

**VOICE MARKERS IN JUREVICIUS'S
WORDLESS GRAPHIC NOVEL: A
MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS**

By

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ABSTRACT

Title: Voice Markers in Jurevicius's Wordless Graphic Novel: A Multimodal Analysis

The present study attempts to identify the voice markers used by the writer in the wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl*. This wordless graphic novel is written by Nathan Jurevicius (2009). The selected graphic novel is quite unusual and unique because it does not contain words. The narrator employs certain significant voice markers to enable the readers to decode the wordless graphics effectively. Content, subjective and pragmatic voice markers embedded in the graphic novel pave way for better understanding of the visuals given in the selected novel. For this purpose, Jahn's theory of voice markers (2021) has been applied to the selected visuals to make sense of the overall plot and major characters of the story. According to Jahn (2021), voice markers or signal markers function as effective cues to guide the readers during the reading process. In the selected graphic novel, content matter, subjective expression and pragmatic signals serve as effective voice markers. The application of Kress and Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar (2006) further facilitates in identifying the voice markers and their functions in the narrative. Visual analysis as a research method brings to fore the importance of the afore-mentioned voice markers in the novel. The visual analysis of the represented participants, color, framing, gaze, social distance and angle highlights the role of these voice markers in the selected wordless graphic novel. It clearly highlights the fact that the content matter as a voice marker plays a crucial role in conveying essential information about the setting, atmosphere and characters. The meticulous use of colors reflects the narrator's perception towards life. The variation in the sizes of visuals also points towards important developments within the story in general and the narrator's personality in particular. In most of the selected visuals, the gaze of the represented participants is directed towards each other which either strengthens or weakens the relationship between them. Moreover, the social distance created by the narrator helps the readers in positioning themselves in the visuals. The readers are dependent upon these voice markers to explore the narrative accordingly. This research study is insightful as it provides access to the implicit underlying stories embedded within the wordless visuals. The voice markers are in, in fact, the cues that enable readers to understand the basic framework of the story and the development of the characters.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

VN: Visual Narratives

DVN: Dynamic Visual Narratives

IVN: Interactive Visual Narrative

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my loving parents whose endless support, motivation and encouragement enabled me to accomplish this task.

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

This research work is deeply rooted in narratology as it centers on the study of voice markers within the selected wordless graphic narrative. By examining how meaning is constructed and conveyed without textual elements, the study delves into the various ways in which visual cues function as narrative voices. This exploration not only broadens the scope of narratological analysis, but also enhances our understanding of how stories can be told and interpreted through purely visual mediums.

Narratology is the study of narrative and narrative structure and the way these affect human perception. Todorov (2006) defines narratology as a theory of the structures of narrative. Basically, it looks at what narratives have in common and what makes one different from another (cited in Taum, 2018). Prince (1982), for instance, defines it as “the study of the form and functioning of narrative” (p. 39). A spoken or written account of connected events is called a narrative. Narratives are basically the stories that depend upon the sequential arrangement and representation of events and incidents. Genette (2016) states that a narrative is “the representation of an event or of a sequence of events” (cited in Abbas et al, 2022, p. 74). In the world of language and pictorial images, a narrative presents diversified images of life. According to Ochs (1997), the narrative provides information that does not pertain simply or directly to the unfolding events. The same sequence of events told by another person to another audience might be presented differently. We “think, daydream, understand, decode, consider and review things in narrative. At its most basic level, a narrative is defined as “the representation of an event or series of events” (Abbott, 2000, p. 114). The analytical and critical study of narrative provides an opportunity to develop an understanding of the text that cannot be achieved through any other means. Active engagement is required on the part of the reader to make sense of the narrative. The narrative offers a refreshing experience of living through the characters in the story.

Types of Narratives

Rhodes and Brown (2005) identified five areas of inquiry in organizational research in general and process organizational studies in particular to which narrative approaches have made significant theoretical contributions: sense-making, communication, politics and power, learning/change, and identity and identification. Further, narratology observes transposition by connecting different narratives where the direct connection gets developed through perception. The four common types of narratives are linear, non-linear, quest and view point narratives. And as per the forms, narratives can be divided into first, second and third person narratives. According to Ochs (1997), “in first person point of view the narrator is the character in the story and in third person point of view the narrator is not the part of the story. The second person point of view is quite uncommon. It includes the reader and the narrator refers to the reader’s thoughts and actions by using the pronoun “you” in the narrative” (p. 165).

Elements of a narrative

Also, every narrative has five elements that define and shape the narrative; plot, setting, character, conflict and theme. These elements are not discussed in the story rather these are revealed in the story in subtle or non-subtle ways. As Boje (2014) puts it that a narrative is a retrospective “whole telling,” with a linear beginning, middle, and end. As a concept, ‘stories’ open up possibilities for envisioning the future and prospective sense-making (p. 210). The narrative generates meanings by establishing a relationship between different events of the story likewise something is a part of the whole and usually that something is the cause of something else.

Introduction to the writer

Nathan Jurevicius (2009) is an Australian director, illustrator, toy designer and an all-round artist who holds a special place when it comes to conveying a piece of literature using colorful illustrations. He has plenty of publications and comics on his credit. *The Adventures of Scarygirl* is a masterpiece of the writer that bestowed upon him success as it was globally hailed by readers of all ages due to its evocative illustrations and intense motifs. *The Adventures of Scarygirl* won Aurealis Award for the best illustrated graphic novel in 2009.

Nathan Jurevicius (2009) was born in Bordertown, South Australia. Born to artistic parents, Nathan was gently coerced into a life of painting, drawing, and crafts. At the age of six, he sold his first piece titled "Woman-with-a-fly-on-her-nose-in-a-phone-booth". Keeping in mind his masterpiece *The Adventures of Scarygirl*, he has tried to present a life via animation based on his vision and ideas. Furthermore, he moved from Australia to Canada and experienced new phases of life. In the wordless graphic novel, he attempts to focus on the set of incidents/events and the element of uncertainty related to them. Moreover, the visual images in the selected novel relate to the personal experiences of the writer as well. Incidents and events highlighted in the visual wordless graphic novel reflect the writer's ideology, cultural and personal preferences. This study will explore these dimensions through the careful and in depth analysis of the visuals. The research questions have been addressed keeping in mind the afore-mentioned dimensions.

Introduction to the story

The Adventures of Scarygirl is an astounding wordless novel that has the power to convey thoughts and emotions through pictorial images. This wordless graphic novel appeals to the readers as they only find pictures to read the story. The introduction to the characters is given on the preliminary pages of the narrative. The scary girl is a young girl that is dumped on a remote peninsula by a truck where she finds many evil as well as good characters. Some characters help her in her quest to find Dr. Maybe, while other characters create hurdles in her way.

Blister finds her and befriends her which is undoubtedly an inevitable part of anyone's life. Later on, she finds Bunny Guru that further believes in her and decides to help her in her dangerous path to meet Dr. Maybe. Their mutual trust is very strong. The scary girl believes that Bunny Guru is faithful to her. The story in the form of pictorial images arouses reader's curiosity and interest to know the characters and the way they interact with each other. Nathan Jurevicius (2009) conveys multiple messages to the readers through explicit and implicit cues embedded within the text. This study is an attempt to analyze the role of the voice markers that enable the reader to keep pace with the development of the story.

In a narrative, the term 'voice' refers to the overall structure of the narrative where the narrator plays a pivotal role in generating the narrative discourse and

establishing connection with the narratee. However, in a wordless graphic novel, the use of voice markers is important to generate a connection. It basically means that the narrator or the voice of the narrative employs certain techniques or makes use of signals to provide information to the narratee. My research aims to focus on the voice markers that specifically generate meanings for the reader in the selected wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl*. By paying close attention to the visuals, different meanings embedded within the text get generated.

Much research is available with regard to the visuals that form part of different texts. However, the researchers have accessed the graphic texts from different dimensions. Focalization and different viewpoints within the narratives/texts have been the focal points of the researchers. My research precisely focuses on the role of voice markers in a wordless graphic novel. The selection of the wordless graphic novel makes my research different from the previous ones. Although one such research on a wordless graphic novel is available, but I have selected a different wordless graphic novel from a different dimension. The basic reason for conducting this research is to examine the role of voice markers for understanding the wordless nature of the text. Without identifying the voice markers or signal phrases, it is difficult rather challenging for the reader to comprehend the narrative framework. The identification and analysis of the pictorial cues or voice markers provides access to the embedded meanings and readers find it convenient to decode the narrative then.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The novel selected for this research work is peculiar in the sense that it lacks words. The visuals within the novel remain incomprehensible to the readers due to the absence of words. The wordless nature of the novel makes it difficult for the readers to decode the text effectively. The absence of the text makes it harder for readers to grasp the themes and details which are, otherwise, provided by the written language. As the visuals are captionless, so the readers are required to concentrate on the use of different techniques in the visuals so as to understand the story narrated by the narrator. The story, however, has been presented in the form of eye-catching visuals that contain different characters. The captionless visuals have been presented to the readers in a sequential order. As these visuals provide limited information to the readers, so in depth deliberation and analysis is required for better understanding of the narrative. The

visuals can acquire value through the careful identification and analysis of the voice markers. Therefore, this study seeks to access the implicit layers of meaning through the application of compositional interpretation in particular. The afore-mentioned problem can be effectively handled through the selected method.

1.2 Research Questions

Q-1 What are the significant features of the visual content matter embedded in the wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl*?

Q-2 How does subjective expression of the narrator play a pivotal role in interpreting the selected graphic novel?

Q-3 How do pragmatic signals help in identifying the relationship between the addresser and the addressee in the selected narrative?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study attempts to identify and analyze the voice markers and their effectiveness in interpreting the selected wordless graphic wordless novel. This research will benefit the researchers and readers in manifold ways:

- 1) It particularly focuses on the visual analysis of the *The Adventures of Scarygirl* by Nathan Jurevicius. The implicit underlying stories embedded within the novel in the form of visuals can be accessed through the careful analysis of voice markers. The analysis of the voice markers provides an access to multiple interpretations of the narrative. This research will be an invaluable contribution to the existing body of knowledge by developing better understanding of Jurevicius's novel. The voice markers provide rich information about the narrator's viewpoint and the positioning of the narrator and the readers. Moreover, these markers pave way for better understanding of the wordless novel, improve research productivity and broaden the horizon.
- 2) Another significant aspect related to this study is the selection of wordless graphic novel in general and the voice markers in particular. There is dearth of research regarding the selected novel. The available literature focuses more on

the textual features of the graphic novels. My research is different as it focuses on the role of voice markers in meaning construction in a wordless graphic novel.

1.4 Delimitation

This research is delimited to the in depth analysis of the selected voice markers embedded within Jurevicius's wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl*. The study of voice markers provides access to the multiple interpretations of the novel. The graphic novel consists of two major parts. This study, however, focuses on the visuals given in the first part of the narrative.

1.5 Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1 provides detail concerning the key terms associated with narrativity and the selected wordless graphic novel.

Chapter 2 entails in depth discussion on the recent researches related to the selected research topic.

Chapter 3 justifies the selection of visual analysis for the study of Jurevicius's wordless graphic novel. Kress and Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar (2006) has been used as a theoretical lens for examining and interpreting pictorial narratives embedded within the novel.

Chapter 4 brings to the limelight the major findings pertaining to the wordless graphic novel.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions on the basis of the major research findings.

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section throws light on the key concepts and recent researches that relate to the selected research topic. The in depth analysis of the recent literature on the related topic indicates that visuals can play a pivotal role in generating underlying stories. Also, narratives appear in manifold ways but when it comes to pictures, then signs, shapes, colors and design present narrative formation. However, the major gap identifiable in the recent literature relates to the study of the visuals in the wordless graphic novel selected for this research study.

2.1 Pictorial Narrativity

Language plays a pivotal role in this world for communicating with others. Also, it facilitated people in the past as they utilized different means for effective communication. One of the means was pictorial narratives. In the past phase, the individuals remained connected to each other by using visuals, images and street arts. The umbrella term ‘narrative art’ first appeared in the 1960s, although the concept existed before this time period (Aktin, 2016). Besides, narrative mapping is a more aesthetic approach to telling a story called narrative art. This approach involves the telling of a story through the media of art which can involve the design and construction of a piece of work using techniques such as sculpture, drawing, painting, installation art, and other art-based media (Aktin, 2016).

According to Meo (2010), images can extend and richen our understanding of the social worlds of research participants (cited in Lapum et al., 2015). The domain of pictorial narratives not only covers the idea of observing images, but also the existence of characters, their role, reactions and behaviors. Sometimes, the characters present certain acts through prosody or else the images portray an underlying story. This phenomenon is known as pictorial narrativity and it focuses on the power of an image to generate numerous underlying stories. Furthermore, pictorial narrativity has the power to generate underlying stories and, in this regard, certain directions are required for conveying specific meanings. Stories can be effectively generated when the

components related to syntax, pragmatics, semantics are aligned in a pattern to develop subjective perception. In case of pictorial narration, the visual images contain the significant semiotic resources for communication. The pictorial content is a viewpoint-centered proposition, modeled as a set of pairs of a world at a time and a geometric viewpoint (Abusch, 2021).

Narrative focuses our attention on to a story, through the direct mediation of a ‘telling’ which we both stare at and through, which is at once central and peripheral to the experience of the story, both absent and present in the consciousness of those being told the story (Hawthorn, 1985). Visual story telling is a common mode in every society. It is basically a phenomenon where it denotes everything from an illustrated story-book to motion pictures. Further, there are three types of visual and narrative studies where the ‘ Dynamic Visual Narratives’ and ‘ Interactive Visual Narrative’ are sub genres of visual narrative (Hawthorn, 1985). A visual is something non-verbal that tells a story and be present in different forms: film, narrative painting, history painting, animation, sequential art, comics and pictorial narratives.

Visual narrative can be termed as a visual that narrates a story where something can be seen using the human eye. Basically, narrative signifies the act of telling a story or a story itself. The characteristic features of a VN are the presence of a story is that the visual is constructed with the idea of communicating a story to the onlooker with help of actors or participants. An actor is a character in the story who performs an action and the VN has a ‘universe of its own and a VN could be expressed on any medium e.g. paper, stone, an electronic device, etc. Narrative is the representation of an event or a series of events (Alber, 2010). Narrative art transmits messages to the viewers with the help of pictorial images. The visuals are embedded with the stories and can be understood rather decoded with the help of additional information given in the form of clues. Visual narration is far more appealing than the written narration due to its aesthetic appeal. However, untiring effort is required to create meaningful and suggestive visuals and to knit them together to generate or narrate a story.

Kelley (2010) points out that “Like a traditional piece of literature in which authors choose their words carefully, the graphic novelist thinks critically about the color, line, form, shape, and detail as well as the language he/she uses. In order to make it decodable, the understanding is devised on the bases of certain perimeters. According

to Kelley (2010), the pictorial narrativity of any wordless graphic novel is an important element when it comes to have strong impact on audience. In the past phase, the individuals remained connected to each other by using visuals, images and street arts. Relatedly, at present times, the power of connectivity still lies in pictorials where the reader develops interest via observing unique shapes, shades and colors of the images.

Furthermore, the visual is fixed but the viewer or the viewer's eye is mobile. The visual is viewed by a moving spectator, who finds connections between juxtaposed scenes that communicate a meaning. The spectator turns the pages or stands back in front of a sculptural panel; it is the eye that moves and explores the visual. Souriau (2016) illustrates this point by citing the example of a statue. His (the viewer's) movement around the statue brings to view, as it were, melodically, the various profiles, the different projections, shadow, and light; thus the most complete appreciation of the aesthetic complexity of the work is gained only by the moving spectator' (Souriau, 2016).

2.2 Basic Elements and Levels of a Narrative

Rayan (2007) states that the narrative consists of material signs, the discourse, which conveys a certain meaning (or content), the story, and fulfills a certain social function. This character of narrative presents three ways of defining narrative: discourse, story, and use. These domains correspond, roughly, to the three components of semiotic theory: syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. And if it complements with visuals, then it turns out as a mode where stories related to world can be triggered.

Broek et al.,(1994) state that narrative as a whole involves many things, including the context and circumstances surrounding a telling, the role of the author and/or narrator and addressee, how a text constructs a world and immerses a reader into it, the emotive qualities that a text elicits, and the ordering of events into a coherent sequence which may include inferred events that have not been overtly specified (cited in Giora, 1994). Therefore, narrator and the actions foster by him in the visuals play a role. Also the sequential parameters in this regard show another level of decoding when it comes to observe pictorial narratives. Narratives may also appear in the visual modality through film. In film, cameras capture events as they unfold in time — just as in perception. This ongoing temporal progression records a single unbounded stream of

events from one camera's viewpoint. However, when it comes to deal with static visuals in wordless graphic novels, source becomes a reason to grow perceptual ideas and measures to restore essence that can easily be shifted to directions other than the devised ones (Pimenta & Poovaiah, 2010).

According to Zahoor (2013), narrative grammar involves cognitive processes like frames, scripts, schemes to derive narrative understanding. The top is where the important things in a sequence happen, and it motivates the context for the rest of the sequence and improves readers and narrator's concentration for work (Zahoor, 2013). Prototypically, peaks correspond with the culmination of an event, or the confluence of numerous events. And related to this measure such sequencing grows reader's interest in understanding and decoding visuals to derive meanings.

Georgius (2009) suggests that narrative has three levels; narrative, underlying stories and frame setting where frame setting can be done by relating underlying stories to human life experience (cited in Jahn, 2021). It is quite easier to relate life experience to the historical perspectives as it is observed that humans throughout lived in colonies, groups and families. Keeping in mind their hemispheric contributions, they share similar attributes of language including understanding it. Oatley (1999) proposes that fiction is not mere description, rather it is simulation. Stories may have been the very first simulations, invented before computers. For simulations of all kinds, it is important to hold genre aesthetically where key emphasis should be primarily upon the colors and arrangements in order to produce more focused and descriptive fiction.

2.3 Difference between Story and Narrative Discourse

'The difference between story and narrative discourse is a difference between two kinds of time and two kinds of order' (Abbott, 2000). Chatman (1980) believes that the "narrative entails movement through time not only "externally" (the duration of the presentation of a novel, film play) but also "internally" (the duration of the sequence of events that constitutes a plot). The first operates in the dimension of narrative called discourse, the second is called story. The VN due to its visual quality makes a strong impact on readers and has been used extensively over the years. Human experiences play a pivotal role when it comes to narrate stories and come up with subjective opinions. It is not hard to relate real life experiences to the historical phases as it is seen

that humans throughout lived in colonies, groups and families. A convention refers to the socially imposed constraints that govern the selection of the most "apt and plausible" forms (or codes) of expression (written, and visual texts) to make a narrative maximally understood within a particular socio-historical context (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006).

According to Francastel (1967), there exists a distinction between ‘arts of time’ and ‘arts of space’; a view to which many scholars subscribe. The ‘arts of space’ produce static or fixed images that are two dimensional (painting) or three dimensional (sculpture); they thus lie outside the time category. They are in essence structurally distinct from music and poetry, which develop within a physically prolonged time (cited in Burke, 1971). They are further divided into three categories: static visual narrative, dynamic visual narrative and interactive visual narrative. In a DVN, the film unfolds in successive moments, in the case of the SVN the visual is frozen but the viewer’s eyes and mind move on. Also, Interactive Visual Narratives (IVNs) are the ones which fulfil three conditions that they are essentially visual in nature, have a narrative aspect to them and involve interaction from the viewer. Thus, IVNs are a distinct category from interactive stories that could be only text-based or oral narrative-based. The difference between ‘arts of time’ and ‘arts of space’ shows that how much important it is to value narrativity. The ‘arts of space’ produce fixed images that are two dimensional (painting) or three dimensional (sculpture) and they thus lie outside the time category where the only direction of understanding it to observe angle, axis, position along with the colors and characters .They are structurally different from music and poetry, which develop within a physically prolonged time. In this regard, interactive participants, representative participants and narrator play a great role.

2.4 Nature of Graphic Novels

The research paper “Analysis of Graphic Novels” by Saini (2020) explores the basic features of the graphic novels. The term “graphic novel” was first coined by Richard Kyle (cited in Saini, 2020). The researcher brings to limelight the major difference between a graphic novel and a comic book. Graphic novels have a long-lasting impact on readers due to the effective use of visuals in them. One of the prominent features of graphic novel is the arousal of curiosity on the basis of visuals. The readers find it difficult to ignore the visuals present in a novel and resultantly pay

more attention to them. Saini (2020) explains that graphic novels are not purely literature but present a unique combination of art and literature.

Drucker (2008) also focuses on the nature of graphic novels in the research paper “What is Graphic about Graphic Novels?” He states that the characteristics of visual materiality are enhanced by print technology to provide unique reading experiences to the readers. Graphic novels provide a new dimension to story-telling phenomenon. The researcher has selected two graphic novels “A survivor’s Tale” and “Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth by Spiegelman (1986) and Chris Ware (2000) respectively. Both the writers focus on communicative efficacy by graphic means. The graphic novels compel the readers to think and rethink about the nature of the visuals in the narrative. The extension of the imaginative world works wonders and generates unlimited meanings.

2.5 Graphic Novels and Visual Literacy—Pedagogical Implications

Seddighi (2019) focuses on the promotion of visual literacy for the enhancement of learners’ performance in the classrooms. She states that reading graphic novels is a challenging task and learners are required to be equipped with latest or up-to-date knowledge for decoding such novels. The research is delimited to the in depth analysis of narrative techniques used by the writer in the novel “Sensitive Creatures” Mandy Ord. The focal point of the research is to highlight the significance of some narrative techniques that make the reading process interesting and engaging and increase memorability of the graphic novel. The narrative techniques discussed in the research paper cover both written and visual techniques which are intentionally used by the writer for achieving special effects. The first narrative technique employed by the writer, according to Seddighi (2019), is the handwriting or font that is consistently used in the selected text. Font size and font style both require serious consideration on the part of the reader to understand implicit messages. Small font refers to the low unconfident voice and big font points towards loud tone in the graphic novel. Moreover, ‘panel-by-panel border’ and ‘panel borders’ are equally important and insightful techniques that draw attention towards the advancement of the story, transitions within the story and the significance of different aspects in the basic story framework. Speech balloons and narrative captions are also important narrative techniques that serve special function in the graphic novel. The placement of the speech bubbles refers to the

conventional or unconventional thinking patterns. Lastly, the technique of silence within the visual signifies readers' participation in decoding and interpreting the graphic novel. The readers are invited to apply their imaginative and reasoning capabilities to approach the visual. So, the researcher concludes that the use of such narrative techniques in the graphic novel greatly impacts readers' understanding of the text.

Discussing the educational implications of graphic novels, McLaughlin and Pilgrim (2018) draw a comparison of five books and their graphic novel counterparts in the research paper titled "Graphic Options: A Comparison of Stories and their Graphic Novel Counterparts". The major focus was on plot, theme, setting, character-development and conflict in the research paper. The findings indicate contrasting differences between the two formats. The researchers advocate the use of graphic novels in educational set up due to their popularity among young generation. Visual images have the power to communicate messages and entertain the readers effectively. Graphic novels differ from traditional novels in multiple ways. The most obvious difference relates to the use of words in a traditional novel and use of visuals in graphic novels. As Schwarz (2006) indicates that graphic novels are detailed and artful versions of comic books. Graphic novels, according to the researchers require a different kind of reading. The visual features such as color, shading, panel layout, perspective and lettering style need to be given attention for decoding the graphic novels. The researchers magnify the significance of such unconventional graphic novels for the successful transmission of knowledge to the learners in educational institutes. The major findings authenticate that the use of graphic novels in classrooms encourages rich discussion, improves problem solving skills, develops confidence and promotes intellectual and personal growth.

Burger (2017) brings to fore the multifaceted benefits of teaching graphic novels in the classroom so as to engage reluctant readers, encourage students to read such novels from fresh perspectives. Development of multimodal literacy skills takes place through the combination of text and image. This unique combination entuses the students to take interest in the graphic novels and get actively engaged in the meaning-making process. The readers involve their minds while reading both the visual and the narrative content. Such practices appear to be fruitful in teaching multiple skills to the students.

Hornbogen (2013) in her thesis “Graphic novels: Agents of reading engagement” illustrates that the graphic novels enhance students’ abilities to become active meaning makers of language. Graphics novels, according to Hornbogen (2013), can effectively be used for students of different levels. Plot, characterization and thematic structure can be examined by the students with interest and enthusiasm through the use of graphic novels in the classroom.

The research article “Reframing the graphic novel for in-service teachers: Reading, writing and creating comics” by Maples (2013) is quite informative in nature. The researcher divided the students into small groups and assigned different tasks to them. One of the tasks was to use sticky notes for highlighting significant points while dissecting the wordless graphic novels. The students had to give special attention to the placement, size, colors and structure of the visuals so as to have access to various elements of the narrative. The activity proved successful as the students got an opportunity to interact with one another while reading and interpreting the wordless novel.

2.6 Recent Researches on Graphic Novels and Narrative/Voice

Markers

The research article “A Stylistic Analysis of Montage” by Shirley N. Dita (2010) focuses on the stylistic analysis of Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta’s Montage. The poem has a unique grammatical structure which provides multiple dimensions to the readers. The researcher has delimited the study to the syntactic and lexical analysis of the poem. The pedagogical implications are also a part of this study. The findings bring to light the use of compounding, functional shift and instances of ambiguity in the selected work. The in depth analysis of the clause structure provides access to the underlying meanings of the text. The research has pedagogical implications as well for the ESL/EFL learners by developing an awareness among learners about the use of language in a text and the resulting constructions of meaning by the readers.

Srivastava (2016) provides interesting insights in her research article “Graphic Novels: Visual Narrative Theory and its Pedagogical Relevance”. The researcher highlights the fact that the new era is characterized by immense expansion where no combination seems to be unacceptable. The borders between unrelated areas like film

studies and science fiction have become blurred. The new culture of interdisciplinary practices increases the possibility of combining different disciplines. Graphic novels contain a unique amalgamation required to pay close attention to the pictures and their association with the words. According to the researcher, the world of graphics is quite appealing for the readers as it contains a color palette to entertain the readers. Certain important element of graphic novels require due consideration in this regard. The first page or the ‘splash page’, according to Srivastava (2016), introduces the plot and major characters to the readers. The sequential arrangement of the images/visuals is also equally important as it relates to the development of the story. The segments within the visual are termed as ‘frames’ or ‘panels’ by the researcher. These panels provide minor or major details to the readers. One interesting dimension highlighted by the researcher is the movement of the reader’s eyes and its key role in understanding the text. The major types of eye-movement, according to Srivastava (2016), are:

- a. Vergence Movement: in this movement, both the eyes carefully focus on the single image.
- b. Saccadic Movement: This eye-movement is quite rapid and allows the reader to make sense of the main idea.
- c. Pursuit Movement: This eye-movement is preferred when the visual foregrounds the movement of animate or inanimate objects.

As far as the use of texts and illustrations in a graphic novel is concerned, writers prefer various combinations. McCloud defines the major combinations in detail (cited in Chatman, 1980):

- a. Word-Specific: Here, words matter more.
- b. Duo-Specific: Both the images and words convey the same meaning.
- c. Additive Combination: Words provide additional information regarding the image.
- d. Parallel combination: Words and visuals do not interact and convey different meanings.
- e. Montage Combination: Words are considered essential in interpreting visuals.
- f. Interdependent Combination: Both words and visuals strengthen the same idea.

So, the researchers necessitates the inclusion of graphic art in academic curriculum so as to enhance and broaden the vision of the learners.

Mamo (2010) focuses on the voice markers so as to analyze the story in the selected story in the dissertation titled “Analysis of Narrative Voice in R. C. Binstock’s *Tree of Heaven*.” He also analyses the relationship between the author and the narrator on the basis of the voice markers. By paying attention to the voice markers, the relationship between the narrator and the reader becomes obvious. The study is significant because thorough analysis of the text indicates the presence of two narrators. Further, it indicates that the narrators are totally different from the author.

Another significant study titled “On Narrative Markers in the Narrator’s Voice in the English Translation of *Sanyan*” (Lang, 2022) highlights the use of voice markers in *Sanyan* which is a collection of classic Chinese vernacular short stories in the Ming Dynasty. The main focus is on the development of the story through the use of voice markers. Moreover, the researcher notices the deletion or replacement of certain voice markers in the translated text due to redundancy and conflict with the English norms. However, the basic framework of the story has been maintained by the translator through the effective use of voice markers. The researcher notices the close relationship between the narrator and the reader on the basis of the in depth dissection of the voice markers. Basically, this research aims at providing insights into the use of voice markers in the short stories and the way these voice markers get affected during the process of translation. The translated text not only gives an alien sense to the reader, but also makes the text more concise and flexible for the target readers.

The research article “Narrative Perspective in a Wordless Graphic Novel: Shaun Tan’s *The Arrival*” by Johnson (2005) focuses on the identification of the narrator and the focalizer on the basis of voice markers. The research seems to be interesting and challenging as the novel contains wordless graphics. With the help of voice markers or pictorial cues, the researcher highlights the presence of the narrator and the focalizer in the selected visuals. Apparently it seems that the wordless graphic novel does not contain any narrator or focalizer, but thorough analysis of the voice markers enables the researcher to comprehend the deeper meanings associated with the narrative.

Klomberg and Cohn (2022) focus on the inferential techniques used by the writers in visual narratives. These inferential techniques enable the readers to identify the underlying unseen and implicit situations that play a significant role in the development of the visual narrative. Comprehension of a visual narrative is a

challenging task but the use of inferential techniques aids readers in decoding the narrative. The researchers conducted two self-paced reading experiments in order to focus on the comparison of the different types of inferential techniques and the effect of the combination of techniques respectively. The major findings indicate the significance of bridging inferences in decoding visual narratives.

Ly (2001) opines that visual images serve a significant semiotic resources for communication. According to them, images are rich in meaning potential. The visual grammar structures enable the readers to decode the narrative. They selected two advertising images for visual grammar analysis. Through the application of Kress and Leeuwen's Theory (2006), the researchers draw the conclusion that wordless graphics can also generate meanings and stories through the in depth analysis of pictorial cues.

One very important research paper titled "The Narrative Functions of Sound-Symbolic Words in Comics and Graphic Novels" by Dey and Bokil (2020) illustrates the functions of various visual elements in comics and graphic novels. The researchers have analyzed popular comics and graphics novel with regard to the use of SSWs (sound-symbolic words). The important narrative functions, according to Dey and Bokil (2020) are termed as temporal-marker, spatial-marker, action-marker, emotion-marker and identity-marker. Extension and expansion of meanings takes place through the analysis of these narrative markers in the selected works

Conclusion

The Adventures of Scary Girl is a young girl's story that has been written by Nathan Jurevicius. In order to decode and interpret the story, the wordless visuals needs to be analyzed through the voice markers. Although the visuals in the wordless graphic novel are static, yet they may lead to an understanding of the narrative through the analysis of the voice markers. The graphics of the novel may acquire meaning with the help of the voice markers. The recent researches clearly indicate that no work has been done on the selected wordless graphic novel. Moreover, the selected voice markers have been analyzed by the researchers in different literary pieces. So, my research work is different from the previous researches and significantly contributes to the already existing literature on the selected topic.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the selected theoretical framework and research method for conducting research on the use of voice markers in the selected wordless graphic novel. It outlines the underlying theoretical perspectives that inform the study, emphasizing how the voice markers enable readers to interpret the graphic novel without textual elements.

3.1 Theoretical framework

3.1.1 Theory of Voice Markers

This research work has been carried out through the application of Jahn's (2021) theory of voice markers to the selected wordless graphic novel "The Adventures of Scarygirl". According to Jahn (2021), "voice" in narratology basically focuses on "who speaks"? The narrator marks the voice of the narrative. Genette (2016) provides a comprehensive definition of the term "narrator". According to him, a narrator is the speaker or voice of the narrative discourse who establishes connection with the narratee by deciding what to tell, how to tell and what sequence best suits the needs of the readers. For the purpose of better understanding, voice markers play a significant role in decoding and making sense of the narrative. Jahn (2021) states that voice markers can also be called as signal phrases because these cues or signals enable the readers to relate the events or incidents given in a sequential order in a narrative. Also, these voice markers or signal phrases assist the readers in knowing and understanding the characters interwoven in the narrative. Basically, voice markers communicate messages to the readers effectively. Wu (2007) argues that the voice markers generate implicit meanings and broaden the reading experiences of the reader. According to Jahn (2021), the three significant voice markers are: content matter, subjective expression and pragmatic signals. This research work focuses on these voice markers in the selected text.

3.1.2 Types of Voice Markers

1. Content Matter

The content matter holds much significance in a narrative. According to Jahn (2021), there are different signal phrases for happy, sad, comic and tragic subjects. The setting and the characters may indicate the overall atmosphere of the narrative. The insignificant details given in a narrative may acquire significance if the readers pay attention to the content matter as it leads to better understanding of the text. My research focuses on the analysis of the setting and major and minor characters that appear insignificant to the readers. Close examination of the apparently insignificant details paves way for better understanding of the wordless graphic novel.

2. Subjective expression

It indicates narrator's education, beliefs, conviction, interest, values, political and ideological orientation and attitude towards people (Jahn, 2021). An understanding of the narrator's ideology, perception and mindset broadens the level of interpretation. There are certain subjective expressions embedded within the narrative and these significant expressive markers need to be analyzed properly by the readers. So, this research is an attempt to magnify the role of such subjective expressions embedded within the visual cues that lead to better comprehension.

3. Pragmatic signals

According to Jahn (2021), these are the expressions that signal the narrator's awareness of the audience and the degree of his/her orientation towards it. These signals basically highlight the nature of the relationship between the narrator and the reader. My research work entails the in depth analysis of the pragmatic signals that bring to the fore the transmission of the message by the narrator and the role of the reader in this regard. The relationship between the narrator and the reader holds much significance in the interpretation of the visual or graphic narrative.

3.2 Theory of Visual Grammar

This research work is also based on Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) theory of visual grammar. According to them, multimodal texts are more complex than the written texts because of visual images, written language, design elements and other

semiotic resources. Both argue that visuals occupy a central position in the grammar of communication. Multimodality deals with the combination of different semiotic modes like language and music and it also refers to the different ways in which number of different semiotic resource systems are co deployed and co-contextualized to construct a text specific meaning. It is an analysis of the rules and principles that allows viewers to understand the meaning potential of relative placement of elements, framing, salience, proximity, color saturations, styles of typeface, etc. (Machin, 2007). Also, it is a complex meaning making activity that has undergone rapid changes in the social, economic and technological context.

Kress (2006) states that written text is associated with the logic of time or temporal sequence whereas visual images are governed by the logic of spatiality, organized arrangements and simultaneity.

He further suggests:

- The meaning is derived from position in the temporal sequence of written text, whereas meaning is made from the spatial relations or grammar of visual texts.
- In visual images, the position, size and composition of the contents of the image play an important role in meaning making. My research work focuses on the analysis of the visuals used by the writer in his wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl*. The visuals generate a comprehensible story on the basis of the in depth analysis of the characters, their expressions, their interaction with each other and setting. Moreover, the placement, the color selection, the size and style of the visuals is of utmost significance in decoding the narrative.

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) believe that the images, colors and music including other visual modes are similar to the language where they can simultaneously fulfill and realize the three broad metafunctions of language. In their view, image and other visual modes can represent objects and their relations in a world outside the representational system, so there are many ideational choices available for visual sign-making in visual communication. Images and other visual modes have the capacity to form text, complexes of signs that internally correlate with each other and externally with the context for which they were produced. The wordless graphic novel selected for this research work contains images only. The verbal mode and the element of music

are missing in this selected work, so the focus is on the projection of visuals. Through the application of the selected theory, multiple interpretations get generated.

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) indicate that visual design, like all semiotic modes, fulfils three metafunctions, and incorporate Halliday's ideas into their theoretical framework of visual grammar.

Representational dimension

It stems from Halliday's (1994) ideational meta-function and highlights the nature of the relationship that exists between the world and things within us (Ly, 2001). Kress and Leeuwen (2006) refer to two types of participants in their framework. The first type, represented participants, refers to the people, places and things that are represented in images and texts. The second type, interactive participants, refers to those who produce the images and texts (e.g. painters, photographers) and those who view and read them. Both types of participants are the focal point of this research work.

According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the representational dimension is typified by two major processes:

- **Narrative process:** In narrative processes, the represented participants in an image are connected by a vector, a line formed by elements in the image. Vectors can be formed by bodies, limbs or tools in action when participants are represented as doing something to or for each other. The narrative process is dynamic in nature as it unfolds actions.
- **Conceptual process:** In contrast to narrative processes, the conceptual processes are static (no vectors) and represent participants in terms of their "more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, structure or meaning.

Both the processes have been considered in this research project. In order to analyze the visuals given in the novel, it is necessary to identify the participants and the processes at the initial most stage.

Interactive Dimension

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) present a second dimension which shows an interaction between the producer and the viewer of the image (interactive participants) and it is based on Halliday's interpersonal function. According to them, producers visually encode social meanings into images through the gaze of the represented participant, the distance of the participant from the viewer and the angle from which this is seen by the viewer. The third voice marker selected for this research focuses on the narrator's awareness of an audience and his/her orientation towards it. So, the interactive dimension is also the focal point of this research. The graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl* narrates story through the sequential arrangement of visuals only, so it is not possible to analyze the different types of viewpoints in verbal mode. Therefore, this study precisely pays attention to gaze, distance and angle for better comprehension of the novel. Through the application of this theoretical dimension on the graphic novel, the nature of the relationship between the addressor and the addressee acquires visibility.

Compositional Dimension

It relates to the composition of the whole, the way in which the representational and interactive elements are made to relate to each other, the way they are integrated into a meaningful whole (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). It involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). The research work, therefore, entails the proper analysis of these visual features for an understanding of the selected narrative. In verbal mode, the selection of words is considered important for better comprehension, while in a wordless graphic novel the visuals are accessed and analyzed from different dimensions so that it appears comprehensible and interpretable.

3.3 Research Design

This research is qualitative in nature where the process of inquiry seeks an in depth understanding of some phenomena. Shank (2002) considers qualitative research as a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning where the researcher follows a proper sequence for conducting research and the research is grounded in experience. By following this systematic procedure, meanings get generated and the researcher is

in a position to make sense of the world. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), qualitative research is interpretive and naturalistic in nature as the researcher explores some phenomenon in a setting through active engagement. Meanings and interpretation are not discoverable, rather they get constructed in contextualized settings. My research work focuses on the construction of meanings through active engagement with the visuals projected in the wordless graphic novel by Nathan Jurevicius (2009). In order to make sense of the wordless graphic novel, the captionless/wordless visuals have been analyzed qualitatively. In depth dissection of the visuals with the help of voice markers activates the process of meaning-making.

3.4 Research Method

Basically, this research has been carried out through the application of compositional interpretation to the selected text. This method, compositional interpretation, was introduced by Rose (2001). For the in depth analysis of visuals given in the selected graphic novel, according to Rose (cited in Griffin, 2005), compositional interpretation is required which offers a way of looking at the content and form of images. Composition, basically, refers to the structure of an image and the interrelatedness of its elements (cited in Griffin, 2005). Rose (2001) emphasizes the fact that the researchers are required to concentrate on the colors, saturation, value and the relationship that exists between these components) (cited in Griffin, 2005). The internal organization of the image is highly significant as it helps in the positioning of the viewer and the producer. The research design selected for this study entails systematic and in depth analysis of the content of the selected images or visuals present in the wordless graphic novel and the way the components of images work together to position the viewers and the producers. Leeuwen (2006) states that the application of visual analysis to pictorial forms may generate layers of meanings and the prime purpose of this method is to investigate what/who is being depicted and what ideas and values are expressed through what and how the image is represented in a specific form.

3.5 Sampling

Purposive sampling technique has been used for conducting this research. This method allows for an in depth examination of key visuals, facilitating a deeper understanding of theme, the narrator's mindset and the relationship between characters

and the narrator and readers. Purposive sampling ensures that the analysis is concentrated on the most informative visuals, enhancing the overall relevance of the findings. So, the visuals containing significant voice markers in part one of the wordless graphic novel have been selected for this research. The selected visuals are rich in information and pertinent to the research objectives.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

In order to carry out research regarding visual narrativity, language, in visual art communication, takes the form of sound, scents, flavors, actions, situations and emotions. Through images, the artists communicate their message effectively to the recipients. But this communicative process remains incomplete without active engagement of the recipients.

A number of components need to be considered for the compositional interpretation of visuals. The selected graphic novel consists of two parts, however, this research work focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the selected images given in part one only. The compositional interpretation of the selected visuals has been carried out in a systematic way:

a. Content

The analysis of the content is the starting point of this research. The image or the visual contains some basic information about the character/s and setting of the narrative. This basic step is useful in investigating the first research question formulated for this research work. Without basic understanding of the narrative, the in depth interpretations are not possible. In order to identify the mood, tone or overall atmosphere of the story, the details given in the visuals serve as voice markers. Through the analysis of the signal markers, the story appears meaningful and comprehensible. Here, the application of the representational dimension of the selected theory provides access to the represented and the interactive participants.

b. Expressive content and color

The expressive content is associated with the affective characteristics of an image. The narrator gives vent to his/her feelings through the projection of the images in a specific way. The feel of an 'image' can be accessed through words in a narrative.

On the contrary, in a wordless graphic novel the analysis of the expressive markers in the form of visuals can lead to comprehensibility. The second research question, in particular, investigates the role of subjective expressions in the selected work. The analysis of expressive content provides access to the narrator's interest, ideology and perception. This aspect of compositional interpretation is based on Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) conceptual process of representational dimension to explore and analyze the narrator's mindset. Moreover, the analysis of color in the visuals further help in analyzing the narrator's viewpoint. For this purpose, hue and value of the color will provide access to the narrator's mindset. Through the application of the compositional dimension of visual grammar (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006), the aspects of salience and framing have also been considered for better interpretation of the selected graphic novel.

c. Spatial organization

The visuals are organized in a systematic way according to the thematic progression of the story. This research work considers the spatial organization within the image and the way the way the image offers a particular viewing position to its readers. The analysis of the selected images is guided by the interactive dimension presented by Kress and Leeuwen (2006). The nature of the relationship between the addresser and the addressee has been investigated keeping in view the third research question. Gaze, social distance and angle are the focal points in this regard.

So, the voice markers have been identified and interpreted through visual analysis method focusing on the represented participants, color scheme, margins, size of the visuals, gaze, social distance and angle for understanding the basic theme, narrator's mindset and the relationship between the addressor and the addressee.

CHAPTER 4

4. DATA ANALYSIS

This section deals with the identification and in depth analysis of the voice markers embedded in the wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scary Girl* by Nathan Jurevicius (2009). It is an unusual graphic novel that does not contain words as such. There are only a limited number of visuals in the selected novel that contain words. The visuals are of utmost significance as they speak to the readers and invite them to pay attention to hidden details with the help of voice markers. The narrator makes use of different voice markers that have been analyzed sequentially in this section. The analysis of every visual consists of three subparts in order to address the research questions set for this study. The detail of the subparts is given below:

Content

This section focuses on the represented participants that include the major setting and the characters highlighted by the narrator in the visual. The readers are required to attend to the specific detail regarding the setting and characters in order to develop better understating of the narrative. This mental activity on the part of the readers increases participation between the narrator and the readers. So, the analysis of these voice markers relates to the first research question.

Expressive content and color

In order to address the second research question, this section primarily focuses on the colors, sizes and margins of the visuals. These are, in fact, significant subjective voice markers that provide access to the narrator's viewpoints and attitudes towards people.

Spatial orientation

This is an equally important section which addresses the third research question. The pragmatic signals include gaze, social distance and angle. The analysis of these pragmatic markers highlights the nature of the relationship between the narrator and the readers.



Figure 1

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

For the in depth analysis of the story, this section focuses on the voice markers that highlight the overall atmosphere of the image. The wordless image can only be accessed through the signal markers or the voice markers. The analysis of the content matter is given below:

Represented and Interactive Participants

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) refer to two types of participants in their framework, that is, represented and interactive participants. As per the representational dimension provided by them, the first visual of the graphic novel contains multiple animate and inanimate objects. The presence of the two owls is a significant voice marker in the image. It indicates that the basic plot of the story revolves around birds and animal figures. The moving car in the same image signals the presence of some person inside it. It appears meaningful and leads the readers towards the basic theme of the story. By connecting the two represented participants in the visual, it becomes clear that the protagonist of the story attempts to reach a specific destination and the birds and animal figures play a significant role during this journey. The owls are attentive at midnight so as to keep an eye on the traveler and ensure safety. The unseen traveler is traveling at night. Darkness prevails in this image and the visible branches of the trees intensify the scary atmosphere of the image. The combined effect of darkness and scary branches of the trees is unavoidable. The journey towards the destination seems to be risky and life-threatening. However, the movement of the car and the visibility of the car lights are the only sources of hope to the traveler. It seems to be a long journey as the traveler is moving through a dense forest. According to Genette (2016), a narrator is the speaker or voice of the narrative discourse who establishes connection with the narratee by deciding what to tell, how to tell and what sequence best suits needs of the readers. So, the projection of the represented participants by the narrator is highly suggestive. The narrator and the reader are the interactive participants. The narrator provides much information to the readers with the help of voice markers. It is the narrator who paints the entire story for the convenience of the readers. Without adequate signals or markers, it is difficult for the readers to decode the story.

b. Expressive content and color

The conceptual processes are static and represent participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, structure or meaning. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) state that the composition of the entire visual pertains to the integration of the representational and interactive elements. If we have a close look at the image, certain voice markers like the objects, their placing, arrangements, color and prosodic features highlight the narrator's subjective expression rather point of view about the story. The narrator is interested in telling the readers about the realistic dimension to life. According to the narrator, life is a journey and it is replete with hazards and unexpected events. There is nothing uncertain in this world. The visual also indicates that the narrator has firm belief in struggle as it ultimately leads to success. The visual is, no doubt, scary in nature but it has some positive connotations as well. The narrator starts the story in a very exquisite manner.

According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the compositional dimension of the story involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). In fact, composition basically refers to the structure of an image and the interrelatedness of its elements (cited in Griffin, 2005). In the selected image, a real situation is there because the traveler is experiencing a major phase of his/her life. This visual does not reveal the identity of the traveler. Secondly, the size of the birds is large enough and the readers cannot simply ignore their presence. The owls are directly looking at the car or they are fully conscious of its presence in the jungle. The birds have been foregrounded and the mountains have been placed in the background by the narrator. The mountains seem to be blurred as well. The light and dark colors are significant voice markers to draw the attention of the readers towards the prominent features of the setting and their role in the development of the plot. The prominence of the black color depicts dullness or gloominess. It highlights the mindset of the narrator. It shows how the narrator feels about world, people and problems. He/she seems to have a pessimistic view towards life.

c. Spatial organization

Rose (2001) states that the internal organization of the image is highly significant as it helps in the positioning of the viewer and the producer (cited in Griffin, 2005). The visuals are organized in a systematic way according to the thematic

progression of the story. The spatial organization within the image and the way the way the image offers a particular viewing position to its readers function as important voice markers. The pragmatic signals are equally important and highlight active relationship between the addresser and the addressee. Addresser is the narrator of the story and whatever he/she wants to deliver can be presented in the wordless graphic novel via image descriptions and positioning of the characters and the readers. Addressee is the reader and interprets the visuals through the pragmatic signals. The analysis of the relationship between the addresser and the addressee is given here:

Gaze

Gaze plays a pivotal role in the activation of imagination. Basically, vector gets formed between the represented participant and the viewer or reader. In the visual, the represented participants have a special role to play in the development of the story. The represented participants enter into an imaginary relationship with the viewer or the reader (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). Without active engagement on the part of the reader, the content of the image appears to be meaningless. So, the gaze holds special significance in making sense of the wordless graphic novel. The represented participants are not looking directly at the reader. Rather their attention is directed towards the moving car. Their focused gaze invites the readers to take into account the presence of the car in the thick and dark forest. So, their gaze is a significant pragmatic marker as it enables the readers to interpret the story at a deeper level. The owls are staring at the car and the element of strangeness is quite obvious in their eyes. They are, in fact, surprised to see the car in the jungle. The straight posture of the owls signifies that are fully alert and perhaps they are ready to remain alert till the time the journey ends.

Social distance

The presence of the first owl is highly suggestive in the visual. The reduced distance between the owl and the reader indicates some intimate social connection between the two participants. The entire body of the owl is not visible. It means that the reader is somewhere near the owl and can conveniently analyze the situation. According to Hall (2000), the shorter the distance between the participant and the viewer, the more intimate the relation becomes (cited in Griffin, 2005).

Angle

According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), there are two types of angles: Horizontal and Vertical. The horizontal angles indicates involvement while the vertical angles indicates detachment (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006). In the selected visual, the represented participant, the owl, is seen from a high angle. This special positioning of the owl gives power to the reader. This horizontal angle indicates high level of involvement between the represented participant and the reader.



Figure 2

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Genette (2016) clearly states that a narrative is the representation of an event or of a sequence of events. In order to decode the captionless visuals, it is important to analyze the use of first voice marker, that is, content to comprehend the way different parts of the story have been arranged and narrated by the narrator. Jahn (2021) puts emphasis on the employment of content matter as a significant voice marker in graphic novels. In the second visual, limited represented participants can be seen. The car in the jungle is now speeding towards the destination. It seems as if the unseen driver is unaware of the impending danger. The sharp beaks of the birds directed towards the car highlight the fact that every creature in the jungle is fully alert due to the movement of the car in silence and pitch darkness. The sharp look with which the birds are staring at the car is quite meaningful and hints at some impending danger. The half visible stems of the trees appear scary and bring about extension in meaning. The overall message associated with the represented participants is that the journey is full of unexpected hazards.

The narrator and the reader are the interactive participants. The narrator weaves the story effectively through the use of voice markers. Such is the presentation of the scene that the entire atmosphere looks scary and intimidating to the readers on the basis of the voice markers embedded in the visual.

b. Expressive content and color

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) argue that visuals occupy a central position in the grammar of communication. Visuals have the power to convey a lot of information to the readers through the use of signal phrases, cues or voice markers (Jahn, 2021). By taking a closer look at the image, certain meanings through the voice markers get created. Darkness prevails in the image which somehow reveals the author's mindset as well. The author seems to be approaching life pessimistically. Life, according to the author, is full of hurdles and challenges. These hurdles and challenges are a concomitant part of life and there is no escape from them. Every living creature is required to

experience them willingly or unwillingly. Bitter experiences may acquire multiple unlimited forms. We should always be mentally prepared to experience them.

The compositional dimension of the story, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). In the image, the projection of the real situation is there as real-life characters participate in the narrative. Secondly, size of the car in this image is small enough as it is being viewed from some high position. Black color depicts night time and it highlights the ideology of the narrator. It basically shows how narrator feels about world, people and problems here. It also indicates that we need some companionship during the unexpected twists and turns of life. There is no escape from such unexpected incidents and one is supposed to face them willingly or unwillingly. Future remains unseen as is evident from the image as well. The car follows the track but the end-point is not visible. So, the element of uncertainty prevails the entire situation.

c. Spatial organization

Kress (2003) indicates that written text is associated with the logic of time or temporal sequence whereas visual images are governed by the logic of spatiality, organized arrangements and simultaneity. The elements within the visual are organized in a systematic way according to the thematic progression of the story. The sequential arrangement of the animate and inanimate things is noticeable enough in the visual. The readers cannot simply ignore the selection and arrangement of the elements in this visual.

Gaze

Gaze plays a pivotal role in the transmission of message between the addressor and the addressee. The link that gets created between the represented participant and the viewer is important enough. The most important represented participant in this visual is the group of birds. The birds are half-visible and their pointed beaks and curious gaze hint at some danger ahead. Their gaze is very meaningful and suggestive. The pointed beaks also appear as significant pragmatic markers as they are precisely directed towards the car. The viewers can conveniently follow the direction of their gaze and understand that the presence of car in the jungle is the focal point of the writer.

So, the connection between the addressor and the addressee gets established through the wordless gaze of the birds.

Social Distance

The scene is being viewed from a high angle and the readers feel that they are observing the entire situation by sitting next to the birds. The readers are given a chance to view the entire scene closely. The close view reveals the fact that the traveler inside the car is traveling alone amidst silence and darkness. The readers conveniently enter the graphics of the visual through such reduced social distance between the participants.

Angle

According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the visual design, like other semiotic modes, fulfils interactive metafunction by creating a link between the narrator and the narratee. The main participants are presented to the readers either through horizontal or vertical angles. In the selected image, the horizontal angle provides an opportunity to the reader to view the entire situation closely. The reader considers himself/herself to be sitting next to the birds. The horizontal angle is quite useful and informative to the reader. This angle enables the readers to foresee the upcoming danger. The feelings and thinking pattern of the birds get transmitted to the reader as well. This voice marker is equally significant in creating links between the represented participants and the viewer/reader. As the reader is now a part of the forest, so better understanding regarding the scary atmosphere and unexpected hurdles gets developed.



Figure 3

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

In their influential framework on visual grammar, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) explore the concept of represented participants, which refers to people, places, and things depicted in images. Jahn (2021) labels these signals as voice markers in his theoretical framework. Participants are crucial elements in constructing meaning, as they are portrayed through various representational strategies that reflect social and cultural contexts. By analyzing the roles and interactions of these participants within visual compositions, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) provide insights into how images communicate messages and influence viewer perceptions. In the third visual, it is obvious that the car is now trapped and damaged. The visual content matter is a significant voice marker in introducing the basic details to the reader. In image three, there are some dark projections that arouse curiosity in the reader's mind. These dark projections or branches of trees correspond with the tragic incident experienced by the scary girl. The scary girl for the very first time appears in this image. The visual is divided into five parts and in the third part the reader is given a chance to have a closer look at the girl. Her apparent condition is pathetic and she seems to have fainted. The represented participants include the scary girl, damaged car and horrifying trees. Moreover, in the second and third parts of the visual, the readers can clearly see the things scattered around the scary girl.

The interaction takes place between the narrator and the reader. The narrator skilfully unfolds the story for the readers in a gradual way. The projection of the characters and the setting aids the readers in comprehending different episodes of the narrative.

b. Expressive content and color

The expressive voice markers present within the narrative clearly showcase the narrator's subjective opinion about the characters and the overall thematic structure. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) state that the color scheme, size and margins of the visual play a pivotal role in highlighting the subjective views of the narrator. The analysis of the compositional dimension of the visual brings to light a number of significant

aspects. This step involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). Through the use of specific colors, the visual evokes certain emotions and moods that align with the narrator's perspective (Kress and Leeuwen 2006).

In the visual, the projection of real-life situation is there but it contains the element of fantasy as well. The second part presents the tragic state of the scary girl from a distance and in the next image the readers are given a chance to view the current state of the scary girl closely. In the third part of the image, the magnified view of the girl shows that the narrator deliberately foregrounds her to let the readers know about the loss that she has experienced. The readers take interest in looking at her belongings that are scattered around the scary girl. The scary girl is in a state of unconscious as her eyes are closed and her face is badly bruised. The use of dull colors in the visual assists the readers in comprehending the tragic incident and its after-effects. The story gets constructed by focusing on the visual cues or voice markers present in the form of color, size and placement of the visual on the page. There is emphasis on the dark phase in the life of the scary girl through the use of dull colors that dominate the entire visual. However, one noticeable thing in the last part of the visual is the reflection of the light of the car on one of the eyes of the girl. It functions as a very significant voice marker because it generates the message that life is the name of vicissitudes. There should always be some ray of hope in order to embrace the difficulties of life with a courageous face. The moment the readers notice some spark on the girl's eye, they feel the presence of some new character in the next part of the image where the arms of that unknown character gain prominence. The new character is introduced by giving a brief glimpse to the readers. The voice markers are strongly connected to each other and help in the construction of the narrative in the mind of the readers. The dark margins around every part in the visual make the readers understand that information given in all the parts needs to be given primary significance. The thickness of the margins serves as an effective voice marker; transferring multiple messages to the readers about the characters and the setting. The narrator's depiction of the scary girl trapped in a troublesome situation points towards the gloomy side of life. According to the narrator, we cannot foresee anything and, therefore, face difficulty in the execution of the plans. The dismal episodes of life are beyond our control and we can only feel helplessness in such phases. The adverse circumstances strongly impact us physically and mentally.

The narrator defines life with the help of various visuals. The expressive voice markers hidden within this visual provide access to the narrator's viewpoint.

So, the deliberate choice of colors, size and margins, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), emphasizes particular elements, guiding the viewer's attention and reinforcing the narrator's personal focus and biases. The selected visual reflects the narrator's internal world through the analysis of the given cues.

c. Spatial organization

The placement of visual elements acts as effective voice marker that helps generate specific meanings within a composition (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The five parts of the visual are organized in a systematic way as per the thematic progression of the story. This level considers the spatial organization within the image. As in the written text, the paragraphs show unity through connectors or turn signals, similarly, the division of one visual into different parts is dependent upon coherence. In every part, there are certain clues related to the next part. For that reason, the readers remain glued to the visual out of curiosity and interest. These pragmatic signals are signposts for the readers and build a strong connection between the addresser (narrator) and the addressee (reader). By positioning elements in strategic locations, such as the center or margins, the visual narrative highlights their importance or marginality, thus influencing the viewer's interpretation (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006).

Certain things shared by the addresser are constructively used by the reader to make sense of the narrative. The visual comprises of five visuals that point towards an alarming situation. The effects associated with the car accident have been foregrounded for the readers.

Gaze

The girl can be seen in the second and third parts of the visual. But there is much clarity in the third part where the girl is lying unconscious with her eyes closed. There is no eye contact between the girl and the reader. The reader observes her closely and feels the pain that is experienced by the girl after the tragic incident. It may be termed as some sort of repetition where variation is there. The narrator takes the readers close to the girl to observe her. This experience on the part of the reader is evocative in nature. The readers are ready to sympathize with the girl on the basis of their close observation.

Spatial arrangement not only directs attention, but also conveys the narrator's intended emphasis and perspective, as Jahn (2021) mentions in his theoretical framework.

Social Distance

The girl is, in fact, inviting the readers to pay special attention to her pathetic condition and way the light of the car falls on one of her eyes. The distant projection of the girl in the second part and the close-up in the third part are in juxtaposition to each other. Variation in this distance helps the readers in determining the role of fate in the life of a person. The closer look at the girl reveals the fact that she is helpless in the hands of fate that has turned against her. The reduced distance in the third part enables the readers to understand the intensity of the loss experienced by the girl. Nothing is in place. The car is completely destroyed and even the things present within the car are badly damaged.

Angle

This level deals with the angle from which the events or incidents are seen or observed by the readers (Jahn, 2021). The angle can be horizontal or vertical. The vertical angle in the second part of the visual keeps the readers away from the girl. The readers are forced to observe the situation objectively. Also, it indicates that the reader is standing at a distance from the scary girl. The tragic condition of the girl is a bit unclear or vague when viewed from a distance. On the other hand, the horizontal angle in the third part of the visual strongly connects the represented participants and the readers. The readers observe the entire tragic incident closely and with the element of subjectivity. Such is the use of horizontal angle by the narrator that the reader imagines to be moving towards the girl so as to observe the whole scenario closely and with keen interest. It means that the readers automatically take keen interest in the projection of the girl and her belongings due to the use of horizontal angle by the narrator.



Figure 4

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Jahn's theory of voice markers (2021) suggests that participants represented visually within a narrative act as effective signals for storytelling by guiding the reader's perception and interpretation of the narrative. These visual cues, according to Jahn (2021), help to establish the narrative voice, indicating who is telling the story and from what perspective. By highlighting certain characters or elements within the visual frame, these markers can enhance the reader's understanding of the story and the relationship between the participants, thus enriching the overall narrative experience.

The fourth visual is a collage of several incidents which are embedded within the narrative. It contains seven sub-divisions that are equally important. Some dark projections get bigger and acquire visibility. It is a foregrounding technique with the help of which the basic characters and setting of the story are gradually introduced in order to keep the element of interest intact. In the previous visual, the narrator provided some clues to the reader regarding the presence of some new character. The lower limbs or arms of the new character were the focal point. In this visual, only the face of the new character named as Blister is visible to the readers. Another represented participant is the scary girl who was badly injured due the unexpected car accident. Initially, the girl seems to be scared of the presence of Blister, but later feels drawn towards him due to that positive vibes surrounding him. In the last part of the visual, both of them seem to be enjoying in the comfort zone.

The narrator deliberately sub-divides the entire visual into different segments that are, in fact, interrelated and develop the story further. The represented participants discussed in the previous section are effective voice markers that build strong connection between the narrator and the reader. The readers attend to the visual with full alertness because the visual lacks words and rigorous mental effort on the part of the readers is required for decoding the visual. The readers never feel passive due to the slippery and thought-provoking nature of the visuals. The projection of the scary atmosphere gets intensified when the readers focus on the exposition of the narrative.

b. **Expressive content and color**

The embedded nature of the voice markers facilitates the readers in understanding the overall story. The represented and interactive participants unfold the basic structure of the story. Furthermore, the use of specific color, sizes and margins help the readers in constructing the story. All these serve as effective voice markers as the readers fail to find any words or text within the visuals. The closer look at the visual and specific focus on the afore-mentioned aspects reflect subjective expression rather point of view of the narrator. The narrator presents the scary girl trapped in a difficult situation through the judicious use of colors.

According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the analysis of the compositional dimension of the story involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). The focus here is on the composition of the whole, the way in which the elements are integrated into a whole (Kress and Leeuwen (2006). The visual is presented to the readers with a tinge of realism and idealism. The girl belongs to the real world, while the octopus, Blister, is the product of the imaginary world of the narrator. Secondly, the sizes of the two characters in this visual are different. The octopus seems to be bigger than the girl and it serves as a significant voice marker because octopus is the new character in the story. For the sake of emphasis, the narrator projects this character differently by keeping the size of this character bigger than the girl. The girl has already been introduced by the narrator, so there is nothing unusual about the size of the girl in this visual. The dull tones of colors reflect the narrator's point of view. These specific tones of colors indicate how narrator feels about world, people and problems. The world is a strange place where we meet unlimited people and only some of them leave an everlasting impact on us. The big size of Blister in the visual clearly showcases the narrator's subjective perspective. The entrance of some special people in our world really matters because they appear to be our guides in every walk of life. Similarly, Blister enters scary girl's world as a supporter and guide to enable her to reach her destination. The red color of the heart brings to fore the narrator's view that we are nothing without our companions and friends. We want others to sympathize and empathize with us. The red color stands out in the visual representing positive emotions for healthy survival. We cannot do anything without getting moral and spiritual strength from our well-wishers. So, Blister is the focal point of this visual because it is going to play a significant role in scary girl's life.

The thick margins in this visual project the characters and setting with emphasis and clarity.

c. Spatial organization

The peculiar arrangement of the parts within the visual draws readers' attention towards the appearance of new character in the narrative and the initial and later responses by the scary girl.

The analysis of the other components is given below:

Gaze

Imaginary relationship gets developed between the participants and viewers on the basis of gaze (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The imaginative world of the readers is dependent upon the projection of visuals in the narrative. The main characters of the visual, scary girl and Blister, seem to be looking at each other. When Blister appears for the first time, he is looking downwards which indicates that the girl is in the opposite direction. The next part brings further clarity when both the characters are easily visible to the readers. Initially, the girl's eyes are closed and Blister also looks at the girl with the element of strangeness in its eyes. Blister develops a soft corner for the girl the moment she opens up her eyes and looks at Blister. The expressions in the girl's eyes are readable to the readers. There is the element of uncertainty in her eyes. But Blister's wide smile in the next part of the visual removes doubts present in the mind of the scary girl. She immediately realizes that Blister will act as her supporter in facing the challenges. The bond of friendship between the scary girl and Blister gets formed as is indicated by the girl's smile and her downward gaze clearly shows that she is being thankful to Blister for spreading positivity in her life.

Social Distance

The projection of all the parts in the visual indicates that the readers are watching these episodes quite closely. The readers seem to be sitting near the two characters somewhere and noticing every gesture and facial expression for making sense of the story. This allows readers to actively participate in the reading process.

Angle

The prominence of horizontal angle in all the parts point towards high level of engagement on the part of readers. They are not away from the characters, rather sitting there and closely observing them. The magnified half visible face of Blister serves as an effective voice marker because it positions the readers accordingly. The readers while sitting next to Blister in their imaginative world get a chance to properly look at the girl and observe her reaction. The story develops on the basis of the interaction between the readers and the imaginative characters through specific angle, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006).



Figure 5

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

In order to have access to the basic content of the narrative, the analysis of the represented and interactive participants is required.

Represented and Interactive participants

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) refer to two types of participants in their framework: represented and interactive participants. The first type refers to people, places and things that are represented in the visual, while interactive participants refer to those who produce the visuals and those who view and read them (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). This visual is also connected to the previous one and relates to the next one as well. All the visuals are strongly connected to one another through the use of voice markers that give implicit signals to the readers. The visual contains seven subparts of different sizes that increase the tellability of the narrative. The basic common feature of the subparts is the presence of the scary girl and Blister. However, in the last part of the visual, the octopus seems to be missing. Blister seems to be the very prominent in this visual. The first part is the most prominent of all because of the huge size of the octopus. The magnified portrayal of the octopus in the first part is significant as the readers understand that the octopus is not a minor character in the story. The background setting is hardly visible in the first part. The other parts have limited things in the background. The side view of a big tree shows that the two characters are communicating with each other near the tree. Long communicative session between the two characters is noticeable in this visual.

The connection between the narrator and the readers gets strengthened because the narrator is vividly narrating the story through the effective use of voice markers in the visual. In the last parts, the narrator makes use of punctuation marks for conveying multiple messages to the readers.

b. Expressive content and color

The visual elements can be analyzed according to three systems: information value, salience and framing (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). This visual contains certain peculiar features or voice markers that require serious consideration for the effective

transmission of messages to the readers. The story remains incomprehensible till the time the readers take special interest in the specific details of the story. The variant sizes of the subparts are indicative of the embedded themes within the narrative. The first part is the biggest of all the parts and its unusual size corresponds with the strong bond of friendship between the scary girl and Blister. Initially, both were strangers to each other but Blister shows readiness to help the girl who is alone and helpless. Blister seems to be compassionate towards the girl. The intensity of warmth gets reflected through the big size of the first part of the visual. The size of the heart also gets bigger in the first part which emphasizes the fact that they both the characters have started trusting each other and their intimate relationship will never end. This visual refers to the subjective stance of the narrator as well. According to the narrator, life is the name of unexpected twists and turns and happiness and sorrow go side by side. So one should never lose hope amidst dangers.

In the first part, the only colorful thing is the red heart which is set against the dull colors. This red-colored heart expresses optimism and enthusiasm. The girl is perhaps ready to resume her journey with the help of Blister. From the fourth part onwards, the use of certain other colors adds variety and life to the story. The transition from dull to bright colors corresponds with the transitional phase from lifelessness to life as experienced by the girl. The scary girl is now back to life, her heart is full of satisfaction, her eyes emit strange spark and her smile is meaningful. Life appears beautiful to her after meeting Blister. Blister is projected in green color in the last parts of the visual. According to color psychology, green color has a very soothing impact on tense nerves and functions as a stress-reliever. The last two parts are enigmatic in nature due to the deliberate use of question mark and exclamation mark. These punctuation marks are in black color that arouse curiosity and suspense in the mind of the readers. Black color is associated with apprehension, dominance, and doubts. The scary girl's mind is full of doubts when Blister suddenly disappears. Before disappearing from the scene, the face of Blister is shining with excitement. It means there is something in store for the girl. Some surprise is awaiting the girl.

c. Spatial organization

The in depth analysis of pragmatic signals or voice markers is insightful as it leads to better understanding of the narrative. This section basically entails discussion on the spatial arrangement of things within the visual.

Gaze

Gaze plays a very a significant role in establishing relationship between he represented participants and the readers. According to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), producers visually encode social meanings into images through the gaze of the represented participants. The gaze of the represented participants, scary girl and Blister, is directed towards each other. Their mutual gaze signifies the establishment of a new and strong bond of friendship between them. It is a sort of reassurance that both will assist each other in adverse circumstances. The eyes of Blister require special mention here because they are full of emotions. Blister is overwhelmed with joy to extend help to the scary girl. In the second last part of the visual, there is an element of excitement in its eyes. Then it suddenly disappears from the scene and leaves the scary girl in doubt. There is no eye-contact between the represented participants and the readers, however, the readers understand through the mutual gaze of the scary girl and Blister that the narrator is emphasizing the relationship between them. The story proceeds further through the identification and interpretation of these pragmatic signals or voice markers.

Social distance

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) refer to proxemics to describe how social relations are determined by different fields of vision in visuals. The first part of the visual takes the readers quite close to the represented participants. The readers consider themselves to be sitting next to the octopus, Blister. The readers can easily read the eyes of the scary girl who seems to be confident, relaxed and excited after the tragic incident. The readers closely observe that Blister's eyes are closed and there is a wide smile on its face. This non-verbal communication is meaningful in the backdrop of tragedy as it signifies high level of satisfaction. Then the readers are placed at some distance from the other parts of the visual. The distance between the represented participants and readers is a bit increased by the narrator for making the visual all-inclusive. The zoom

out technique enables the narrator to present the background imagery to the readers as well.

Angle

There are two types of angles discussed by Kress and Leeuwen (2006): horizontal and vertical. The horizontal angle, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), refers to involvement, while the vertical one indicates detachment of the readers due to the specific positioning of the visual. There is a combination of horizontal and vertical angles in this visual. The use of horizontal angle in the first part invites the readers to observe the interaction between the two characters quite closely. This invitation increases the involvement and participation of the readers. The rest of the parts, however, present vertical angle. The narrator keeps the readers at a distance to include the background setting as well in the visual. It is, of course, necessary to give information about the background to the readers so that they stay informed.



Figure 6

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Jahn (2021) clearly states that the presentation of characters, setting and atmosphere functions as a significant voice marker in the narrative. The sixth image is a combination of different episodes where the new character Blister has been foregrounded through the use of sharp colors. The scary girl is visible in the last part of the visual only. The preceding parts provide information about the girl in an indirect way. The girl is not physically present in the initial parts but her lost belongings gain the attention of the readers. The octopus, Blister, dives in to water to collect the scattered belongings of the girl lying at the bottom level of water. The shirt, tentacle, eye-patch, shoes and cap are the inanimate represented participants in the visual that catch readers' eyes. The scary girl uses a tentacle as her arm because she lost one of her arms in a tragic incident.

The communication between the narrator and the readers takes place with the help of significant voice markers, that is, the represented and interactive participants, expressive content, color and spatial organization (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The presentation of interesting and colorful visuals grabs the attention of the readers with the help of voice markers, the narrator successfully communicates multiple aspects of the narrative to the readers.

b. Expressive content and color

Rose (2001) emphasizes the fact that visual analysis focuses on the use of colors, saturation and value and the relationship that exists between them (cited in Griffin, 2005). The selected visual is a unique combination of real and unreal characters. Blister is, no doubt, a real character but there is something peculiar about its projection. The presence of hair on Blister' head makes it resemble a human being. Secondly, the huge size of Blister in the first part of the visual shows its major role in the story. To the narrator, the relationship between the scary girl and Blister is of utmost significance. The readers observe the use of different colors in this visual and these colors enable the readers to visualize everything in their mind. The use of green and blue colors signifies serenity and calmness. The colors highlight the current condition of the scary girl who

is at peace now. The narrator prefers using black color for the girl's belongings as this color indicates dominance and authority. Blister collects and returns the scattered belongings of the girl so that she may resume her journey with confidence.

The last part of the visual contains a smooth combination of yellow and green colors depicting daytime. This noticeable transition from night time to day time correlates with the life pattern of the scary girl as well. For the moment, she is out of the danger zone and feels comfortable in the company of Blister. Here, the narrator's presence can be strongly felt. This visual highlights the ideology of the narrator who believes that sorrow or grief is followed by happiness. All the phases of life are transitory in nature, so human beings should never lose hope.

The narrator is not visible anywhere but the presence can strongly be felt. Although the story is being narrated about other characters, but somehow the characteristic traits of the narrator also get highlighted. The narrator is presenting minute details to the readers which point towards the observant nature of the narrator. Moreover, the narrator seems to be playing tactfully with colors which clearly depict the lively temperament of the narrator.

c. Spatial organization

The five parts within the visual are organized in a sequential way according to the thematic progression of the story. The spatial organization of different things within the image is meaningful helps in the construction of the narrative (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006).

Gaze

Gaze plays a pivotal role in the development of the story (Kress and Leeuwn, 2006). Basically, relationship gets established between represented participant and the readers. The first five parts of the visual point towards the searching arms of Blister. It seems to be gathering misplaced belongings of the scary girl. There is a strong eye contact between the scary and Blister in the last part of the visual. They look straight into each other's eyes to convey different messages. The scary girl is in a state of uncertainty as she is surprised to see how helpful and caring Blister is. The expression of excitement on Blister's face bring happiness to the scary girl. Blister looks excitedly

at the scary girl and its gaze holds much significance in the girl's life. Their mutual gaze helps them in extending their zone of friendship.

Social Distance

The distance between the represented participants and the readers, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), is highly suggestive in a visual. In the first four parts of the selected visual, the readers feel as if they have dived into water along with Blister. They consider themselves beneath the water surface and observe the scary girl's belongings scattered everywhere. The reduced social distance between the readers and Blister is of much significance. The arms of the octopus are busy in gathering things. The readers can easily gauge the intensity of sincerity and dedication through Blister's activities. The last part increases social distance between the readers and the represented participants. The readers are now required to observe the situation objectively.

Angle

The use of horizontal angle by the narrator stimulates readers' interest in the ongoing story. The readers can subjectively experience the major and minor happenings within the story. The last part, however, requires readers to observe the entire situation from a vertical angle. The readers notice that Blister returns things to the scary girl with much excitement and the girl is amazed to see how concerned it is to save her life.



Figure 7

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

In a narrative process, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), the participants in an image or visual are represented as doing something to or for each other. In the seventh visual, there is a collage where the new character Blister has been presented as a prominent character via increase in its size. Blister's excitement is visible on its face as it tries its level best to make the scary girl look presentable. It shows their connectivity and strong friendship. Blister provides emotional support to the scary girl. The scary girl looks satisfied and happy after wearing her clothes and other accessories. She feels much protected now. Another equally important thing is the rainfall that suddenly begins and fills the scary girl's heart with fear as she is homeless. But, Blister's supportive gestures pacify her. Blister's presence makes her feel at home.

The narrator and the readers are the interactive participants. Messages are encoded via visuals by the narrator and the readers decode them by focusing on the different types of voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) state that the compositional dimension of the visual involves the study of the information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins). In the visual, there is the depiction of the real situation with a tinge of fantasy. Secondly, the magnified size of Blister matches the development of the story as Blister is expected to play multiple roles in the life of the scary girl. The bigger size of the first part of the visual carries much weight as it signifies the emotional attachment between the scary girl and Blister. Another important thing that gets highlighted through this variation in size is the narrator's viewpoint about people in this world. According to the narrator, we should nurture good thoughts. There are painful moments in life but some special people have got magical power to heal up the wounds. Blister is one such character that has got this magical power. The visual enumerates different characteristic features of Blister. It presents a perfect amalgamation of kindness, compassion, sincerity and devotion. Such a combination is very rare and Blister is, indeed a rare character. Blister is projected in green color by the narrator. Green color symbolizes

harmony and stability. Blister protects the girl from the heavy rain shower as well by spreading its arm over her head. The last part contains a question mark which refers to the scary girl's questioning mind. Blister raises one of its arms for some specific reason and the scary girl is eager to know about the reason.

The narrator effectively shows how both the characters interact with each other. The verbal expressions are not given anywhere in the visual, but the portrayal of the non-verbal communication is so powerful that the readers face no difficulty in decoding the narrative. Besides, the readers get to know about the basic temperament and ideology of the narrator as well.

c. Spatial organization

The five parts of the visual are organized in a systematic way. Even the represented participants are arranged in a way that increases readability of the narrative. The important aspects of the visual that relate to spatial organization are discussed below:

Gaze

Gaze of the represented participants plays a pivotal role in effectively decoding the visual (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The represented participant, Blister, seems to be looking at the scary girl. Its gaze is not directed towards the readers. The gaze on the part of Blister acts a strong voice marker signifying everlasting bonding between them. Initially, the scary girl looks at her apparel and then closes her eyes with a sense of thankfulness. She shows her gratitude towards Blister with her closed eyes. Although the characters do not look at each in some parts of the visual, even then their attention is directed towards each other. The moment the rain starts, both the represented participants, the scary girl and Blister, seem to be worried while staring at the rain drops. But the next moment, Blister extends its arm to cover the head of the scary girl so as to protect her from the heavy rainfall. Moreover, a meaningful smile appears on its face. The question mark in the visual refers to the question that arises in the girl's mind. She is unable to decipher Blister's wide smile. For that reason, her gaze contains the element of surprise.

Social Distance

Only the first part of the visual offers reduced distance to the readers as they closely enjoy the newly established bond of friendship between the scary girl and Blister. The readers can easily visualize themselves sitting next to Blister and observing the scary girl's reaction on receiving her belongings back. As Blister's face has been magnified, so the readers can see and feel what Blister feels. Through this reduced distance, the readers get a chance to experience the details subjectively. However, the remaining parts offer a holistic view to the readers where they notice some change in the scene. The rainfall initially perturbs the girl but Blister seems to have solution to every problem.

Angle

The horizontal angle is a function of the relation between the frontal plane of the image-producer and the frontal plane of the represented participants (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The prominence of horizontal angle in the case of first part of the visual indicates personal involvement on the part of the readers. All the parts of the visual are at the eye level which means that the readers are given a powerful position to enter the narrative.



Figure 8

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The projection of the represented and interactive participants in a visual serves as an effective signal or voice marker (Jahn, 20221). This visual consists of eight parts and the last part is the most prominent one due its size. The first five parts focus on the basic tools that Blister uses to construct a tree house for the scary girl. So, a wide range of tools draws reader's attention towards Blister's planning. Blister is ready to provide a safe place to the scary girl where she feels secure and protected. This visual is in continuation of the previous one where the scary girl seems to be worried due to the rainfall. The caring behavior of Blister provides hope to the girl as she seems to be smiling in the last part of the visual. The wide smile on her face is indicative of hope and life.

The readers are introduced to Blister's plan gradually. The first five parts of the visual are arranged sequentially so as to increase the participation of the readers in the meaning-making process. Through the depiction of the represented participants, the readers understand that Blister acts strategically. A number of qualities associated with Blister gain prominence through the presentation of the narrative by the narrator.

b. Expressive content and color

The selection of vibrant colors, sizes and margins considered to be highly suggestive in a visual (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The scary girl's companion, Blister, works incessantly to provide peace and comfort to her. The bright colors refer to excitement, joy, hope and energy. The girl seems to be back to life as Blister provides a comfortable place to her. The provision of a secure house minimizes girl's apprehensions. The last part of the visual seems to be the most captivating one as the narrator makes use of a number of bright colors in it. The readers' interest gets developed through the unique combination of the colors. Also the big size of the last part of the visual is eye-catching for the readers. The different sizes of the subparts indicate macro-planning and micro-planning on the part of Blister. Blister has a set goal in its mind and in order to attain the goal, it prefers micro-planning in order to secure the future of the girl. The combination of yellow and red colors evokes various emotions

in a graphic narrative. Colors act as strong voice markers to guide the readers in decoding the wordless graphic novel. Typically, red symbolizes passion and energy, while yellow is often associated with happiness and optimism. When combined, they indicate a unique mix of intense emotions and urgency. The use of equal margins for the subparts indicates that the minute details are equally important.

The visual projects the viewpoint of the narrator as well. Such is the projection of details that the readers can easily read the narrator's mind. As per the details provided by the narrator, the readers get to know that Blister is hard-worker and uses its magical mind to construct a secure house for the girl. The details clearly indicate that the narrator believes in collaboration and cooperation. Survival is possible through mutual co-existence. The subjective voice markers foreground narrator's mindset (Jahn, 2021). The narrator considers life to be full of adventures and the participants should accept the hardships of life with a smiling face.

c. Spatial organization

Another equally important voice marker is the pragmatic voice marker that enables the readers to have access to the basic plot of the narrative (Jahn, 2021). Through the effective use of pragmatic markers, strong relationship gets constructed between the narrator and the reader.

Gaze

Gaze plays a very important role in the development of the narrative because relationship between the narrator and the readers gets established (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). In this visual, the represented participants, the scary girl and Blister, look at each other meaningfully. As per their facial expressions and gestures, both are extending their friendship zone. The indelible effort on the part of Blister is indicative of lifetime support. On the basis of gaze, it is obvious that Blister is not a fair-weather friend, rather a devoted and sincere friend who is willing to go to any extent to please and help the scary girl.

Social Distance

The social distance that has been represented by Blister and the scary girl is another significant voice marker that refers to the relationship between the addresser

and the addressee. In the first five subparts, the living characters are missing. The tools are the focal point of these subparts. However, the last subpart appears to be different as it introduces a lot of things to the readers. The living characters are again visible. Only the face of Blister is obvious which indicates intimate relationship between the represented participant and the readers. The girl is fully visible which highlights the fact that the readers are present near Blister and viewing the condition and response of the girl quite closely.

Angle

The horizontal angle in this visual shows that the represented participants and the readers are the same level. The represented participants are almost at the same level which increases interaction between the readers and the characters. The readers enjoy this position in the visual because the horizontal angle enables them to view the progression of the narrative clearly. Active participation on the part of the readers develops better understanding of the narrative.



Figure 9

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The visual content matter is a significant voice marker that orients the readers to develop understanding of the narrative accordingly (Jahn, 2021). In the ninth visual, a new character has been foregrounded along with the presence of the same character, that is, the scary girl. This visual also consists of six parts that develop the narrative effectively. In the first part, the girl seems to be waving at Blister which is a friendly and intimate gesture. The next two parts of the visual signal that the girl is getting ready to sleep comfortably. She wears a beautiful smile on her face that points towards her satisfaction. Finally she falls asleep and during her deep slumber two different characters appear in her dream. The first one is Blister who brings a smile on her face, while the other character is an unknown one that makes her feel uncomfortable during her sleep. The discomfort can be detected through her facial expression while she is lying on her bed.

The most important details are highlighted by the narrator in the subparts of the visual. The last subpart ends with a question mark as an unknown character has been introduced by the narrator. The introduction to the new character in the last part arouses curiosity in the readers. So, overall the relationship between the narrator and the readers appears to be very strong as the readers remain glued to the narrative to explore the story further through the effective use of the voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

The subjective expression or the subjective viewpoint of the narrator is another voice marker that constructs the plot (Jahn, 2021). This visual is a combination of mixed feelings where the girl can be seen both satisfied and uncomfortable. She gets worried when she sees Mr. Maybe, an unknown character, in her dream. The projection of Mr. Maybe in this visual points towards the narrator's approach towards life. According to the narrator, both happiness and sorrow go side by side and there is no way out as such. This visual provides a definition of life that it is a never-ending journey and one remains uncertain and unsure about the upcoming incidents. This is the bitter fact associated with life but it should be accepted by human beings.

The composition of the visual provides pathways to the readers. In the first two parts, yellow color is dominant. It is interesting to note that the yellow color appears when Blister is around. As it disappears from the visual, the dominant yellow color also loses its value. The strategic use of yellow color suggests that it is symbolic of hope and vitality. As a result, the girl experiences positive emotions in the presence of Blister. The moment it disappears, she feels lonely and dissatisfied again. It is due to this reason she dreams of Mr. Maybe during night time in the absence of Blister. The room appears dull due to the use of grey color by the narrator. The dream is narrated in a colorful way by the narrator. Although Mr. Maybe is an unknown person for the girl, yet his appearance is colorful which indicates that the girl is in search of this person. For this reason, she undertakes this hazardous journey. The sizes of the last two parts are equal which demonstrate that the scary girl can reach her destination only if Blister extends support to her.

c. Spatial organization

The spatial organization, according to Kress and Leeuwen (2006), focuses on gaze, social distance and angle. These aspects are discussed below:

Gaze

The gaze of the two characters is not directed towards the readers. Rather, the scary girl and Blister attend to each other as the darkness of the night spreads everywhere. Blister seems to be looking towards some other direction in the scary girl's dream. Perhaps it is looking at the scary girl in the dream as its face exhibits feelings of intense joy. Mr. Maybe, on the other, gazes at the readers with an impassive face. The blue color of his eyes points towards the element of mystery associated with his character. This character looks directly into the eyes of the readers to transmit the message that finding this person in the world is a challenging task for the girl. The empty direct gaze illustrates the mysterious and uncertain nature of the journey.

Social Distance

The presence of the increased distance between the represented participants and the readers in the first three parts provides full view of the tree house to the readers. The readers can easily view the way this house has been designed and constructed by Blister. The next parts of the visual allow the readers to enter the room of the scary girl

and even provide access to her dreams. Personal involvement of the readers takes place on the basis of this social distance.

Angle

In all the parts of the visual, the narrator maintains horizontal angle for the readers. The readers consider themselves to be present within the visuals at the same level. They are given opportunities to observe and analyze the represented participants keenly. Both the represented participants and the readers are given equal importance by the narrator.



Figure 10

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Represented and interactive participants in a visual act as voice markers, guiding the reader's interpretation of the visual (Jahn, 2021). This visual contains twelve parts that provide minutest details to the readers. There are slight differences in the visuals as the first three parts specifically focus on the girl who seems to be worried, goes downstairs and searches for Blister. Perhaps she wants to share her dream with Blister. The next three parts bring further clarity as the girl is seen sharing the dream with Blister. Both of them sit together and try to resolve this issue. They speculate about the location of Mr. Maybe but all in vain. Finally, the scary girl climbs up the stair and enters the room with a gloomy face as the issue remains unresolved. In order to have an escape from this confusion, she tries to sleep once again. This time she hears a strange sound as the visual contains the words "toot, toot". After hearing these strange signals, the girl is awake once again. The confusion in her mind persists and she starts thinking about the meanings of these unfamiliar signals. "Toot, toot" is the onomatopoeic representation of a sound made by a telephone. It indicates that the connection between the scary girl and Mr. Maybe is lost.

The interactive participants are the narrator and the readers. The readers participate in the meaning-making process through the analysis of the voice markers used by the narrator. In this wordless graphic novel, visuals contain certain clues or voice markers that pave way towards better understanding. This visual in the form of a collage provides detail about the story to the readers through content that plays a significant role as a voice marker.

b. Expressive content and color

The internal composition of the visual also acts as a significant voice marker (Jahn, 2021). The selection and combination of colors in this collage brings to fore the implicit meanings. All the parts appear to be dull as far as the selection of colors is concerned. However, the fourth part stands out due to the use of bright colors for highlighting the face of Mr. Maybe. It indirectly refers to the fact that Mr. Maybe is a source of happiness for the scary girl. The scary girl has a set goal to find this person

but the problem is that she does not know anything about him. Mr. Maybe appears in her dreams only and the scary girl believes that the man exists in reality as well. She wants her dream to come true. The auditory signals associated with Mr. Maybe appear in black and white colors which point towards confusion and doubt.

Through the analysis of the represented participants, the readers develop understanding regarding the point of view of the narrator as well. The narrator is nowhere visible but the presence can strongly be felt as the construction of the plot depends on the narrator. All the parts in this collage-shaped visual are well-connected. The narrator projects the scary girl realistically. In real-life situations we face different problematic situations and the intensity of such situations worsens if we fail to share our inner most feelings with anyone. The burdens of life get alleviated the moment we feel connected to our dear and near ones. So, according to the narrator, the problems acquire visibility gradually and there is a solution to every problem. There is nothing impossible in this world. The only thing that matters is determination and steadfastness.

c. Spatial Organization

This collage furthers the narrative through visual details. The important pragmatic voice markers in this regard are gaze, social distance and angle (Jahn, 2021). In all the parts, the represented participants, the scary girl and Blister, are either looking at each other or seem to be lost in their thoughts. Their attention is not directed towards the readers. But the readers are given a chance to observe the details closely. Every part in this collage invites the readers to have closer look at the represented participants which increases readers' involvement. All the parts are placed at eye-level which means that the narrator is giving equal importance to the readers. The use of horizontal angle maintains balance between the characters and the readers.



Figure 11

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented Participant

The way participants are depicted in an image, including their expressions and interactions, functions as a strong voice marker (Jahn, 2021). The girl is the main represented participant in this visual. She is seen to be climbing down the tree to trace the place from where the sound “toot, toot” is coming. There are three equal parts in vertical direction in this visual. The girl looks down and gets to know that the sound is actually coming from a cavity within the tree. These voice markers in the form of content are directed towards the readers. The narrator provides clues to the readers about the narrative by foregrounding the represented participants, that is, the scary girl, the tree and the cavity within the tree. The presentation of these basic participants arouses curiosity in the readers.

b. Expressive Content and Color

The internal composition of the visual pertains to colors, size and margins of the visual (Kress and Leeuw, 2006). In the selected visual, the narrator is mindful of the backgrounding and foregrounding techniques for the development of plot. That is why, the deliberate use of dull colors makes the sound appear prominent because yellow color points towards the sound waves coming from within the cavity. Yellow color manifests the narrator’s inquisitive nature to explore the world. Through the use of these strong and bright colors, the narrator makes the readers feel energetic as well. The juxtaposition of dull and bright colors is thought-provoking and draws readers’ attention to the point from where the sound is clearly audible. This color also indicates that suffering is always followed by happiness and positive approach towards life keeps the person strong even in adverse circumstances.

Equal proportion of parts indicates another important aspect of the narrator’s personality. The narrator believes that every minor or major episode of life is significant. Life is the name of exploration. The one who struggles hard to counter difficulties ultimately finds a way out.

c. Spatial Organization

The arrangement of the elements in a visual functions as a strong voice maker (Jahn, 2021). The gaze of the girl is not directed towards the readers, rather she is obsessed with the incoming sound. The hollow within the cavity is the focal point of the girl as she approaches it. She ultimately succeeds to reach the bottom of the tree. The worth-noting point is that the girl is heading towards the cavity all by her own. In fact, she is decisive to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

The distance between the scary girl and the readers is reasonably close as the readers can only view half of the tree. The readers imagine themselves to be sitting near the tree and observing the physical activities of the scary girl. So, social distance functions as a strong voice marker, giving the readers an opportunity to sit comfortably near the tree and comprehend the logical flow of incidents in the narrative.

Moreover, the employment of the horizontal angle as a voice marker assists the readers in developing strong relationship with the major character within the narrative. The readers can easily sympathize and empathize with the scary girl on the basis of the varying voice signals or cues. The intimate connection between the represented participants and the readers on the basis of horizontal angle lets the readers experience different emotions.



Figure 12

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The presentation of the setting and the characters develops strong connection between the narrator and the readers (Jahn, 2021). This visual is a combination of three parts that introduce two new characters to the readers. The setting and the main characters are important voice markers for the readers to decode the story in a procedural way. In this visual, the scary girl finally enters the cavity within the tree and finds answer to the question. The sound TooT, TooT basically gets produced due to the emergence of the bubbles from the smoking pipe. Both the new characters are present there with their eyes closed. In order to make one of the new characters prominent, the narrator presents it a little bigger in size. The bigger character is Bunny Guru while the smaller one is the egg. In the previous visual, the clue in the form of the sound “Toot Toot” was given about the character which is finally shown in this current visual. The other parts of the visual focus primarily on Bunny Guru highlighting the fact that this new character is also going to play a major role in the adventurous task of the scary girl. In this visual, Bunny Guru is sitting comfortably and taking sips from a cup. This tension-free posture of the rabbit, Bunny Guru, is indicative of the fact that it is leading a comfortable life.

The narrator sub-divides the entire visual into different segments and these are interrelated and develop the narrative. The readers observe the visual with full interest as it lacks words in it. However, the visual contains sufficient information in the form of voice markers. The readers never feels passive due to interesting, attractive and connected style of the visual. The presentation of the colorful atmosphere arouses readers’ curiosity and excitement.

b. Expressive content and color

The internal composition of the visual invites the readers to pay close attention to the subjective voice markers like colors, size and margins (Jahn, 2021). The setting is painted in a colorful way which implicitly means that Bunny Guru will be playing the role of guide in the upcoming episodes of the narrative. The prominent white color of the rabbit, Bunny Guro, points towards purity and sincerity. A unique medley of

different colors in this visual amuses and entertains the readers and gives cues to the readers about other intricate details of the narrative. Amidst the colorful setting, the white face of Bunny Guru seems to be shining extraordinarily. Every visual is eye-catching and informative in this wordless graphic novel. The basic reason for this appealing face value is the careful selection of colors by the narrator to provide cues or signals to the readers. Even the sizes of the visuals carry equal importance because these aspects help the narrator in foregrounding the most important details for the understanding of the readers. The first part in this visual occupies more space than the other ones. The only reason is to familiarize the readers with the basic setting of the place and then the other parts magnify Bunny Guru and its luxurious living style.

The narrator's subjectivity gets reflected through these voice markers. The narrative provides different definitions of life and all those definitions are interrelated. The narrator views life as a mystery where we meet new people and develop familiarity with them gradually. The narrator also believes in the fact that life is a process of socialization as survival is only possible through co-existence.

c. Spatial organization

The stretchable quality of the readers' imaginative world increases through the gradual introduction to the setting and the characters. The important pragmatic voice markers in this regard are gaze, social distance and angle (Jahn, 2021).

The gaze is an important voice marker that signifies the character's temperament and behavior (Jahn, 2021). In the first, the scary girl gazes at the two unevenly sized creatures who are sitting with their eyes closed. The gaze of the girl reflects surprise and curiosity while the closed eyes of the egg and Bunny Guru indicate satisfaction and achievement. In the last part, Bunny Guru looks straight into the eyes of the readers and seems to be talking to them non-verbally. The green color of his eyes is very different but it has some positive connotation. The eyes of Bunny Guru are fully open and they seem to be very expressive. Bunny Guru sits alert as he sees the scary girl entering that place.

The reduced social distance between the represented participants and the readers builds intimate connection between them (Kress and Leeuw, 2006). In the first part, the readers consider themselves to be sitting beside Bunny Guru and enjoying its

company. The projection of the last two parts, on the other hand, makes the readers feel to be sitting right in front of Bunny Guru. This is a very significant voice maker for the readers. This placement of the readers within the visual helps them in observing the new character properly. They can easily view the entire character and understand the unheard words of Bunny Guru.

The horizontal angle in each part again strengthens readers' position or placement in the visuals. It basically sharpens readers' imaginative faculty to visualize things with precision and accuracy. Such experience on the part of the visuals enhances the functioning of the long-term memory of the readers and they find it easy to retain information. So, the voice markers embedded within this visual provide access to the readers to decode and interpret the visual accordingly.



Figure 13

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) describe the representational dimension as a dynamic process that unfolds the manifold strings of the narrative through the projection of characters, setting and interaction between the participants. This visual is also presented to the readers in the form of a collage. It consists of seven parts and each part has different voice markers embedded in it. The setting and the characters require due consideration as they function as significant voice markers in unfolding the basic features of the narrative. In almost all the parts the basic common feature is the presence of the scary girl and Bunny Guru. The scary girl is excited to see Bunny Guru because she thinks that this new character with special powers may help her in her expedition. Although the narrator has not used any word in the visual, yet the sequence of the parts in the visual clearly illustrates that she shares her problem with Bunny Guru and awaits its response eagerly. By utilizing its exceptional magical powers, Bunny Guru attempts to find answer to her query. The last part refers to some magical spell as Bunny Guru seems to be wandering somewhere between the planets in its imaginative world.

Both the narrator and the readers remain active and attentive throughout the process of encoding and decoding of the narrative. The narrator employs effective voice markers in the form of setting and characters and the readers remain engaged in questioning the visuals and identifying and analyzing the content-related voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

Salience and framing act as effective voice markers in highlighting the affective characteristics of the narrative (Jahn, 2021). These important aspects of the narrative provide access to the internal and implicit mindset of the narrator as well. The most important feature of this visual is its magical appeal due to the use of beautiful colors that are skilfully used by the narrator. The imaginative world can do wonders, indeed. Its capacity is unlimited and its stretchable quality has the power to bring far-fetched solutions to different problems. The narrator has used strong and bright colors in this visual but such is the combination of these colors that they make the entire visual quite appealing for the readers. These colors refer to the strong powers associated with the

imaginative world and instill feelings of hope and optimism into readers' mind as well. Moreover, the varying sizes of the parts in the visual enable the narrator in highlighting the importance of different things and characters. The last part stands out among all due its bigger size. Functioning as an effective subjective voice marker, it brings to light the undeniable role of the thinking ability or imaginative world in one's life.

The narrator's viewpoint acquires prominence through salience and framing. As per the narrative details provided by the narrator, it is obvious that the positive thinking pattern can change one's life. Without hope, nothing is achievable or approachable in this world. Once we enter the magical, limitless world of imagination, we start experiencing new things. The imaginative world has the incredible power to inspire us by presenting new ideas and innovative solutions. It allows us to envision a better future.

c. Spatial Organization

Gaze, social distance and angle are the important voice markers in a visual (Jahn, 2021). The narrator projects the main characters, scary girl and Bunny Guru, in a peculiar way. In most of the parts, their gaze is directed towards each other. Bunny Guru appears to be a supportive character as it instantly shows willingness to aid the scary girl in resolving her issues. The scary girl's gaze in the first part clearly indicates that she is overwhelmed with joy to see this new character. This new character appears as ray of hope for her.

Moreover, the wordless visuals are decipherable on the basis of the identification of another pragmatic marker, that is, social distance. The parts within the visual only contain the main characters. It means that the readers find themselves to be existing near the characters and this reduced distance develops their interest in focusing on the expressions and behaviors of the characters.

The repeated use of the horizontal angle in this visual is advantageous for the readers as they consider themselves to be equally important participants in the narrative. The characters are placed at the eye-level which signifies the presence of the readers on the frontal plane. Through these pragmatic signals or markers, readers develop further understanding of the narrative.



Figure 14

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Kress and Leeuwen (2006) propose that images, like language, have grammar structure that can be analyzed for meaning. The visual analysis of the selected visual brings to fore the main components of the narrative. This visual is a collage of several incidents which are embedded within the narrative. It contains ten sub-divisions that are equally important. Here, it shows deep interaction between the two characters. In the previous visual, the narrator provided some clear clues to the readers regarding the presence of some new character. And now in this image, the new character has been shown interacting with the scary girl. The scary girl is hopeful to get some positive answer from Bunny Guru. She patiently waits for the response with a smiling face. Bunny Guru eventually fails to provide any solution to the scary girl. The girl attempts to provide some additional clues to the rabbit about Mr. Maybe. Bunny Guru once again tries to figure out the problem. The next five parts appear to be similar in nature because these parts focus only on Bunny Guru's mental effort to trace the presence of Mr. Maybe. After much effort, it finally sees a mysterious building-like structure in its imaginative world. The girl is unable to understand this clue for finding Mr. Maybe.

The narrator deliberately sub-divides the entire visual into different segments that, in fact, initiate interaction between the readers and the represented participants. The represented participants discussed in the previous section are effective voice markers that build strong connection between the narrator and the readers. The readers attend to the visual mindfully. The absence of words in the visual makes it difficult for the readers to decode the narrative, but the effective employment of voice markers increases readers' participation in the text.

b. Expressive content and color

The in-depth analysis of the subjective voice-markers, that is, information value (ideal/real), salience (size, color, focus) and framing (margins) paves way for better understanding of the wordless visual (Jahn, 2021). In this visual, the skilful use of bright colors is appealing for both children and adults. Bunny Guru dominates the visual due to the excessive space that is given to it in different parts. As far as the informational

value of this visual is concerned, it brings to fore two real characters of the world, the scary girl and Bunny Guru, with a tinge of magic realism. Both the characters are surrounded by bright yellow color which infuses hope in them. Bunny Guru's habitat is sparkling with colors. The colorful atmosphere is welcoming for the readers as it invites them to enter the vivacious world inhabited by Bunny Guru. These colors serve as strong sources of information and entertainment for the readers. The parts of the visual vary in size according to the progression of the narrative. The first part is the biggest of all the parts due to its meaningfulness. The size correlates with the scary girl's excitement, curiosity and prolonged patience.

These subjective voice markers are indicative of the narrator's opinions and personal feelings (Jahn, 2021). The analysis of the internal composition of the visual is quite insightful. It clearly illustrates that the narrator is trying to ennoble the readers by emphasizing the fact that one should never lose hope. One must try again and again so as to achieve the goal. Success lies in steadfastness and determination.

c. Spatial organization

The narrator makes use of certain pragmatic cues or markers as well to narrate the story effectively (Jahn, 2021). In the first place, the gaze is very important as it reveals the nature of interaction between the participants. The scary girl gazes at Bunny Guru in an attempt to find answer to her query. Bunny Guru is busy in the imaginative world with its eyes closed to figure out where Mr. Maybe lives. The closed eyes in almost five parts of the visual refer to high level of concentration. The reduced social distance between the narrator and the represented participants and horizontal angle maximize readers' interest in the narrative.



Figure 15

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The narrative holds significance for the readers only when it contains sufficient cues to aid or accelerate the reading process (Jahn, 2021). The scary girl is the common represented participant here. She gets transported into the imaginative world created by the rabbit, Bunny Guru. In fact, Bunny Guru is being helpful to the extent that it lets the scary girl find answer to the question on her own. The imaginative world is an alluring one where she sees a chain of girls moving in a line with their eyes closed. Perhaps they are in a state of trance. Their movement never stops as they move in a straight line.

The readers attend to the visual with full attention and interest because of the peculiar arrangement of the subparts. There is interaction between the narrator and the readers in every visual.

b. Expressive content and color

The internal composition of the visual, according to Rose (2001), offers ways of looking at the content and form of images (cited in Griffin, 2005). The yellow color seems to be dominant in this visual as well. The scary girl is excited to visualize this scene in her imaginative world. The girls with the eyes closed keep moving in a straight line and ultimately reach a yellow-colored character sitting on a high pedestal. The unknown building seems to be multistoried where the pillars are of yellow color. Even the unknown hidden character is of yellow color. The visit to this imaginative domain increases the scary girl's curiosity further. The presence of Mr. Maybe remains enigmatic for her. But the only thing positive in this visual is the positive connotation associated with yellow color. The scary girl receives this message indirectly that she should never lose hope and show steadfastness in reaching her destination. It may be related to the journey of self-discovery or enlightenment. The scary girl is required to explore her own self first in order to attain her objectives. The colorful visual provides inspiration to the girl. The third part of the visual is the most salient one because of its enlarged size. The basic reason is to emphasize the importance of the imaginative world in one's life. The thinking power can bring about positive changes in one's life.

These interpretations directly relate to the narrator's perspective as well. There is no doubt that the scary girl seeks help from others. But the overall message of this visual is that personal effort is the only solution to every problem. The narrator believes in personal effort as it has miraculous results. The progress of an individual is directly associated with effort. So, the imaginative also indicates that the journey may be long but one should show consistency.

c. Spatial organization

The systematic organization of the components of a visual relates to the thematic progression of the narrative (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The closed eyes of the scary girl draw readers' attention to the sparkling world of imagination. The gaze is directed towards the imaginative world where the scary girl meets different imaginative characters. Due to the reduced social distance and horizontal angle, the readers find it easy to enter the imaginative world along with the scary girl and enjoy the colorful things present there.



Figure 16

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The setting and the characters within the visual need special consideration as these are important voice markers (Jahn, 2021). This visual presents only one detailed part where vertical illustrations related to the imaginative world are embedded in it. In the previous visual, the strange world of imagination was the focal point. This visual seems to be the continuation of the previous one but the difference lies in the projection of the scary girl as well. Here, both the scary girl and the imagination world have been foregrounded. The wide smile on the scary girl's face is indicative of pleasure and satisfaction. It seems as if she has found answer to her problem. The imaginative presents a medley of different unknown characters and colors. The overall effect of this journey towards the imaginative realm is satisfying and positive.

The narrator keeps this visual simple but the meanings are not identifiable on the surface level. Rather, the readers are required to focus on the use of different voice markers so as to get engaged in the process of meaning-making. The readers observe the visual with full interest where represented participants have been foregrounded. So, the narrator maximizes readers' interaction with the help of voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

In Kress and Leeuwen's visual grammar theory (2006), colors, size and margins play a significant role in conveying meanings. The most noticeable feature of this visual is the use of pink color. The narrator prefers using the strong tone of this color due to specific reasons. Previously, the yellow color was dominant but in this visual the only color that dominates the entire scene is pink color. The narrator skilfully plays with the colors according to the thematic progression of the story. The colors speak to the readers and entertain them. The colors play multiple functions at the same time as they seem to be entertaining, enlightening and informing the readers about the overall theme of the narrative. The color pink has a psychological impact. It is considered to be a calming color as it positively impacts moods and behaviors. The in depth analysis of this voice marker further illustrates that the scary is going to meet a number of unknown characters in her journey but this journey should be taken positively. The use of this

color reflects the narrator's approach as well. Hurdles and obstacles are a part of life and must be faced with a smiling face. The constructive or destructive role of the imaginative world is in the hands of a person. The person may reprogram the mind to achieve good results. So, the power of positive colors in this visual is obvious as the girl seems to be satisfied. Her smile is indicative of readiness to undertake the journey with courage and passion. Margins and the spacing around elements affect the visual's structure and balance, shaping the perceived relationship between elements (Kress and Leuwn, 2006). The big size of the visual and the decorative margin around it highlight the significance of the message associated with the scary girl, the smile on her face and prominence of pink color around her. The decorative margins are in black color which help the narrator in foregrounding the content and the magical power associated with the imaginative world.

c. Spatial organization

According to Jahn (2021), pragmatic signals are the voice markers that signal the narrator's awareness of the audience and the degree of his/her orientation towards it. Here, the pragmatic voice marker, gaze, can only be discussed with reference to the imaginative world that the scary girl views with her eyes closed. She is lost in the colorful and magical world where she comes across a number of things and characters. All the details related to the imaginative world are vibrant. The world of fantasy is visited and enjoyed by the readers as well. The readers can easily visualize that they are sitting quite close to the girl, as indicated by the reduced social distance. Moreover, they are not viewing the scene from a high or a low angle. They observe and experience the entire scene due to the employment of horizontal angle.



Figure 17

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The content-related voice markers enable the readers to identify the main characteristic features of the narrative (Jahn, 2021). This visual is divided into three equal parts. The first and the second parts indicate that the fantasy world disappears and the girl is back to reality. But the girl and Bunny Guru are surrounded by the tentacles of Blister. It means that Blister must have been searching for the scary girl and ultimately succeeds in finding her. But it is furious to see the girl with an unknown character. The repetition of the exclamation mark before and after question mark clearly magnifies the intense anger experienced by Blister. It holds Bunny Guru and the egg tightly in its tentacles. The girl is also surprised to see its anger. The angry expression on Blister's face points towards the fact it is either very possessive or being over-protective to save the scary girl.

The narrator's job is to provide signals to the readers in this wordless graphic novels to narrate the story effectively. The identification of the content-related voice markers increases readers' participation to understand the meanings or the messages embedded within the narrative (Jahn, 2021).

b. Expressive Content and Color

Jahn (2021) states that the narrator's subjective feelings find their way out through the color-scheme, size and margins used in the visual. Although the narrator can nowhere be seen in the visual, yet the presence can strongly be felt with the help of voice markers (Jahn, 2021). In the first two parts, pink and green colors dominate the visual. The last part, however, contains excessive use of blue color. As it has already been discussed that pink refers to positive emotions in general and compassion, kindness and satisfaction in particular. The green color of the tentacles also has positive connotations as it refers to freshness and harmony. These qualities can be associated with Blister as it tries to bring about stability in girl's life. The dominance of blue color in the last part makes the tentacles appear blue as well. Here, blue signifies sadness or gloominess. Blister is shocked to see these strangers around the scary girl. It becomes apprehensive and questions the rabbit about its identity and relationship with the girl in

fury. The equal sizes of the first two parts give this clue to the readers that these parts contain significant information. However, the last part gains attention of the readers due to its biggest size. The size heightens climax within the narrative.

The preference for these positive colors brings to limelight the narrator's personality and temperament. The wordless graphic novel points towards unexpected negative experiences in one's life, but these negative instances are presented with a tinge of hopefulness and optimism. The colors, in fact, ignite positivity and impact the readers as well. The reading process has an ennobling effect on the readers. The narrator's positive side of the personality gets reflected through the use of selective colors in the visual.

c. Spatial Organization

Three important pragmatic voice markers are gaze, social distance and angle (Jahn, 2021). In the second part, the represented participants, the scary girl and Bunny Guru, fix their gaze at the tentacles of Blister who unexpectedly appears in the visual. In the last part, all the characters are looking at each other but their gazes point towards different emotions. Blister's gaze expresses annoyance as it holds Bunny Guru in its tentacles. Bunny Guru's gaze reflects shock and surprise and the same feelings get reflected through the scary girl's eyes as well. The narrator maintains the same social distance in the first two parts of the visual. Reduced social distance in visual storytelling signifies close emotional connection between the readers and the characters. The readers can relate themselves intimately to the characters' emotional states. This reduced distance makes the visual more meaningful. Moreover, the horizontal angle keeps the readers' interest intact. They enter the story and develop interest due to the use of this angle in this visual. They enjoy the same powers as the represented characters in the visual.



Figure 18

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The content-related information, one of the significant voice markers, familiarizes the readers with growing tension between the characters (Jahn, 2021). In this visual, the scary girl is communicating with Blister in order to pacify it. She tries to convince Blister that Bunny Guru is a sincere friend and Blister should not doubt its purity. When the scary girl and Bunny Guru further elaborate that they know where Mr. Maybe lives, Blister expresses its anger. It considers Bunny Guru to be entirely wrong. The conflict between Blister and the scary girl gets aggravated as the scary girl assertively states that she can trace Mr. Maybe along with Bunny guru. Blister fails to change her opinion about Bunny Guru as she clearly shows reluctance to agree with Blister.

The readers enjoy the minutest details provided by the narrator with the help of different voice markers. Without the element of suspense, the readers may lose their interest in the narrative. However, the narrator weaves the story dexterously with the help of voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

There is close connection between the colors, the size of the visual, framing or margins and the narrator's perspective or viewpoint (Jahn, 2021). The color contrast is strikingly different. The yellow color stands out due to the presence of blue color in the background. The foregrounded yellow color in every part of the visual conveys significant information to the readers about the heightened argument between the represented participants. As yellow color refers to energy and enthusiasm, so the characters exchange dialogs quite energetically. Every character has a different opinion about this situation. The scary girl wants to prove her point but it further annoys Blister. The cross in black color means that Blister utterly rejects the scary girl's opinion about Bunny Guru and its plan to find Mr. Maybe.

Three rectangular shaped parts are placed along with two square-shapes parts. The readers feel as if the narrator is playing with the geometrical shapes here. The

rectangular-shaped parts are followed by square-shaped parts which have deeper significance in this wordless graphic novel. According to the psychology of geometric shapes, rectangle indicates elaboration and expansion due to its elongated shape. It provides additional or extra detail to the readers about the represented participants. For presenting the argument between the characters, the narrator prefers rectangular shape. Argumentation involves the presentation of an idea through the application of logic in order to convince and persuade the other person. Interestingly, fails to convince Blister due to her weak argument. The next two parts of the visual have been presented in the form of squares. The squares due to their limited capacity can only provide limited information to the readers. But, these square-shaped parts of the visual acts as strong adhesive devices between this visual and the next visual. So, the readers experience eagerness to read and interpret the upcoming visual as well.

All these details provide access to the narrator's personality and temperament as well. The narrator makes use of mathematical knowledge to narrate the unusual story with the help of wordless visuals. The narrator believes in variation and diversity that is why different voice markers have been used in the narrative. Story-telling is an art and the narrator is an expert in it. This is one of the remarkable abilities of the narrator that finds its expression in the narrative.

c. Spatial organization

It is an effective pragmatic voice marker used by the narrator to narrate the story (Jahn, 2021). All the characters stare at each other. Their gaze is very meaningful and suggestive. They express their intense emotions with the help of their gaze and succeed in conveying their emotions successfully. Besides, the reduced social distance indicates intimacy between the readers and the characters. Only the face of Blister is visible which indicates closeness on the part of the readers. Also, the horizontal or frontal angle increases involvement of the readers and makes them enjoy the visual experience.



Figure 19

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

Represented and interactive participants are essential components of a visual and facilitate readers in deciphering meanings associated with the narrative (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). This visual is a collage of seven parts which develop the story further. The represented participants are, in fact, the setting and the characters. The setting in first three parts is the same. The characters are sitting near the tree and the issue is still not resolved. Bunny Guru offers Blister to join them in order to trace Mr. Maybe, but this infuriates Blister and it takes a deep plunge into water. The scary girl pulls a long face as it is unbearable for her to see Blister in rage and fury. The subsequent parts indicate that she climbs up the tree and prepares herself to fall asleep.

Active engagement on the part of the narrator and the readers is required. The readers can only decode the story with the help of voice markers used by the narrator. Every visual consists of different types of voice markers. The identification and interpretation of the represented participants by the readers makes the story meaningful.

b. Expressive content and color

The careful use of colors, margins and unequal or equal sizes in a visual serves as an effective subjective voice marker (Jahn, 2021). The dominance of pale blue color in the parts points towards sad and gloomy atmosphere. The scary girl is upset and worried due to Blister's impulsive reaction. Blister is very decisive in every matter. It is not willing to welcome Bunny Guru in its social circle. Perhaps it is being possessive as far as its friendship with the scary girl is concerned. The plan of Bunny Guru has been highlighted with the help of yellow color which infuses feelings of energy and vigor. The scary girl is also enthusiastic about the journey, but Blister seems to be very reluctant to accept this plan. The fourth part in the center of the visual is the biggest which illustrates intense feeling of grief experienced by the scary girl. She feels a bit alone and isolated in the absence of Blister. She acknowledges the fact that Blister has been very kind and supportive to her.

The narrator's mind can also be accessed with the help of subjective voice markers. The basic message that the narrator intends to convey to the readers is that dissensus is a part of life. Difference of opinion should be accepted, otherwise issues remain unresolved. Every person is different from the other person and all the human beings are liable to commit mistakes and errors. What really matters in life is our attitude towards our own selves. We should learn and unlearn things as the need arises.

c. Spatial organization

The spatial organization deals with gaze, social distance and angle (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The narrative appears to be decodable and interpretable due to the careful analysis of the pragmatic voice markers (Jahn, 2021). The gaze of Blister gains prominence here as it is indicative of intense anger. The scary girl's gaze, on the other hand, reflects her excitement regarding the new plan. The last parts of the visual highlight the scary girl's empty gaze in the absence of Blister. The first and the last three parts indicated intimate distance between the represented participants and the readers as the readers can only see some parts of Blister. It is due to closeness that the entire physique of Blister is not visible. However, in the fifth part, the narrator increases the distance between the represented participants and allows them to have complete view of the scary girl and her new companion, Bunny Guru. The narrator makes use of both horizontal and vertical angles in this visual. The only part in which the narrator uses vertical angle is the central or the fifth part which places the readers on a high level. The readers feel detachment from the characters and observe them objectively.



Figure 20

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The employment of content voice marker by the narrator enables the readers to understand the progression of the story (Jahn, 2021). The visual is divided into five unequal parts where Blister is the focal point. The physical activity of Blister is indicative of his restlessness. The sight of Bunny Guru is unbearable for it. The issue remains unresolved as the scary girl is unwilling to change her decision. The expressions on Blister's face are readable and indicative of extreme sorrow and grief. Blister seems to be contemplating on the current issue and its solution. The readers are dependent upon the narrator for decoding the story. So, the readers attend to story by paying special attention to the voice markers.

b. Expressive content and color

The subjective markers develop understanding regarding the point of view or personal opinions of the narrator (Jahn, 2021). The use of specific colors, sizes and margins is of utmost significance in this regard (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). In this visual, the most eye-catching color is green which refers to jealousy on the part of Blister. Out of jealousy, Blister is unable to acknowledge and welcome Bunny Guru's presence in the situation. It is unable to overcome this negative feeling and remains passive in every part of the visual. The most unusual feature of this visual is the depiction of eye color of Blister. It is interesting to note that one eyeball is blue while the other is red. It basically represents a mix of different emotions. Blister experiences discomfort on the basis of new twist in the form of Bunny Guru in the story. The colors of its eyeballs indicate that Blister is energetic and ambitious and wants to bring about harmony as well. But, the dominance of green color on its entire face refers to high level of jealousy that makes it incapable to do anything. The two bigger parts of the visual highlight purposeless activities of Blister that fail to bring inner peace to it. The last part of the visual is different in the sense that decorative margin has been used by the narrator. It signifies the activation of the imaginative world. Blister gets transported into the magical realm of imagination with its eyes closed.

Here, the narrator's viewpoint is obvious. Such is the negative effect of jealousy, that it starts damaging the mental and physical health of the sufferer. The sufferer cannot think of anything except the rival. It aggravates the situation by bringing about instability in the mental order. There are certain significant lessons for the readers embedded in visuals. The basic aim of the narrator is to bring about certain positive change in the society that is why, the negative impact of jealousy has been highlighted.

c. Spatial Organization

This pragmatic marker positions the readers in the narrative (Jahn, 2021). As Blister is the focal point of this visual so its gaze requires special mention here. Blister keeps looking downwards in search of peace and harmony. The narrator maintains intimate social distance between the readers and the represented participants. In most of the parts, the head of Blister is visible only that points towards minimum distance and enables the readers to feel the excessive pain experienced by Blister. Moreover, the horizontal angle is purposefully used so as to enable the readers to experience the suffering of Blister. This is a very effective technique to convey feelings and emotions to the readers. It also maintains a balance between the readers and the represented participants as they consider themselves to be equally important in the narrative.



Figure 21

Visual Analysis (Compositional Interpretation)

a. Content

Represented and Interactive Participants

The content matter as a voice marker, according to Jahn (2021), includes setting and characters in a visual. The basic understanding regarding the visual develops on the basis of this voice marker (Jahn, 2021). This visual does not contain any subpart and points towards the activation of the imaginative world of Blister. Previously, the narrator invited the readers to enjoy the imaginative world of the scary girl which entirely changed her plan to trace Mr. Maybe. Now it's Blister's turn to experience something different in its imaginative world. The unexpected entry of Mr. Maybe in the form of spider in this imaginative world is worrisome for Blister. The expressions of anxiety and worry are manifest on its face. Mr. Maybe is pursuing Blister and it is difficult for Blister to get rid of this unexpected situation. Some unfamiliar creatures with red eyes can also be seen at the bottom which reflect anger that is nourished by Blister.

The readers never lose interest in the narrative due to the use of effective voice markers by the narrator. That is why there is maximum participation and engagement on the part of the readers. The story presents unexpected twists and turns with the help of cues or signals. So, the voice markers make it possible for the readers to decode the story effectively.

b. Expressive content and color

The use of the subjective voice marker highlights the narrator's beliefs, interest and ideological orientation in a visual (Jahn, 2021). The readers enter the imaginative world along with Blister and experience an unexpected situation there. The colors play significant roles here. Mr. Maybe is surrounded by red color while Blister is projected in green color. Both these colors are important signals or voice markers for the readers to have access to their emotions. Jahn (2021) argues that the voice markers generate implicit meanings and broaden the reading experience of the reader. Mr. Maybe seems to be in a furious mood and chases Blister to make it change the plan. The presentation of Blister in green color expresses intense feeling of jealousy which makes it vulnerable to other creatures. Jealousy is such a negative emotion that it weakens strength, courage

and will power of a person. It increases stress level and significantly impacts mental health.

Through these effective subjective voice markers, the narrator's personality gets reflected (Jahn, 2021). The narrator successfully pinpoints the negativities associated with jealousy. Jealousy leads to emotional distress, strained relationships, health issues, behavioral changes and mental disorder. This is one of the major obstacles in one's life that should be addressed appropriately. Prolonged jealousy acts as an inhibitive factor and spoils healthy relationships. The object of jealousy remains unaffected but the victim or the sufferer experiences inexplicable loss.

c. Spatial Organization

Pragmatic voice markers are crucial for effective communication as they aid in comprehending the context of the narrative (Jahn, 2021). They serve as effective tools in making sense of hidden meanings and intentions associated with the represented participants (Jahn, 2021). The gazes of Blister and Mr. Maybe are significant pragmatic voice markers here. Blister's empty gaze indicates its inner weakness and restlessness. It wants to get rid of the haunting image of Mr. Maybe that has brought restlessness and chaos in its life. Its close and intimate friendship is badly affected by the scary girl's changed plan in which she includes Bunny Guru who acts as Blister's greatest rival. As the whole figure of Blister is visible in this visual so, it represents impersonal relationship between the represented participants and the readers. The readers are not expected to experience this scene subjectively. Rather, the narrator prefers objectivity in portraying negative emotions in the guise of Blister and Mr. Maybe. The readers can view the represented participants from a low level which indicates the dominating position of the represented participants. It is basically due to the negative emotions that the represented participants seem to dominate the situation. These pragmatic markers maintain objectivity so that the readers can neutrally analyze the harmful effects associated with anger and jealousy. Moreover, the low positioning of the readers in this visual makes them realize the negative impact of these negative emotions and their uncontrolled power to destroy everything.

Jahn's concept of spatial organization (2021) basically refers to how the arrangement of physical and narrative spaces can serve as a distinctive voice marker within a visual text. Jahn (2021) emphasizes the spatial cues or pragmatic voice markers

in a visual as they are instrumental in shaping the reader's perception. So, the employment of the voice markers adds richness to the storytelling experience. The visual text is not just a series of images, but a cohesive, meaningful narrative experience.

Conclusion

So, the in depth analysis of the content-related, subjective/expressive and pragmatic voice markers makes the story accessible to the readers. A superficial reading of the wordless visuals makes it difficult to develop understanding regarding the story. The study highlights the significance of different types of voice markers that provide access to different dimensions of the story. Every visual contains unlimited meanings and messages which can easily be understood with the help of voice markers or signals that direct the attention of the readers towards particular details. The development of the story takes place through the effective employment of voice markers by the narrator.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSION

The basic purpose of this research is to foreground the role of voice markers in the selected graphic novel. The selected wordless graphic novel *The Adventures of Scarygirl* by Nathan Jurevicius (2009) activates mental capabilities to understand the narrative or the story embedded within the visuals. The mental effort required for decoding the graphic novel is inevitable because the visuals do not contain words. In order to make sense of the basic plot, setting and characters, it is very essential to focus on the colors, design and layout of the visual. These features play a very significant role so as to read, decode and comprehend graphic novels. It is evidently interesting and entertaining to understand a story with the help of visuals. However, careful attention to the voice markers enables the readers to decode the visuals effectively.

Importantly, decoding the visual content matter is quite technical and challenging in nature. In case of traditional written novels, the content matter consists of words that are effectively employed by the writers for manifold purposes, for example, foregrounding and backgrounding, etc. The graphic novels, on the other hand, invite readers to understand the narrative with the help of different cues. The voice markers are in, in fact, the cues that enable readers to understand the basic framework of the story and the development of the characters. This research focuses on three basic questions:

1. What are the significant features of the visual content matter embedded in the wordless graphic novel?
2. How does subjective expression of the narrative play a pivotal role in interpreting the selected graphic novel?
3. How do pragmatic signals help in identifying the relationship between the addresser and the addressee?

The analysis of the selected visuals is guided by the application of Jahn's theory of voice markers (2021) and Kress and Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar (2006). By using visual analysis as a research method, the voice markers in the selected visuals in

the graphic novel have been identified and analyzed accordingly. The three research questions focus on the three voice markers, namely content matter (setting, atmosphere and characters), subjective expression (the narrator's personal interest, perception and attitude towards life in general and people in particular) and pragmatic signals (the relationship between the narrator and the reader on the basis of gaze, social distance and angle). Every visual contains signals of varying nature to guide readers through the story.

The first research question addresses the nature of the content matter present within the visuals. By paying close attention to the specific details pertaining to the setting, atmosphere and characters, the meanings get generated. The findings indicate that the content matter serves as a significant voice marker in decoding the selected visuals. The identification of the represented participants in the visuals increases the interaction between the narrator and the readers. The presence of the animate and inanimate object in a specific setting within the visual introduces the major and minor characters to the readers. Moreover, the represented participants in the foreground acquire prominence against the ones in the background. The scary girl is seen to be struggling with the adverse external factors to reach her destination. The destination is replete with perils and hazardous risks, however, she is aided by certain other fictional characters, Blister and Bunny Guru, on her way to meet Mr. Maybe. The content matter as a voice marker brings to fore the obsession of the scary girl regarding Mr. Maybe, the possessive nature of Blister, the magical powers of Bunny Guru and unexpected hurdles faced by the scary girl. Without the basic understanding of the content matter, it is quite difficult to decipher meanings. The analysis further helps in understanding the progression of the story. So, the visual analysis of the selected visuals clearly highlights the fact that the content matter as a voice marker plays a crucial role in conveying essential information about the setting, atmosphere and characters.

The second research question addresses the employment of subjective expression as a voice marker in the wordless graphic novel. The narrator is the person who narrates the story behind the scene. The narrator is not explicitly visible anywhere, however, close dissection of the visual makes the reader feel the presence of the narrator. The analysis of the subjective expression as a voice marker develops readers' understanding regarding the narrator's viewpoint, personal opinions and subjective behavior towards different phenomena. Here, the internal composition of the visual is

considered to be of utmost significance as it brings to limelight the mindset of the narrator. In certain visuals, the blue color dominates which points towards the gloomy picture of life. Life is the name of vicissitudes and the narrator basically prepares the readers to face unexpected twists and turns in life through the projection of this color. Amidst such uncertainty, the green color of Blister's tentacles infuses new life in the scary girl who seems to be hopeful again to achieve her target. It also functions to nullify the negativity associated with blue color. Moreover, the yellow color in certain visuals portrays the characters as being energetic and enthusiastic to carry out their tasks. The meticulous use of colors reflects the narrator's perception towards life. The narrator seems to believe that life is the name of uncertainty where consistency and determination pave way for success and victory. The variation in the sizes of visuals also points towards important developments within the story in general and the narrator's personality in particular (Jahn, 2021). The narrator makes use of different framing patterns or margins so as to direct the attention of the readers towards particular details. The thick borders around the visuals indicate that the narrator is more concerned about the details given in those visuals while the decorative ones invite the readers to enter the imaginative world and explore the unexplored.

The in depth analysis of the pragmatic signals, according to the third research question, basically highlights the nature of the relationship between the narrator and the reader or the addressor and the addressee. In this regard, spatial organization plays a crucial role in developing cohesive connections between the narrator and the readers (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). The spatial organization of the visual includes gaze, social distance and angle (Kress and Leeuwen, 2006). It is the narrator who paints the entire story for the readers in a systematic way. The pragmatic signals orient the readers in such a way that they easily grasp whatever the narrator wants to convey to the readers. The imaginary connection gets established between the represented participants and the readers on the basis of gaze. In most of the selected visuals, the gaze of the represented participants is directed towards each other which either strengthens or weakens the relationship between them. Moreover, the social distance created by the narrator helps the readers in positioning themselves in the visuals. The readers are dependent upon these voice markers to explore the narrative accordingly. The close view of the represented participants allows the readers to have intimate connection with them. The increased distance between them, on the other hand, refers to objectivity and

detachment. The use of horizontal angle in the visuals provides an opportunity to the readers to consider themselves important as the characters are at the eye level. The vertical angle places the readers on a high level in certain visuals so that there is non-participant observation on their part and they interpret the story with a neutral and objective mind.

5.1 Scope of the Study

In researching voice markers in Jurevicius's wordless graphic novel, the study explores the ways in which non-verbal cues such as character expressions, body language, visual motifs and panel composition, serve as substitutes for traditional narrative voices. The scope of the study includes analyzing selected graphic novel by Jurevicius, focusing on how these visual elements guide readers' interpretations of character perspectives, emotions, and thematic messages without the use of written or spoken language. The findings of this research may aid the readers in studying and interpreting other wordless graphic novels.

5.2 Recommendations

1. The future researchers may consider focalization in the selected novel. It will enable them to decode and comprehend the same story from a different angle. The selection of this dimension will provide new insights and meanings and bring about extension in meaning.

2. The second part of the same graphic novel may be also selected for the in depth interpretation of the voice markers. It will further develop better understanding regarding the setting, atmosphere and characters within the graphic novel.

3. Another possibility is to draw a comparison between different wordless graphic novels and highlight the major similarities and dissimilarities between them on the basis of the employment of voice markers.

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