

# "Black and White" with Croatian Young Learners

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**SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU**  
**UČITELJSKI FAKULTET**  
**ODSJEK ZA UČITELJSKE STUDIJE**

**Katarina Brbora**

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## SUMMARY

Picturebooks are often viewed as easy reading material, but their word-picture relationship can prove that is not always the case. The current digital age where multitasking is considered normal has impacted the way children think, see and learn. Both Radical Change theory and considering picturebooks as postmodern developed in the 1990s (Dresang, 2008), and both approaches use similar terminology in describing common features of contemporary (postmodern) children's literature. This thesis was focused on the use of postmodern picturebooks, with a special emphasis on David Macaulay's *Black and White*, in order to examine Croatian EFL young learners' responses to it. In preparation for the thesis, a study was conducted in two parts. The first, conducted using an online questionnaire, was aimed at identifying the attitudes of teachers and student teachers on the use of picturebooks in teaching English to young learners. The results imply that participants would use picturebooks, but not very often and mostly for the purpose of expanding lesson aims related to specific grammar or vocabulary or reading and pronunciation. Almost none of the participants show an intent to use postmodern picturebooks, as they are not familiar with them. The second step of the investigation involved young learners: a small-group read-aloud and discussion of Macaulay's *Black and White* proved both beneficial for developing children's thinking and fun for the participants because they used language in a spontaneous and playful manner. It can be concluded that young English language learners readily engage in the reading process of postmodern picturebooks and understand them well. However, it is up to the teacher to decide how much time and effort will be assigned to such activities in class.

**Key words:** David Macaulay's *Black and White*, digital age, picturebook, postmodern picturebooks, Radical Change theory, response

## SAŽETAK

Slikovnice se često smatraju laganim materijalom za čitanje, no odnos teksta i slike u njima mogu pokazati da to nije uvijek slučaj. Digitalno doba u kojem živimo, gdje je ‘multitasking’ normalna stvar, utjecalo je na dječji način razmišljanja, gledanja i učenja. Radikalna teorija i primjena pojma postmodernizma u izučavanju slikovnice razvili su se 1990-ih (Dresang, 2008) te oba koncepta koriste sličnu terminologiju pri opisivanju glavnih karakteristika suvremene (postmodernističke) dječje književnosti. Ovaj je rad usmjeren na uporabu postmodernističke slikovnice *Black and White* Davida Macaulayja kako bi se ispitala reakcija hrvatskih učenika engleskoga jezika mlađe školske dobi na takve slikovnice. U prvom se koraku provela anketa o iskustvima i stavovima učitelja i studenata učiteljskih fakulteta o poznavanju i uporabi takvih slikovnica u nastavi. Pokazalo se da su se ispitanici koristili slikovnicama, iako ne često te većinom u svrhu postizanja ishoda učenja povezanih s određenom gramatičkom strukturom ili vokabularom, vještinom čitanja i izgovorom. Gotovo nitko od ispitanika nije pokazao sklonost uporabi postmodernističke slikovnice jer nisu upoznati s njom. Kratka radionica s učenicima i čitanje slikovnice *Black and White*, pokazalo je njezin pozitivan učinak na dječje razmišljanje te je aktivnost bila zabavna za učenike zbog uporabe jezika kao spontane igre. Glavni je zaključak ovoga istraživanja da djeca dobro prihvaćaju i razumiju postmodernističke slikovnice. Međutim, o učitelju ovisi koliko je vremena i truda spreman posvetiti uporabi takve slikovnice u nastavi.

**Ključne riječi:** *Black and White* (David Macaulay), digitalno doba, postmodernistička slikovnica, postmodernizam, radikalna teorija, reakcija na književno djelo, slikovnica

## 1. INTRODUCTION

At first glance, picturebook as a literary form may seem basic and easy to read. On the one hand, a picturebook can be defined as a social, cultural and historical product most commonly created for the enjoyment of young children as the intended audience (Kiefer, 2008, p. 9). On the other hand, throughout history, the picturebook has always had a similar art format in which “the words tell us what the pictures do not show, and the pictures show us what the words do not tell us” (Nodelman, 1988, as cited in Kiefer, 2008, p. 9).

As picturebooks are often looked upon as easy material to read, so is the relationship between the text and the pictures considered simple. Sipe (1998) considers the relationship between the words and pictures a synergistic one, in which words and pictures establish a complex interplay. Apart from words and pictures, what creates a picturebook’s meaning is the reader’s response to it. The picturebook’s form may change because of some social or technological advances, but what remains constant is the response coming from the reader both emotionally and intellectually (Kiefer, 2008).

Kiefer (1995) looks at reading pictures as a “multifaceted and sometimes personal act that requires focus and sophistication”. Kiefer’s work (1995) showed that reading multi-layered picturebooks had a positive impact on children’s oral, written, visual, and representative responses. According to Pantaleo (2008, p. 11), metafictional devices have been used in contemporary literature to draw the attention of the reader and to highlight how the reader creates meaning using those devices while reading the book, which enables the reader to become an active member in interpreting the book.

The main goal of this thesis is to investigate the possibilities of using postmodern picturebooks, more specifically David Macaulay’s *Black and White* (1990) as a “postmodern picturebook”, with young Croatian EFL (English as a foreign language) learners. The aim of this thesis is twofold: to determine teachers’ attitudes towards using picturebooks in lower primary school and to examine how young Croatian EFL learners respond to reading a complex picturebook.

The thesis begins with a brief introduction to the poetics of the postmodern picturebook and its connection to the digital age. The chapter also outlines Radical Change theory and postmodernism, as well as the metafictional devices and techniques found in contemporary picturebooks, with a special emphasis on Macaulay’s *Black and White*. The third chapter

contains a discussion of the results of the survey conducted among teachers and student teachers concerning the use of picturebooks in the classroom setting. This is followed by a chapter on types of responses to picturebooks and the phenomenon of interthinking in small-group discussions, along with an overview of existing literature and similar studies conducted with primary school students involving picturebooks. The fifth chapter contains a detailed analysis of learners' responses to Macaulay's *Black and White* taken from a small-group discussion held in Zagreb, Croatia. The conclusion synthesizes the results of both parts of the study, comments on the drawbacks of the study, and suggest ideas for further research on related topics.

### *1.1. Procedure, participants and methodology*

The first part of the study consists of a survey conducted among Croatian primary school teachers and student teachers. It included 43 students of Croatian teacher education study programmes, 14 primary school teachers, and nine primary school teachers of English. All the participants, 66 in total, were female. This part of the study used an online questionnaire as an instrument which was sent to various Facebook social groups of Croatian teachers. The questionnaire mostly comprised open-ended questions (see Appendix A).

The second part of the study consisted of a small-group reading and discussion of Macaulay's *Black and White*, which was organized to see whether it was possible for Croatian EFL learners to understand such a complex picturebook and to examine the learners' responses and interpretations. This part of the study involved six Croatian 4<sup>th</sup> grade learners aged between 9 and 10, all of whom started learning English as a foreign language in the first grade. At the time of the observation, they were thus in their fourth year of learning English. The learners were chosen randomly by their English teachers and the group included three boys and three girls.

Prior to conducting the second part of the research, the ethics clearance was obtained from the faculty's research ethics committee, the research was approved by the school's principal, and the parents consented to their children taking part in the research. The identities of children were obscured in order to preserve anonymity and, instead of names, 'Girl' and 'Boy' were used in data extracts. The data consist of audio recordings of the small-group discussion, which was transcribed and analysed by focusing on the learners' responses to the postmodern picturebook. The discussion with the learners was held in the school's library and



lasted for 90 minutes. The learners were given almost no instruction before reading the picturebook as the goal was to ensure their responses were natural and authentic.

## 2. POSTMODERN PICTUREBOOKS

### 2. 1. *Life in the digital age*

The period in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we are currently living in is often referred to as the digital or the electronic age. With the domination of information technology, this era is often defined as “a technologically advanced era of multitasking, a term first associated with a computer processing multiple independent jobs simultaneously” (Martin, 2004, p. 6). Nevertheless, this term can also be applied to people (including children) living in the digital era, in which multitasking is a part of everyday life (Martin, 2004).

According to Hopkins, Brookes, and Green (2013), pre-schoolers begin using digital devices even before books, which is why their increased usage of technology strongly affects their cognitive, physical, and socio-emotional development. Martin (2004) points out it is the multiple stimuli, along with the visual stimuli, which children are exposed to from their birth, which results in them learning and making sense of multiple narratives very early in their life. According to him, along with limiting children’s usage of technology, it is important to attain a better understanding of how children of the digital age understand and perceive the world.

### 2. 2. *Radical Change Theory and postmodern picturebooks*

The theory that developed from the need to better understand changes in young people’s understanding and behaviour due to digital changes is Radical Change Theory (Dresang, 2008). Dresang states that this theory was first introduced in the early 1990s. The ‘digital’ in the term ‘digital age’ relates not only to the media, but also to the qualities of the media, such as interactivity, connectivity, and access, which have all influenced society. Interactivity represents the dynamic, nonlinear, and complex information flow in literature and other media; connectivity represents the “sense of community or construction of social worlds that emerge from changing perspectives and to expanded associations in the real world or in books and other resources”; and access represents the breaking of the walls of information that was out of reach (Dresang, 2008, p. 41). In terms of children’s literature, Dresang (2008) says Radical Change differentiates three kinds of changes in the behaviour of digital age youth: change in thinking and learning; change in perspective; and change in the access to information and the ideas they have.

Along with Radical Change Theory, another concept appeared three decades prior to it, at a much larger scale, which is called postmodernism (Dresang, 2008). Pantaleo and Sipe (2008) refer to postmodernism as a collection of changes and developments in philosophy, literature, art, architecture, and music during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Dresang (2008) claims that postmodernism did not include literature for young people until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Postmodernism includes questioning everything, from meaning to interpretations of history, and “highlights the multiplication of voices, questions, and conflicts” (McGowan, 1994, as cited in Dresang, 2008, p. 42). In literature for young people, postmodernism is mostly seen in terms of use of metafictional devices and techniques (Dresang, 2008, p. 42).

### 2. 3. *Radical Change and postmodernism in contemporary picturebooks*

Radical Change Theory and considering picturebooks as postmodern both evolved during the 1990s as independent concepts that have similar viewpoints on literary changes effected by the changes in the digital age (Dresang, 2008, p. 42). As picturebooks mirror the culture and context they are made in, contemporary picturebooks reflect the digital age. Dresang continues by stating that both Radical Change and postmodernism identify some literary changes (as defined by Radical Change) and/or metafictional devices and techniques (as defined by postmodernism) that can be found in contemporary literature.

**Table 1.** Comparison of literary changes identified by Radical Change and metafictional devices and techniques identified by postmodernism (Dresang, 2008, p. 43)

Literary Changes Identified by Radical Change	Metafictional Devices and Techniques Identified by Postmodernism
<i>Changing Forms and Formats</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>graphics in new forms and formats, including handheld hypertext and digital design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>typographic experimentation (McCallum, 1996)</li> <li>new and unusual design and layouts (Anstey, 2002)</li> <li>“a pastiche of illustrative styles” (Anstey, 2002, p. 447)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>words and pictures reaching new levels of synergy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illustrative framing [...] (i.e., a text within a picture or a text within another text) (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2001)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>nonlinear and nonsequential organization and format</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disruption of traditional time and space relationships (Goldstone, 1998)</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple layers of meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “availability of multiple readings and meanings for a variety of audiences” (Anstey, 2002, p. 447)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interactive formats (with text, between text and reader, and between texts)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overly obtrusive narrators who directly address readers and comment on their own narrations (McCallum, 1996)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intertextuality (Anstey, 2002)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• parodic appropriations of other texts, genres, and discourses (McCallum, 1996)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Mixing of genres, discourse styles, mode of narration and speech representation” (McCallum, 1996, p. 397)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• description of the creative process (Goldstone, 1998)</li> </ul>
<i>Changing Perspectives</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple perspectives, visual and verbal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multiple narrators; multiple narratives (Goldstone, 1998)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• previously unheard voices</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• youth who speak for themselves</li> </ul>	
<i>Changing Boundaries</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subjects previously forbidden</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• settings previously overlooked</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characters portrayed in new, complex ways</li> <li>• new types of communities</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unresolved endings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “indeterminacy in written or illustrative text, plot, character or setting” (Anstey, 2002, p. 447)</li> </ul>

Furthermore, Dresang compares some of the terminology used by both concepts which is applicable to children’s literature. As seen in Table 1, both theories use different terms to describe the same literary elements or events, which Dresang shows in parallel. What distinguishes the two is that postmodernism in picturebooks draws attention to pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness, while Radical Change in picturebooks highlights the handheld hypertext and digital design connected to interactivity, connectivity, and access to the digital environment. Pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness relate to the vagueness and fragmentation of society in the period of postmodernism, while the handheld hypertext applies to books that bear the characteristics of nonlinear and nonsequential aspects of digital media.

To support theory with practice, Dresang (2008) calls attention to Sylvia Pantaleo's work, which shows elements of Radical Change theory in books where emphasis is put not only on the text, but also the reader. Pantaleo (2004) lists a number of picturebooks with metafictional devices that can encourage children to grow their abilities as readers and develop the metafictional awareness needed in the digital age. Some of the picturebooks are the following: *Black and White* (Macaulay, 1990), *Starry Messenger* (Sis, 1996), and *The Stinky Cheeseman and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (Scieszka, 1992). Sutherland-Smith (2002), according to Pantaleo (2004), claims that when reading texts with metafictional elements, readers develop literacy similar to web literacy, which enables simultaneous reading and analysis of multiple sources in form interaction.

#### 2. 4. Black and White – a postmodern picturebook

Following the literary changes and metafictional devices identified by Radical Change Theory and the concept of postmodernism applied to picturebooks, Sipe and McGuire (2008) identify six common characteristics of postmodern picturebooks:

1. blurring the distinctions between popular and “high” culture, the categories of traditional literary genres, and the boundaries among author, narrator, and reader
2. subversion of literary traditions and conventions and undermining the traditional distinction between the story and the outside “real” world
3. intertextuality (present in all texts) is made explicit and manifold, often taking the form of pastiche, a wry, layered blend of texts from many sources
4. multiplicity of meanings, so that there are multiple pathways through the narrative, a high degree of ambiguity, and nonresolution or open-ended endings
5. playfulness, in which readers are invited to treat the text as semiotic playground
6. self-referentiality, which refuses to allow readers to have a vicarious lived-through experience, offering instead a metafictional stance by drawing attention to the text *as a text* rather than as a secondary world

(Pantaleo and Sipe (2008, p. 3)

Moreover, Mackey (2008) believes that children reading postmodern picturebooks have power when reading and must manage the contradictions the form provides. Mackey also says that the contrasts of anarchy and safety in postmodern picturebooks make the reader question,

think, and learn. Anstey (2002, as quoted in Mackey, 2008, p. 106), claims postmodern picturebooks have the impact in the development of children becoming critical readers. The competence of critical reading goes beyond literature reading:

The acknowledgment of change as the one constant of life in new times indicates that literacy education must focus not only on the mastery of certain knowledge and skills, but also on the use of these skills in various social contexts. Furthermore, literacy education must foster the attitudes and abilities needed to master and use the evolving languages and technologies of the future.

David Macaulay's *Black and White* (1990) is a non-traditional picturebook that won the Caldecott Medal in 1991, and with its postmodern qualities it serves as a prototype for both the picturebook and literature for children of the digital era (Dresang, 2008). *Black and White* belongs to the most prominent examples of picturebooks recognised as having qualities of postmodernism, and it motivated Dresang to develop the Radical Change theory. In his Caldecott acceptance speech, Macaulay (1991) emphasised the importance of developing and nourishing visual literacy and constant curiosity to know why things are the way they are. Macaulay states "that it is essential to see, not merely to look; that words and pictures can support each other; that it isn't necessary to think in a straight line to make sense; and finally that risk can be rewarded". This is what inspired Macaulay to create *Black and White* – he used play to engage the readers by making them think and see things in the picturebook (Pantaleo, 2006, p. 2).

## 2. 5. *Play and playfulness in Macaulay's Black and White*

*Black and White* is a complex metafictional picturebook that plays with the reader with its materiality (cover, endpapers, title page, layout of double spreads) as well as with its multiple narratives and other metafictional devices. Nikolajeva (2008) considers the picturebook cover a very important element which can contribute to the reader's creation of meaning, as that is the first thing a reader sees when they begin reading a certain book. *Black and White's* cover plays with the reader with its transparent title (which reveals the colours blue, white and green) and sends the message to the reader to look beyond the words, while its title's torn-out newspaper shape refers to the black-and-white newspapers that are among the main motifs of its plot (Dresang and McClelland, 1995). In addition, the red colour of the title as printed on the spine

mocks the reader, as if referring to the riddle “What is black and white and red/read all over?”, again pointing to the motif of newspapers (Dresang and McClelland, 1995).

The book is then accompanied by a short text in which Macaulay warns the reader: “This book appears to contain a number of stories that do not necessarily occur at the same time. Then again, it may contain only one story” (Macaulay, 1990, p. 1). With this warning, readers are introduced to the multiple storylines of *Black and White*, i.e., four ‘separate’ stories with individual titles and borders – “Seeing Things”, “Problem Parents”, “A Waiting Game”, and “Udder Chaos” (Allan, 2018). The stories may initially seem independent of each other, with their specific style and colours, but as the story progresses, frame-breaking begins (Martin, 2004). Macaulay emphasizes his ludic approach even more by playing with the page layout and the relationship between words and pictures, while intratextual connections become more noticeable.

According to Kaplan (2003), *Black and White* inspires the reader to question and continuously participate in finding different possible stories, which gives the reader authority. Even when the readers think they have disentangled the actual story, they are then still confronted by many questions that make them suspicious of their interpretation (Kaplan, 2003).

Another way Macaulay plays with the reader by manipulating the word-picture relationship is the contradiction between words and pictures in “Seeing Things”, where the text refers to an old woman, but the picture clearly shows the character of the robber from parallel stories (Dresang and McClelland, 1995). Words also contradict pictures in “Udder Chaos”, where the text describes Holstein cows while the pictures depict the robber, which Dresang and McClelland (1995) believe creates irony.

All things considered, *Black and White* is without doubt a postmodern picturebook in which play is used both as a sense of enjoyment and to encourage interpretation (Geyh, 2003, as cited in Allan, 2018). In fact, this playfulness, as Allan (2018) states, has a vital role, as it highlights the picturebook’s metafictional quality and the ideologies of its text.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION – TEACHERS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS USING PICTUREBOOKS**

This chapter contains an analysis of the answers teachers and student teachers provided to the questions in an online questionnaire, written and prepared specifically for this study. The questionnaire consisted of two parts – the first one was concerned with teachers’ and student teachers’ attitudes towards picturebooks and their use, while the second part focused on the use of picturebooks in teaching (personal experience).

#### *3. 1. Attitudes towards picturebooks and their use*

The first question was a multiple-choice one in which participants were asked at what age it was appropriate for children to read picturebooks. The results were as follows: preschool age – 98.5%, lower primary school age – 93.9%, and upper primary school age – 36.4%. Only three participants out of 66 answered that people of all ages can read picturebooks.

The second question was open-ended and was concerned with how much of the teaching time could be dedicated to picturebooks. Most participants answered they would dedicate one hour per week, while the second most common answer was to use them for one hour per month. The answers show that most teachers would not dedicate much time to picturebooks. Ten participants showed interested in using picturebooks in their teaching.

When asked about the goal of using picturebooks in teaching, most participants, 57 of them, replied they would use picturebooks with the purpose of teaching vocabulary or grammar and improving pronunciation and reading skills. Five participants stated that they would use picturebooks for some educational and motivational purposes. Four answers included the use of picturebooks in developing children’s thinking and imagination and in correlating with the school subject of Art. Only three participants answered they would use picturebooks for fun and play.

When asked which school subject and in which grade they would use picturebooks, most participants, 63 in total, answered they would use picturebooks both in pre-school and in lower primary grades in almost all subjects, but especially in language lessons.

When asked about the complexity of picturebooks, 74.2% participants answered that picturebooks are simple, and 9.1% answered they are complex. Other answers included:



‘picturebooks can be both simple and complex’, ‘it depends on the picturebook’, and ‘picturebooks are fun and interesting’.

When asked if they knew of any picturebook awards, most participants (12) mentioned either the Croatian awards *Ovca u kutiji* and *Grigor Vitez*, and/or (8) the American awards *The Randolph Caldecott Medal*, *The John Newbery Medal* (which is, actually, not a picturebook award, but is awarded annually to the author of the best book of children’s literature in the U.S.A., usually a novel), and *The Kate Greenaway Medal*.

### 3. 2. Using picturebooks in teaching (personal experience)

According to the provided answers, 33.3% of the participants claim they use picturebooks regularly, 22.7% that they use them sometimes, and 22.7% that they rarely use picturebooks in their teaching. Almost half of the participants (31) claim they use picturebooks in their Croatian and English language classes in lower primary grades.

Student teachers who answered they did not use picturebooks in teaching explained it is because of a lack of opportunity and the inability of finding appropriate picturebooks for the lesson they were assigned by their teacher mentor. They also stated that their teacher mentors did not sufficiently motivate them to use picturebooks, and that when doing practice teaching lessons, they did not have enough freedom to use them.

From the provided answers it is evident that participants generally use various Croatian picturebooks and some English picturebooks. Some of the English picturebooks they use include *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1902), a classic English picturebook by Beatrix Potter, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (1994), a board picturebook written and illustrated by Eric Carle, and *The Snowman* (1976), a wordless picturebook written and illustrated by Raymond Briggs, while three participants stated they use *Little Red Riding Hood*, which is a tale originally written down by Charles Perrault in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The participants did not provide the authors’ names, but only the titles, and their answers indicate their leaning towards using traditional picturebooks in their teaching.

Furthermore, most participants’ answers revealed that they would choose a picturebook according to the students’ and their own interests. Many of them said that they would use picturebooks recommended by the national curriculum as part of the students’ mandatory reading list. The Croatian National Curriculum for Compulsory Education gives teachers the

freedom to choose any kind of book in their teaching as long as it fulfils the curriculum's aims. The curriculum only recommends using picturebooks in English classes in primary school.

When asked about postmodern picturebooks, 60.6% of the participants answered they were not familiar with any of them, and when asked if they knew about Macaulay's *Black and White*, most of them (43) said they did not know of it and did not use it in their teaching. The 23 participants who knew of it are student teachers who have not used it with learners yet.

To sum up, the answers show that picturebooks, if they are used in primary classes, it is mainly in language lessons for the purpose of teaching vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Most participants did not know of postmodern picturebooks and Macaulay's *Black and White*. The answers served as an additional motivation to test if a picturebook of that kind could be used with young EFL learners, which is discussed in the next chapter.

## 4. RESPONDING TO PICTUREBOOKS

### 4. 1. *Types of responses*

Rosenblatt (1976) advocates the belief that readers should be given an active part in creating meaning while reading, as well as the freedom to talk and respond to the reading material. The term ‘response to literature’ is complex and is often viewed as an iceberg – it refers to the mental and physical response and to the reader’s activities while reading (Purves and Rippere, 1968). In other words, reading only appears to be visual, but a major part of our response to literature occurs in our mind and is invisible to others. Pantaleo refers to Rosenblatt’s transactional theory of 1976, when she states that the relationship between the text and the reader is a form of transaction in which both the readers and the text affect each other – the readers create meaning while reading and each new part of the text provides them with a new experience. When it comes to picturebooks, she believes readers fill in the gaps and move back and forth between the words and the pictures.

Children’s responses to literature are categorised differently by many authors. For the purposes of this study, Langer’s model of *envisionment* (1990, 1995) and Sipe’s (2008) five categories of responses are used to interpret the learners’ responses to a postmodern picturebook. Langer’s model of *envisionment* includes four types of relationships between the reader and the text: “being out and stepping in”, “being in and moving through”, “being in and stepping out”, and “stepping out and objectifying experience”. Additionally, Sipe describes five different categories of responses children make while listening to picturebook read-alouds: analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, and performative.

### 4. 2. *Interthinking and small-group discussions*

When responding to picturebooks, students are often put in bigger or smaller groups and then encouraged to share their ideas and think through talking with others, which is a process known as ‘interthinking’ (Pantaleo, 2008). Pantaleo mentions the social constructivist perspective that claims individuals construct meaning by interacting with new information.

Barnes (1976) describes exploratory talk as the ‘thinking-aloud’ talk that can help learners construct and control their thoughts. On the other hand, Mercer (1995) describes another type of talk, known as cumulative talk, which does not engage the learners “critically but constructively with each other’s ideas”, and can be recognized in the use of repetitions,

confirmations, and elaborations. Both exploratory and cumulative talk are used in small-group discussions Pantaleo (2008) conducted as interactive read-alouds of picturebooks with children for the sake of their experience of pleasure and enjoyment. In addition, Pantaleo noted children were active and engaged in constructing and interpreting their meaning of the book used. “Reading aloud can develop children’s literacy skills, promote interest in reading achievement, provide opportunities for social interaction, and improve writing abilities” (Galda et al., 2000).

Furthermore, Pantaleo (2008) adds that reading in small groups provided children with the same amount of interaction as an individual session of reading that led to better comprehension than when working in a big group (i.e., the whole class). Coulthard’s research (2003, as cited by Pantaleo, 2008), confirms that picturebooks with detailed visuals help young learners of English cross the barrier of some unknown language. Moreover, Torr found that learners’ comments made in small group discussions gave “insight into their literary and literacy interpretations” (2004, p. 446).

## **5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION – LEARNERS’ RESPONSES TO MACAULAY’S *BLACK AND WHITE***

Following the theoretical background provided in this thesis, a small-group reading and discussion of Macaulay’s *Black and White* was held to see if it was possible for Croatian EFL young learners to understand such a complex picturebook in English and to examine their responses and interpretations. The discussion was conducted in an interactive manner, whereby learners were encouraged to explore the picturebook by themselves, and respond, make comments, and create meaning while reading the picturebook. In the same way, the discussion was focused on learners’ talk rather than teacher talk, but the investigator did ask some additional open-ended questions to motivate learners to explain their interpretations and thinking in more detail. Some questions were pre-planned, and some emerged from the situational context. In line with Sipe’s model (2008, p. 209), the investigator mostly played the role of manager and encourager who asked questions when those were needed to further the discussion, and the children were given agency, as their meaning-making was in the focus of this discussion. All the interactions between and among the learners and the investigator were audiotaped and transcribed.

The research data includes the transcriptions of the learners’ small-group discussion, which offered some insight into how they create meaning out of the postmodern picturebook *Black and White*. The transcript excerpts are analysed and discussed below in order to interpret the learners’ responses to and interpretations of *Black and White*. The transcribed text contains the original learners’ oral expressions without any language corrections or translation.

### *5. 1. Analysis of peritext*

Before handing the picturebook to the learners, the investigator showed them the front cover and the back cover, to which they provided responses.

INVESTIGATOR: So... Look at the cover of this book. [showing the picturebook’s front and back cover]

BOY 1: Is that a cow?

GIRL 1: That’s a cow!

GIRL 2: Like somebody is moving a cow.

BOY 1: That's an alien!

GIRL 1: No, it's not an alien.

GIRL 2: It's a man. He is moving a cow.

BOY 1: It's a shadow.

INVESTIGATOR: What do you think?

GIRL 3: To je vještica.

INVESTIGATOR: So, you think it's a witch?

BOY 2: It's a shadow of human.

The learners were then given the picturebook and instructed to read it. They first looked at the book's title page and responded to it by reading the warning and analysing the picture of the burglar escaping the jail. The learners also provided an additional comment on the picturebook's publication date.

INVESTIGATOR: You can now take a look and get all together.

GIRL 1: Do we need to read the book?

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, you will read it together... What do you see here? A warning? [opening the picturebook]

BOY 1: [reading the warning] This book appears to contain a number of stories that do not necessarily occur at the same time.

INVESTIGATOR: What does that mean? Do you know, maybe?

BOY 1: [looking at the text and trying to translate word by word] Ova knjiga appears... Ugh... Izgleda ima brojeve od priče koje nisu najvažnije u isto vrijeme.

INVESTIGATOR: Znači da se ne događaju u isto vrijeme? Što mislite da će to značiti?

BOY 2: Valjda da će netko vidjeti jednu stvar, a drugi će vidjeti drugu stvar.

INVESTIGATOR: A što mislite što znači ovo 'Black and White'? Zašto se baš tako zove slikovnica?

GIRL 1: Zato što su nasuprotne boje.

INVESTIGATOR: Dobro.

BOY 3: Zato što se lakše vidi da jedan vidi jedno, a drugi drugo.

INVESTIGATOR: Znači da se vide neki kontrasti između crne i bijele.

BOY 3: Da je zbunjujuće.

GIRL 1: [looking at the picturebook and pointing at the age] Ovo je napisano 1990.

INVESTIGATOR: Da, je li vam se to davno čini ili?

GIRL 1: To je prije 31 godinu...

INVESTIGATOR: Da, a ja sam se rodila 1997. pa se i meni čini daleko ta godina. Mislite li da će onda biti staromodna slikovnica?

BOY 1: Pa ne mora bit.

GIRL 2: It doesn't have to mean it's old and it's not like a good book.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, maybe you can have an open mind, otvorenog uma ići na ovu slikovnicu.

GIRL 1: Okay.

INVESTIGATOR: Maybe you can take a closer look at the picture. [showing the title page] What do you think is going to happen?

ALL: [looking at the title page and pointing]

BOY 2: I think that's a jail.

GIRL 2: Like somebody is trying to escape the jail.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes.

GIRL 1: Somebody already did it because look there is...

GIRL 2: There is some blankets.

INVESTIGATOR: So what did he do?

ALL: He escaped the prison!

## *5. 2. Interthinking during the discussion and interactive read-aloud*

While reading the picturebook, the learners attempted to both construct its meaning individually and take notice of what others said. Similarly to Pantaleo's (2007) experience with her participants, the learners assisted and influenced each other in constructing a progressive

understanding of the picturebook. One learner even showed awareness of this, which is visible from the following excerpt:

INVESTIGATOR: Mislite li da ćete stvoriti neko drugačije značenje ovoj slikovnici ako ju ponovno čitate?

GIRL 1: No, we already know, but if we did it alone we would definitely made something differently. We make some new ideas because we combined our thoughts and we made a new meaning.

### 5. 3. *Discussion of artistic hybridity*

While discussing the illustrations on page 17, i.e., why one character was coloured lighter than the other, one learner explained the illustrator's choice:

GIRL 1: Ali taj je blijedi!

GIRL 3: But he is lighter!

GIRL 2: But he is still in train!

BOY 1: [pointing] Zato što ovo tu, pogledaj svjetlo! [referring to the bottom illustration of the children] Ovdje nije svjetlo.

GIRL 1: Because the same artist make that.

BOY 1: Daj da vidim neš! [flipping back the pages and looking at the illustrations]

INVESTIGATOR: You think the other illustrator did that?

GIRL 1: Yes!

GIRL 2: Seeing things!

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he did that?

GIRL 1: Because maybe someone has their style to draw something, so he likes to draw people like that so he draw all people like this.

The learners noticed the use of different artistic styles in this picturebook, so they were asked to provide an analytic response. Namely, Sipe (2008) distinguishes among the following types of responses – the analytical, the intertextual, the personal, and the transparent response. Sipe explains that the analytic response involves viewing the text in order to create narrative meaning, e.g., the relationship between the text and the pictures, analysis of the book as an



object or the illustrations' design and semiotic significance. The learners were asked to give an analytic response to the choice of artistic styles Macaulay made in the four stories. The learners noticed that the artistic style used in 'Seeing Things' is different from the style used in other stories as well as the purpose of using different artistic styles in the picturebook.

INVESTIGATOR: What do you think about the pictures? Were they the same in all these four pieces or? [pointing] What about this one? Is this one different from the others?

GIRL 1: Yes, because it's like real art and these are just for fun.

#### 5. 4. Discussion of the authorship

The following transcript reveals that the learners were unsure about who wrote the warning and created the whole picturebook. As described in Langer's model of *envisionment* (1990, 1995), the learners showed different kinds of relationships they had with the text as readers. Langer identifies four relationships of readers to text: "being out and stepping in", "being in and moving through", "being in and stepping out", and "stepping out and objectifying experience". Langer points out that these relationships do not follow a linear path, but the reader can experience different relationships and shift from one to the other, therefore reflecting on the text they have read and creating meaning. It is visible from the learners' activity that they flipped back and forth through the picturebook's pages and compared its illustrations, which shows the nonlinear path of their reading. Most learners in this study showed they were still 'in the story', as they did not identify the author as an external subject. The same can be identified as the transparent response that Sipe (2008) explains as children entering and becoming a part of the story world. Only one learner (BOY 1) showed confidence in answering that it is the author (David Macaulay) who wrote the warning and created the book, which can be understood as Langer's "being in and stepping out" relationship, or as Sipe's analytic response, since the learner addressed the book as a constructed object.

INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] Okay, but take a look. Why was this warning at the beginning?  
Who wrote this warning?

GIRL 1: Pa djeca.

GIRL 2: The children.

INVESTIGATOR: Who wrote the book?

GIRL 2: The children.

BOY 1: [pointing] Pa ovaj koji je napisao knjigu.

GIRL 1: [reading] David Macaulay.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you think the author wrote the warning?

BOY 3: Yes.

GIRL 2: No!

GIRL 1: Maybe the author who was getting this was wrote this. No, he can't do that.

BOY 1: The author who is writing everything, he must made that.

[...]

GIRL 2: When he (the boy in the story) was playing, he got the inspiration to make this story.

### *5. 5. Personal response*

The following excerpt shows an example of what Sipe (2008) identifies as the personal and the intertextual responses. Sipe states that the personal response represents the child's connection to their personal life, while the intertextual response involves children connecting the text to other cultural products (e.g., books or movies). While analysing the colours black and white and their connection to the two burglars (p. 18), one learner made a connection to his personal experience and the movies he has seen:

BOY 2: So, you can see black and white. Maybe they're competing. Maybe he's black, and she's white. I don't know... Maybe they are playing like a chess game. I see that in crimi movies...

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 2: Some, you got a figures. You got queen, you got king, and that. Their enemies like cases. And they got money...

INVESTIGATOR: Why did you connect it with chess?

GIRL 1: Because you got black and white figures.

After reading the picturebook, the learners were asked some additional questions regarding their use of other media, such as TV or comic books. Following this, the learners were asked if they saw any connection between the picturebook and other media, to which one learner (GIRL 2) personally and intertextually responded:

GIRL 2: Because I remember I watched like that happen in real life. Like some burglar or some people that are criminals try to take over a plane. And there were like victims and they stole the plane and the whole army come to save them.

### 5. 6. *Words contradicting pictures*

As already mentioned above, *Black and White* contains many examples of tension between words and pictures. However, although they understood the pictures better, the learners decided to trust text more than the pictures, which is obvious from the following transcript about the burglar/old lady:

BOY 3: [pointing] Ovaj izgleda ko lopov.

INVESTIGATOR: You think that's the burglar?

GIRL 2: Oh my gosh, I think that is the same burglar!

BOY 2: No, but in this text it say it's an old woman.

GIRL 1: But maybe he is hiding.

BOY 3: Maybe that is his partner.

BOY 2: [pointing] Maybe both escape and then maybe it's she escaped and then she works with him and she just dressed this, I don't know what's this. She dressed it to...

It is apparent that at this point of the interactive read-aloud that the learners did not connect the burglar from 'Udder Chaos' and with the one from 'Seeing Things', but instead trusted the text as the primary source of meaning. The same results can be seen from the case studies conducted by Lauš and Narančić Kovač (2008a, 2008b), who showed that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade EFL primary students showed a tendency of relying on the text as the primary source of meaning (2008b). On the other hand, the results of the other study (Lauš and Narančić Kovač 2008a) show that 2<sup>nd</sup> grade EFL primary students rely more on the visual text, instead of the verbal text. Lauš and Narančić Kovač also concluded "that children rely on a combination of visual discourse, verbal discourse and on their mastery of the story scheme to reconstruct the story" (2008a, p. 125) that can also be applied to our learners.

### *5. 7. Readers inventing their own story*

While reading the picturebook, the learners showed creativity when explaining the actions of the burglar by constructing their own story using background knowledge about the world. Complex pictures of the burglar in which he is hiding motivated the learners to discuss their thoughts and share them with the rest of the group.

GIRL 2: [pointing] I want to say something about this photo and this photo. I thought if he is going for that lady, she must have evidence of that. Maybe she saw him something do that's criminal.

GIRL 1: And she want to get him back in the jail, but she...

INVESTIGATOR: So, she wants to catch him?

GIRL 1 & GIRL 2: Yes!

GIRL 1: Or, he wants to catch her.

INVESTIGATOR: Oh, so they are chasing each other?

ALL: Yes!

BOY 2: Or, it's... It could be private detective like first, but it can be maybe she betrayed him. But she knows like a lot of robs he did, but she will maybe... Maybe she... Možda je ostala dovoljno dugo u zatvoru da su ju pustili pa da je onda ona htjela, pa da onda ona sad njega hoće uhvatit zato što je on pobjegao. To se već svuda proširilo. Možda ona njega želi uhvatit zato što i još mu produłji kaznu.

BOY 3: Ali zašto je bila u odijelu?

GIRL 1: Pa ne znam, da ju on ne prepozna.

### *5. 8. Reading emotions from pictures*

Although the learners trusted the text more, they understood the pictures better. The illustrations helped the learners describe different things, such as how a character is feeling. The first excerpt includes learners discussing one character from the singing choir and why his face is red. The second analysis of emotions was encouraged by the investigator, and the learners explained how the boy on the train felt. Below are excerpts in which the learners draw conclusions on how a character feels according to the picture.

GIRL 1: [pointing] And what is with his face?

BOY 3: Izgorio je.

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he is red?

GIRL 1: I don't know. Maybe, I don't know.

BOY 2: [pointing] This guy stole a book from this guy!

ALL: Yes!

GIRL 2: [pointing] And his clothes!

INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] And who is this guy?

GIRL 2: It is the burglar!

GIRL 1: And he is shy because he don't have clothes.

[...]

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. [pointing] Look at his face. What is he feeling like?

GIRL 3: Scared.

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he's scared?

GIRL 3: Ili tužan.

INVESTIGATOR: Or sad. Why?

BOY 2: But he see is that really cloud. He is confused because I don't know, we don't see that cloud or...

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

It is apparent from the learners' interpretations of characters that the visuals serve as sources of characterizing information that Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer (2018, p. 395) state are: (a) presentations of a character's features, verbal and nonverbal behaviour, physiognomy, and body language; (b) presentation of the character's mental and emotional state; (c) inferred character traits mapped from the presentation of the fictional space to the character; and (d) presentation of characters from different angles. Our learners, as seen in the transcript excerpts above, used visuals (characters' illustration) to draw information about the characters' mental and emotional state (shyness, fright, sadness).

### 5. 9. *Connecting the four stories*

Even though the picturebook seemed to be clear about including four stories by giving them four different titles, and most of Pantaleo's (2008) participants (fifth grade students) approached it as four separate parallels and tried to connect them into one, our learners decided to approach it the other way around – as one story (possibly because of their previous experience that one book usually contains only one story). Around half-way through reading the picturebook, the learners started to question if there is more than one story and discussed the connections between the stories. In the process, they leafed back and forth in the picturebook to check and confirm their hypotheses. This finding can be explained by the fact that the reading process in case of picturebooks involves digressions, returning to already read pages, and discovering new trajectories during re-reading (Narančić Kovač 2015, p. 178). Reading picturebooks is always characterised by switching attention between their two discourses, interactivity and the demand of rereading (p. 197) re-reading is one of the constitutive and defining features of the picturebook as a format (p., 375) .

BOY 2: [flipping the pages and pointing] Can I say something? There are four different stories because maybe this is 'A Waiting Game' story. Maybe this is a 'Udder Chaos' story. Maybe this is 'Problem Parents' story and maybe the 'Seeing Things' story.

ALL: Oh, yes! Yes!

BOY 2: And maybe they all connect.

GIRL 1: Yes, and you see that there are four different stories there.

GIRL 2: Yeah!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: This is just like finding a burglar.

BOY 1: [pointing] It's not just like. There are two... These two are connected, and these two are connected. Because they saw the burglar on the television.

GIRL 1: I think it's four different stories, but everything is connected in different ways.

BOY 2: I don't know. Maybe there are four different, maybe there are not. We will see.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is two, and this is two.

GIRL 1: They said there are many stories there.

Despite their discussion about the multiple story lines, all the learners (except one) very quickly ‘stepped into the story’ again. Although BOY 1 alarmed his colleagues about the way the book is playing with them, the other learners acted as if they did not hear him but drew the same conclusion later at the end of the discussion. Narančić Kovač points out that the necessity of re-reading is particularly emphasised by the discourses of *Black and White* because it is impossible to reconstruct a consistent story: there is always a detail which cannot logically be fitted in, so the reading itself changes from a receptive process of receiving information into a search for a story and a participation in the construction of meanings (2015, p. 72). Exactly as BOY 1 points out in the following excerpt, the reading process becomes a game, similar to computer games.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is just a game! This is just a game! Because look! One, two, three. One, two, three. The burglar, there is cows that stop the train.

GIRL 1: He take out the cows so he can stop the train so he can come in and do whatever he wants to do.

GIRL 2: Yes, and he is trying to pretend he is a normal passenger that he was trying to get in that train like a normal people.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is all just game because this is all the same. This is the train, this is the cows that stops the train, and this are all just flame coming out of the train.

As the four stories of *Black and White* are non-linear, the learners tried to create linearity by analysing different picturebook details. One of them was a squirrel (Macaulay, 1990, p. 2–8):

GIRL 3: [pointing] There's a squirrel.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: [pointing and flipping the pages] But that same squirrel is right over here.

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 2: So the picture moved!

[...]

GIRL 1: [pointing at and referring to the squirrel] And teacher there is again this animal.

INVESTIGATOR: What kind of animal is that?

ALL: A squirrel.

BOY 3: Odavde izgleda ko da je neka ptica, ovdje oči, ovdje kljun.

GIRL 1: Ajme da...

BOY 1: Iluzija!

GIRL 2: Oh my God!

GIRL 1: [pointing] There are his legs again. Maybe we can find out something more.

[...]

GIRL 3: [pointing] Nema više vjeverice.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, so the animal is disappearing or...?

GIRL 2: Yes!

One learner tried to create a linear flow of the story by counting people coming to the station on each page (Macaulay, 1990, p. 6–8).

BOY 1: [counting the people at the station] Jedan, dva, tri, četiri, pet, šest, sedam, osam, devet, deset, jedanaest, dvanaest, trinaest, četrnaest, petnaest, šesnaest, sedamnaest, osamnaest, devetnaest, dvadeset, dvadeset i jedan, dvadeset i dva.

BOY 2: Twenty-three people. So ten people come.

INVESTIGATOR: So ten more came to the station?

GIRL 2: Yes...

The other learner noticed the changes in the colours of the sky and the sun moving in the background, which led the learners to conclude that as the sun and the sky change, time flies (Macaulay, 1990, p. 2–26).

BOY 3: [pointing] Ali zašto je ovdje noć, a ovdje dan? To je možda u podzemnoj, ali zašto onda ovdje čekaju?

BOY 1: Možda je tamo samo mračnije.

GIRL 3: Maybe it's cloudier.

GIRL 1: [pointing and comparing the shades of blue] Wait, wait, wait, wait. Every colour is a different shade of blue. And here is something. Wait.

BOY 2: [pointing] There's a shadow.

GIRL 1: [pointing] But look! It's bigger, it's bigger! On every picture it's bigger!

BOY 1: Because it's sun! The sun is moving!



Because of interthinking, BOY 2 combined the thoughts and interpretations from the other learners, which helped him make some conclusions on the meaning of the story (Macaulay, 1990, p. 2–12).

BOY 2: [flipping the pages and pointing] But look at this! If you look at the first page, there's nothing. Then there is squirrel, then there is two people. Then there is more people, more people, more people, more people.

#### *5. 10. Learners' thoughts after the discussion*

After the discussion, the learners were asked what it was like for them to read *Black and White*. As was apparent from their behaviour during interactive reading, the learners had fun and experienced pleasure in exploring the meaning of the picturebook, which is a similar response Pantaleo's (2008) participants (fifth grade students) had. The learners also did not find it time-consuming or exhausting and were glad they spent time reading the picturebook.

BOY 2: Okay, this was fun.

INVESTIGATOR: Was it interesting to you?

ALL: Yes!

GIRL 1: We were like one hour reading this book to get it right and now we know that we don't need to read it, we just need to think and look.

When asked if they would like to make a picturebook similar to this one, learners answered the following:

ALL: No!

BOY 2: Maybe.

GIRL 1: Because I don't wanna trick people.

The learners' responses show that they understood how the picturebook plays with the reader. However, the learners did not show interest in creating a similar picturebook.

The following excerpt is from the final part of the discussion in which learners made certain conclusions and referred to the book as a subject that played with them. They also believed they did not get the 'right' meaning of the picturebook, and some of the learners said that was the case because they are 'only children'.

GIRL 1: We just didn't get the picture right.

BOY 2: They were just playing.

BOY 1: It was just a game.

GIRL 1: We get it.

INVESTIGATOR: So, what do you think, are there four separate stories?

BOY 1: Yes.

GIRL 2: No, it's a whole combined one big story!

BOY 2: [pointing] This is the real story, and this is just what they made.

GIRL 2: [pointing] And they tricked us thinking that this was all a game because look. A problem parents, and this is a waiting game. Like this is, we have head.

BOY 3: Doslovno nam je pisalo.

INVESTIGATOR: But you didn't look at it.

GIRL 1: We just needed to...

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think that happened to you?

GIRL 1: Because we weren't thinking right.

GIRL 2: Yeah!

GIRL 1: Because we are just children!

INVESTIGATOR: You think it's because you are children?

BOY 2: No, the book wants you to think that.

GIRL 1: Because the book is smarter than us.

GIRL 2: [pointing] They confused us with this, and this, and this.

BOY 2: Knjiga samo želi da mi mislimo da je sve to spojeno, a zapravo to samo nikako ne možeš saznati do kraja knjige.

Based on the presented research, it is evident that the learners did not pay much attention to the fact that they were using English as a foreign language but were relaxed and focused on the functional use of language – to discuss the meaning of *Black and White* with their colleagues. In the process, they actually did practice using English, and some of the learners

sometimes chose to use their mother tongue to express their thoughts more easily. The learners managed to respond positively to various utterances in English found in the verbal text and the investigator's interpolations, but did not use the verb forms accurately in their language production. This supports the findings by Narančić Kovač and Milković (2015) about Croatian primary grade students reacting positively and in a meaningful way to various English verb forms and tenses used by their teachers. Rather than focusing the read-aloud on fulfilling vocabulary or grammar aims, the aim of engaging the learners in creating individual meanings of the picturebook was fulfilled. The learners were engaged throughout the experience and showed interest in participating in the discussion. Most of the learners interacted with each other, although several decided to work by themselves, which could be because of their introverted personality. All in all, the small-group discussion can be assessed as beneficial, as learners were actively involved, developed a higher level of thinking, and practiced their visual literacy. The results support the findings by Arizpe and Styles (2008) that children can respond to postmodern picturebooks by holding discussions dissimilar to conventional classroom discussions and can also express their own creativity. Furthermore, the results confirm the findings by Arizpe and Styles that by accepting the challenge of trying to understand postmodern picturebooks, the students (bilingual learners) develop their metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies. Although their English teacher believed that complex grammatical structures in the picturebook might confuse the children, the results show the opposite. The learners readily accepted the challenge to look at both words and pictures from the beginning and showed satisfaction and pleasure when meaning was created. Narančić Kovač and Milković (2015) made very similar conclusions in their study, showing that children can understand and acquire language units as meaningful wholes in an interaction context without difficulty and without being taught explicitly.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND IDEAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Picturebooks and their word-picture relationship can be a complex material to read. Postmodern picturebooks are characterised by different metafictional devices that give agency to the reader. Reading a postmodern picturebook is viewed as a transactional process, a playful situation in which the author uses different metafictional devices to encourage the reader to pose questions. Reading in small group settings can provide learners with many benefits as the phenomenon of interthinking occurs.

As the results of the survey conducted in the first part of this study show, teachers and student teachers would like to use picturebooks in class, but not very often and mostly for the purpose of fulfilling lesson aims related to specific grammatical structures or vocabulary or reading and pronunciation skills. Just a few participants would use postmodern picturebooks, the majority not being familiar with them at all.

In contrast to the responses provided by teachers and student teachers, which reflect their inclination to use picturebooks merely as a teaching tool, the results of the analysis of a small-group discussion during a group reading event with primary school pupils show that picturebooks can serve a broader range of functions and address more complex and more important competences of young children. Along with simply being fun, they can also provide starting points for discussions which promote close reading, higher-level thinking, creative meaning-making and more, which are conclusions similar to those Pantaleo (2008) made in her own studies. This study has shown that young learners of English as a foreign language can read and understand complex narratives in the picturebook format equally successful as the native speakers of English. It has also been shown that the pupils included in this study were able to approach the picturebook with no difficulty despite the fact that they did not understand the entirety of the verbal discourse of the picturebook in its entirety, which their English teacher had assumed would pose a problem.

The notion of response as an iceberg is supported and confirmed by the results of this study. Most of the learners involved in the study expressed some of their thoughts verbally and responded using facial expressions and gestures. Some more introvert learners did not express themselves orally much, which does not indicate that they did not experience anything while reading the picturebook, but only that some learners are not willing to participate when reading in a social context.

Our results may serve as an inspiration for teachers to use postmodern picturebooks in the classroom. Picturebooks can be used to understand how children of the digital age think and aid them in developing their metacognitive strategies. However, it is up to the teacher to decide how much time and effort they are willing to assign to picturebooks in teaching. It is, unfortunately, questionable if the teachers would be willing to give agency to the learners for them to read picturebooks on their own, as the results of the survey indicate that many teachers depend on following a certain pre-planned lesson structure.

Similar further research could be conducted with additional groups of children, in connected studies to include more participants. Longitudinal studies could be conducted using picturebook workshops in which both lower and upper primary students would participate, and in which various picturebooks would be used for read-alouds and discussions. Although time-consuming, longitudinal studies would be useful to investigate how literary understanding develops over time (cf. Sipe, 2008). Future studies might explore the different responses of lower and upper primary students to different types of picturebooks – traditional, postmodern, digital (especially with regard to the materiality of picturebooks), etc. Some examples of postmodern picturebooks that could be used in such studies include picturebooks written by the following authors: David Macaulay (*Black and White*, 1990; *Shortcut*, 1995), Emily Gravett (*Wolves*, 2005; *Blue Chameleon*, 2010), Richard McGuire (*What's Wrong with This Book?*, 1997), David Wiesner (*Tuesday*, 1991; *The Three Pigs*, 2001; *Flotsam*, 2006), the Ahlbergs (*Each Peach Pear Plum*, 1978; *Peepo*, 1981; *The Jolly Postman*, 1986), Simms Taback (*Joseph Had a Little Overcoat*, 1977; *There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*, 1997), and Jon Scieszka (*The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, with Lane Smith, 1992; *Battle Bunny*, with Mac Barnett and Matt Myers, 2013).

To conclude, this study has shown that using postmodern picturebooks in reading with children provides a number of possibilities for further study. The part of the research conducted with children has illustrated their ability to understand postmodern picturebooks and make numerous new meanings by working individually or in interaction with their peers. Similar studies should continue to investigate teachers' attitudes towards using postmodern picturebooks in the classroom as well as the evolving responses of future generations of students to such challenging and rewarding literature.

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## APPENDICES

### *Appendix A: Research questionnaire*

#### **Razgovarajmo o slikovnicama!**

Draga kolegice / Dragi kolega,

molimo Vas da izdvojite nekoliko minuta za popunjavanje ovog upitnika i na taj način doprinesete istraživanju koje se provodi u svrhu izrade diplomskog rada.

Upitnikom želimo ispitati stavove studenata i učitelja (razredne nastave/engleskog jezika) o slikovnicama i njihovom korištenju u nastavi. Ne postoje točni i netočni odgovori, zanimaju nas Vaša osobna mišljenja. Upitnik je anoniman, a sudjelovanje je dobrovoljno.

Za sve nejasnoće i moguća pitanja možete se javiti na mail [REDACTED] ili [REDACTED]

Hvala Vam na sudjelovanju!

Katarina Brbora i Jaka Tvrdeić

Spol

- Ž
- M

Dob

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46+

Zanimanje

- Učitelj razredne nastave
- Učitelj engleskog jezika
- Student

Fakultet

- Stručni četverogodišnji učiteljski studij
- Stručni četverogodišnji učiteljski studij s pojačanim predmetom
- Magistarski studij primarnog obrazovanja (engleski ili njemački jezik)
- Magistarski studij primarnog obrazovanja (modul)
- Filozofski fakultet
- Ostalo

#### **Stavovi o slikovnicama i njihovoj upotrebi**

U kojoj je dobi prikladno koristiti slikovnice? \*moguće je odabrati više odgovora\*

- Predškolska dob
- Niži razredi OŠ
- Viši razredi OŠ
- Ostalo

Koliko biste vremena mogli posvetiti slikovnicama u nastavi? (otvoreno pitanje)

S kojim biste ciljem uveli slikovnicu u nastavu? (otvoreno pitanje)

Ako ste učitelj/student razredne nastave, u kojim biste predmetima i razredima mogli koristiti slikovnicu? (otvoreno pitanje)

Slikovnice su načelno:

- Jednostavne
- Zahtjevne
- Ostalo

Poznajete li neke od nagrada koje se dodjeljuju slikovnicama? Ako da, molimo navedite ih. (otvoreno pitanje)

### **Upotreba slikovnica u nastavi (osobno iskustvo)**

Ako ste student(ica), popunite anketu na temelju održanih javnih i individualnih sati/odrađene stručno-pedagoške prakse.

Koristite li se slikovnicama u nastavi?

- Redovito
- Povremeno
- Rijetko
- Nikada
- Ostalo

Ako da, u nastavi kojih predmeta (i u kojim razredima) ste se poslužili slikovnicama? (otvoreno pitanje)

Ako ne, zašto? (otvoreno pitanje)

Navedite hrvatske ili strane slikovnice kojima ste se koristili ili ih zadavali za individualno čitanje/lektiru. (otvoreno pitanje)

Gdje biste mogli pronaći slikovnice za nastavu? (otvoreno pitanje)

Po kojem biste kriteriju birali slikovnice i djela dječje književnosti za nastavu? \*moguće je odabrati više odgovora\*

- Interes učenika
- Popularnost slikovnice
- Nastavna tema
- Preporučena lektira
- Vlastiti interes
- Preporuka druge osobe
- Ostalo

Znate li koju slikovnicu koja bi, po Vašem mišljenju, bila zanimljiva odraslim čitateljima? (otvoreno pitanje)

Jeste li upoznati s postmodernističkim slikovnicama?

- Da
- Ne

Je li Vam poznata ijedna od ovih slikovnica: *The Three Pigs* (Weisner) / *Black and White* (Macaulay)

- Da, prva navedena slikovnica (Weisner)
- Da, druga navedena slikovnica (Macaulay)
- Poznate su mi obje slikovnice

- Ne

Jeste li se ikada koristili navedenim slikovnicama u nastavi?

- Da
- Ne

*Appendix B: The transcript of the small-group discussion*

INVESTIGATOR: Ovo je dakle knjiga koju ćemo čitati...

ALL: *Black and White!*

BOY 1: Zašto je ovo zeleno?

INVESTIGATOR: Je li želite pričati na hrvatskom ili na engleskom? Što vam je lakše?

ALL: Hrvatski. Engleski. Oboje. Svejedno nam je, kako Vi želite.

INVESTIGATOR: Ja mogu vas pitati na engleskom, a vi možete odgovoriti i na engleskom i na hrvatskom, kako vam je lakše izraziti se.

GIRL 1: Nama kad nas teacher pita moramo odgovarati punom rečenicom na engleskom.

INVESTIGATOR: Možemo tako. You can talk in Croatian, in English, whatever you like. I just want to hear your opinion.

ALL: Okay.

INVESTIGATOR: So... Look at the cover of this book. [showing the picturebook's front and back cover]

BOY 1: Is that a cow?

GIRL 1: That's a cow!

GIRL 2: Like somebody is moving a cow.

BOY 1: That's an alien!

GIRL 1: No, it's not an alien.

GIRL 2: It's a man. He is moving a cow.

BOY 2: It's a shadow.

INVESTIGATOR: What do you think [GIRL 3]?

GIRL 3: To je vještica.

INVESTIGATOR: So you think it's a witch?

BOY 2: It's a shadow of human.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So do you know what kind of a book is this if it has pictures?

GIRL 2: Fairy tales?

GIRL 1: Slikovnica.

INVESTIGATOR: Slikovnica, do you know how do we say slikovnica in English?

GIRL 1 AND GIRL 2: Picturebook!

INVESTIGATOR: Picturebook, that's right! So, have you ever read a picturebook?

ALL: Yes...

BOY 1: Many times.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you have a favourite one?

ALL: No. Maybe.

INVESTIGATOR: Can you remember any kind of picturebook that you read maybe as a small child?

BOY 1: Mickey Mouse.

INVESTIGATOR: You can now take a look and get all together.

GIRL 1: Do we need to read the book?

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, you will read it together... What do you see here? A warning? [opening up the picturebook]

BOY 1: [reading the warning] This book appears to contain a number of stories that do not necessarily occur at the same time.

INVESTIGATOR: What does that mean, [BOY 1]? Do you know maybe?

BOY 1: [looking at the text and trying to translate word by word] Ova knjiga appears... Ugh... Izgleda ima brojeve od priče koje nisu najvažnije u isto vrijeme.

INVESTIGATOR: Znači da se ne događaju u isto vrijeme? Što mislite da će to značiti?

BOY 2: Valjda da će netko vidjeti jednu stvar, a drugi će vidjeti drugu stvar.

INVESTIGATOR: Da, neki će možda vidjeti na drugačiji način, tj. protumačiti na drugačiji način, a možda će netko smisliti neko drugo značenje toj priči. A što mislite što znači ovo 'Black and White'? Zašto se baš tako zove slikovnica?

GIRL 1: Zato što su nasuprotne boje.

INVESTIGATOR: Dobro.

BOY 3: Zato što se lakše vidi da jedan vidi jedno, a drugi drugo.

INVESTIGATOR: Znači da se vide neki kontrasti između crne i bijele.

BOY 3: Da je zbunjujuće.

GIRL 1: [looking at the picturebook and pointing at the age] Ovo je napisano 1990.

INVESTIGATOR: Da, je li vam se to davno čini ili?

GIRL 1: To je prije 31 godinu.

INVESTIGATOR: Da, a ja sam se rodila 1997. pa se i meni čini daleko ta godina. Je li mislite da će onda biti staromodna slikovnica?

BOY 1: Pa ne mora bit.

GIRL 2: It doesn't have to mean it's old and it's not like a good book.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, maybe you can have an open mind, otvorenog uma ići na ovu slikovnicu.

GIRL 1: Okay.

INVESTIGATOR: Maybe you can take a closer look at the picture. [showing the title page] What do you think is going to happen?

ALL: [looking at the title page and pointing]

BOY 2: I think that's a jail.

GIRL 2: Like somebody is trying to escape the jail.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes.

GIRL 1: Somebody already did it because look there is...

GIRL 2: There is some blankets.

INVESTIGATOR: So what did he do?

ALL: He escaped the prison!

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, maybe he did that. But we will find out soon. You can now look at the picturebook together and choose how to read it [handing the picturebook to the learners].

ALL: [looking together at the first picturebook doublespread]

BOY 1: Problem parents.

BOY 2: Aha... I think this was a black dog and maybe milk spell over him.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, so what happened?

BOY 2: Now he is like a robber.

GIRL 2: That's the robber who escaped the prison.

INVESTIGATOR: So you think that's the same robber from the beginning?

GIRL 2: Yes, I do.

INVESTIGATOR: So, what about the other pictures? What do you see?

GIRL 1: A house.

INVESTIGATOR: What's here? [pointing to the 'Udder Chaos' picture]

BOY 3: A human. [pointing to the shape on the cow]

GIRL 1: A tail.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you remember maybe what did we mention at the beginning when we looked at the cover of the book?

ALL: Black and white! A cow.

BOY 3: Ovo je možda obala, ovo more s otocima [pointing at the shape on the cow].

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, so that could be a coast with some islands.

BOY 2: Is this all of it just black and white?

INVESTIGATOR: We will find out, but good thinking! And what about the titles?

BOY 2: [reading] A waiting game.

GIRL 2: He is probably waiting so the people leave the house so he can rob the house and when they get back they don't have anything to do.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. What about the others, what do you think?

BOY 1: [reading] Problem parents. A waiting game.

GIRL 2: That's their house!

INVESTIGATOR: That could be the case... Have you taken a look at all of the pictures?

BOY 2: [pointing at the letter 'U' in the title 'Udder Chaos'] This is cow.

ALL: Seeing things.

GIRL 1: This is the train and there is this thing [pointing at the rope made of blankets].

GIRL 2: [pointing at the title 'Seeing things'] This is the cloud saying something.

INVESTIGATOR: The cloud is saying what?

ALL: Seeing things!

INVESTIGATOR: What do you think about the title? Is it connected to the picture?

ALL: No.

BOY 3: [pointing at the 'Seeing Things' picture] Možda je ovo voda i ovo brod koji se utapa.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes...

GIRL 1: Maybe someone see different.

INVESTIGATOR: So someone can look at that picture differently?

BOY 1: [reading and pointing] Seeing things. Udder Chaos. Problem parents. A waiting game.

GIRL 2: Uuu, that makes sense now!

INVESTIGATOR: Do you think that these pictures are connected or are they separate?

BOY 1: Maybe they are connected.

GIRL 1: But we don't know how they are connected.

INVESTIGATOR: Let's take a look, you can go further.

BOY 2: Maybe they are in the train, they are travelling home.

GIRL 2: No, this is their house.

GIRL 1: The boy's got a jail shirt.

GIRL 2: That's probably a shirt with stripes.

BOY 2: That doesn't have to be a jail shirt.

GIRL 2: Yes, maybe that's just a normal shirt with stripes!

BOY 1: Yes...

BOY 1: [pointing] Oni mogu biti ovdje u vlaku i ovaj je provalio u kuću i sad bježi.

BOY 3: [pointing] Ali ovdje su tanje pruge nego ovdje, ovo može bit ko da je neki sudac.

BOY 2: [pointing] But look the door is open.

INVESTIGATOR: Maybe you can now flip the page and see what happens next.

GIRL 2: Oh!

BOY 1: [reading and pointing] One thing about parents is that you're supposed to be able to count on them, even when they don't understand you. This train is this train!

ALL: Yes!

GIRL 2: This is where the people wait on the station for the train!

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, which train?

ALL: From the first picture!

GIRL 1: Yes, they wait.

GIRL 3: [pointing] There's a squirrell..

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: [pointing and flipping the pages] But that same squirrell is right over here.

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 2: So the picture moved!

BOY 2: [reading] It is the boy's first trip alone. He can hardly wait to see his parents again. Even on the fast train, the journey will take all night. He sleeps curled up at one end of the seat.

GIRL 2: [pointing] That's a dog!

BOY 2: That's again a dog!

GIRL 1: And there's a cow!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. So what about the cow?

GIRL 1: [pointing] Uhm, look. There should be her leg, but it's like...

BOY 2: [pointing] It's like this. You connect this and you get cow.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Oh, okay...  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Here's the tail, and here's the back part...  
 ALL: Yes!  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] And then here is the other...  
 BOY 2: [pointing and flipping] Like here. The black...  
 INVESTIGATOR: Like the cover?  
 ALL: Yes!  
 INVESTIGATOR: We can go on if you want.  
 ALL: [flipping the page] Oh!  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] Maybe he is trying to rob the train station.  
 BOY 3: [flipping back the page and pointing] Wait, wait, wait! Why is this here?  
 BOY 2: [pointing] That's a rope!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay.  
 GIRL 2: I get it now. He was trying to rob the train station because people pay for tickets there. And there is money so he wanted to get to the money.  
 BOY 3: Zašto ALL čitaju novine?  
 BOY 1: Pa, because...  
 GIRL 2: Maybe there's news!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Maybe you can go on and find out more...  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] There is more people who are reading newspapers.  
 BOY 2: [reading] Sometime in the early morning hours, the train comes to rest. All is quiet. Suddenly, the door of the compartment slides open. The conductor leans in, announces that something is blocking the tracks, and disappears. A few minutes later, an old woman enters the compartment and sits down opposite the boy. She says nothing.  
 BOY 1: [reading] Every morning at seven o'clock they leave for their offices in the city.  
 GIRL 2: [reading] The worst thing about Holstein cows is that if they ever get out of the field, they're almost impossible to find.  
 GIRL 1: This is not human because his legs are there and he is hiding.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So what is he trying to do?  
 GIRL 2: He is trying to sneak in somewhere with a cow.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Oh, okay...  
 GIRL 1: And there are the cow's legs, and those are his legs.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Ovaj izgleda ko lopov.  
 INVESTIGATOR: You think that's the burglar?  
 GIRL 2: Oh my gosh, I think that is the same burglar!  
 BOY 2: No, but in this text it say it's an old woman.  
 GIRL 1: But maybe he is hiding.  
 BOY 3: Maybe that is his partner.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] Maybe both escape and then maybe it's she escaped and then she works with him and she just dressed this, I don't know what's this. She dressed it to...  
 BOY 1: [flipping, pointing and counting people at the station] Samo malo, okreni na prvu stranicu. Tu je pet, tu je ništ, onda se tu dođe pet, onda ih je tu trinaest.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay, so why did you count the people at the station?  
 GIRL 1: Because they are coming to the station.  
 GIRL 2: He was warning us in the beginning about the numbers, right?  
 BOY 2: [flipping the page and pointing] Teacher, teacher, I know. It's a problem parents because they always went, they always leave in the office to go to city in the office.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay...  
 BOY 2: And the children are in the school maybe and burglars are trying to get into this house.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Maybe...  
 BOY 1: Znači 0, 5, 13.  
 BOY 1: And that is a waiting game because they are waiting.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Maybe that could be the case...  
 GIRL 1: [pointing and referring to the squirell] And teacher there is again this animal.

INVESTIGATOR: What kind of animal is that?

ALL: A squirell.

BOY 3: Odavde izgleda ko da je neka ptica, ovdje oči, ovdje kljun.

GIRL 1: Ajme da...

BOY 1: Iluzija!

GIRL 2: Oh my God!

GIRL 1: [pointing] There are his legs again. Maybe we can find out something more.

ALL: [flipping the page]

BOY 2: [reading] Leaning out the window, the boy can just make out what looks like a row of boulders in front of the train. He wonders if it's an avalanche. But where from? Even in the poor light, there is no sign of a mountain or even a hill.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 1: [reading] And every evening at seven o'clock they come home, sort through the mail, ask about homework, and send us to bed.

BOY 3: Again newspapers... And there is the dog again.

GIRL 2: And he is on a leash!

BOY 2: [pointing] He is sleeping.

GIRL 1: He is sleeping. Everybody is sleeping.

GIRL 2: The tracks!

GIRL 3: [pointing] On spava na ovim tračnicama.

GIRL 2: Maybe there is a connection to the train.

GIRL 1: The boy is coming with a train.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 1: And there is no, not kids and that is... Uhm... reading newspapers, he is not now reading, he is sleeping, but he was reading.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 3: [pointing] Nema više vjeverice.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, so the animal is disappearing or?

GIRL 2: Yes!

GIRL 1: It's a conductor!

INVESTIGATOR: It's a conductor. Did they mention the conductor?

GIRL 1: No.

BOY 1: [counting the people at the station] Jedan, dva, tri, četiri, pet, šest, sedam, osam, devet, deset, jedanaest, dvanaest, trinaest, četrnaest, petnaest, šesnaest, sedamnaest, osamnaest, devetnaest, dvadeset, dvadeset i jedan, dvadeset i dva.

BOY 2: Twenty-three people. So ten people come.

INVESTIGATOR: So ten more came to the station?

GIRL 2: Yes...

BOY 2: [reading] Ask any farmer. It's a nightmare. But it happens.

INVESTIGATOR: What happens?

GIRL 2: Oh, the cows disappear!

GIRL 1: [flipping the page back and reading] Yes, because there was text that 'The worst thing about Holstein cows is that if they ever get out of the field, they're almost impossible to find'.

INVESTIGATOR: Why are they almost impossible to find?

GIRL 1: Because they are black and white and they can...

BOY 1: [flipping back the page] Samo malo, a da pročitamo do kraja warning...

BOY 3: [flipping and pointing] Ali ovdje nema one bakice, ovdje ima. Možda je otišla da vidi koliko još ima do kraja...

GIRL 2: Maybe she left the room.

BOY 1: A di je ovaj warning? Nismo pročitali dalje.

BOY 1: Then again it may contain only one story. In any event, careful inspection of both words and pictures is recommended.

GIRL 1: But no people leave!

GIRL 2: Yes!

INVESTIGATOR: So, people are what?



GIRL 2: Waiting for the train!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay...  
 BOY 2: Maybe he is with a train. And the train goes to his house.  
 BOY 2: The train is about to go.  
 GIRL 2: Maybe he is waiting for the train to start...  
 BOY 2: [pointing and connecting 'Seeing Things' and 'A Waiting Game'] That's train from the this. He is seeing thing.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] And the conductor, tj. vlakovođa je ovdje, what means it can... the train...  
 GIRL 2: The train is coming so soon, I think so.  
 GIRL 1: Because many people are waiting.  
 GIRL 1: [flipping and pointing] He didn't be here or here.  
 BOY 2: Maybe it was too early.  
 INVESTIGATOR: What do you think, what are you looking at?  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Gdje su ova kamenja.  
 GIRL 1: Maybe he was having a break.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, the rocks. What about the rocks?  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Zašto je ovo ovdje sivo?  
 BOY 2: It's a shadow! But please flip the page! I'm confused with this text.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay, what is confusing?  
 BOY 2: Because I'm connecting to the train is here soon, but, uhm...  
 INVESTIGATOR: What is he saying, the boy?  
 BOY 2: The text is saying that there is no hill or a mountain, but they have to pass mountain and or some hill.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes...  
 BOY 2: [pointing] But, uhm... They didn't pass and the conductor is here.  
 BOY 1: Dječak ne poznaje grad.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, what do you think happened? Maybe you can explain in Croatian if it's easier.  
 BOY 1: Zato što piše he wonders if it's an avalanche.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Ali zašto je ovdje noć, a ovdje dan? To je možda u podzemnoj, ali zašto onda ovdje čekaju?  
 BOY 1: Možda je tamo samo mračnije.  
 GIRL 3: Maybe it's cloudier.  
 GIRL 1: [pointing and comparing the shades of blue on a list of pages] Wait, wait, wait, wait. Every colour is a different shade of blue. And here is something. Wait.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] There's a shadow.  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] But, look! It's bigger, it's bigger! On every picture it's bigger!  
 BOY 1: Because it's sun! The sun is moving!  
 BOY 2: [flipping the pages and pointing] But, look at this! If you look at the first page, there's nothing. Then there is squirrell, then there is two people. Then there is more people, more people, more people, more people.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay...  
 GIRL 1: Yes, now you're ruining the story!  
 BOY 1: Moramo ići po redu!  
 INVESTIGATOR: You can be patient, okay?  
 GIRL 1: [flipping the page] Okay, this is the next page.  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Ajde neka neka od vas čita, ovo tu.  
 GIRL 2: Can you read this?  
 GIRL 3: [reading] He sees the driver jump down from the engine and approach the boulders. The man is shouting and waving his fists. The boy grins. He's helped his parents in the garden often enough to know that you can't move rocks just by shouting at them.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Mene ovo zbunjuje...  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] This can be his sister because they're coming in the house or someone's coming in the house because she is screaming 'Mom'.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Whose sister?  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] His sister.

GIRL 2: [flipping] Oh, my gosh, wait!

GIRL 1: Oh my gosh, wait.

BOY 2: Read the text first, please!

GIRL 1: [pointing] There is her. And there is mum and dad.

BOY 2: Read the text please!

BOY 1: [reading] But from the moment they came through the door that night, my brother and I knew something was wrong.

GIRL 1: Yes!

GIRL 2: [pointing] There's a news forecast! That means they on the news said that she escaped the prison!

INVESTIGATOR: Who escaped the prison?

ALL: The burglar!

BOY 2: I ovi su možda nešto čuli i onda...

GIRL 2: They got scared!

BOY 2: They got scared because mom and dad didn't go home.

INVESTIGATOR: So, mom and dad are not home?

GIRL 1 AND GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 2: Maybe, that's problem parents...

GIRL 1: They went to the office.

BOY 1: Ček, prije nego što su otišli na posao oni su još uvijek bili...

GIRL 1: [pointing] She's saying 'Hm, hi mom. Hm'.

BOY 1: Ona priča s mamom...

GIRL 2: [pointing] Ne! They went to the office, look! That's dad and that's mom!

BOY 2: No! They are saying 'Hi, hi, hi' like 'goodbye, mom, goodbye dad'.

GIRL 2: Yes!

GIRL 1: Yes!

BOY 1: [pointing] But there is this!

INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] What can you read here?

BOY 1: [reading] Every morning at seven o'clock they leave for their offices in the city.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay... So, what?

BOY 1: Znači roditelji su otišli.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 1: [flipping and pointing] I ovi su ostali sad sami.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: Wait, wait, wait!

GIRL 2: [pointing] This is a cow!

BOY 3: Can we read this please...

GIRL 1: [pointing] We don't know who is he!

GIRL 2: That's dad!

BOY 2: No!

BOY 1: That's dad and mom!

BOY 2: No, no, no. Look! [reading] And every evening at seven o'clock they come home, sort through the mail, ask about homework, and send us to bed.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 2: So they send children to bed so it's mom and dad.

GIRL 2: That means this is the next day! Probably...

BOY 1: [pointing] Ova likuša pripovijeda.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

GIRL 3: [pointing] A tko je ovaj lik?

GIRL 2: That's the conductor of the train! That's the driver from the train!

BOY 2: Maybe there is... Something is wrong with the train and he jumped out that he see, get the problem.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 2: He know what the problem is, but he jumped out.

BOY 1: [pointing] Ovaj lik izgleda jako jako slično ovom liku.

GIRL 1: Ne, nije to on, ima drugačiju kosu.

GIRL 2: Wait, wait, wait!

BOY 2: The boy is in the train, that's another boy who, I don't know...

INVESTIGATOR: So, you don't think that's the same boy?

BOY 1: That's not the same boy.

GIRL 2: [pointing] That's the cows! There's a lot of cows there! That's a like a whole field of cows!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 2: And he is hiding with them.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 1: [pointing] Maybe somebody can read this.

BOY 2: [reading] Your attention please. Passengers awaiting the arrival of the eight-thirteen to the city are advised that that train will be slightly delayed. Southern Rail regrets any inconvenience.

GIRL 2: That that train got deleted.

GIRL 1: Probably.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 2: And they need to save them.

INVESTIGATOR: And how did that happen?

GIRL 2: The rocks fall.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. What does the story tell us about the rocks?

BOY 2: Maybe somebody sabotaged that train.

GIRL 2: Yeah! [pointing] She sabotaged because she worked with that burglar!

BOY 2: But, how, how? Listen! [pointing] How did she sabotage? She's in the train, ho did she sabotage the rocks fall?

GIRL 1: Maybe him!

INVESTIGATOR: So you think the woman from the train sabotaged him?

GIRL 1: No, no, no! Maybe he did it for her!

GIRL 2: Yes! So that she can help him.

BOY 1: Maybe they placed a bomb.

BOY 2: Maybe they don't work together. Maybe it's an enemy for her.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay... So maybe she is not his friend?

BOY 2: Yes. [pointing] Maybe he sabotaged the train so she can't came here because I think that house is very, has... Uhm... Maybe their house has a lot of money and then he wants only to he to...

GIRL 2: He can get the money.

GIRL 1: Maybe they are competing!

INVESTIGATOR: So, maybe they are competing who will be better?

ALL: Yes!

BOY 2: [pointing] But, we can't see this guy! We can't see is it her or just him!

GIRL 1: He did it because he don't want her to come so he dragged the rocks so she can't come here.

BOY 3: [pointing] Di je konduker?

GIRL 2: Oh, he's gone!

INVESTIGATOR: Hm, where is the conductor?

GIRL 1: [pointing] Ovaj čovjek negdje gleda.

GIRL 3: Maybe...

INVESTIGATOR: So, why is he looking that way?

GIRL 1: Maybe he is looking where is the train.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 1: [flipping the page] Možemo dalje.

BOY 2: Can we just...

ALL: [pointing] Oh, the boy!

BOY 2: [reading] Amusement quickly turns to amazement. He rubs his eyes again and again but still can't believe what he sees. The boulders are moving.

BOY 1: [pointing] On je očigledno išo u kuću!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 1: Pa se popeo ovdje da vidi di je vlak.

ALL: Da! Yes!

GIRL 1: [pointing] That's mom and dad!

BOY 1: [reading] That was the night they came home wearing newspapers. I couldn't believe it. They came in laughing, ignored the mail, and started marching around the living room singing, "She'll be coming 'round the mountain when she comes." I mean, you expect parents to be weird, but this was scary.

INVESTIGATOR: So, what happened?

GIRL 1: [pointing] Tu je neki čovjek.

BOY 2: [pointing and flipping] Look, look, look, look, look!

GIRL 2: That's her!

BOY 2: [pointing] That's this guy...

GIRL 1: Yes...

BOY 2: [pointing] And that's... It's black and white! Like the cover!

GIRL 1: They just changed the places where the black and white is.

BOY 2: So you can see black and white. Maybe they're competing. Maybe he's black, and she's white. I don't know.

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 1: Festival ima jako dobrih stvari, ugh!

BOY 2: Maybe they are playing like a chess game. I see that in crimi movies...

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 2: Some, you got a figures. You got queen, you got king, and that. Their enemies like cases. And they got money...

BOY 1: Na festivalu ima mnogo stvari!

INVESTIGATOR: Why did you connect it with chess?

GIRL 1: Because you got black and white figures.

INVESTIGATOR: What did you say?

BOY 1: Na festivalu ima mnogo i puno skupih stvari.

GIRL 1: So that's maybe why the burglars went there!

BOY 2: What is choir?

GIRL 2: To su zadaci u kući!

BOY 1: [pointing] On nije išao u kuću zapravo, on je uzeo samo ljestve i onda se popeo.

GIRL 1: Yes! [flipping back the page] Wait, are they right here? No, they're not.

BOY 1: [pointing] Vidite dječak izgleda jako slično ovome.

BOY 2: The boy is suspicious!

GIRL 1: Ali taj je bljeđi!

GIRL 3: But he is lighter!

GIRL 2: But he is still in train!

BOY 1: [pointing] Zato što ovo tu, pogledaj svjetlo! Ovdje nije svjetlo.

GIRL 1: Because the same artist make that.

BOY 1: Daj da vidim neš!

INVESTIGATOR: You think the other illustrator did that?

GIRL 1: Yes!

GIRL 2: Seeing things!

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he did that?

GIRL 1: Because maybe someone has their style to draw something so he likes to draw people like that so he draw all people like this.

BOY 2: [pointing] But, he is suspicious! I think he sees the problem so, but in the same that can't be he because he saw, he's on the way to his parents, but he is looking right now at his parents.

INVESTIGATOR: And what's happening right now?

BOY 2: They are dancing and singing.

INVESTIGATOR: Is that normal or?

BOY 2: No.

INVESTIGATOR: Why?

BOY 2: Because they are in newspapers.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Do you have any more comments on these pictures?

BOY 1: [pointing] There are two faces.  
 ALL: [flipping the pages]  
 GIRL 1: Oh my gosh!  
 GIRL 3: Konduktor je pao!  
 BOY 2: Maybe somebody sabotage him.  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] And what is with his face?  
 BOY 3: Izgorio je.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he is red?  
 GIRL 1: I don't know. Maybe, I don't know.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] This guy stole a book from this guy!  
 ALL: Yes!  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] And his clothes!  
 INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] And who is this guy?  
 GIRL 2: It is the burglar!  
 GIRL 1: And he is shy because he don't have clothes.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] But there is cows.  
 INVESTIGATOR: There are still cows here?  
 BOY 1: Maybe he sees the cows.  
 BOY 2: [reading] Slowly, they float of the tracks, down the embankment, and into the bushes that border the railway line.  
 GIRL 3: [pointing] Tu nitko nema novine.  
 GIRL 3: [pointing] I ovaj ima torbu.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] No, maybe. He didn't fell. He is listening to the tracks.  
 INVESTIGATOR: He's listening to the choir?  
 BOY 2: Ne, on sluša tračnice da vidi koliko još treba. Možeš osjetiti vibraciju vlaka tako.  
 BOY 1: [reading] The next thing I knew, Dad had lugged in a pile of old newspapers from the garage. He and Mom were looking us up and down and whispering. Šaptaju se nešto.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay, something is suspicious. Do you think so?  
 GIRL 1: Yes, very suspicious.  
 BOY 1: They have so many. No one has...  
 INVESTIGATOR: You think they took the newspapers from the people on the station?  
 BOY 1: Ma ne, iz garaže su.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Do you maybe know what do we call these people who sing together?  
 GIRL 1: Singers.  
 INVESTIGATOR: How do we call them together?  
 GIRL 2: Zbor.  
 INVESTIGATOR: The choir.  
 GIRL 1: The choir festival, it's a singing festival!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes, so it's not a festival where you buy expensive things.  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Znam! Ljudi su platili da vide i on se sad prerušio, možda je poslije kad bude vani da on uzme sve te novce i pobjegne.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] Maybe he just hide here because he, I don't know. He would not take money just from choir. That's too long to somebody with... Netko bi ga prepoznao zato što ono ipak ima masku i sve.  
 BOY 1: Ali kad je odmah, nije pjevao cijelo vrijeme.  
 GIRL 2: Wait, wait, wait, wait.  
 BOY 3: Trebalo bi puno novca da on skupi onoliko koliko želi.  
 BOY 2: [flipping the page]  
 GIRL 1: Ne, nemoj još, pliz!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay, just be a bit more patient.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Ovi tu ovdje pjevaju i možda oni čuju ove i onda pjevaju s njima.  
 GIRL 1: Ne, možda su ih čuli.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, you're thinking the parents are singing with the choir?  
 BOY 1: No, they're whispering something.  
 BOY 2: Maybe they are suspicious of burglar too, but maybe they were in a choir.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 2: So they... Then they left it, they used newspapers and have some fun and then go home.

INVESTIGATOR: So maybe they sang at the choir and then they got home and then they dressed up in newspapers?

BOY 2: Yeah.

INVESTIGATOR: And they continued singing and whispering?

BOY 2: Yeah.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, what did you notice?

BOY 3: [pointing] Što je ovo?

BOY 2: That's his hat.

BOY 1: Can we flip it please?

BOY 3: [pointing] But, wait. The truck. Maybe it's in the water.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, why do you think the train is in the water?

BOY 2: [reading] Slowly, they float of the tracks, down the embankment, and into the bushes that border the railway line.

INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] Take a closer look at this picture. What else do you see?

GIRL 1: Windows and grass.

INVESTIGATOR: What's beneath?

BOY 2: I see cows here.

INVESTIGATOR: So these are cows?

GIRL 2: Cows?

BOY 2: [pointing] So burglar, maybe there is a choir here. Maybe that's this.

INVESTIGATOR: So you are thinking those are cows or the choir?

GIRL 1: [pointing] Wait, wait, wait! If you look a little bit more of this, it can be someone's face. This is eyes, this is mouth, and this is nose. And this is ear.

GIRL 2: Oh, it's a burglar face!

INVESTIGATOR: So, do you connect it to something we already saw?

BOY 2: It's too big to be a face! It's too big!

INVESTIGATOR: Do you remember where we saw a face?

GIRL 1: We saw the face on the first page.

BOY 1: [pointing] Here is the shadow.

BOY 2: [pointing] But you don't know what is this even!

BOY 1: [pointing] Yes, so this is a shadow.

INVESTIGATOR: So you think this is the shadow of a burglar or?

BOY 3: Koliko ovo ima stranica?

INVESTIGATOR: It has a few more pages.

BOY 1: Can we just flip the next page? [pointing] Malo su ova dvojica slična.

BOY 2: No, that's not the same nose! Who is reading?

GIRL 1: [reading] I can do that! When the last one is gone, the driver clammers back into the cab and the train lurches forward. Lighter-than-air boulders tumble around the boy's mind until the steady rhythmic clicking of the rails sends him back to sleep. Screeching brakes. Hissing steam. Singing. Singing?! Reluctantly, he opens his eyes. The old lady has vanished.

GIRL 2: Oh!

INVESTIGATOR: What happens?

GIRL 1: The old lady is gone!

GIRL 2: She vanished!

GIRL 1: And there is the clothes. So she may be gone.

BOY 2: [pointing] Maybe she saw this and she can camouflage.

INVESTIGATOR: So she saw the cows behind the bushes and went away?

ALL: Maybe.

BOY 1: [reading] I asked if they wanted to check my homework. Mom just tore the Leisure section into strips and asked if I wanted to be a turkey!

BOY 3: [pointing] Ali zašto je ovdje opet pas?

GIRL 1: [pointing] Ovdje je kao neka kabina.

INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] Okay, who is this?

BOY 1: To je onaj mali.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay, what are you thinking?  
 BOY 3: Možda je skužio da se ova skinula, ali vidi joj masku.  
 GIRL 1: No, she goes in the next little room in the train and she take out her clothes like someone else.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So the burglar was pretending to be the old lady?  
 GIRL 1: Yes!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay.  
 BOY 1: Maybe that's true.  
 BOY 2: Let's read this! [reading] Your attention please. Passengers awaiting the arrival of the eight-thirteen to the city are advised that that train is still temporarily delayed. Southern Rail regrets any inconvenience.  
 BOY 1: [reading] And they're no easier to find at night...  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] And everybody is looking at that woman who is holding newspapers.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes. What did you find out in this text?  
 BOY 1: Oni su se vratili znači...  
 BOY 2: Znači da je vlak otkazan.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes.  
 GIRL 2: Ali to ne mora značiti da je otkazan zato što piše 'temporarily'.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes.  
 BOY 2: They are no easier to find at night.  
 BOY 3: Di je konduker?  
 INVESTIGATOR: Who is no easier to find at night?  
 BOY 2, BOY 1 I BOY 3: The burglars!  
 BOY 2: The burglar and...  
 BOY 1: And the train. And the cows.  
 GIRL 2: The cows!  
 GIRL 1: Yes, because cows are then all black...  
 GIRL 2: They are black and white.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] Ha-ha, he is thinking about turkey!  
 INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] So what do you think about this picture?  
 BOY 1: It's funny.  
 GIRL 1: Mom and dad ask this boy do you he wants to be a turkey.  
 BOY 1: Nope, that's not.  
 BOY 2: Girl asks mom and dad.  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] Yes, here is the girl turkey.  
 BOY 2: The girl ask mum and dad to check homework and then mom just rap it and just ask her if she wants to be a turkey.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Možda možemo ovo tu pročitati.  
 GIRL 2: Oh my gosh! This is a white-black dog. It's not pouring milk on him anymore.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, you don't think it's because of the milk?  
 BOY 1: Možda je to onaj rakun.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So you think it's a racoon?  
 BOY 2: Racoons have this kind of masks.  
 BOY 1: And then they pour milk and it's white.  
 BOY 3: [pointing] Možda možemo pročitati što ovdje piše.  
 GIRL 1: [reading] Mu.  
 ALL: [reading] Mu...  
 INVESTIGATOR: Can you maybe connect it to something?  
 GIRL 2: The cows! The cows mu.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So you read that from the girl's paper?  
 BOY 1: 'Mn' piše tako da ne možemo ništa. Samo idimo dalje.  
 BOY 2: [flipping the page and reading] With his sleeve, he clears some mist from inside the window. Where he expects a platform, he sees only smoke or steam or cloud. he stares and wonders. Is that really cloud out there?

BOY 1: [pointing] There is a picture in here.

BOY 2: [reading] I looked at my brother. We played along – for the moment. But pretty soon both of us looked like rejects from some origami zoo. I was thinking, “Who are these people?”.

INVESTIGATOR: Who are these people?

GIRL 3: [pointing] Ova radi isto kapu i oni rade kape.

GIRL 2: Yes! As the parents!

BOY 2: She is wondering who are these people. Maybe they are not their mom and dad.

INVESTIGATOR: Oh, you think that’s not mom and dad?

BOY 1: Maybe they just like...

BOY 3: Možda tetak i teta.

GIRL 2: [pointing] Look at her hair! It’s like the same as her mom’s!

BOY 2: But a lot of people have black hair.

BOY 1: [pointing] This hat is the same...

GIRL 2: As that one.

BOY 2: [reading] even with a light. Oh, you can’t find the burglars here, but like it’s hard to find him.

GIRL 2: Even in the light it’s hard to find the burglars and the cows!

INVESTIGATOR: So, what do you remember, what was in the previous page?

GIRL 2: At night, burglars, train and cows.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. [pointing] Look at his face. What is he feeling like?

GIRL 3: Scared.

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he’s scared?

GIRL 3: Ili tužan.

INVESTIGATOR: Or sad. Why?

BOY 2: But he see is that really cloud. He is confused because I don’t know, we don’t see that cloud or...

INVESTIGATOR: Okay...

BOY 1: [pointing] Maybe this is a cloud.

BOY 2: But maybe there are four...

INVESTIGATOR: So you think the shapes on the cow are clouds?

GIRL 3: [pointing] Ovo izgleda ko ruka.

BOY 2: [flipping the pages and pointing] Can I say something? There are four different stories because maybe this is ‘A Waiting Game’ story. Maybe this is a ‘Udder Chaos’ story. Maybe this is ‘Problem Parents’ story and maybe the ‘Seeing Things’ story.

ALL: Oh, yes! Yes!

BOY 2: And maybe they all connect.

GIRL 1: Yes, and you see that there are four different stories there.

GIRL 2: Yeah!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: This is just like finding a burglar.

BOY 1: [pointing] It’s not just like. There are two... These two are connected, and these two are connected. Because they saw the burglar on the television.

GIRL 1: I think it’s four different stories, but everything is connected in different ways.

BOY 2: I don’t know. Maybe there are four different, maybe there are not. We will see.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is two, and this is two.

GIRL 1: They said there are many stories there.

BOY 2: But there is just like train so it’s maybe...

GIRL 1: So the cows are going across...

GIRL 2: Across the train track!

BOY 3: [pointing] And this is burglar.

INVESTIGATOR: So you think the cows are going across the train track?

GIRL 2: Yes, that’s the only reason why is there a sign for the train!

GIRL 1: And look. All the people now has got the newspaper all over the station.

BOY 1: Ali ne kužim kaj oni sad rade.

BOY 2: [reading] And something else is drifting by. Snow? The boy is thrilled. He opens the window. The singing gets louder.



INVESTIGATOR: What singing?

GIRL 2: Oh, I know!

BOY 2: From the choir!

INVESTIGATOR: Yes.

BOY 1: So he with cows block the train so he...

GIRL 1: So he can sabotage that lady so she can...

BOY 1: And they are here in the song.

BOY 2: Maybe he is trying to catch that old lady.

GIRL 2: Maybe she's a victim, that old lady. The only reason he's coming for her.

BOY 2: Yeah. I think she knows some evidence to catch him how is easy to catch him. So, I don't know. Maybe he is trying to get her to she do not talk to anybody.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 3: Ako je vlak pao u grmlje, zašto je ovaj još unutra?

GIRL 2: But he is not happy!

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think he is not happy?

GIRL 2: Because he wants to see his parents.

BOY 2: [pointing] But he is happy. Look, he has a smile on his face.

BOY 1: [reading] Then they started marching again and, by the fourth trip around the living room, my brother was really getting into it. The little traitor.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you know what a traitor means?

BOY 1: Izdajica.

INVESTIGATOR: So, what do you think here happened?

BOY 2: They were in the train just looking...

GIRL 2: [pointing] I want to say something about this photo and this photo. I thought if he is going for that lady, she must have evidence of that. Maybe she saw him something do that's criminal.

GIRL 1: And she want to get him back in the jail, but she...

INVESTIGATOR: So, she wants to catch him?

GIRL 1 I GIRL 2: Yes!

GIRL 1: Or, he wants to catch her.

INVESTIGATOR: Oh, so they are chasing each other?

ALL: Yes!

BOY 2: Or, it's... It could be private detective like first, but it can be maybe she betrayed him. But she knows like a lot of robs he did, but she will maybe... Maybe she... Možda je ostala dovoljno dugo u zatvoru da su ju pustili pa da je onda ona htjela, pa da onda ona sad njega hoće uhvatit zato što je on pobjegao. To se već svuda proširilo. Možda ona njega želi uhvatit zato što i još mu produlji kaznu.

BOY 3: Ali zašto je bila u odijelu?

GIRL 1: Pa ne znam, da ju on ne prepozna.

BOY 1: [pointing] Tu je sjena.

BOY 3: Možda da se kao prijatelje, ko dva lopova...

GIRL 2: They can do crimes together. They will be stronger then!

BOY 3: Ne, ne, nego ima samo odijelo da on misli da ona isto krade pa da budu zajedno i ona ga uhvati.

INVESTIGATOR: So, you think that the woman as a burglar was undercover?

GIRL 1 I BOY 3: Yeah!

BOY 2: Maybe that woman is just like working for the police and just tries to see if he wants to just like meet her, just be with her in... Kako da kažem, da zajedno rade! And when they meet, she will betray him, police will come out and catch the burglar.

GIRL 2: [pointing and flipping] I figured just something! Remember this? and remember this? This is the same coat as this.

GIRL 1: So they are partners!

BOY 2: [pointing and flipping] No! Maybe it's not him! It's the same nose just like the old woman. Look.

BOY 3: Yes.

GIRL 2: Yeah!

BOY 2: Maybe it's her because she disappeared.

GIRL 2: But she has white...

BOY 1: [pointing and flipping] Watch this. He's fatter, but in this picture he is skinny.

BOY 2: Maybe that's her.

GIRL 1: It's not her.

GIRL 2: She has white skin, and he has like some pinkish skin.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Do you think a person's skin can change it's colour?

GIRL 1: No, because she can put actually makeup.

BOY 1: Flip the page!

BOY 2: Let's read! [reading] He opens the window. the singing gets louder. He sticks out his hand to catch a few flakes.

INVESTIGATOR: What's happening?

GIRL 2: [pointing] This is combined with this! Because this is the train in this story. This is the smoke from the station, see?

INVESTIGATOR: Is that smoke or words?

GIRL 1: It's just paper.

GIRL 2: It's like cloud, and this is like steam that makes a cloud.

BOY 2: [reading] I knew I was the only one who could save them now! I grabbed the mail and stuffed it into my father's hand. He shuffled through it. I crossed my fingers. He shuffled through it. I crossed my fingers. He shuffled again and then ripped it into a million pieces and I was standing in the middle of a blizzard.

BOY 1: [pointing] Ovo tu je njegov mail! Sve ovo tu je njegov mail.

INVESTIGATOR: So, it's his homework?

GIRL 2: [pointing] And this is the steam!

INVESTIGATOR: So is that ripped pieces of paper or the smoke?

BOY 3: Možda je to zadaća.

GIRL 2: This is ripped paper and smoke. Both!

BOY 3: Možda je ovo strgana zadaća.

BOY 1: [reading] Your attention please. Passengers awaiting the arrival of the eight-thirteen to the city are advised that Southern Rail has no idea where the train is and regrets any inconvenience.

INVESTIGATOR: So what is happening to the train?

BOY 2: [pointing] That is the train station because they are looking right there. He is telling her the train is there so there is... The newspapers are just flying around just like here.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is just a game! This is just a game! Because look! One, two, three. One, two, three. The burglar, there is cows that stop the train.

GIRL 1: He take out the cows so he can stop the train so he can come in and do whatever he wants to do.

GIRL 2: Yes, and he is trying to pretend he is a normal passenger that he was trying to get in that train like a normal people.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is all just game because this is all the same. This is the train, this is the cows that stops the train, and this are all just flame coming out of the train.

INVESTIGATOR: So, you don't think that is a true story?

BOY 1: Yes!

BOY 3: [pointing] Ovo su kao neka vrata.

GIRL 2: Maybe he is trying to get with that boy something and that woman.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: Can I say something, please?

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

BOY 2: [flipping the pages and pointing]

INVESTIGATOR: So, you went back?

BOY 2: Yes, I went back a lot. So, the doors previously...

BOY 3: Zar nisu vrata bila zatvorena?

BOY 2: Ne, bila su otvorena, ja mislim.

INVESTIGATOR: Which door?

BOY 2: [pointing] Yeah, this door.

GIRL 2: But maybe...

INVESTIGATOR: So, at the beginning you told me that this is the house where those people lived. What do you think now?

BOY 2: That's a train station.

GIRL 1: Wait, I know! That's the same train.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, that's what he told us before but you didn't really listen.

GIRL 2: [pointing] He is looking up, but here he is not looking up!

BOY 1: Maybe...

GIRL 1: [pointing] He is hiding, look! He is looking at him, and he is hiding.

BOY 2: Maybe he wants to rob the train!

GIRL 1: [pointing] There is the newspaper here!

BOY 3: Možda je konduktor... Ali možda je i onaj dječak...

BOY 1: No, it's not the boy...

BOY 2: [pointing] He doesn't have a hat. But, look! The burglar is hiding, maybe something is in train that he wants. maybe he wants the woman who is in train, but she disappeared too. But, like, maybe he wants something in the train or maybe there are... Maybe she stole something, and...

GIRL 1: He wants that back.

BOY 2: No! She wants maybe pass that to him so, I don't know.

INVESTIGATOR: What does she want to do?

BOY 2: Pass him the thing she stole.

INVESTIGATOR: So they were working as partners or what?

BOY 2: Well, it could be. There is a possibility.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay. Maybe you can look more.

GIRL 2: Oh my god!

BOY 2: [reading] He's about to melt them on his tongue when he notices that each flake is decorated with words and numbers. It isn't snow. It's newspaper!

GIRL 2: Oh!

BOY 2: [reading] I was about to give up when my brother suddenly shouted, "Let's go out dinner." "Good idea," said Mom. "I know just the place." I panicked. I mean, I was still dressed like a turkey! In the house was bad enough – but outside?!

INVESTIGATOR: What's happening?

BOY 1: Ali nismo pazili na brojeve.

GIRL 3: [pointing] Ali tu je sad više brojeva i onda će vjerojatno cijelu kuću ispunit papirima.

BOY 1: Da, to i je kuća! Možda to i je njihova kuća!

BOY 2: [pointing and reading] But, look! Like a turkey! In the house was bad enough – but outside?

GIRL 2: [flipping back and pointing] Ali zašto je onda tu legao konduktor?

BOY 3: Ali mislim da to nije konduktor zato što...

GIRL 3: [pointing] Ali svi su obučeni u ovaj papir.

GIRL 2: The conductor was being on the floor like listening something what he said about the tracks. That means that this is not a house.

BOY 3: To je ona stanica.

BOY 1 I BOY 2: [flipping the picturebook in various directions]

BOY 2: I'm trying to do something.

BOY 1: [pointing] A human face! Nose, lips, a hat, neck, rest of the body.

GIRL 1: Yeah!

INVESTIGATOR: So that means that this is a human?

BOY 2: [pointing] Yes, that is nose, that is hat, and... That's paper. That is other human.

GIRL 1: [pointing] Maybe a cow, or it can be...

BOY 1: Maybe this is a...

GIRL 1: Pink paper.

BOY 2: [pointing] Maybe this is that old woman and he wants to give some paper to her. Maybe it's a code or something.

INVESTIGATOR: Oh, that could be a code they use to work as partners?

ALL: [flipping the page] Oh!

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, what's happening?

GIRL 2: [pointing] The train! Oh my god.

BOY 2: [reading] Then he sees them standing beside the train. Strange creatures tossing torn paper into the air and singing. He must have missed them at first because their clothes are as gray as the swirling cloud.

GIRL 2: [pointing] I saw this! This is the choir festival!

BOY 1: [pointing] Jedan lik mi je poznat. Daj pusti. Ovaj tu je nešto sličan onome ko pjeva.

GIRL 2: Yes, this is the choir singing!

INVESTIGATOR: So you think these are the same people singing and waiting at the station?

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 2: [pointing] Then the burglar must be there because he is singing there too. And there is no man like this.

GIRL 2: Yes!

BOY 3: But zašto... [flipping back the pages] Možda je ovo ona marama od skroz početka, onaj rope.

BOY 2: [flipping and pointing] Ali ne ne, look! Because they were like here and they start to get in newspapers and you see, they start to decorate with newspapers because they saw the train coming.

BOY 3: [reading] I tried one last thing. "But it's a school night! What about my homework?" [I was really desperate!] "Just give me a second to brush my hair," said Mom. Then Dad looked at me with this grin and said, "Maybe we should leave our costumes at home." I couldn't believe it. Sanity! My brother, of course, insisted on wearing his stupid hat.

GIRL 2: I need to say something! Maybe they lead us on the wrong track this book at the first time, that warning!

INVESTIGATOR: So, you think the book is trying to fool us?

GIRL 2: Yes!

INVESTIGATOR: With the warning?

GIRL 2: [pointing] Yes, because it's maybe all combined. Look! One, two, three – this is combined. And this is too combined.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, so you think the stories are combined?

GIRL 2: Yes! It all makes sense now.

BOY 1: [reading] Your attention please. Passengers awaiting the eight-thirteen to the city are advised that that train is now arriving on platform one. Southern Rail regrets any inconvenience caused by the delay.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay, what happened?

BOY 1: [pointing] Šta je ovo?

GIRL 2: [pointing] This is an eye.

INVESTIGATOR: Whose eye is this?

BOY 2: His eye.

GIRL 1 I GIRL 2: The cow's.

BOY 1: No!

GIRL 1: Maybe it's not cow's eye.

INVESTIGATOR: Is it the cow's eye or the dog's eye?

BOY 2: I don't know. Dog is at home because he's a spy.

BOY 3: Od lopova.

BOY 2: Maybe it's a woman's eye.

GIRL 3: Ali pas nema takve oči.

BOY 2: Ali oni su... Vidite svi da su doslovce, da je sve ovdje kombinirano, da su sve to krave i čovjek. Ovo je možda oko od one stare žene, a oko nje su one krave.

INVESTIGATOR: So, that could be the woman surrounded by cows?

ALL: Oh...

BOY 1: [pointing] Ovo je san, a ovo je stvarno.

BOY 2: [reading] A piercing whistle suddenly interrupts the celebration. With a jolt, the train begins to move. Quickly, the boy draws his hand inside, letting the flakes slip away. He yawns and settles one more into the warmth of his seat.

BOY 3: [reading] In the car they started singing again. But it was pretty dark out, so I figured nobody could see us. We pulled up to the fish and chips shop. Mom went in. Soon she was back, laughing and holding our dinners – each wrapped, as usual, in newspaper. "See," she said, "everybody's doing it!".

BOY 1: [pointing] Ovo je kuća, ovo je sve dalje vlak.  
 GIRL 1: Yeah.  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Ovo je sve dalje snijeg.  
 GIRL 2: No, that's steam from the train probably.  
 BOY 2: [reading] But the best thing about Holstein cows... Wait! We will see that later.  
 BOY 2: [flipping back the pages] Look, there is a sun here.  
 GIRL 2: It's like blizzard or something.  
 GIRL 1: In one picture they said that there is many smoke.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So you think it's smoke?  
 GIRL 1 I GIRL 2: Yes!  
 BOY 2: [flipping and pointing] Maybe there's the smoke because there is sunny, sunny, everywhere is sunny. But just here... Odjedanput je došao samo kao snijeg, ali to je ne može bit.  
 BOY 1: [flipping and pointing] Ali kako je ovo sve došlo ako prvo je on blokirao mjesto s kravama...  
 GIRL 2: Oh, maybe they...  
 BOY 2: [flipping and pointing] Maybe it's just smoke and the cloud because clouds...  
 INVESTIGATOR: So the picture got like this because of the smoke and the clouds?  
 ALL: Yes!  
 INVESTIGATOR: Okay.  
 BOY 2: [reading] But the best thing about Holstein cows...  
 BOY 2: [flipping the page and reading] When the boy awakens, the train is drawing alongside a platform an enormous glass roof. He puts his nose up against the window. No cloud. No snow. No singing. Instead, two figures approaching the train. There's something familiar about them. The boy steps onto the platform and they move quickly toward him. "Hello, my angel," His mother says. "What a journey you must have had."  
 BOY 1: Imam jedno pitanje! [flipping the pages and pointing] Vidite ovo tu kad su pitali hoće li biti turkey isto kao ovo na krovu.  
 BOY 2: [pointing] But, look. It was like just here before and here is... It's not that...  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] The burglar is here!  
 GIRL 1: We skipped the last page.  
 BOY 2: I nismo sve pročitali.  
 BOY 3: [reading] I've got to admit, it was kind of fun in the end – even cleaning up all the papers around the house. But just as I was heading for bed I heard, "Hey kiddo. What about that homework?" You've got to watch those parents. It's exhausting.  
 BOY 2: [reading] is that no matter how far they go, they always come back – when they want to be milked.  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Ovdje squirell čisti.  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] This is the burglar!  
 GIRL 3: [pointing] I smanjilo se.  
 BOY 1: It was all just a game.  
 GIRL 1: Yes! Oh my god!  
 GIRL 2: They said at the beginning it's a waiting game!  
 INVESTIGATOR: So it's not real?  
 GIRL 2: No!  
 BOY 2: It's just not connected!  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] Look, look! I know. The kids wanted to make some story or something for, I don't know what. So they made something of little house and little people so there's like little people and cows.  
 BOY 2: So you can connect it. They maybe just to see how the others will connect it.  
 GIRL 1: How we will react because we all were thinking this was for real life.  
 BOY 1: I didn't. I said it was just a game.  
 INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] Can you take a look at this picture?  
 GIRL 2: This is just a picture probably.  
 BOY 3: To je ona kućica.  
 BOY 1: There's only one thing we didn't discover.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Yes, what?

BOY 1: Who is that girl?  
 GIRL 2: Wait, wait, wait.  
 BOY 2: [flipping back the pages and pointing] Look there's the book!  
 GIRL 1: [pointing] Oh, my gosh! And this is the train!  
 GIRL 2: Yes!  
 GIRL 1: We just didn't get the picture right.  
 BOY 2: They were just playing.  
 BOY 1: It was just a game.  
 GIRL 1: We get it.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, what do you think, are there four separate stories?  
 BOY 1: Yes.  
 GIRL 2: No, it's a whole combined one big story!  
 BOY 2: [pointing] This is the real story, and this is just what they made.  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] And they tricked us thinking that this was all a game because look. A problem parents, and this is a waiting game. Like this is, we have head.  
 BOY 3: Doslovno nam je pisalo.  
 INVESTIGATOR: But you didn't look at it.  
 GIRL 1: We just needed to...  
 INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think that happened to you?  
 GIRL 1: Because we weren't thinking right.  
 GIRL 2: Yeah!  
 GIRL 1: Because we are just children!  
 INVESTIGATOR: You think it's because you are children?  
 BOY 2: No, the book wants you to think that.  
 GIRL 1: Because the book is smarter than us.  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] They confused us with this, and this, and this.  
 BOY 2: Knjiga samo želi da mi mislimo da je sve to spojeno, a zapravo to samo nikako ne možeš saznati do kraja knjige.  
 INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] Okay but take a look. Why was this warning at the beginning? Who wrote this warning?  
 GIRL 1: Pa djeca.  
 GIRL 2: The children.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Who wrote the book?  
 GIRL 2: The children.  
 BOY 1: [pointing] Pa ovaj koji je napisao knjigu.  
 GIRL 1: [reading] David Macaulay.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Do you think the author wrote the warning?  
 BOY 3: Yes.  
 GIRL 2: No!  
 GIRL 1: Maybe the author who was getting this was wrote this. No, he can't do that.  
 BOY 1: The author who is writing everything, he must made that.  
 INVESTIGATOR: So, who was this message to?  
 ALL: To us!  
 INVESTIGATOR: To the readers?  
 GIRL 2: Yes, they were trying to trick us or something.  
 INVESTIGATOR: Was it hard to you to read these pictures and the story?  
 ALL: No.  
 GIRL 2: [pointing] They confused us with this and this. We were just thinking about why he got out of prison and...  
 INVESTIGATOR: [pointing] What do you think, why are these pages red?  
 BOY 2: I don't know. That's...  
 INVESTIGATOR: Do you maybe know about the riddle/zagonetka "What is black and white and red all over"?  
 GIRL 2: Oh, it's a warning!  
 INVESTIGATOR: No... Do you know what red means?

ALL: Crveno.

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, but do you know maybe of a verb that in the past you say 'I read a book'?

BOY 2: Pročitao.

ALL: Oh!

INVESTIGATOR: So, what kind of paper was in this picturebook?

BOY 3: Black and white.

BOY 2: What is black and white and red?

GIRL 2: Oh! I read! Pročitala sam!

GIRL 1: Oh, the newspapers is black and white!

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, and they are read all over.

BOY 1: Oh, readed!

GIRL 1: They read the book and like read is like part of the read!

INVESTIGATOR: Yes, so that was the riddle.

BOY 2: Okay, this was fun.

INVESTIGATOR: Was it interesting to you?

ALL: Yes!

GIRL 1: We were like one hour reading this book to get it right and now we know that we don't need to read it, we just need to think and look.

INVESTIGATOR: So, who are the main characters?

GIRL 2: The children and the parents.

INVESTIGATOR: And someone mentioned that these kinds of things happen in crime movies. So do you like to watch TV and movies?

ALL: Yes!

BOY 1: Almost every day.

INVESTIGATOR: Do you like to watch cartoons?

GIRL 1: Yes!

BOY 2: Not really.

INVESTIGATOR: Does anyone read some kind of comics/stripove?

BOY 1: Yes.

INVESTIGATOR: Is this picturebook similar to TV shows, movies, comics?

BOY 2: Yes.

GIRL 2: Because I remember I watched like that happen in real life. Like some burglar or some people that are criminals try to take over a plane. And there were like victims and they stole the plane and the whole army come to save them.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.

GIRL 2: This is like the books.

INVESTIGATOR: And how is it similar to comics?

GIRL 1: Because comics is like big pictures and small text.

BOY 1: [pointing] This is similar to the comics.

INVESTIGATOR: And what did you find easier, the words or the pictures?

BOY 2: Everything.

ALL: The pictures.

INVESTIGATOR: So how did you make the meaning of this picturebook? Did you look more at the pictures or?

ALL: At the pictures.

INVESTIGATOR: What do you think about the pictures? Were they the same in all these four pieces or? [pointing] What about this one? Is this one different from the others?

GIRL 1: Yes, because it's like real art and these are just for fun.

BOY 1: [pointing] I just found something out! The boy is... These are two pictures the boy has. This is from her because he play with trains and her homework is this.

GIRL 2: Oh my gosh, I get it! Like they are playing like this.

INVESTIGATOR: So you think her homework is about this boy who is travelling with the train?

BOY 1: Yes.

GIRL 2: [pointing] And he played with this!

BOY 2: [pointing] No, I think it's this boy played with train so that's like this train and he played with the figures like there's that station. He had that station and he got a train, and the news they were just... All was right there.

GIRL 1: [flipping and pointing] Look the dog, and look the cow!

GIRL 2: When he was playing, he got the inspiration to make this story.

BOY 1: [pointing] Tu kad je pas ležao, nekoliko stranica iza krave blokiraju vlak.

BOY 2: [pointing] Look, a dog! It's just dog!

ALL: Yes!

GIRL 2: We were so fooled!

INVESTIGATOR: So are there any borders? Je li postoje neke granice?

BOY 1: Ne.

INVESTIGATOR: Why do you think so? [pointing] Look at this one. What is happening with the borders?

BOY 2: That's just wrapped paper, homework.

INVESTIGATOR: Would you like to read this picturebook again?

ALL: No. We don't have time.

INVESTIGATOR: Je li mislite da ćete stvorit neko drugačije značenje ovoj slikovnici ako ju ponovno čitate?

GIRL 1: No, we already know, but if we did it alone we would definitely made something differently. We make some new ideas because we combined our thoughts and we made a new meaning.

INVESTIGATOR: Would you like to write a picturebook like this one?

ALL: No!

BOY 2: Maybe.

GIRL 1: Because I don't wanna trick people.

INVESTIGATOR: Okay.



**Statement of Authorship**

I declare that this master's degree thesis is my work, written on the basis of literature referenced above and the conducted research.

**Izjava o izvornosti diplomskog rada**

Izjavljujem da je moj diplomski rad izvorni rezultat mojeg rada te da se u izradi istoga nisam koristila drugim izvorima osim onih koji su u njemu navedeni.

Zagreb, 6.7.2021.

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Katarina Brbora