refer to the European dimension in primary education, or any documentation discussed in Chapter One of this thesis, there are clearly significant points at which the EPBC is able to support much of this 'essential core knowledge'. The following elements taken from parts A,B and C of the document are supported in the activities discussed in Section 8.6 of this chapter:

#### Part A: Knowledge and Understanding required to secure Pupils' Progress

- \*hearing, discussing, re-telling and inventing stories and recounting and describing events (A3a.iii)
- \*how spoken language is related to written language (A3a.iv)
- \*analyze aspects of the text including:
  - character and plot
  - organisation and structure
  - argument and viewpoint
  - relationship to other texts (A3d.iii)

#### Part B: Effective Teaching and Assessment

- \*how to develop pupil's enthusiasm for reading (B5c)
- \*develop critical responses/help pupils to make connections between books (B5e.v)
- \*oral and written activities which require pupils to make critical and imaginative responses to aspects of literature and to evaluate texts they read, referring to relevant passages or episodes to support their opinions; (B5e.vi)
- \*teach compositional skills through drawing on pupils' knowledge of spoken language and reading as a model or stimulus for writing and for increasing their awareness of differences between written and spoken language (B5f.i)
- \* how to teach speaking and listening through activities which will:
  - adapt their speech for different purposes
  - listen attentively for different purposes
  - participate effectively in discussion; (B5g)
- \*how inspection and research evidence and international comparisons can inform their teaching (B8c)

### Part C: Knowledge and Understanding of English

- \*provide them with a systematic understanding of language and how it works (C9)
- \*morphology - word structure and derivations (C12b.iv)
- \*word meanings and how words relate to each other (C12b.v)
- \*Organisation including the structure of written text, the order of paragraphs, and the chronology of a plot.(C12b.x)
- \*how to evaluate texts critically, including an ability to analyze different types of fiction, evaluating their quality and making judgements about them. (C12c.)

#### 8.4 Using the EPBC to Teach Standard English and Language Study

Whilst the activities in the following sections are devised to be used in schools at Key Stage Two of the 1995 National Curriculum, a rationale for their development is presented which supports sections A and B of the 1997 TTA document. In addition, specific attention is placed on the *Standard English and Language Study* section (1995), relevant to schools. Whilst this was a new addition to the English curriculum, first presented in the 1995 document, it is the area for which there is the least resource material available for use in schools. It is also the concern of many trainees, known to me, who have expressed doubts about their own understanding of language, particularly the Key Stage Three/Four (1995) elements necessary for them to qualify for teacher status.

At Key Stages Three and Four of the 1995 document, aspects of the standard English and language study section, supported by the EPBC activities, require that pupils should:

- \* consider the differences between speech and writing (Speaking and Listening 3b)
- \* be taught to recognise, analyze and evaluate the characteristic features of different types of text in print and other media (Reading 3a)
- \* consider the effects of organisation and structure (Reading 3a)
- \* consider how authors' purposes and intentions are portrayed, and how attitudes, values and meanings are communicated (Reading 3a)
- \* be taught about the main characteristics of literary language (Reading 3b)
- \* be taught to analyze and evaluate the use of language in a variety of media, making comparisons where appropriate, eg the treatment of a traditional story in a children's **picture book** and in its original source (Reading 3b)
- \* analyze techniques eg the portrayal of setting, the building of suspense and the use of imagery(Reading 3b)
- \* relate their study of language to their reading and their previous linguistic experience, written and oral (Writing 3a)

- \* analyze their own writing, reflecting on the meaning and clarity of individual sentences, using appropriate terminology (Writing 3b)
- \* learn about:
  - discourse structure eg the structure of whole texts
  - phrase, clause and sentence structure; including the use of appropriate connectives
  - words and grammatical functions, including: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions and conjunctions (Writing 3b)
- \* explore word derivations (Writing 3b)

As the TTA document also requires that all trainees must be provided with a 'systematic understanding of language and how it works' (TTA, 1977: 17), the materials in this chapter provide support for Section C at initial teacher training level.

### 8.5 Kees en Keetje: A Detailed Example from the EPBC for Teaching at Key Stage Two

The EPBC provides a number of opportunities for understanding about how language works, especially with *Kees en Keetje*, the Dutch text which has been chosen as exemplification of how picture books can be used by trainee teachers with older readers in Key Stage Two classrooms. It has been chosen because:

- \* It has a very clear visual narrative structure
- \* Setting, although universally recognised, makes a number of cultural references
- \* Characterisation develops well, visually
- \* The theme of the 'ups and downs' of friendship is universal
- \* Many linguistic comparisons can be made with the Dutch language

The importance of the illustrations in this book cannot be underestimated because, through pictures, it is often possible to indicate things that are difficult to say in words. The universal power of illustrations, therefore, enables children to appreciate a familiar story in a new way, and find deeper layers of meaning (Section 4.14). Familiarity with conventions, which is vital to meaning, often exploits the possibilities for complex narrative inherent in the images. In addition, pictures offer readers a position of power, so that they can look at them (Section 4.3), and are invited to observe the story from different viewpoints, as well gain a greater understanding of how narrative and language work through interaction with the text.

The sequence of activities in Section 8.6 has been devised for use by trainee teachers to enable them to use these visual narratives in conjunction with the written, to meet both the needs of the National Curriculum for English and implement a European dimension at Key Stage Two. Although one book has been chosen to highlight the potential of European picture books, similar activities can be devised to accompany all other books in the EPBC, especially making linguistic comparisons.

Learning about languages not too different from their own can often help pupils to understand more about how language works. Dutch, the language of *Kees en Keetje*, according to Greg Brooks in a discussion at an International Reading Association Conference (1997), is the European language closest to English and has the most similarities. It is not, however, widely spoken outside the Netherlands and Flemish speaking part of Belgium, yet it could provide a stepping stone to linguistic competence for many young learners.

#### 8.6 A Sequence of Structured Classroom Activities for Key Stage Two Readers

##### *Kees and Keetje*

##### A Dutch Story from The Netherlands

by Jantien Buisman

##### Written in Flemish, the Dutch Language.

##### Synopsis of Story

This is the story of two hedgehogs who have lived together for a long time. They have put up with each others unpleasant habits, like burping and picking noses, because they love each other.

One day, however, they become so irritated by these habits that they decide to separate. So they have to divide up all their belongings. Unfortunately, they do not do this very sensibly. For example, Kees takes the bed and Keetje the mattress!

Each day when they pass each other they always look the other way but, on one occasion, they are both carrying half of their favourite meal: chips and apple sauce (a children's speciality in The Netherlands). This makes them realise how much they need each other and they decide to become friends again.

The following activities all relate to this book. Practical classroom suggestions are made in the left hand columns of each table, whilst the theoretical rationale underpinning each is set out in the right, for the benefit of the trainees.

#### 8.6.1 Activity One: Introductory Discussion

##### *Rationale:*

Before any of the books in the collection are discussed in relation to the National Curricula, they can be set within a European context by:

- \* locating them , geographically within the physical context of the other European members states, ie on a map of Europe;
- \* discussing the language/s spoken, making reference to the influence that surrounding countries may have eg why Dutch is also spoken in the Flemish part of Belgium; or the influence that France, Germany and Italy have on the languages spoken in Luxembourg;
- \* sharing any known characteristics relating to culture, literature, food, music etc.
- \* discussing any previous or current interactions pupils may have with the country.

In addition, focus can be placed on, and comparisons made between, both the literary and linguistic similarities/differences of English texts and those of the country in question. Activity One (Table 16) suggests some possible ways in which this could be done with *Kees en Keetje*, from The Netherlands; written in Flemish.

Table 16: Activity 1 - An Introduction to *Kees en Keetje*: Using a Book from the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two

| Practical Activity  | Theoretical Rationale   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Introductory Discussion</b></p> <p><b>TITLE:</b><br/>Look at title, together with pictures.<br/><i>Kees En Keetje</i><br/>What is it in English?<br/><i>Kees and Keetje</i><br/>What helped the translation?<br/>Picture; two characters; knowledge that characters have names (proper nouns); knowledge that nouns are often joined with and (a conjunction) in book titles<br/>Are there any letter combinations that are different in from English?: tje</p> <p><b>AUTHOR:</b><br/>Discuss the name: Jantien Buisman<br/>Guess the Nationality: Dutch<br/>Male or Female?: female<br/>Are there any letter combinations that are different from English?: tien; uis</p> <p><b>PUBLISHER:</b><br/>Name: Uitgeverij De Harmonie<br/>Place: Amsterdam<br/>Year: 1976<br/>Are these conventions the same in English books?<br/>In which country is Amsterdam<br/>Are there any letter combinations that are different from English?: uit; rij<br/>Are there any words that are similar to English?</p> <p>Can you come to any conclusions about the Dutch language eg the 'j' features significantly or there are some words that are similar to English (harmonie)</p> <p>What is the story likely to be?</p> | <p><b>Focus on the importance of discussion about the book: its title, author, publisher and possible story-line. Particularly noting the similarities and differences between the Dutch and English languages.</b></p> <p>Focus on the similarities with English:<br/>phrase structure;<br/>use of nouns;<br/>conjunctions;<br/>punctuation eg upper case 'K'</p> <p>Focus on differences eg letter combinations</p> <p>Focus on name/possible pronunciation<br/>Introduction to concept of different nationalities<br/>Possible clues to gender?<br/>Common letter strings</p> <p>Similarities and differences<br/>Knowledge of place names; use of upper case</p> <p>Comparisons of technique</p> <p>Geographical reference; locate on map<br/>Linguistic comparisons</p> <p>Linguistic reflection</p> <p>Knowledge about: narrative structure; story conventions; universal themes; importance of titles and illustrations.</p> |

### 8.6.2 Activity Two: Teaching about Narrative Structure

#### *Rationale:*

Before any written activity is set, a rationale needs to be established which includes a sense of audience and purpose (National Writing Project, 1988). As this book is only written in Dutch, it is necessary to write an English version (purpose) for children in the UK (audience). There are only the synopsis of the story and the pictures to help with this task; the rationale for which is set out in Table 17, linking the practical activity to theoretical rationale.

The task has been devised to enable trainee teachers to reflect on just how much time needs to be spent on the speaking and listening, as well as the reading aspects of the National Curriculum, before any writing takes place. It is then important to focus on the stages of writing, which involve all the drafting processes plus proof reading (including spelling), before the work is finally presented for publication. Even at this stage, there is likely to be a need for re-reading and discussion.

Table 17: Activity Two - *Kees en Keetje*: Teaching about Narrative Structure

| Practical Activity  | Theoretical Rationale  |
|---|--|
| 1. Work in groups of 6, forming 3 sets of pairs: <b>A;B;C</b> .   | Establish narrative framework/ 'home groups'   |
| 2. Using the photocopied storyboards from <i>Kees and Keetje</i> (Appendix 3):<br>Pair <b>A</b> needs to discuss what is happening in each picture of the 'beginning section';<br>Pair <b>B</b> needs to discuss what is happening in each picture of the 'middle section';<br>Pair <b>C</b> needs to discuss what is happening in each picture of the 'end section'. | Use of National Oracy Project (1991) 'jig-sawing' technique to establish 'expert groups'     |
| 3. Each pair <b>A</b> now joins another pair <b>A</b> ;<br>Each pair <b>B</b> now joins another pair <b>B</b> ;<br>Each pair <b>C</b> now joins another pair <b>C</b> .   | Sharing of expertise   |
| 4. In new groups, discuss ideas about each part story. Are there any differences? Does anything need to be changed?   | Possible revision of initial ideas   |
| 5. Back in original groups of six, discuss the possibilities for a group story, with pair <b>A</b> writing the beginning, pair <b>B</b> the middle and pair <b>C</b> the end. Need to talk about ways of linking the three parts.   | Share expertise in 'home groups', establishing thematic narrative                            |
| 6. Split into pairs again and write a sentence (or more) about what is happening in each picture. It should be written as if the story were to accompany the pictures.  | Structure of written text/ relationship with visuals   |
| 7. Back in original groups, whole story to be read through. Does it make sense? Do the 3 parts link together? Do any alterations need to be made?   | Revision: revising, re-drafting, proof reading   |
| 8. Get together with another group of six and read own story to them/listen to theirs. Try to make at least one positive comment about each story, and one about how it could possibly be improved.   | Sharing of Narrative: Responding to and assessing written work, making relevant suggestions. |
| 9. The story is now ready for publication.  | Acting as response partners (National Writing Project 1988)                                  |
| 10. When finished, think about how much time was spent <b>speaking and listening</b> ; how much time <b>reading</b> ; and how much time was actually spent <b>writing</b> .   | National Curriculum Requirements   |
|   | Summarise skills necessary   |

8.6.3 Activities Three and Four: Teaching about Linguistic Knowledge

Rationale

After the story has been written in English and familiarity with the illustrations/narrative structure is assured, focus can be placed on the text which accompanies the pictures through the tasks outlined in Tables 18 and 19, which focus on the similarities between languages and linguistic knowledge.

Table 18: Activity Three - *Kees en Keetje*: Teaching about Linguistic Knowledge - Similarities Between Languages

| Practical Activity  | Theoretical Rationale   |
|---|---|
| <p>Using the illustrations and knowledge of the story, try to work out the meaning of this Dutch sentence in English:</p> <p>"Ze gaven mekaar een dikke kus" Figure 22<br/>(They gave each other a big kiss)</p> <p>Focus on WHY words can be guessed</p> | <p><b>Rationale: Focus on similarities between languages makes them appear less alien.</b></p> <p>The previous activity encouraged the text to be guessed from the illustrations and story context. English links can be made with the visual similarities of "kus". A further guess might then be made about the word "dikke" (big); and another that they gave each other a big kiss.</p> <p>Noun = kiss: visible similarity to English<br/>Adjective = big : visible in picture<br/>Verb = gave: visible similarity to English<br/>Article = een: implicit KAL structure<br/>Pronoun=they: sub. for Kees and Keetje</p> <p>mekaa = most difficult word; can only be guessed from the context of the sentence</p> |

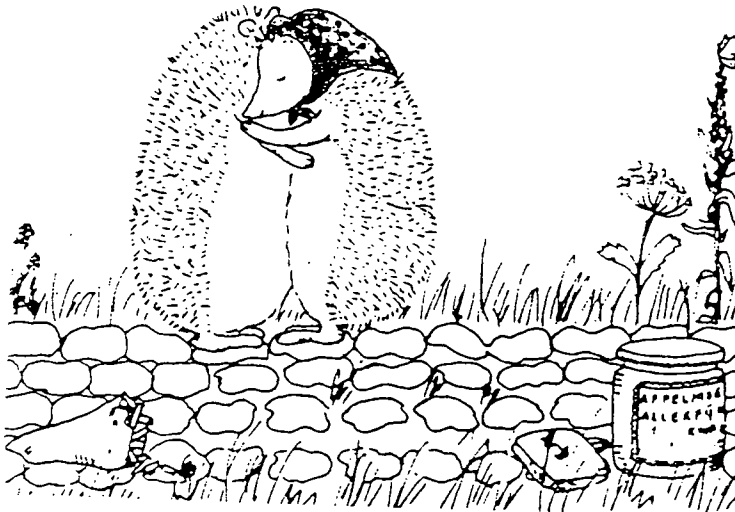


Figure 22: Ze gaven mekaar een dikke kus

Table 19: Activity Four - *Kees en Keetje*: Teaching about Linguistic Knowledge - Language Structure

| Practical Activity  | Theoretical Rationale  |
|---|--|
| <p>Refer to translation of the text which accompanies Figure 23.</p> <p>Comparison of languages:<br/> words learned already: ze = pronoun<br/> same in English: lamp, pan = noun<br/> similar in English: bord = noun<br/> that re-occur: op - in/on = preposition<br/> het/de - the = article</p> <p>Sentence structure:<br/> Discuss why lines two to five do not begin with a capital letter.</p> <p>Discussion of 'subject- verb- object- adverbial' in these clauses</p> <p>Read whole story in English translation from Dutch (Appendix 4)</p> <p>Listen to the tape whilst reading the Dutch language alongside the illustrations.</p> <p>Focus on differences between reading the text and listening to the tape.</p> | <p><b>Rationale: Attention to language structure in another language helps focus on ones own.</b></p> <p>Discussion of similarities and differences:<br/> eg more than one meaning for 'op'<br/> Prepositions in transference of languages</p> <p>'het' and 'de' = definite article: 'the'<br/> Other languages have genders for nouns</p> <p>Ellipsis: "They put the" is understood and therefore omitted.</p> <p>To be used as an entrée into work related to of parts of speech and functions of lang.</p> <p>Make comparisons with the Dutch language - focus on how many words can be recognised/translated into English.</p> <p>Discuss how much of the text can be understood.</p> <p>Allows comparisons between written and spoken language; discussion on pronunciation of words; relationship with English. Also, difficulties between written and spoken words eg spelling.</p> |



Fig. 23: "Ze deden de kap weer op de lamp, het deksel op de pan, het kopje op de schotel de stoffer op het blik de schaakstukken op het dambord."

"They put the shade back on the lamp, the lid back on the pan, the cup back on the saucer the brush back in the dustbin the chessmen back on the draughts board."

## 8.7 Using the EPBC to Meet the Requirements of the 1995 National Curriculum

In studying other languages, there is the potential to reflect upon ones own. The activities in Section 8.6 are examples which demonstrate possible ways of facilitating this reflection. They are specifically designed to meet the requirements of the 1995 National Curriculum which suggests that language study can be developed through :

activities which, through their content and purpose, demand the range of grammatical constructions ... and develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between the written and spoken form (KS2: Speaking and Listening 3a)

activities which introduce pupils to the organisation, structure and presentation of texts ... and the appropriate terms to enable them to discuss the texts they read eg author, setting, plot, format ... and to use their knowledge gained from reading to develop their understanding of the structure, vocabulary and grammar of language (KS2 Reading 3)

activities which give pupils an opportunity to reflect on their use of language, beginning to differentiate between spoken and written forms ... and to develop their understanding of the grammar of complex sentences, including clause and phrases ... and knowledge of standard written forms of nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions ... and their interest in words should be extended through the discussion of language use (KS2 Writing 3).

## 8.8 Resumé of Using the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two of the 1995 National Curriculum

Table 20 summarises the National Curriculum areas, discussed in sections 8.2, 8.4 and 8.7, which are supported by the activities outlined in Section 8.6. For Key Stage Two, the focus is on use in school; for Key Stages Three and Four it is the knowledge and understanding of trainee teachers.

Table 20: Resumé of Using the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two of the 1995 National Curriculum

| National Curriculum Areas (1995)   | Support Activities   |
|--|--|
| <b>KS2</b> (discussed in Section 8.2)<br>Speaking & Listening 3b<br>Reading 1d<br>Reading 2a<br>Writing 2d                   | Activities 1 and 3<br>The Text<br>Activity 4<br>Activity 2                                       |
| <b>KS2</b> (discussed in Section 8.7)<br>Speaking & Listening 3a<br>Reading 3<br>Writing 3                                   | Activities 1 and 2<br>Activity 3<br>Activity 4   |
| <b>KS3/4</b> (discussed in Section 8.4)<br>Speaking and Listening 3b<br>Reading 3a<br>Reading 3b<br>Writing 3a<br>Writing 3b | Activities 1 and 2<br>Activity 2<br>Activities 1, 2, 3 and 4<br>Activity 3<br>Activities 2 and 4 |

### 8.9 Using the EPBC to Teaching Literary Forms

As well as knowledge of linguistic and narrative structure, trainee teachers also need to be aware of the literary techniques that can be taught through using European picture books, both at their own level and in upper primary classrooms. This section focuses on specific literary forms and refers to relevant sections of the 1997 Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English which they support.

The visual aspect of the picture book has been the main focus of this thesis as it lends impact to stories and enhances the value of many literary techniques. In addition, it provides opportunities for older children to better understand literary narratives. Just as graphic organisers can aid reading comprehension, the visual art in books can support and illuminate such devices such as character development, mood, point of view, irony and satire (Keifer, 1995: 184). The European books included in the EPBC have the ability to heighten children's understanding of literary elements such as:

### 8.9.1 Characterisation

Where characters in literature have many facets which generally develop as a story progresses, and strengths/weaknesses are portrayed en route. In Chapter Seven, Sections 7.3/ 7.4/ 7.5 detail the ways in which illustrators, in a number of European picture books, portray the development of their characters. The frightened *Toffle*, from Finland, who gains in confidence once he has a reason to be brave; or the self-confident *Groucho*, from France, who experiences one or two setbacks which cause him to question his bravado before returning to his protective home environment. Comparisons are possible with all the European protagonists in the EPBC, they either grow (like *Grandpa* from Sweden) or deteriorate (like *Fat King* from Northern Ireland). This makes discussion of progression within the narrative, during the course of the story, possible in order to comprehend visual characterisation. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.vi)

### 8.9.2 Climax

The point in the story where the outcome is decided is usually the greatest moment of tension and the crucial element on which narrative depends. For *Groucho* (France) it is confrontation with the sewer rat; for *Grisette and Choupette* (Luxembourg) it is the crashing of the red motorcycle; for *A Olvelha Negra* (Portugal) it is the entry of the black sheep; for the boy in *Das Land der Ecken* (Austria) it is the breaking of the round object which does not conform to his country's culture. Central elements of tension, crucial to any story-line, are an integral part of all the books in the European collection and provide opportunities for analysing the organisation and structure of texts. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; Be.vi)

### 8.9.3 Elaboration and Detail

Specific attention to fine detail add unique qualities to characters, setting and plot. This will facilitate a deeper understanding and appreciation of the narrative story. The setting of *Kan*

*Du Vissla Johanna?*, for example, with its focus on fine lines, shape and colour (Section 7.4) create an environment which alludes to the Swedish culture and its treatment of old people whilst, at the same time, creating an air of mischief in the protagonists. The details of character and setting in *Katie Morag and the New Pier* also open a window onto life in a Scottish fishing village and its inhabitants (Section 7.4). *Starting School*, in contrast, presents snapshots which focus on the 'Englishness' of its setting, through minute vignettes of English life (Section 7.5). The fine detail in *El Guardian Del Olvido*, on the other hand, takes the reader into a surreal world enhanced with references to Spanish culture (7.4); contrasting with the minutia of the creatures in *Mosekonens Bryg*, Denmark's earthly world (7.4). (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

#### 8.9.4 Foreshadowing

Helps the reader to anticipate coming events, to guess what will happen next; as in the Austrian book *Das Land Der Ecken*. Here the prediction for breaking the round object is facilitated through the detailed expression of the characters and the directionality of their movements; as is the possibility of meeting a round headed child and them going off together. In the German *Hallo, Kleiner Wal*, too, the foreshadowing for the appearance of the whale is transmitted through a sequence of predictable events. Similarly, the Luxembourgish *Grisette and Choupette's* crash is no surprise. These predictive elements of visual texts, which are so crucial to early reading development and understanding of story narrative, are also used to great effect in more sophisticated novels to give the reader insights into possible developments. Analysis of these strategies with older primary children, using sophisticated picture book texts, can facilitate greater understanding when reading novels at secondary level. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

### 8.9.5 Irony

The situation in which actions or words are the opposite of what is expected is a traditional literary quality used frequently in picture books for older children. The farmer who administers to the needs of *Grisette and Choupette* after their motor-bike accident, for example, is expected to chastise the young mice. Instead, he does the reverse. He allows them out on his bike again; but, this time, under strict supervision! The visual image is very forceful and is discussed in Section 7.4. Irony in the Danish *Mosekonens Bryg*, however, is a little more subtle. Traditionally one would expect the bringers of Spring to be bright and gay, cheerful characters who bring new life to the countryside. This Danish tale, however, sees the Marsh People brewing beer, as a forerunner to what they feel is necessary for enjoyment in the lighter months of the year! (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

### 8.9.6 Tone or Mood

The implied feeling or attitude of the author/illustrator comes through in many of the EPBC books. In *Lotje is Jarig* from the Flemish speaking part of Belgium, for example, Lieve Baeten, the illustrator, creates a colourful and warm environment in which to place her apprentice witch. Through tone of colours and delicacy of brush-strokes, she creates a mood which reflects the light-hearted character of Lotje on her birthday. In contrast, for *El Guardian Del Olvido*, Alfonso Ruano produces a more sombre mood with illustrations that depict uncertainty in tone. Blues, blacks and browns convey a message of mystery and intrigue; an effect which pervades the book. The watery colours of *Cantre'r Gwaelod* from Wales, however, set tone and mood for an enigmatic tale of a submerged city beneath the sea. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

### 8.9.7 Parody

The humorous imitation of a well-known work or form can be seen in *Un Jour Mon Prince*

*Viendra* from the French speaking part of Belgium. Traditionally, the prince is handsome and the young girl beautiful, as in the case of *Snow White*. *Un Jour Mon Prince Viendra*, however, sets a very different mood. The prince is a rather rotund baker and the prospective princess a brash and aggressive witch, discussed more fully in Section 7.3. Parody, too, features in *War and Peas*, chosen to represent Northern Ireland. Here the serious nature of the continuing friction between Great Britain and Northern Ireland is depicted in allegorical fashion. The richer country being seen as one with an over-large King who governs a land of plenty, depicted through over-large images of food and drink. The poorer, needier kingdom being governed by a gaunt and fading lion. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

#### 8.9.8 Point of View

The perspective taken by the author in *A Olvelha Negra* from Portugal is that of a dreamer who, on looking up at the sky, imagines the clouds transforming. This fantasy is transmitted to the reader who is also allowed to dream. When, however, into this peaceful world appears an element of conflict, the black sheep, the author hands over to the reader to complete the tale. This can be done by either remaining within the world of fantasy or, in discussion, making analogies with real-life situations. In contrast, the stance taken in *La Bambina Che Non Voleva Andare a Dormire* from Italy, is the viewpoint of the child. Anna doesn't want to go to bed and recounts her story personally; seeing herself in a dominant position as she takes part in every tale her father retells. The role of the reader here is to empathise with Anna's point of view, making relevant forays into his/her own fantasies. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v)

#### 8.9.9 Satire

Criticism of social or human weaknesses, often through exaggeration, is a feature of the Irish, Welsh and Greek books based on universal themes related to sayings such as 'Pride comes

before a fall' (Wales); 'One can have too much of a good thing' (Greece); or 'If at first you don't succeed . . . ' (Ireland). Curiously, food is a feature in all three books and an excess of it, in many cultures, is seen as a sign of human weakness. In the first of these, a Welsh king loses his city because he is too proud to leave the banqueting hall whilst his subjects are feasting. In the second, the Greek story-spinner eats so many sweets that he longs for something savory. In the third, it is the Irish Saint Patrick who tries many times to help Crom Dubh to believe and, finally, succeeds. (TTA, 1997: A3d.iii; B5e.v).

#### 8.10 Using the EPBC to Meet the Requirements of the 1997 National Curriculum

Teaching Literary Forms through European Picture Books is made possible through concentration on specific aspects of texts, and the discussion in Section 8.9 focuses on individual books which meet many of the demands of the Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English. These include: an analysis of character and plot, organisation and structure; argument and view point; and relationships to other texts (A3d.iii). The development of critical responses helps children to make connections between books (B5e.v) and oral/written activities require pupils to make critical and imaginative responses to aspects of literature and to evaluate the texts they read, referring to relevant passages/episodes to support their opinions (B5e.vi). Focus on story structure, characterisation, setting and themes of European Picture books facilitates the teaching of compositional skills through drawing on pupils' knowledge of spoken language and reading as a model or stimulus for writing and for increasing their awareness of differences between written and spoken language (B5f.i).

In general, when using the European collection, hearing, discussing, re-telling, recounting and describing events (A3a.iii) is instrumental in developing pupil's enthusiasm for reading (A3d.iii) and allows them to both listen attentively and participate effectively in discussions (B5g). Through using these materials not only is it possible for trainee teachers to gain insight

into how international comparisons can inform their teaching (B8c) it also teaches them how to evaluate texts critically and make judgements about them (C12c.)

8.11 Resumé of Using the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two of the 1997 National Curriculum

Sections 8.6 and 8.9 of this chapter discuss ways in which the European picture book Collection can facilitate the Initial Teacher Training National Curriculum for Primary English (1997). A resumé of the specific areas covered is set out in Table 21. This shows how it is possible to support trainee teachers in all three sections of the document, namely:

- Section A: Knowledge and understanding required to secure pupils' progress in English
- Section B: Effective Teaching and Assessment Methods
- Section C: Knowledge and Understanding of English.

Table 21: Resumé of Using the EPBC to Teach English at Key Stage Two of the 1997 National Curriculum

| National Curriculum Areas (1997) | Support                               |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A3a.iii                          | Activities 1 and 2 (Section 8.6)      |
| A3d.iii                          | 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 (Section 8.9)       |
| B5e.v                            | 3,4,5,6,7,8,9 (Section 8.9)           |
| B5e.vi                           | 1,2 (Section 8.9)                     |
| B5f.i                            | Activities 1,2,3 and 4 (Section 8.6)  |
| B5g                              | Activities 1, 2,3 and 4 (Section 8.6) |
| B8c                              | Working with entire EPBC collection   |
| C12c                             | All activities                        |

## 8.12 Summary

Chapter Eight developed the previously considered notion of visual narratives within the EPBC and, from the point of view of trainee teachers , explored:

- i) The interplay between visual and multi-lingual texts as Key Stage Two children read picture books; when comprehension is initially generated through the visual reading of European texts.
- ii) How this understanding can facilitate reading of the possible text in terms of investigating other languages; before a translation is given and the whole story read in English, alongside the original text.
- iii) Teaching literary forms through European picture books, in terms of their potential for use with trainee teachers both at their own level and in Key Stage Two classrooms;
- iv) How these concepts meet the requirements of both the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula for primary English

Through the use of activities related to one exemplary text, it demonstrated that European picture books with a universal theme can facilitate insights into other European languages.

Often, in fact, there are many similarities; an analysis of which allows for reflection upon the structure of ones own. The ways in which these books can meet many of the National Curriculum requirements were shown in terms of:

- \*facilitating an understanding of story structure/story sequencing;
- \*learning about the literature of other countries;
- \*widening the range of texts read;
- \*improving speaking and listening skills when discussing texts; and
- \*using the narrative as a device for stimulating/structuring writing.

Teaching literary forms through the EPBC highlighted the many ways in which European picture books can give trainee teachers a knowledge and awareness of ways in which it is possible for Key Stage Two children to better understand literary narratives in preparation for more in-depth study of denser texts at secondary level. Just as very young readers need to be encouraged to take an active role in the reading of the multi-layered picture book to complete the narrative when acquiring early literacy skills, so too do older readers in terms of using this visual narrative framework to create new levels of meaning and understanding, both of story structure itself and cultural complexities which may ensue.

## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSION

#### 9.1 Summary

The two main strands running through the thesis have focused on how trainee teachers can both implement a European dimension and teach English, at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum in England. These two concepts have been brought together due to a personal belief that much can be learned about other nations through the universal themes that permeate contemporary European fiction. Children throughout the European Community have many common shared experiences which, through stories, can begin to create empathy and understanding between them. European stories, however, are only likely to have application in UK schools, and become instruments of change, if they can also meet the requirements of Government Curricula.

In order to assess the feasibility of unifying the two strands, a threefold approach was adopted. First to establish a European Picture Book Collection (EPBC); then to develop a semiotic text analysis (STA) framework to be applied to each book; and, finally to provide detailed examples of material for use by trainee teachers to teach English from a European perspective. This was in response to the research questions: Which books might form a European collection? How can such a collection facilitate a European dimension in primary education? How can it enable trainee teachers to implement a European dimension at Key Stage Two of the National Curriculum for English in England?

With the enthusiasm, expertise and advice of European colleagues, it was possible to develop a collection of European picture books for this study. The picture books chosen addressed a universal childhood theme, that of *friendship*, a theme with which children throughout Europe can identify. The loneliness of the Finnish *Toffle* until he finds a friend; *Berra's* need to be

friends with a Swedish grandfather; or the ability of two Austrian boys from very different worlds to become friends, allow children to empathise with childhood characters from other countries who share similar fears, longings and conflicts.

The semiotic framework (STA), when applied to each text, provided an analysis which produced evidence of the visual similarities and possible interpretations that could be made by young European readers. In addition, the STA focused on specific visual elements within their narratives that parallel written texts; thus providing a more concrete link for extension activities in school. For example, to establish the *setting* of a story, more static visual codes ie *size, perspective, colour, shape* tend to be used; almost equating with the static/descriptive written form of nouns and adjectives. Those of *story* structure, on the other hand, incline towards the use of more active visual codes ie *action, movement, facial expressions, bodily gestures*, which are more akin to verbs and adverbs.

The semiotic text analysis (STA), as applied to the books in the EPBC, also enabled for each one to be classified and analyzed to provide confirmation of their suitability for inclusion. The STA has been designed, not only as a framework for selecting and analysing the current books but also, as a means of updating and enlarging this collection. As new member states join the European Community, further new books are likely to be proposed for consideration to which the STA can be applied. In addition, other researchers should be able to use the framework to create their own collections.

In providing material to meet the requirements of both the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula, the activities devised specifically focus on ways in which the EPBC could be used to assist trainee teachers to develop the knowledge and understanding necessary to secure pupils' progress in English at Key Stage Two (1997). Through a number of activities, based on one

exemplary Dutch text, it was possible to focus on: narrative structure, grammatical terminology and linguistic knowledge. A clear visual narrative structure proved essential to initial understanding of the story; making later analysis and interaction with the written text possible. The interplay between the visual and written then allowed for discussion of linguistic terminology and functions, especially those required for standard English and language study (1995).

This research is unique and original since it began from a purely personal standpoint; that of personal experience within Europe, observing the interaction of trainee teachers and children when using picture books. These interactions, when linked to professional and theoretical knowledge about language and learning, led me to a broadening of the concept of teaching English, especially for children learning to read. This initial experience gave rise to the hypothesis that upper primary school children can learn about Europe through visual and auditory immersion into European picture books during English lessons - a hypothesis which I have attempted to substantiate in this thesis.

## 9.2 Further Areas of Study

When focusing on the two main strands of this project, there were a number of issues which impinged on, and could equally well have developed from, the thesis. Many of these issues deserve recognition and would benefit from future research:

(1) From this study it is evident that, even though EU directives and DfE documents state that a European dimension should be implemented in primary education, the 1995 and 1997 National Curricula give no specific guidelines to either teachers or teacher educators for this to take place. Although I have attempted to go some way towards providing for developments within the primary English curriculum, pedagogical innovation doesn't just happen. There need

to be investigations into the ways in which teacher training establishments and schools can implement directives across the whole educational spectrum.

(2) Even though the historic development of the picture book within Europe, since the time of Comenius, shows that educationalists have regarded picture books as instrumental in the learning process, their potential still does not appear to have been realised in terms of European awareness. Although I touched on the issue of books in translation and their 'travelability', a much more in depth study needs to be undertaken into the value of the work of translators such as Anthea Bell, and their contribution to the 'European-ness' of the UK book market.

(3) The number of very eminent European colleagues willing to be involved in this study clearly demonstrates a perceived need to develop materials which would help their trainee teachers to implement a European dimension in upper primary classrooms. This project has, however, only looked at the ways of developing materials for use in English schools. What is now needed is for similar work to be undertaken in other member states. This would enable more detailed comparison and analysis from which all countries would benefit.

(4) The semiotic text analysis of visual narratives within the EPBC, undertaken in this research in England, shows that it is possible, through a universality of themes, for parallels to be drawn between European texts. This, however, has been done by one researcher in one country. What is now needed is for the STA to be applied by colleagues from other member states in order to compare and contrast interpretations.

(5) Although focusing on one book in the EPBC, as in Chapter Eight, does provide an example of how this book's potential can be utilized by trainee teachers, on its own it cannot

be sufficient. Further investigations, therefore, need to be made as to how (i) activities can be developed for the other books and (ii) further material can be produced.

(6) Although European materials have been produced by this project, their true value needs to be ascertained through trialling with both Key Stage Two children and trainee teachers. Before this can be done, however: (i) appropriate funding needs to be made available; (ii) the 'know-how' needs to be provided in terms of literary expertise and European knowledge; and (iii) possibly the most difficult, teachers/trainee teachers need to be convinced that their pupils would benefit from a greater understanding about Europe.

### 9.3 Final Remarks

It may be argued that the approach taken in this project has not significantly more to offer trainee teachers, working in Key Stage Two classes, than texts already available in the English language. I should like to suggest that, in addition to the visual enhancement that such texts can bring to children's awareness of narrative structure, there are additional benefits to be gained from using picture books originating in other countries of the European Union. These books have the potential to not only achieve the more accepted goals but can also facilitate a realisation that there are many things which are universally similar throughout Europe - an understanding of which can create harmony throughout the countries. The differences, on the other hand, can help us to appreciate the many ways of living; that each individual country has its own language and culture which enriches the lives of those who are part of it. Knowing about these differences helps us to understand and widen our own experiences, perhaps stimulating learning and acceptance of them; possibly adopting some of them within our teaching; and certainly gaining insight and the ability to observe and reflect upon our own language and culture.

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## **APPENDICES**

## 1a: Letter to Prospective Symposium Participants

### European Children's Literature Network

Dear

30.12.93

Your name has been given to me by \_\_\_\_\_ who says that you are very knowledgeable about children's literature, especially picture books. The reason for writing is that I am coordinating a project, to be financed by the European Commission, which is designed to implement a European dimension in education using children's literature.

It is hoped that a conference will be held in the near future where papers will be presented by colleagues from ALL member states. I should very much like to know if you would be interested in representing your country in this project. If you are, it would be very helpful if you could fill in the attached personal information sheet. Once funding is received, travel expenses and accommodation will be financed for one person from each member state.

As an indication of what might be included in your paper, here are some suggestions for your consideration:

\*Outline current research/theory of children's literature in your country  
(preferably picture books for primary children ie 7-11 years)

\*If possible, relate this to children's learning in school ie facilitating the reading process in terms of:

- a) ability to learn to read
- b) enhancing knowledge and love of literature
- c) developing cultural awareness/identity

\*possibly discuss:

- a) ways in which national stereotypes and ethnocentrisms persist in modern texts
- b) the influence of oral storytelling traditions
- c) encouraging bilingual texts
- d) the importance of translations/translators
- e) children reading a variety of european children's literature **whilst they are still children.**
- d) using texts of television which are book-based
- e) children's libraries
- f) the popularity, worldwide, of specific characters/ books

\*Consider the benefits of using picture books rather than more lengthy texts

\*Suggest titles that are used in your country, plus brief information about content (Maybe with a view to setting up a data base)

\*Refer to a small number (3-5) picture books which could be brought to the conference and discussed in terms of exchanging and developing ideas for use in schools

It is hoped that, from this conference, we shall begin to:

\*Promote the establishment and co-ordination of a collection of children's literature in a range of European languages in each country

\*Promote the translation of children's literature across Europe

\*Design (and publish) materials for use in school which will promote a European dimension in education through children's literature.

I hope that this project is of interest and I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Penni Cotton  
Project Co-ordinator.

16: Personal Information from Prospective Participants

1. Personal Details/Current Role:

- i) Name.....E.Mail.....Fax.....Tel.....
- ii) Country.....Institution.....
- ii) Address.....
- iv) Current role.....
- v) Number of years you have been teaching.....
- vi) Languages spoken.....

2. Children's Literature Background/Previous Experience:

- i) Personal areas of interest in children's literature: .....  
.....  
.....
- ii) Research interests: .....  
.....  
.....
- iii) Books you have published: .....  
.....  
.....
- iv) Regular courses on which you teach in your home institution: .....  
.....  
.....
- v) Occasional courses/conferences either at your home institution or further afield: .....  
.....

3. Specific Interest in Europe:

Previous involvement in European Projects:

.....

.....

4. Contribution towards the European Picture Book Collection:

I should like to become involved in the project because:

.....

.....

5. Presentation:

i) I should like to present a paper entitled:.....

.....

ii) Brief synopsis of the paper:.....

.....

.....

.....

6. How Picture Books are currently used in schools:

In my country we use picture books in school to: .....

.....

7. Possible Picture Books for the collection:

| Title | Author | Publisher | Year  |
|-------|--------|-----------|-------|
| ..... | .....  | .....     | ..... |
| ..... | .....  | .....     | ..... |
| ..... | .....  | .....     | ..... |

*Many Thanks, Penni Cotton*

2: Participant Rationale for Individual Book Selection

| <u>Title</u> | <u>Author</u> | <u>Publisher</u> | <u>Year</u> |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|
| .....        |               |                  |             |
| .....        |               |                  |             |

i) Why did you select this book?

.....

.....

ii) Does it touch on certain themes which cross national barriers? If so, what are they?

.....

.....

iii) Does the book illustrate certain elements of your own national culture? If so, what are they?

.....

.....

iv) Are any qualities of the illustrations particularly noteworthy? If so, what are they?

.....

.....

v) Are any qualities of the language particularly noteworthy? If so, what are they?

.....

.....

vi) Are there any other noteworthy qualities of the book? If so, what are they?

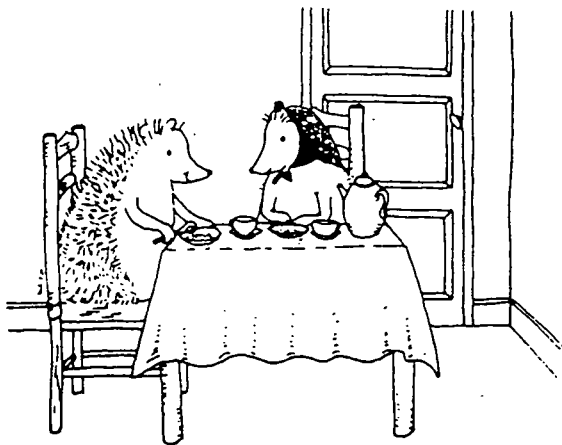
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3a. Storyboard A: Activity Two



1



2



3



4



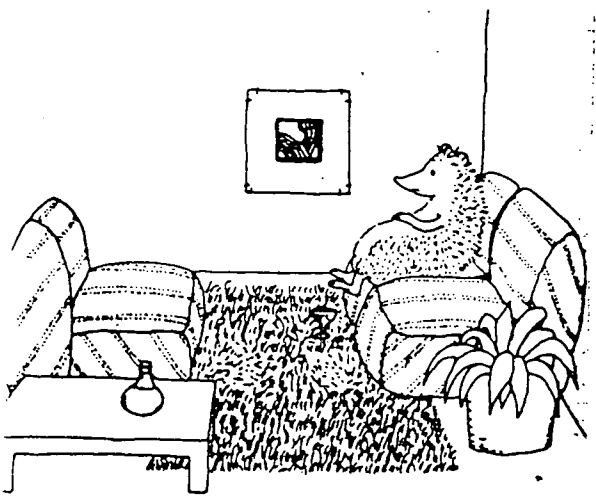
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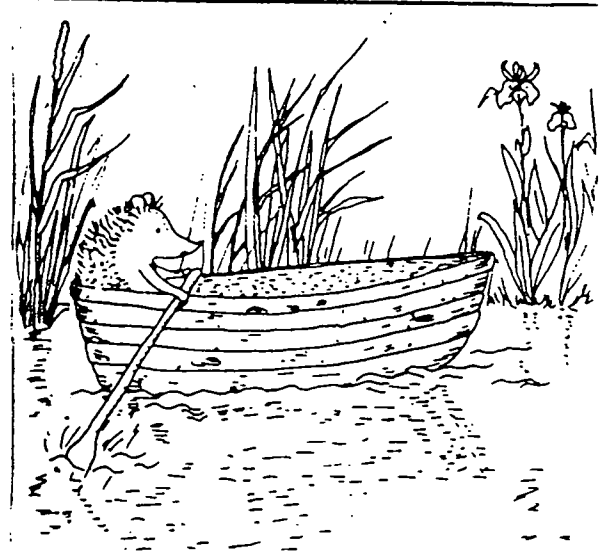
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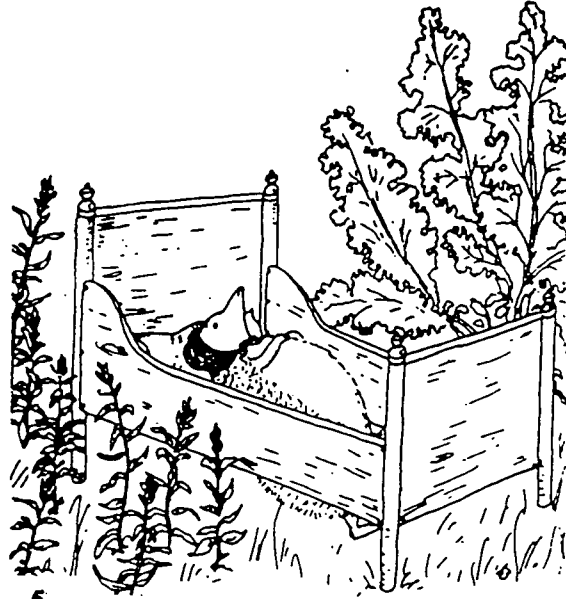
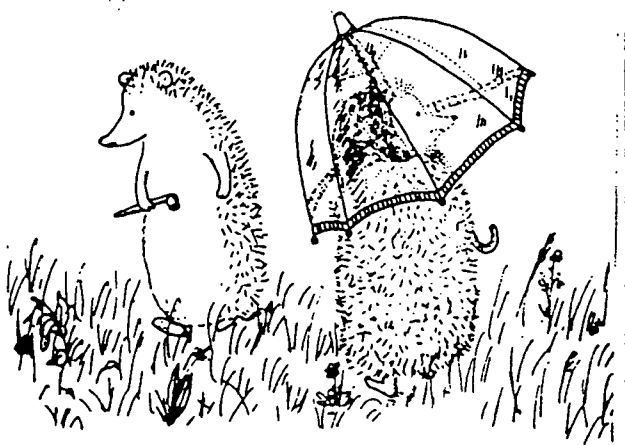


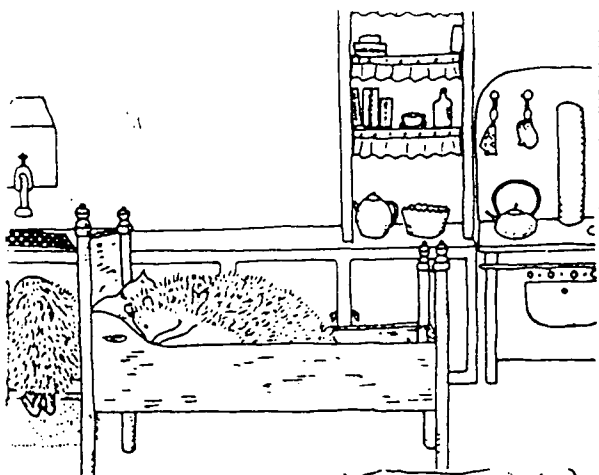
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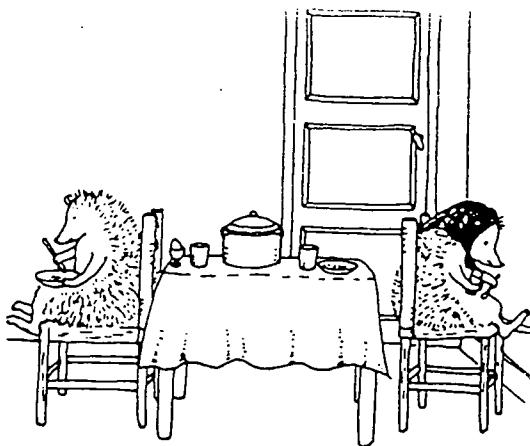
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36. Storyboard B: Activity Two





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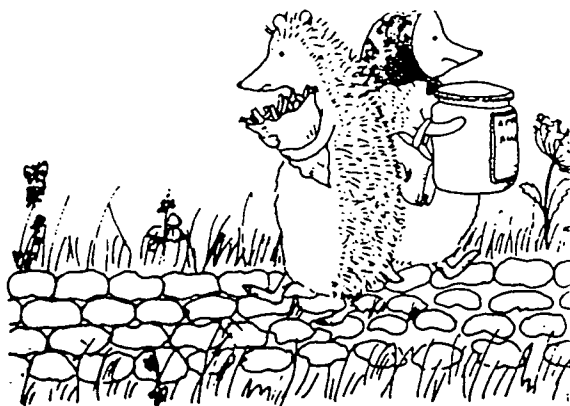


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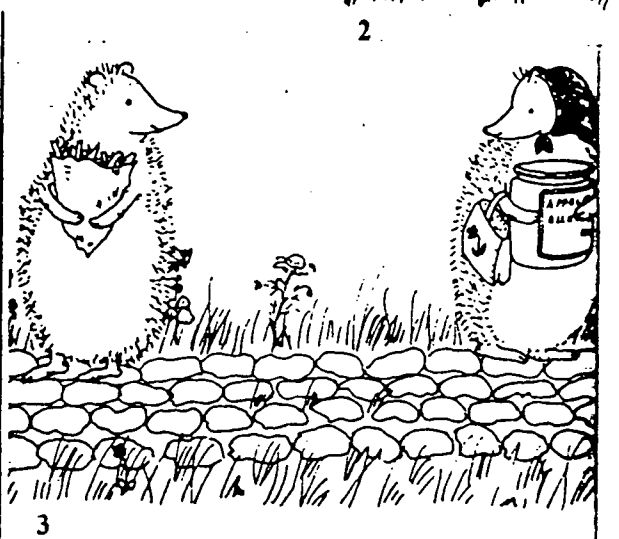
### 3c. Storyboard C: Activity Two



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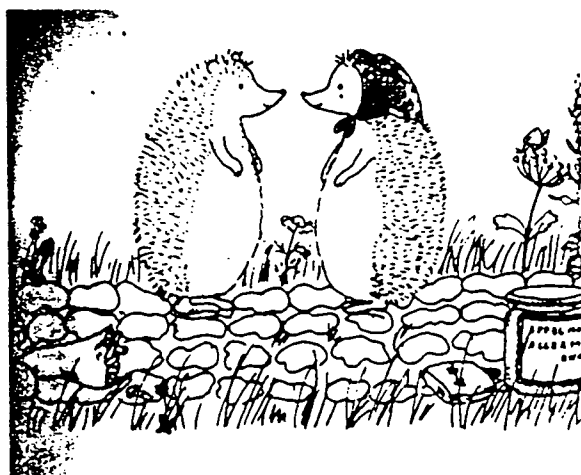
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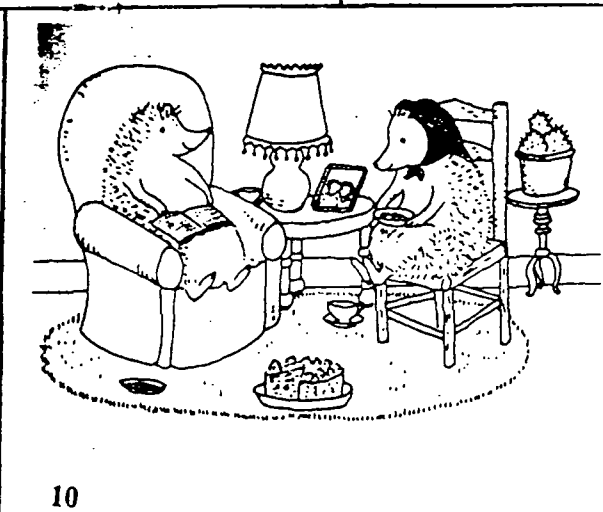
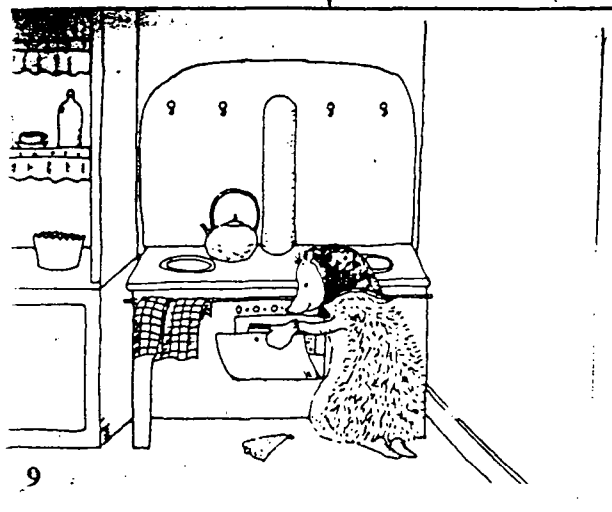
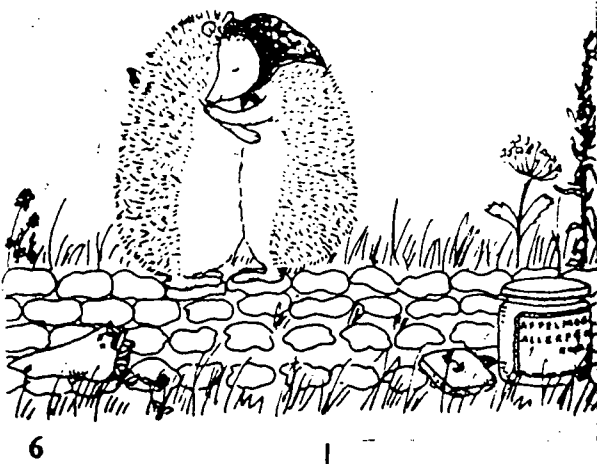
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## 4: Translation of Kees and Keetje: Comparisons Between the Languages

The idea to set the text out in this way was taken from the tri-lingual Luxembourgish picture book in the EPBC *D'Grisette an Choupette um Motorrad*, designed for children to 'absorb' the three languages together. Here, the close proximity of the original and translation facilitates comparisons.

### *Beginning*

**Kees en Keetje Kenden elkaar al zolang, net zo lang als ze zichzelf kenden.**

Kees and Keetje had known each other for ages, almost as long as they had known themselves.

**1. Ze woonden in een poppenhuis zonder dak. Dat vonden ze niet erg.**

They lived in a dolls' house that didn't have a roof. They didn't mind that.

**Als het regende, sliepen ze in de keukenkastjes.**

When it rained, they slept in the kitchen cupboards.

**Ze hielden zoveel van elkaar, dat ze samen de afwas deden.**

They loved each other so much, that they did the washing-up together.

**2. Op een keer merkte Keetje dat Kees smakte en slurpte.**

One day Keetje noticed that Kees was smacking his lips and slurping.

**Zachtjes, maar ze hoorde het wel. En af en toe liet Kees een winje. Dan zei hij: pardon.**

Quietly, but she could hear it just the same. And now and again he farted. Then he said: pardon.

**Kees zag dat Keetje soms in haar neus peuterde.**

Kees sometimes noticed Keetje picking her nose.

**Ze zeiden er niets van, want ze hielden van elkaar.**

They didn't mention it because they loved each other.

**3. Het leek wel of Kees iedere dag een beetje harder smakte en slurpte.**

Keetje seemed to be smacking his lips and slurping more loudly each day.

**Op een keer liepen Kees en Keetje te kuieren. Kees liet een harde wind. En hij zei niet: pardon.**

One day, Kees and Keetje were having a stroll. Kees let out a big fart. And did not say: pardon.

**Keetje werd zo boos, dat ze zich als een bal oprotte.**

Keetje was so cross that she curls up into a ball.

**Wat ben jij prikkelbaar! zei Kees. Dat ben je zelf, zei Keetje.**

You're being very prickly, said Kees. So are you, said Keetje.

**4. Ik ben helemaal niet prikkelbaar! riep Kees boos, terwijl hij zich ook oprotte.**

I'm not prickly at all! Kees cried crossly, curling up into a ball too.

**Na een poosje keek Kees voorzichtig op. Op hetzelfde moment stak Keetje haar hoofd uit de bal.**

After a time, Kees looked out cautiously. Keetje stuck her head out of the ball at the same moment

**Hierom moesten ze zo lachen, dat ze over de grond rolden van plezier.**

They rolled over and over on the ground because it gave them so much pleasure.

**5. Ze liepen gearmd naar huis. Keetje bakte een taart en Kees las een moppenboekje voor.**

They walked home arm in arm. Keetje baked a cake and Kees read jokes aloud from a joke book.

**Wat is het toppunt van lievigheid? Keetje vond het een moeilijke mop.**

What is the best thing about living? Keetje thought that was a difficult one.

**Dat zijn wij! zei Kees, terwijl hij zijn buik vasthield van het lachen.**

We are! Kees said, holding on tightly to his tummy because he was laughing so much.

**Dat is een goeie, zeg! zei Keetje.**

My that's good! said Keetje.

**6. 's Avonds in bed kregen ze weer ruzie. Jij hebt het hele bed, zei Keetje.**

In bed that night they had another argument. You're taking up the whole bed, said Keetje.

**Nietes, zei Kees. Welles, zei Keetje. Na een heleboel nietesen en wellesen werd Keetje zo boos,**

I'm not, said Kees. You are said Keetje. After a lot of 'not's and 'are's, Keetje was so cross

**dat ze in een keukenkastje ging slapen.**

that she went to sleep in the kitchen cupboard.

**7. Ze hadden slecht geslapen. De pinnigheden waren niet van de lucht.**

They slept badly. The air still had not cleared the next day.

**Ze draaiden hun stoelen om en aten mokkend hun ontbijt.**

They turned their chairs round and eat their breakfast in a sulk.

**8. Hou op met dat gesmak, gilde Keetje plotseling.**

Stop that smacking noise! Keetje suddenly screeched.

**Je eigen schuld, jij wou toch zo graag in dit huis wonen.**

It's all your fault, it was you who wanted to live in this house so much.

**'t Is zo gehorig als wat, zei Kees.**

You can hear everything that goes on in it, said Kees.

**Ze zeiden zoveel lelijke dingen tegen elkaar, dat ze niet langer bij elkaar,**

They said so many nasty things to each other,

**dat ze niet langer bij elkaar wilden wonen.**

that they no longer wanted to live together.

**Ze verdeelden de spullen op een eigenaardige manier.**

They divided their things in a very peculiar way.

**9. Ze wilden geen van beiden in het poppenhuis blijven wonen.**

Neither wanted to go on living in the dolls' house.

**Kees zocht een plekje tussen de goudsbloemen.**

Kees found a place amongst the sunflowers.

**Gelukkig had hij zijn eigen stoel en zijn eigen boek.**

Luckily he had his own chair and his own book.

**Hij zat de eerste avond rustig bij te komen van de ruzie.**

The first evening he sat quietly, recovering from the argument.

**Nu kan ik eindelijk eens rustig mijn boek lezen zonder dat gekwebbel van Keetje er tussendoor,**

At last I can read my book in peace without Keetje always interrupting with her chatter,

**dacht hij.**

he thought.

**10. Keetje had een plekje gevonden in de groentetuin.**

Kees had found a place in the vegetable garden.

**Nu kan ik eindelijk eens rustig tegen mezelf praten zonder dat gemopper van Kees er tussendoor,**

At last I can talk to myself in peace without Kees interrupting all the time with his jokes,

**zei ze hardop**

she said aloud.

## *Middle*

### **1. Kees maakte lange, rustige wandelingen.**

Kees went for long quiet walks.

### **2. Keetje ook.**

Keetje, too.

**Ze was zo blij, dat ze nu de parapluie helemaal voor zichzelf had, dat ze hem altijd meenam.**

She was so happy to have the umbrella all to herself, now that she always took it with her.

### **3. Soms kwamen Kees en Keetje elkaar tegen.**

Sometimes Kees and Keetje ran into each other.

**Dan keken ze heel erg de andere kant op.**

Then they firmly looked the other way.

### **4. Het slapen ging slecht.**

They didn't sleep well.

**Kees had wel de hele matras, maar hij kon de deken niet instoppen.**

Although Kees had the whole mattress, he couldn't tuck the blanket in.

### **5. Keetje had het hele bed, maar ze zakte nogal eens door de planken.**

Keetje had the whole bed but she kept falling through the bottom.

### **6. Ze woonden nu meer dan een week apart.**

By now they had been living apart for more than a week.

**Keetje begon het vervelend te vinden, dat ze nooit antwoord kreeg.**

Keetje began to wish that she could sometimes get an answer.

### **7. Kees had eerst van de rust genoten, maar nu lag hij steeds vaker te piekeren.**

At first Kees enjoyed his peace but now he was beginning to fret more and more.

**Hij bedacht wel eens een nieuwe mop, maar in je eentje lijkt een nieuwe mop op een oude.**

Sometimes he thought up a new joke but when you're on your own a new joke is just like an old one.

**8. Toen Keetje vond dat het wasdag was, spande ze zelf een waslijn.**

When Keetje decided it was washing-day, she put up a washing-line all by herself.

**De waslijn zag er niet stevig uit.**

It didn't look very strong.

**Daar is Kees toch handiger in, zei ze tegen zichzelf.**

Kees is better at this than I am, she said to herself.

**9. Kees zocht een oude vriend op, maar die was niet thuis.**

Kees went to call on an old friend but he wasn't at home.

**Hij bleef een poosje wachten, de vriend kwam niet.**

He waited for a bit but his friend didn't come.

**10. Hij ging wat spelevaren.**

He went boating for while

**Hij werd moe van het roeien en er was niemand tegen wie hij kon zeggen: Nu jij eens een keer.**

The rowing made him tired and he couldn't tell anybody: Now it's your turn.

*End*

**1. Keetje zocht Juffrouw Slenter op om een beetje te praten.**

Keetje visited her friend Juffrouw Slenter for a bit of a chat.

**Juffrouw Slenter gaf op alles antwoord. Dat vond Keetje ook vervelend.**

Jeffrouw Slenter gave an answer to everything. That irritated Kees.

**Zoals Kees het deed, half luisteren en halve antwoorden, dat was prettig.**

What Kees did, half listening and half answering, was better.

**Dan raakte ze ook niet zo gauw in der war.**

Then she didn't get so confused.

**2. Op een dag kwamen Kees en Keetje elkaar tegen.**

One day Kees and Keetje met each other.

**Kees droeg een zak patat en Keetje een pot appelmoes.**

Kees was carrying a bag of chips and Keetje a pot of apple sauce.

**Keetje dacht: met patat, dat zou lekker zijn.**

Keetje thought: those chips would go well with this.

**Kees dacht: met appelmoes, dat zou lekker zijn.**

Kees thought: the apple sauce would go well with this.

**3. Keetje draaide zich om. Wat rook die patat lekker.**

Keetje turned round. The chips smelt so delicious.

**Kees draaide zich ook om. Die applemoes kan ze nooit alleen op, dacht hij.**

Keetje turned round too. She'll never get through that jar of apple sauce on her own, he thought.

**4. Ze keken elkaar aan en vergaten de patat en de appelmoes.**

They looked at each other and forgot about the chips and the apple sauce.

**5. Wat heeft ze toch een lief gezicht, dacht Kees. En Keetje dacht net zo iets.**

What a lovely face she has, thought Kees. Keetje thought the same thing.

**6. Ze gaven mekaar een dikke kus.**

They gave each other a big kiss.

**7. En samen gingen ze naar huis, net zoals vroeger.**

And they went home together just as before.

**8. Ze deden de kap weer op de lamp, het deksel op de pan, het kopje op de schotel,**

They put the shade back on the lamp, the lid back on the pan, the cup back on the saucer,

**de stoffer op het blik, de schaakstukken op het dambord.**

the brush back in the dustpan, the chessmen back on the draughts board.

**9. Ze vonden dat ze een feestje moesten maken. Keetje bakte een hele lekkere pruimentartaart.**

They wondered about having a celebration. Keetje baked a scrumptious plum cake.

**10. Kees wist nog een mop. Wat is het toppunt van lievigheid?**

Kees knew another joke. What is the best thing about living?

**Ik geloof dat ik die al ken, zei Keetje.**

I think I already know that one, said Keetje.

