

**A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF GRAPHIC NOVELS USED IN  
THE MALAYSIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**2016**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS  
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

**2016**

**UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA**

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Registration/Matric No: THA100016

Name of Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Title of Thesis ("this Work"):

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Field of Study: SEMIOTICS AND MULTIMODALITY

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## ABSTRACT

Graphic novels remain an uncharted territory in the Malaysian curriculum. This study investigated how comics, visual and textual components are represented and cohesion realised in graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. Additionally, the study discussed the pedagogical implications of deploying graphic novels in English Language classrooms. As a first, the study also focused on investigating adapted classics which are reprinted as graphic novels. The theoretical frameworks based on the works of Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (2004), Okum (2005), McKenzie (2005), Halliday (1994, 2004) and Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) were deployed. The graphic novels used were *Black Beauty* (2010), *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010) and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009). Interviews were conducted with the writers, illustrators and an official from the Ministry of Education of Malaysia for triangulation. Results of the study show that both writers and illustrators of the novels adhered to certain linguistic and image structures to support the close adaptations of the original works. The comics conventions analysis indicates that critical considerations are made specifically on compression and extensions in recreating the original through sequential art. The linguistic analysis of transitivity reveals the dominance of three Processes: Material, Relational and Mental Processes. As such, the most active Participants are Actors, Goals, Sensors, Phenomenon, Tokens, Values, Carriers and Attributes. The type of Circumstance prevalent is Circumstances of Location. Additionally, Circumstances of Events provide an avenue to condense the time frame. There is also a predominance of Narrative Processes. The dominance of Action Processes denotes the focus on actions and movements to accentuate the dynamism of the characters. The use of Conceptual Processes demonstrates the reliance on images



that are static. The findings affirm that Material Processes of SFL (representing linguistic functions) correspond with Narrative Processes of VG as both represent ‘outer experiences’ in a material world. In establishing cohesion, the use of splash pages provides a continuous background whereas overlap panels anchor continuous sequences clearly. The role of readers as interpreters is pertinent in establishing coherence through cognitive deduction. The analysis of Panel-to-Panel Transitions shows that Action-to-Action transitions are prevalent and this is parallel with most mainstream American comic books and graphic novels. This denotes that though the genre is different, the analysis reveals that mainstream transitions patterns are adhered to. The data analysis of Text Image Interaction discloses that the Complementary type of interaction is predominant. Colours are also utilised to create cohesion between the panels. The positions of speech balloons denote a clear distinctive cohesion marker through placements that support the reader to follow the Western convention of reading. Captions are utilised to create cohesion by providing information and narrative knowledge. Contrary to assumptions, the study unveils that the authors and illustrators of the three novels did not work together. Importantly, this study ascertains that both writers and illustrators of this genre relied on actions, both linguistically and visually represented, to support the abridgement of the originals. In the case of *TBVM*, this study establishes the fact that it should be considered a graphic reader rather than a graphic novel mainly due to its structural composition. Besides filling up the gap in research, the conceptual framework supports the effective dissection of these graphic novels through semiotics resources.

## ABSTRAK

Novel grafik merupakan elemen yang jarang diterokai dalam kurikulum Malaysia. Kajian ini menganalisis bagaimana komponen komik, visual dan tekstual direpresentasi serta melihat penghasilan kesinambungan elemen-elemen tersebut dalam novel-novel grafik yang diadaptasi dari genre novel-novel klasik. Selain itu, kajian ini juga membincangkan implikasi pedagogi dalam penggunaan novel grafik dalam kelas Bahasa Inggeris. Kajian ini merupakan satu-satunya penyelidikan yang berfokus kepada novel grafik yang diadaptasi dari genre novel klasik. Kerangka teori Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (2004), Okum (2005), McKenzie (2005), Halliday (1994, 2004) dan Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) mendasari analisis kajian ini. Buku-buku yang dikaji adalah *Black Beauty* (2010), *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010) dan *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009). Selain itu, wawancara melalui e-mel telah dilaksanakan dengan penulis, ilustrator dan pegawai dari Kementerian Pelajaran bagi tujuan triangulasi. Dapatan kajian mendedahkan bahawa penulis dan ilustrator novel ini mengikut struktur linguistik dan imej yang tertentu untuk menyokong adaptasi novel-novel ini dari sumber asal. Analisis konvensi komik pula menunjukkan bahawa pertimbangan kritikal dititikberatkan khususnya pada peluasan dan rumusan teks asal berdasarkan seni yang berurutan (*sequential art*). Analisis linguistik *transitivity* menunjukkan dominasi tiga *Processes* iaitu *Material*, *Relational* dan *Mental Processes*. Berlandaskan penemuan ini, *Participants* yang aktif ialah *Actors*, *Goals*, *Sensors*, *Phenomenon*, *Tokens*, *Values*, *Carriers* dan *Attributes*. Jenis *Circumstance* yang dominan ialah *Circumstances of Location*. Di samping itu, melalui *Circumstances of Events*, jurang masa dapat disingkatkan. Peratus penggunaan *Narrative Processes* juga adalah yang paling tinggi, khususnya sub-proses *Action* yang mengutamakan

pergerakan dan aksi yang memantapkan aspek dinamika watak-watak. Penggunaan *Conceptual Processes* membuktikan kebergantungan kepada penggunaan ime-imej statik. Analisis kajian ini juga mengesahkan bahawa *Material Processes* dalam *Systemic Functional Linguistics* berkaitan dengan *Narrative Processes* dalam *Visual Grammar* yang menitikberatkan pengalaman luaran. Dalam merealisasikan kesinambungan, penggunaan *splash page* menyediakan latar belakang yang berurutan manakala panel bertindih (*overlap panel*) membantu dalam meningkatkan pertalian antara adengan dengan jelas. Peranan pembaca sebagai penterjemah dalam menganalisis imej-imej berkenaan juga penting dalam memastikan kesinambungan melalui deduksi kognitif. Analisis transisi *Panel-to-Panel Transitions* mengutamakan penggunaan transisi *Action-to-Action* dan dapatan ini selari dengan apa yang terdapat dalam kajian tentang buku-buku komik dan novel grafik utama di Amerika Syarikat. Ini membuktikan bahawa walaupun genre buku adalah berlainan, namun corak transisi utama dituruti. Analisis data daripada *Text Image Interaction* mendedahkan penggunaan luas interaksi jenis *Complementary*. Selain itu, penggunaan warna juga penting dalam menghasilkan kesinambungan panel. Tambahan pula, posisi belon ucapan (*speech balloons*) menggambarkan unsur kesinambungan berdasarkan konvensi bacaan Barat. Penggunaan kapsyen (*caption*) pula membantu dalam membentuk unsur kesinambungan dengan memberikan informasi dan pengetahuan naratif. Bertentangan dengan tanggapan umum, kajian ini mendedahkan bahawa penulis dan ilustrator novel-novel grafik bekerja secara bersendirian dan tidak berkerjasama dalam menghasilkan novel grafik. Kajian ini juga membuktikan bahawa penulis dan ilustrator bergantung kepada elemen aksi dalam bentuk linguistik dan visual bagi meringkaskan cerita asal. Dapatan kajian juga membuktikan novel *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* merupakan sebuah *graphic reader* dan bukannya sebuah novel grafik berdasarkan struktur komposisinya. Melalui kajian ini, ternyata bahawa kerangka konseptual yang diadaptasi

sebagai instrumen analisis berjaya mengupas novel-novel grafik dengan lebih efektif melalui sumber semiotik.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.*

-Albert Schweitzer

This thesis is an embodiment of a childhood dream come true and I am eternally thankful for those who have been with me through this journey. Beyond the language and images, this journey has seen the contribution of so many people who have left such an indelible mark in my life. For these and more, I thank:

God - thank you for giving me strength to persevere all these years. Without you, all is in vain.

Dr. Fauziah Taib - my enigmatic supervisor; thank you for being more than just an advisor and a mentor. Thank you for being there for me at every leg of my journey. For your guidance, patience, immense knowledge and motivation, I would be forever indebted.

Dr. Sakina Suffian – my devoted supervisor; thank you for your immense care and guidance in seeing me through the completion of my PhD journey.

Dr. Baljit Kaur, Dr. Cecilia Cheong and Dr. Lau Kui Ling - members of my thesis committee; thank you for providing insightful comments and helpful suggestions.

Dr. Surinderpal Kaur - thank you for the heartfelt encouragement, your inspiring CDA and Semiotics classes and deep passion in sharing my enthusiasm for great literary works and graphic novels.

Dr. Sridevi Srinivass - thank you for being my SFL guru; without doubt, you piqued my interest in SFL and I am grateful for that and the many spiritual discussions we had.

Dr. David Yoong - thank you for being that person who always challenges the status quo; for seeing things differently, and not always with rose tinted glasses.

Prof. Stefanie Pillai, Prof. Zuraidah Mohd. and Don, Prof. Jawakhir - thank you very much for the support and encouragement.

Dr. Francisco Veloso - thank you for your genuine interest and feedback all the way from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Greg Rebis, Jenniffer Tanner, L.L. Owens and Peggy Albers and Eileen Guan - thank you for your cooperation, feedbacks and the data you have provided for this study.

Dr Kumaran Rajendran - my PhD buddy, thank you for enduring many hours of challenging conversations. Your friendship and camaraderie are deeply appreciated.

My dearest friends - Prof. Dr Esther Boucher, Dr Nellie Loh, Amilly Eu, Lina Yip, Siew Ling, S. Komathy, R. Kalaivalli and Padlon Rahman; thank you for cheering me on and offering assiduous moral and emotional support.

My cousins - Christie, Leena, Latha, Suganya, Hemala, Darwitha, Pradha and Subha; thank you for keeping me sane throughout this arduous journey.

My in-laws, the Shanmugams - thank you for the encouragement.

My siblings, Devi and Sara - thank you for being the wonderful and amazing persons you all are.

My parents - K. Rajendra and Suguna Paul, thank you Papa and Amma for the inspiration and selfless sacrifice towards my education pursuits from young; for sowing the seeds of excellence in my life and academic achievements.

My son - Abbhilash, thank you so much for being the joy and sunshine of my life.

My husband - Siva, thank you for instilling work ethics and the desire to achieve even the most impossible of goals. And thank you for the patience and love that made everything possible.

Thank you one and all for making my dream come true. This journey has come to an end and I am looking forward to the beginning of a new chapter in my life.

*"Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."*

-L. Frank Baum, *Wizard of the Oz*

*To God,*

For seeing through my darkest hours and endowing me with the strength  
to carry on, persevere and choose the road less travelled...

In Memory of:

*Sergeant Kanagarethinam Paul*

Thank you for instilling the desire to reach for the stars

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ministry of Education -	MOE
Curriculum Development Department -	CDD
English Language -	EL
English Language Teaching -	ELT
<i>Black Beauty</i> -	<i>BB</i>
<i>Journey to the Centre of the Earth</i> -	<i>JttCotE</i>
<i>The Boscombe Valley Mystery</i> -	<i>TBVM</i>
Page -	PG
Panel -	P
Caption -	C
Speech Balloon -	Speech Balloon
Sentence -	Sentence
Systemic Functional Linguistics -	SFL
Visual Grammar -	VG
Extreme long shot -	ELS
Long shot -	LS
Knee shot -	KS
Medium shot -	MS
Medium close-up -	MCU
Close-up -	CU
Extreme close-up -	ECU
System of Transitivity -	SoT
Participant -	Par
Process -	Pr
Material Process -	MP
Mental Process -	MenP
Verbal Process -	VP
Behavioural Process -	BP
Relational Process -	RP
Existential Process -	EP
Circumstance -	Cir
Circumstance of Extent -	CoE
Circumstance of Location -	CoL

Circumstance of Cause -	CoC
Circumstance of Accompaniment -	CoA
Circumstance of Matter -	CoMat
Circumstance of Role -	CoR
Circumstance of Manner -	CoMan
Circumstance of Contingency -	CoCo
Circumstance of Angle -	CoAn
Narrative Process -	NP
Conceptual Process -	CP
Classification Process -	ClaP
Analytical Process -	AnaP
Symbolic Process -	SymP
Panel to Panel Transitions -	PtPT
Moment-to-Moment -	Mom-t-Mom
Action-to-Action -	Act-t-Act
Subject-to-Subject -	Sub-t-Sub
Scene-to-Scene -	Sce-t-Sce
Aspect-to-Aspect -	As-t-As
Non-sequitur -	NS
Text Image Interaction -	TII
Dual Coding Theory -	DCT
Schema Theory -	ST
Transactional Theory -	TT



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University of Malaya

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Some of the most interesting, most daring, most heart breaking art being created right now, of both the verbal and visual varieties, is being published in graphic novels.  
(Grossman, 2003, as cited in Schwarz, 2004)

### **1.1 Overview of Study**

The influence of multiple modes in print and media has increasingly shifted the focus from linear texts. As Siegel (2006) posits, “Language arts education can no longer ignore the way that our social, cultural, and economic worlds now require facility with texts and practices involving the full range of representational modes” (p. 65). And here within rests the descriptive framework of multimodality which underpins this study. As a semiotically grounded theory, multimodality distinguishes the different systems of communication that humans use (New London Group, 1996). Audio, visual, linguistic, spatial and gestural modes have been discussed as communicative resources which carry their own affordances or meaning making potentials as argued by scholars (Kress, Jewitt, Bourne et.al., 2005; Ventola, Charles & Kaltenbacher, 2004).

A graphic novel is multimodal in nature as the multiple complex components of textual and visual are intertwined in creating meanings. Studies in graphic novels and comic books are on an upward trend these days with more scholars vouching for their effectiveness especially in the classroom. Once considered “the enfant terrible of literature” (Stafford, 2011, p. 54), graphic novels are now acknowledged as a component of contemporary educational literature especially in the United States of America. Nevertheless, the situation in many Asian countries, including Malaysia,

pictures a scenario where the medium has been placed at the bottom of the literary heap.

Lent (2001) puts forth:

“Common to parts of Asia is a less-than-enthusiastic reception-even a disdain-for comics and cartoon, some people dumping them into the ashcan of ‘low culture, others snubbing them as children’s fare” (p. 6).

The profound and intimate relationship of the English language with visuals like images and pictures traces back a long withstanding tradition. From the time of illuminated manuscripts of medieval romance; Dickens *Oliver Twist* (1839) illustrated by George Cruikshank; Maurice Sendak’s modern picture books like *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963); Will Eisner’s graphic novels; comics from DC, Marvel and Image Publishers to the narratives of films and computer games, the amalgamation of text and visual is symbiotic. The inclusion of illustrations is seen as an embellishment to a text or even to clarify or accentuate meanings. It cannot be denied that new forms of literary skills are pertinent in understanding a variety of texts these days. With the immersion of students in various multimodal platforms like WhatsApp, Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, comic books and graphic novels provide a fecund environment to embrace a generation of visual society. Once considered pure fluff and junk, comic books and graphic novels are currently igniting much interest among academicians and scholars. Though purists may look at this genre cynically, scholarly developments indicate the gradual acceptance of comic books and graphic novels as notable research subjects and important educational tools. As part of popular culture, comic books and graphic novels comprise artful complexities that encourage learning and engagement among students. With the advent of technology, it is important that informed choices are made in providing interesting and enjoyable texts to students these days. Schwarz (2002) posits, “Graphic novels can bring new life beyond bland textbooks” (p. 2).

The unique medium of comics specifically graphic novels is a good example of an emerging multimodal text. The medium offers great narratives, beautiful art and rich information. Certainly such a valuable layout paves way for opportunities among students to apply critical thinking in analysing, evaluating and even creating graphic novels. Bomer (2008) asserts that these multimodal texts are “where print and image do the work of meaning together, where sound and music contribute to the perspective readers are asked to take, where bodily performance works in tandem with the written word, where print itself is animated and choreographed” (p. 354). In short, within this extraordinary realm, graphic novels dwell as multimodal texts: a combination of modalities to reckon with. Morphing from comic books, graphic novels are what Campbell (2007) refers as “an emerging new literature of our times” (p. 13).

## **1.2 The Premise of the Present Study**

The subject of literature has been emphasized in recent years especially in English Language Teaching (hereafter ELT) in Malaysia. This emphasis aims to promote proficiency, inculcate moral values and to also boost students’ understanding of myriad traditions and cultures. Literature is said to be appropriate in embracing these aims as it comprises a structure that contains aesthetic values with total coherence and effect. The incorporation of literature in any system of education is pertinent as it has the innate ability to develop and hone creativity in language and imagination. In facing the challenges of the world today, the importance of inculcating good values, fostering critical and creative thinking skills and enhancing an understanding of the world is foremost crucial and this can be achieved through literature.

The first cycle of the literature component was introduced in Malaysia in March 2000 as a part of the ELT syllabus in secondary schools, for both Forms 1 (equivalent to Year 7 of the British Curriculum) and 4 (equivalent to Year 10) respectively. According to the syllabus specification document for the English Language Component from the Curriculum Development Department (2009), the objectives of studying the prescribed texts include strengthening students' proficiency of the English language and enhancing the personal development of students. The syllabus also intends to encourage students to respond to these texts creatively and critically, study the language used and see how it achieves a particular purpose, reflect upon and draw moral values from the many issues rendered. In addition, it also intends for students to understand and appreciate the cultures of others. It is also noted that the recent Malaysian Education Blueprint 2013-2015 has targeted to reduce the gap between urban-rural English Language proficiency. One of the recommended ways is to inculcate and develop the reading for pleasure culture among the young.

The objectives mentioned above undoubtedly embrace the three models of teaching literature as proposed by Carter and Long (1991) which are the language, cultural and personal growth models. In addition to helping students to become better readers, the introduction is also seen as a pathway to engage students to eventually become life-long readers (Vethamani, 2002). In short, the literature in English Language component serves to realise one of the important goals of the national Education Philosophy that is to develop individuals holistically. According to the interviewed official (information obtained on 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2013) from the Curriculum Development Department (hereafter CDD) of the Ministry of Education of Malaysia (hereafter MOE), there are 8 main reasons of including graphic novels in the curriculum.

The reasons are:

- 1) to develop a variety of literacy skills including visual and critical literacies
- 2) to present varied choices to traditional texts in a more reader- friendly format
- 3) to encourage reluctant readers as the medium of visuals is highly stimulating
- 4) to develop literacy specifically among the younger generation through humour and fun
- 5) to introduce literary works like the classics which are considered heavy reading materials for some
- 6) to generate a strong impact on readers through visuals that scaffolds meaning making through images
- 7) to enhance value, variety and creativity as images make texts more accessible particularly to second language users
- 8) to promote effective learning as graphic novels encourage brain based learning that uses both the right and left brain

The compulsory genres in the English Literature component introduced in 2000 in the classrooms were poems, short stories and novels. Short stories like *The Pencil* by Ali Majod, *How Dalat Got Its Name* by Heidi Munan and *Of Bunga Telur and Bally Shoes* Che Husna Azhari were introduced to Form 1 students. The genre of poems includes *Life's Brief Candle* by William Shakespeare, *The Dead Crow* by A. Samad Said and *The Lake Isle of Innisfree* by W.B. Yeats. Novels for this cycle were the adapted versions of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (2000), Angela Wright's *Potato People* (2000) and Gaston Leroux's *Phantom of the Opera* (2000). Nevertheless, developments in the Malaysian EL curriculum like the abolishment of the Teaching of Mathematics and Science in English policy and the introduction of the policy of Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening the Command of English in 2010 were designed as

policies to strengthen English Language (hereafter EL) proficiency by the MOE of Malaysia. Accordingly, new methods were adopted in teaching literature to develop students' confidence in the language besides immersing them in the language. Students in Form 1 and 4 were introduced to the second cycle of texts which include graphic novels, novels, short stories, poems and drama in January 2010. Among the objectives of the introduction is to enable students to improve their proficiency through reading, being able to respond to text, understand and appreciate other cultures besides relating events and characters to students' own lives (CDD, 2009). According to Dr Mohamad Abu Bakar (the former Director General of Education from the MOE), the inclusion of new genres like graphic novels and drama is seen as a fresh approach to teaching literature in Malaysian schools (Kaur, 2010). As a result, the graphic versions of classics like *Black Beauty*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* were introduced by the MOE to Malaysian students in Forms 1 in 2010. In his foreword in these three novels, Alimudin Dom (the former director general of the MOE) stated that the introduction of these abridged versions of classics in the form of graphic novels is seen as an encouragement and method to promote the reading habit among students.

The introduction was also seen as a response to the ineffectiveness of two earlier programmes by the MOE which were the English Language Reading Programme (ELRP) in the mid-1970s and the Class Reader Programme (CRP) in 1990. Both programmes failed to increase the development of the standard of the country's EL. (Ganakumaran, 2002). One major reason was that it was not assessed through examinations. Another major drawback was that teachers lacked the appropriate skills in using the texts. Consequently, the first cycle of the literature component was introduced in March 2000 as part of the EL syllabus in secondary schools in Malaysia

for both Forms 1 and 4 respectively. In addition, this component was also a tested component in the EL paper. According to Rosenblatt (1978), reading literature enables learners to acquire a living experience which in turn helps them to reflect on the meaning of their life. At the same time, the understanding of literature can also foster a better relationship among learners of different cultures when they have better communication and are more receptive to others. The exposure to ideas from other cultures, histories and people promotes the mastering of literature functionally. Hence, it is hoped that the prescribed literary texts recommended for the literature component would help to develop the students' outlook of the world. In helping students to read literary texts effectively, teachers would be able to help students to develop as individuals and improve their relationships with people and institutions around them.

In realising these aims, studying literature should not be limited to a study of linguistics structures, but also experiential meanings that are embedded in between the lines. The reading of a text is not only about decoding the written word, but also being able to relate and connect with the text and its context (Freire & Macedo, 1987). This encourages the pleasure and enjoyment of reading rather than the need to read to gather facts. As such, the execution of teaching methods which encompass active involvement in reading particular texts rather than to a passive reception of information about the texts is pertinent. Semali (2000) argues that the:

“Time has arrived to broaden the canons of traditional education and the curriculum to include the expanding technologies...using critical pedagogy to integrate the new forms of visual and electronic ‘texts’ represents a curriculum requiring new competencies and a new definition of what constitutes learning as well as how and when it takes place” (p.7).



Letcher (2008) puts forth that “Graphic novels can do all that great literature can do, while at the same time evoking our sense of visuals and aesthetics” (p. 94). In addition, Thomas (2011) believes that as a medium, the graphic novel adaptation is able to narrate a story differently. He further reiterates that, “distinguishing among those difference enhances our students’ literacy development in ways that approaching traditional text-only cannot” (p. 194). As a staple of popular culture, graphic novels are certainly not just for diehard fandoms and comic books enthusiasts any more. These complex works of modern literature and art warrant the recognition they truly deserve.

### **1.3 Statement of Problem**

Reading is the most pertinent skill to master as it is the foundation towards progress and a greater development in other communication areas like speaking, writing, texting and the comprehension of language. According to Anderson (1999), reading is an active process which involves the reader to build meaning. Thus, reading materials that are relevant and promote interaction are important for students. Traditional texts which are mono-modal in nature (the stress on linguistic based text) in displaying information often raise problems for students in comprehending texts. These texts also inhibits the love for reading literature texts (Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010). As students live in a multimodal and multimedia society, they have to be educated so as to use the different mediums functionally and critically, to make and produce meaning in many modes and to develop critical thinking.

To date, many studies support the role of multimodality in enhancing literacy (Moya, 2014; Serafini, 2011; Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006; Walsh, 2006; Duncum, 2004). According to Kress (2008), multimodality refers to the many modes in

representations and communications which elicit meanings (p. 91). In addition, Kress (2003) further asserts that “the world told is a different world to the world shown” (p. 1) and teachers should embrace this notion by focusing more on how the world is shown. Norton (2003) agrees that it is crucial to take account of the various semiotic modes in rethinking the notion of literacy. In echoing the importance of multimodality, Kress (2010) succinctly postulates that:

“In education, for instance, the question of what theories are needed to deal with learning and assessment in a multimodal constituted world of meaning is becoming newly and insistently urgent” (p.174).

With the rapid proliferation of new information technologies, traditional literacy is in a process of reinvention. In his seminal book, *The Crafty Reader*, Scholes (2001) argues that:

“New media, in any case, do not replace or eliminate old ones. They take their places in a world of communication; they require realignments of that world; they borrow from the older ways of composing texts; they change—often enrich—the older forms themselves” (p. xv).

Unsworth (2001) believes that in encouraging students to become effective participants in emerging multi-literacies, the ability to comprehend “how the resources of language, image and digital rhetoric can be deployed independently and interactively to construct different kinds of meanings” (p. 8) is vital. By investigating how the different modes of visual and textual components are represented, it would be beneficial for students and educators to exhaust the medium effectively. Wigand (1986) postulates that research on comics clearly is a blind spot in academic writing but recent developments in scholarly contributions denote that more people are getting into the bandwagon of dissecting both comic books and graphic novels in various ways. These developments show that there is a great potential of knowledge within the medium. Additionally, Carter (2007a) proposes that the use of graphic novels in improving literacy needs more research.

Stainbrook (2003) for one, feels that “comics as a broad medium of discourse remains untapped, untouched, and unexamined by academic scholarship” (p. 170).

In recent years, numerous journal articles argue for the literary and pedagogic value of graphics (Hughes, King, Perkins, & Fuke, 2011; Serafini, 2010; Griffith, 2010; Gillenwater 2009). For Saraceni (2003a), the medium of comics contribute to the production of sophisticated texts that embrace absolute literary value. Indeed, the understanding of various conventions of comics in graphic novels promotes multi-literacies specifically visual literacy and critical literacy. Jacobs (2007b) asserts that investigations of comic books as multimodal texts would be able to reveal literate practices that surround comic books (and graphic novels) and other multimodal texts. This would also provide insights on how such practices influence our pedagogies. Morgan and Ramanathan (2005) believe that multimodal materials are able to “engage identities and the imagination in provocative ways unmet through other textual sources” (p. 158). Similar to traditional forms of literature, graphic novels can be resourceful tools in helping students to critically examine the many fields of literature, art, science and even history. Certainly, an analysis into how images and texts are represented in graphic novels will assist in a thorough dissection of the novel especially when used as a pedagogical tool. As most discussion of graphic novels concentrate on their pedagogical advantages and implications, this denies graphic novels a rightful place in the canon of literature to a certain extent. As such, their visual and textual layouts are worth a serious analysis and investigation.

Within the Malaysian context, studies further reiterate the efficacy of encompassing multimodality in the classroom (Nallaya, 2010; Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010; Sivapalan, 2008). A multimodal analysis aims to identify and discuss multimodal

elements that are prevalent in texts and how these create meanings. As an attempt to delve in the inter-symbiosis of how images and texts interact in graphic novels, this study intends to examine how images and texts complement each other in the selected novels. Yang (2008) argues that, “by combining image and text, graphic novels bridge the gap between the media we watch and media we read” (p.187). As such, it is also important to analyse how these elements work together to create a unified text (Taib, 2010). In lieu of this type of analysis, this study intends to analyse the textual or verbal and visual representations of the three graphic novels used.

It cannot be denied that that recent years have seen an increase in studies related to the literature component which is taught in Malaysian schools (Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010; Sivapalan, 2008; Hwang & Embi, 2007; Subramaniam, Ismail & Lie, 2003). The study by Subramaniam, Ismail & Lie, 2003 for example, states that many teachers still have not attended proper trainings in preparation to teach literature, resulting in teachers having limited knowledge in executing literature classes. Nevertheless, about slightly more than half of the respondents in their study do read academic books and/or picture books and comic books. Sidhu’s (2003) study reveals the many challenges faced by literature learners which include uninteresting literary texts, texts compatibility, cultural alienation and linguistic difficulty are among some of the key problems identified. The importance of adopting new applications of pedagogical strategies and styles in the literature classroom is crucial without succumbing to the usual norm of relying too much on literary elements (Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010).

Besides the findings discussed earlier, the lack of creativity among teachers in preparing tasks for students is also a common scenario in many schools. Most teachers pay little attention to comprehension instructs and there is minimal integration of literary

elements (Sidhu, Fook, & Kaur, 2010). Menon (2009) argues that the literature component in the main EL paper is only taught at superficial level supporting the notion that students are merely required to answer questions on reading and comprehension levels; and to understand the basic values portrayed in the texts. Thus, students benefit very little as this method limits students' engagements with the texts. This in turn also goes against the aim of the literature component in the classroom, which according to the MOE is to produce cultured and informed citizens able to form opinions, to evaluate and think. MOE's vision clearly echoes Rosenblatt's (1938) that:

“Those who cram the classics down students' throats long before they are ready are careless of the fate of the great works of the past...our aim should be to develop so much interest in what literature offers that they will read later for themselves. Thus, they will come to the classics at that point in their mental and emotional development when particular works will have particular significance for them” (p. 257-258).

In short, it is crucial for educators to connect themselves with the notion of fun and variety as these elements are a guaranteed source of motivation that provides the students to be active learners. It is important to note that different contexts encourage literacy skills of many forms. Different types of texts like newspapers, advertisements, pamphlets, Internet sites and e-mails, for example, are some common types of texts engaged by readers. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) of the New London Group posit that the prerequisite to be literate in today's society is the ability to have a command of a range of diverse and complex texts and technologies, or in short, to be multi-literate. In relation to this, graphic novels promote multi-literacies as they encourage visual literacy, critical literacy and progressive literacy. As educators, the possibilities of using graphic novels in the classroom are only limited by the imagination. Visual literacy is defined as “the ability to understand, and use images, including the ability to think, learn and express oneself in terms of images” by Braden and Hortin (1982). Proponents

of visual literacy (Annett, 2008; Connor, 2011) strongly recommend the implementation of graphic texts in enhancing understanding of texts among students. Duncan & Smith (2009) further reiterate that literary experts like Stephen Krashen believe that comics function “as a bridge to other kinds of reading, as they help young readers develop linguistic competence and interest in books” (p. 288). Only recently comic books and graphic novels have been considered as an art form, a specific print medium, and a cultural artefact by scholars.

The combination of both text and image makes reading more interesting and provides opportunities for meaning making. The fusion of images, word balloons, lettering, sound effects and gutters form page layouts that create meanings in the multiple realms of meaning making in graphic novels. This clearly underpins the notion of multimodality, a term coined by the New England Group. Although the graphic novels used currently in Malaysian schools are simplified, they are multimodal texts and as such, their contribution towards promoting literacy cannot be ignored.

Interestingly, Carter (2007a) suggests that teachers should see graphic novels as an augmentative take (where teachers consider them as primary resources) rather than the common supplemental take (where graphic novels are seen as extras to canonical texts). Nevertheless, what is important is that there should be encouragement in the usage of graphic novels in the classroom as they can coexist peacefully with more traditional texts, thus enhancing the notion of variety in the classrooms. Though Carter and Long (1991) describe the benefits of simplified readers in promoting literacy competence, their assertion also supports the advantages of using graphic novels in the classroom.

Carter and Long (1991) put forth that:

“Simplified readers can also help to promote literary competence by introducing to students well-constructed and interesting material which demands some kind of inference from the reader...Such motivation may not always be best encouraged by classic, canonical literary texts; any texts which stimulates a sufficient interest to read between the lines will be a good choice” (p. 6).

The dearth of research on multimodality in the Malaysian classrooms is also another motivation in embarking this research. In Malaysia, most mainstream classroom studies have until recently focused on the role of language in describing learning processes and evaluating learning outcomes. As such, the researcher also hopes to contribute to a growing body of research on multimodality, in particular in the textual and visual analysis of graphic novels. To date there is no research on the analysis of multimodality in graphic novels in the localized context. The use of an amalgamated framework which is underpinned by the theories propounded by Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (1994), Okum (2005), McKenzie (2005), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006), Halliday (1994, 2004) and Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) is another first as there is yet to be any studies pursued in the analysis of graphic novels encompassing an amalgamation of these frameworks. This novel exploration undoubtedly supports Goodman’s (1996) claim that “the development of a theoretical academic framework for exploring the links between the visual and verbal language is still in its infancy” (p. 38).

It must be noted that to date, most research on comic books and graphic novels focus on their literary content, the cognitive processing of visuals and the social-transformative power of the medium. Evans-Boniecki (2013) explores the motivations and aspirations in using graphic novels pedagogically and how they empower a phenomenon through a grounded theory study. Boerman-Cornell (2012), on the other hand, looks into the

element of affordances through contextualization, sourcing and corroboration of historical graphic novels like Joe Sacco's *Palestine*. In comparing some of these studies, it is evident that the investigation into textual (linguistic) and visual elements and how these elements interact are limited. Stainbrook (2003) reiterate that many studies on word-image interaction focus on "the opposing natures and words and upon a sustained tension between the forms" (p. 7).

The studies mentioned earlier indicate that a large body of research on graphic novels has focused on content analysis and also their pedagogical implications and benefits. Thus, little work has actually concentrated on the textual and visual (elements of multimodality) of this medium, specifically focusing on adapted classics and this research intends to address this gap. In Rudolphe Topffer's words, "the picture story, which critics disregard and scholars scarcely notice, has had great influence at all times, perhaps even more than written literature" (as cited in McCloud, 1994, p. 201). In short, this study intends to analyse comics, textual and visual representations of adapted classics and how these elements converge into a meaningful text. As Martin (2009) states, "Today many authors and artists adapt works of classic literature into a medium more user friendly to our increasingly visual student population" (p. 30) and within this assertion, lies the significance of this research into investigating how these adapted classics are construed.

From the researcher's own experience as a teacher of English Language for 20 years, the main challenge in learning literature is the frequent incompatibility between students' language ability and the language of the selected texts. Moreover, the implicit meanings students seemed to extract from their study of the novels used in the classrooms seem shallow as they rely too much on various external supplements. In



addition, 'chalk-and-talk' and 'spoon-feeding' methods are adopted and these strategies lead to a monotonous teaching and learning process. Many teachers also rely heavily on easily available workbooks as the main objective is the need to pass examinations rather than the fulfilling the original aims of the syllabus itself. Another problem in teaching the literature component is that teachers tend to drill and focus too much on literary features like plot, theme, characters, moral values and the settings of a story in order to prepare students for examinations. Though proficient students respond well, the slow and reluctant readers are somehow 'put off' by these texts and their literal elements. As a result, many may lose interest in texts which are deemed difficult or bored with texts which are considered too easy. Through such strategies, the development of students' thinking skills and creativity could be seriously impeded. Thus, different pedagogical approaches in teaching the literature component is vital instead of being drilled the same aspects of stylistics repeatedly. These stimulating approaches will make the classes more lively and interesting and lessen the need to stress too much on the stylistics aspect of teaching literature. As Thomas (2011) aptly believes, "reconsidering text, reading and genre through comic books and graphic novels – texts often associated with those children's worlds – is a step toward honouring more nuanced and sophisticated perceptions of text" (p. 199).

Having been a fan of graphic novels for the last few years, it is enlightening to note that the MOE has incorporated these gems as part of the revised English Literature syllabus. In addition, the novelty of graphic novels itself makes it an interesting field to study; thus, it is hoped that this study contributes to a burgeoning body of research on systemic functional multimodality particularly the analysis of both textual and visual representations in graphic novels.

#### 1.4 Aims and Research Questions

The main aim of this research is to highlight the multimodal components found in the three graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics used in the secondary literature classroom in Malaysia. The multimodality of the texts is analysed from two very important elements; textual and visual. The aims of this research are:

- 1) to analyse the various components of comics in selected graphic novels
- 2) to analyse how textual conventions are portrayed in selected graphic novels
- 3) to analyse how visual conventions are portrayed in selected graphic novels
- 4) to analyse how cohesion is established among the textual and visual elements of the conventions of comic in selected graphic novels

In achieving the objectives stated above, the study is guided by the following questions:

- 1) What are the components of comics that constitute the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?
- 2) a. How are textual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?  
b. How are visual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?
- 3) How is cohesion established among the multimodal components in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?

More importantly, the analysis which underpins the 3 research questions (hereafter RQs) encapsulates Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) argument on the system of meaning.

For Kress and van Leeuwen (2006):

“...language and visual communication can both be used to realize the ‘same’ fundamental systems of meaning that constitute our cultures, but each does so by means of its own specific forms, does so differently, and independently” (p. 19).

## **1.5 The Rationale**

Question 1 (hereafter Q1) as an umbrella question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 288) studies the components of comics (based on common comics conventions) both textually and visually found in graphic novels, specifically the genre of adapted classics. This is deemed essential as the investigation focuses on the extent of how much these components are realized in the graphic novels which are from the genre of adapted classics. An understanding of how these components are depicted in these novels is pertinent for it assists educators in dissecting these novels effectively in the classrooms. This echoes the affirmation of Fassbender, Dulaney and Pope (2013) that stresses the need for guidance in reaping the benefits of reading and analysing graphic novels. As Kummerling-Meibauer (2013) succinctly posits, “images cannot always be understood in an ad-hoc fashion, but that instead comprehension is based upon codes that must be acquired in a long-term process” (p. 13). And hereby lays the need to investigate how these codes (in this case, the comics conventions) are represented in the graphic adaptation of classics. This analysis was carried out using a framework extrapolated from the works of Eisner (1985, 1996), McCloud (1994), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005).

On the other hand, Question 2 (hereafter Q2) focuses on both the textual and visual elements in the novels analysed using frameworks based on theories expounded by

Halliday (1994, 2004) and Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006). Firstly, the textual analysis was conducted using Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) framework specifically in terms of transitivity. The transitivity analysis isolated clausal elements to identify the lexicogrammatical patterns of the textual elements in the graphic novels. Secondly, the visual analysis described how images or visuals are portrayed in the graphic novels in terms of representation analysis of Visual Grammar (hereafter VG) propounded by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006). Through this analysis, the Narrative and Conceptual Processes were focused upon.

Finally, Question 3 (hereafter Q3) investigates how cohesion is realized through visuals and texts of the novels. Using McCloud's Panel to Panel Transitions (1994), this question sheds an insight on how visuals in panels cohere to elicit meanings. Within the panels, the text and image relationship of cohesion was further explored based on the element of interaction through the work of Nikolajeva and Scott (2006). In addition, cohesion supported by the deployment of splash pages and panel overlaps were also focused upon.

To determine triangulation (Babbie, 2010; Cresswell, 2009), questions on why multimodal components are represented as such in the novels were emailed to the writers and illustrators of three novels. Their written responses provided data to further enrich the final analysis. An email interview was also administered to an officer from CDD to further triangulate data specifically to determine the reasons of introducing graphic novels in the Malaysian literature classrooms. Being inductive in nature, this study concentrates on the emerging patterns and trends in multimodality as represented in the genre of adapted classics in the medium of graphic novels.

## 1.6 Significance

This study is significant for four reasons based on different aspects of interest. First, from an academic perspective, the proposed study hopes to contribute to the limited body of research on comics and graphic novels' fields with an emphasis on adapted classics. In relation to this, Wigand (1986) asserts that "extremely little research on the subject has been conducted by social scientists and the subject remains a blind spot within academic study" (p. 29). Most recent researches on comics and graphic novels have concentrated on the analyses of content, readership studies and also pedagogical implications in using the medium in classrooms. The study however, represents a pioneering effort on the researcher's part to contribute to the existing knowledge on multimodal analysis. As a first, the study also focuses on investigating adapted classics which are reprinted as graphic novels.

The second significance of the study is the framework of the analysis itself. The amalgamated framework to analyse the components of comics is a vital tool to understand how the components are represented in graphic novels, and as such, is significant to better appreciate the novels. More importantly, the comprehension of how these components are construed makes reading meaningful. Furthermore, there are very few studies adopting Halliday's SFL and Kress and van Leeuwen's VG in analysing textual and visual elements respectively specifically in comic books and graphic novels. In all, the conceptual frameworks could be also adapted to analyse other illustrative texts like children's picture books, illustrated books, comic books and manga. This promotes a fun-filled classroom strategy that relies on the cacophony of materials that interplay both textual and visual elements that are in abundance.

The third significance of the study embraces is from a pedagogical aspect. Here, educators who use graphic novels will be able to exhaust this genre rather extensively once they understand how meanings are created in these novels. For example, by understanding the layouts of both textual and visual conventions of comics, educators will be able to effectively use these novels rather than just asking students to read the novels without an input on the technicalities of the conventions of comics. A more effective lesson can be delivered as the knowledge of both visual and textual meanings may help students to present a clearer picture of the genre to pupils. Such strategies also help in an effective dissection of the novels specifically to comprehend stylistic elements. In embracing current methods of engaging students, Kress (2003) succinctly affirms:

“In the new landscapes of communication, with the dominance of the new media and with the ‘old media (the book for instance) being reshaped by the forms of the new media, the demands on readers, and the demands of reading will, if anything, be greater, and they will certainly be different. That constitutes the new agenda for thinking about reading” (p. 167).

Furthermore, resource writers will be able to provide alternative materials like workbooks to support the needs of teachers and students. For example, supplementary workbooks that highlight the conventions of comics and their relationship in dissecting literary elements would be able to give a heads start for teachers. Both State Education Departments and Teacher Training Institutes would also be able to come up with appropriate courses for pre-service and in-service teachers utilising the findings of the study.

Finally, the fourth significance encompasses a personal perspective. With the advent of interest in this field among comic books and graphic novel aficionados, this researcher hopes to collaborate with other graphic novel enthusiasts as there is a dearth of research

especially in Asia. With so much of data in the various genres of graphic novels, there is an abundant of opportunities for future research especially in the area of content analysis. Furthermore, the realm of graphic novels is much an uncharted territory specifically in Malaysia. With local publishers like Art Square Group and Maple Comics, there is so much room for research in locally produced comic books and graphic novels. The pursuit for research topics in comic books and graphic novels is very much an open field waiting to be explored.

### 1.7 Definition of Terms

Terms which are used extensively in this study is hereby defined to ensure clarity and avoid ambiguity. In relation to comic books and graphic novels, it must be noted that there are various terms and definitions in use today and there is little consensus on the most frequently cited terms (which will be discussed in Chapter 2). As such, the study adheres to the following terms in Table 1 and their definitions.

**Table 1.1:** Definitions of Terms

Term		Definition
1	Comics Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An umbrella heading</li> <li>• Generic to the realm of comics and graphic novels</li> </ul>
2	Comics Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence (McCloud, 1994, p. 20)</li> <li>• Seeks to deliver meanings</li> <li>• Produces an aesthetic response</li> </ul>
3	Comics/ Comic Book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A continuing series with an issue number</li> <li>• Contains cohesive narrative</li> </ul>
4	Graphic Novel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A longer form comic book with an ISBN</li> <li>• Embraces longer narrative</li> </ul>

In relation to Table 1.1, it must be stressed that this study adopts the definitions mentioned above, specifically comic books which are also commonly known as comics

among their readers. Conversely, comics is also understood as a medium which comic books and graphic novels adopt. Nevertheless, it must be noted that there are studies which use comics, comic books and graphic novels interchangeably.

## **1.8 Scope and Limitations**

The nature of this study encompasses detailed analysis of data and as such, it is framed based on the following limitations:

- 1) The proposed research only covers the three graphic novels which are used as texts of the literature component which is a part of the Form 1 English Language syllabus (up till December 2014). Thus, it is not representative and definitive of other graphic novels.
- 2) In addition, the study investigates the textual components in terms of transitivity only thus excluding both the interpersonal and textual analyses. Hence, the analysis basically identifies the Participants, Processes and Circumstances in the clauses.
- 3) In terms of visual analysis, the study employs Kress and van Leeuwen's Representation analysis of the visuals, thus excluding interaction and composition analyses. The study focuses on only representation analysis as this analysis complements the transitivity analysis of the textual element (based on SFL) of the graphic novels. Within the Narrative Process, only Action and Reaction Processes are analysed while both Speech and Mental Processes are not. The components of speech balloons and thought balloons which represent Speech and Mental Processes are inherent features in graphic novels.



In addition to this, the elements of Participants and Circumstances are not analysed independently. As this study involves a detailed analysis of the conventions of comics, textual and visual analysis, and cohesion analysis, certain elements were singled out due to page limitations. Participants are discussed in relation with their Processes. In addition, the visual analysis centres only on the main image representation.

- 4) Feedbacks from the writers and illustrators of the three graphic novels through e-mail interviews were needed to obtain data to triangulate the study. Though great efforts were made to contact all writers and illustrators of the three novels, two persons could not be contacted and one has passed on. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.
- 5) Although this study adopts selected theories and specific texts, the findings are not representative for other texts based on the premise that other theories or a combination of them could be matched with other graphic novels for multiple interpretations. Triangulation was conducted to enhance credibility and to produce a thick and rich data.

## **1.9 Organisation of the Thesis**

There are 9 chapters in this thesis inclusive of this chapter. Chapter 1 provides the introduction, background, objectives and significance of the research. Chapter 2 reviews and discusses the literature while Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical frameworks and presents the conceptual framework that underpins the research. The research design and methodology for analysis are featured in Chapter 4. Chapters 5, 6 and 7, on the other hand, are related to data analysis and discuss the findings of the three research questions respectively. Based on the recommendation of the Candidature

Defence Panel (18<sup>th</sup> October 2012), Chapter 8 gives an insight of the pedagogical advantages of adopting graphic novels in the classroom. Finally, Chapter 9 concludes the overall results and identifies additional potential issues for future research

### **1.10 Summary**

This chapter provides the background, the premise of the research and the theories scaffolding it. The statement of problem is also discussed further. This is followed by an overview of the objectives and the listing of the four research questions. The rationale of the research is also presented to set the stage for this study. The current chapter also looked into the significance of the study academically, pedagogically and personally. In addition, definitions of terms are listed to provide intelligibility and clarity to provide a unified method in the subsequent discussions in the following chapters. Subsequently, the limitations and scope of the research is also featured in this chapter. Finally, the structure of the whole thesis is presented.

The following Chapter 2 provides an overview of the relevant literature that underpins this study.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

What matters is the decision to use the past to make sense of  
the present.

(Kovacs & Marshall, 2011, p. ix)

### 2.0 Introduction

The burgeoning interest in Malaysia towards the medium of comics especially graphic novels is an indicator that many people are viewing them with much interest. Rather than placing them at the bottom of the literary heap, the pedagogic benefits of graphic novels and comics have been the subject of research in the humanities. In this time and age, serious considerations must be given to various multimodal representations as they continuously onslaught our modern and contemporary world. As mentioned earlier, graphic novels are multimodal in nature and this only further intensifies the need to strengthen their recognition especially here in Malaysia.

Hatfield (2000) posits comics research as an “eclectic and interdisciplinary” (p.12) field of study as it draws from various fields of literary theory, cultural studies, film theory, history and education. In addition to these mentioned areas, the field of linguistics is also playing a significant role on research in comics. Disciplines like semiotics, systemic functional linguistics, literature, critical discourse analysis and others further contribute to the study of comics from various aspects.

The following review of literature starts with a brief introduction on the field of semiotics in Section 2.1 and its relationship with the medium graphic novels is put forth

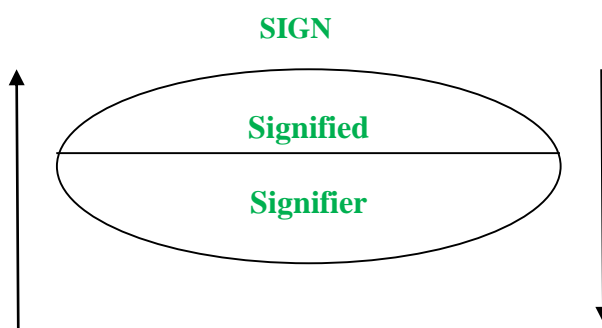
in its subsection. The historical overview of comics, comic books and graphic novels is presented in Section 2.2. The following Section 2.3 explains the fluidity of definitions and continues with a detailed discussion of the different genres of graphic novels and adapted literary classics. An overview of multimodality is focused upon in Section 2.4 and its relation with graphic novels is discussed in its subsection. Section 2.5 considers literature in the Malaysian context while Section 2.6 looks at the relationship between graphic novels and pedagogy. Previous research on comic books and graphic novels are presented in Section 2.7. This is followed by an overview of the components of comics in Section 2.8. Section 2.9 discusses Systemic Functional Linguistics and its subsection touches on the ideational metafunction. The discussion on Visual Grammar is presented in Section 2.10 and the components of Narrative and Conceptual Processes are presented in its subsection. Section 2.11 gives an overview of cohesion and the various elements of cohesion are further elaborated in the subsection. Finally, the chapter concludes with a summary in Section 2.12.

## **2.1 The Field of Semiotics**

The word semiotics is derived from *Semeion* which is the Greek word for sign. Umberto Eco (1976) asserts that “Semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign” (p. 7) and this can be considered as a very broad definition. Chandler (2010) also similarly acknowledges semiotics as the study of signs which encompass any semiotic modes. The field of semiotics focuses on the meanings construed in the various types of texts, and as Connors (2010) posit “not only what texts mean, but how they mean” (p. 32). As signs are an integral element of semiotics, the reading of comics is considered an intricate semiotic process as postulated by Bongco (2000).

Aurelius Augustinus or more commonly known as St. Augustine of Hippo, a Roman philosopher, linguist, rhetorician and bishop first proposed the study of signs in 397CE (Lester, 2011, p. 53), indicating that signs were the link between humans and nature. The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1875–1913) founded semiotics while Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and Charles William Morris (1901-1979) are considered other important figures in the advancement of semiotics. Modern semiotic theorists include Roland Barthes (1915-1980), Yuri Lotman (1922 -1993), Umberto Eco (1932) and Julia Kristeva (1941). Multimodality on the other hand, is a functional approach that stresses on the functions of semiotic modes and is characterized by the presence and use of multiple modes. Siegel (2006) believes, “Semiotics is uniquely suited to understanding multimodality because it offers a way of thinking about meaning and text that does not privilege language over all other sign systems” (p. 68).

Saussure’s term of semiology is usually referred as the Saussurean tradition whereas the Peircean tradition uses the term ‘semiotics’. Nevertheless today, the term ‘semiotics’ is used to refer to the whole field as an umbrella term (Noth, 1990, p. 14 as cited in Chandler, 2010, p. 3-4). The key elements in Saussurean semiotics are the *signifier* and the *signified* which is shown in Figure 2.1.

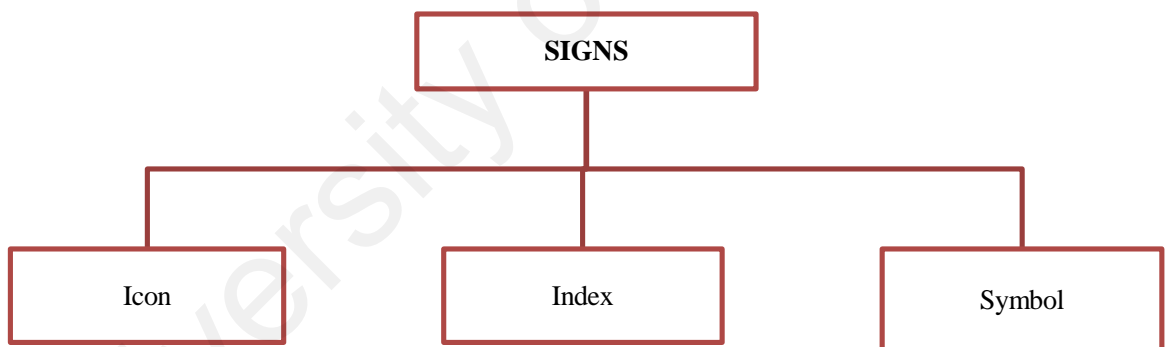


**Figure 2.1:** The Saussurean Dyadic Model of the Sign  
(adapted from Chandler, 2007, p. 14)

Figure 2.1 illustrates a dyadic model and the association of the *signifier* and the *signified* with the *sign*. Both these concepts denote an arbitrary and conventional relationship. A signifier conforms to what is denoted or the form that a sign takes and a signified conforms to what is connoted or the concept that it refers to. A linguistic example of the word '**Hero**' (someone endowed with great courage and strength) is a sign comprising of:

- A signifier: the word **hero**;
- A signified concept: Thor is a legendary comic **hero**.

For Pierce, an integral basis of semiotics is the concept of sign (Sebeok, 2001). A sign is something that *stands* for something else that indicates a meaning. The three types of signs are represented in Figure 2.2.



**Figure 2.2:** Types of Signs

Figure 2.2 denotes the three types of signs namely icon, index and symbol. The following discussion elaborates the three different types of signs.

- **Symbol** - relates to its meaning by virtue of shared conventions and is arbitrary where the signifier doesn't resemble the signified. Word and numbers are considered symbols. For example, the sequence of the letters of 'f-l-o-w-e-r' stands for the idea of 'flower' due to its conventional meaning in the English language.

This representation is not because that 'f-l-o-w-e-r' resembles a flower. Symbols can also embody arbitrary meaning.

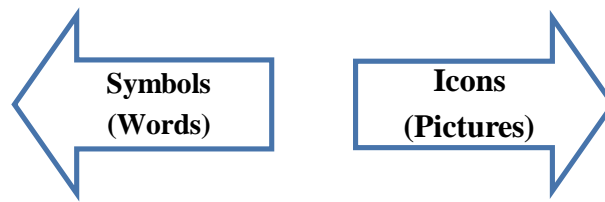
- **Icon** - resembles what it means where the signifier resembles the signified through similar qualities. Pictures, portraits, photographs, cartoons and metaphors are icons because they are similar to what they represent. Example, a picture of a flower represents that specific flower because it resembles it.
- **Index** - denotes the presence of something else. Here, the signifier is not arbitrary but related to the signified in some way. For example, thunder is an index for rain and smoke is an index for fire.

### 2.1.1 Semiotics and Graphic Novels

Graphic novels are a product of hybridity between words and pictures which transpires through the medium of comics. Forceville (2005) posits:

“Unlike realistic photographs and live-action films, which more or less ‘naturally’ mirror real-life manifestations of emotions, comics and cartoons make use of stereotypical exaggerations using rudimentary ‘sign-system’ very much like a language” (p. 71).

As a multimodal text, the graphic novel is an assemblage of signs through a particular format known as the comics format which is based on sequential art. The comics format is a unique feature in comic books, graphic novels and cartoon strips. Saraceni (2003a) in his book, *The Language of Comics* asserts that pictures tend to be iconic and words are symbolic and their opposition is represented in Figure 2.3.

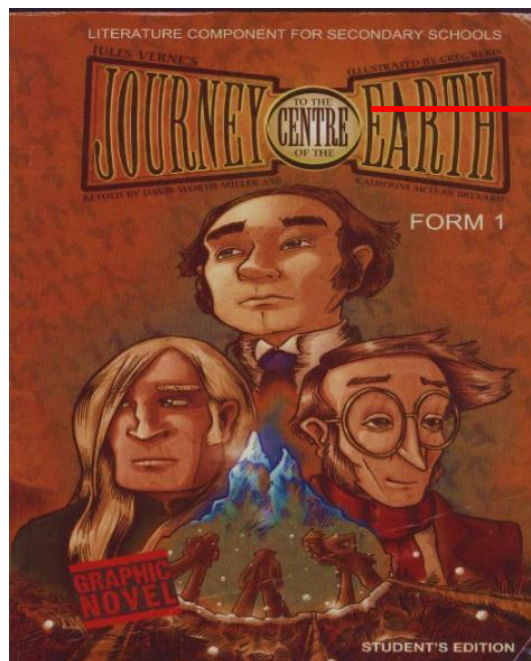


**Figure 2.3:** The Opposition of Words and Pictures  
(adapted from Saraceni, 2003a, p. 15)

Figure 2.3 shows that though there is an opposing relationship between words and pictures, many signs can be positioned “along a scale *between* symbol and icon” (Saraceni, 2003a, p. 18), thus representing the fact that at times these signs can be both symbolic and iconic concurrently.

In graphic novels, these symbolic and iconic signs are indicated by both their textual and visual components. This is evident in Figure 2.4 that depicts the cover page of the novel *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (hereafter *JttCotE*). Focusing on the title of *JttCotE* (the textual component), it can be deduced that the support between both the visual and textual components are imperative in conveying meanings. Though the words denote the meaning of *JttCotE*, the illustration of the middle circle represents the Earth and ‘to the Centre of the’ denotes the journey towards this location. Here, clearly the text has exploited the visual aspects of the words thus contributing to its meaning. Though the words *JttCotE* is symbolic, the image of the Earth and its centralised placement of ‘to the Centre of the’ are iconic. This confirms Saraceni’s (2003a) assertion that there is “very often a *blend* of symbolic and iconic characteristics” (p. 22). The discussion above clearly indicates the importance of visual aspects of words, for instance, which carries great significance.

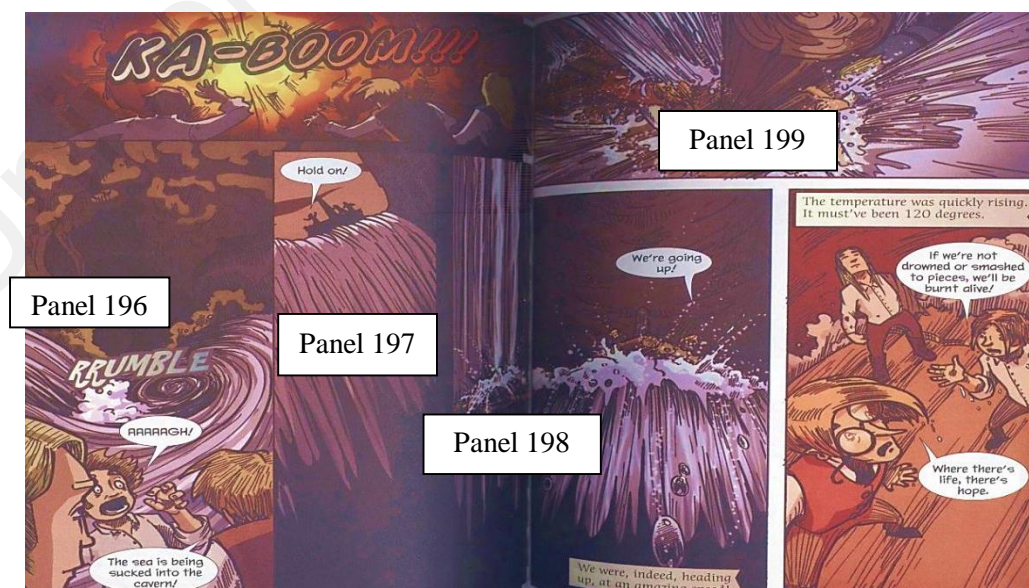




Shape of Earth and middle positioning

**Figure 2.4:** Cover Page of *Journey to the Centre of Earth*. ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 2.4 illustrates the cover of the graphic novel *JttCotE* and the intended interplay of both text and visuals in underpinning the title of the novel. Comics also contain images which blend symbolic and iconic elements. Visuals which are repeated convey similar symbolic meanings as the example illustrated in Figure 2.5.



**Figure 2.5:** The Representation of Symbolic Values in *Journey to the Centre of Earth* (p.60-6). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 2.5 contains four panels (ps. 196, 197, 198, 199) that feature sea waves and their lines represent a symbolic value as they are repeated throughout the four panels. The illustrations also foreshadow an eminent danger faced by the travellers as they traverse the centre of the Earth.

The collaboration between words and pictures are also essential in the layout of comics and graphic novels. Though they usually “don’t mirror” each other (Saraceni, 2003a, p. 28) which is common in children’s picture books, the textual and visual components in comics interact in different ways to elicit meanings through the interpretation of the text. In Figure 2.6, the four panels show the protagonist of the novel *JttCotE*, Axel facing another dead end after entering a wrong tunnel. The usage of the special-effect words ‘CLANK’ and CLINK’ symbolically shows the sound effects of his torch falling down. The illustration of the torch by the illustrator indicates an iconic representation. Both these elements further collaborate to represent Axel’s anxiety and despair in facing such a predicament. Though this interpretation is subjective, it is made possible through the interaction of both the textual components (*It’s useless* and sound effect words- ‘CLANK’ and ‘CLINK’) and the various positions and images of the torch.



**Figure 2.6:** An Iconic Representation *Journey to the Centre of Earth* (p.60-61).  
©Stone Arch Books.

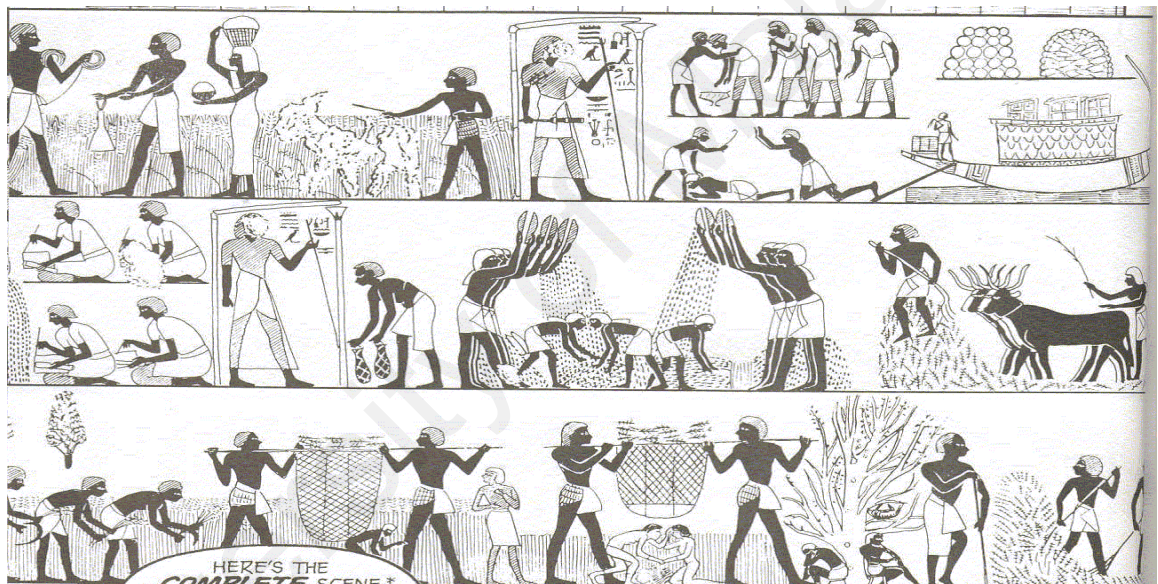
This contention also concurs with Baldry and Thibault (2005) whose analysis on *Marmaduke* cartoons indicate that “meaning making cannot be construed in terms of individual semiotic resources but instead relies on their combination” (p. 7). Duncan and Smith (2009) further add that most of the images in comic books are iconic signs. Nevertheless, they further postulate that because comic books are considered an *additive medium* (where readers or receivers interpret based on their own experience and knowledge), many elements can be indexical signs such as emotion and sensation which are not explicit. In addition, as symbolic signs are more abstract and arbitrary, different readers will naturally have different interpretations. Chandler (2010) further adds that exploring semiotic perspectives shows that “meaning is not ‘transmitted’ to us – we actively create it according to a complex interplay of codes or conventions of which we are normally unaware” (p. 11). Conventions like panel frames, borders, shapes, speech balloons and others can all be considered as signs. As a semiotic representation, readers of comics and graphic novels must understand the meanings of these signs and indexes to decipher the text as a whole. The major part of the current study analyses graphic novels of the adapted classics genre and looks into how the conventions of comics which make up signs and indexes create meanings. The following discussion focuses on the history of comic books and the evolvement of graphic novels.

## **2.2 Historical Overview of Comics, Comic Books and Graphic Novels**

It is widely acknowledged that the history of comics, comic books and graphic novels are deeply entwined with each other. Graphic novels for one, originated from the world of comics and gained popularity in the late 1970s due to what can be considered as a ‘rebranding’ in today’s economic terms. For McCloud (1994), the relationship between



comics and communications can be traced back to early history of civilization by embracing the definition of ‘sequential art’. For instance, the Bayeux Tapestry, a 230 foot long embroidered cloth illustrates a sequence of images detailing the Norman Conquest of England. Early Egyptians also used the combinations of hieroglyphics and images in a sequenced manner. The Egyptians’ contribution to the written word through ideograms and phonograms are evident through the many ancient wall inscriptions found in Egypt. One example is reflected by a harvest scene from the Tomb of Menna of Egypt as depicted in Figure 2.7.



**Figure 2.7:** Section of Funerary Art from the Tomb of Menna  
(Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, 1994, p. 14). ©HarperPerennial.

Figure 2.7 represents a section of funerary art from the Tomb of Menna. The inscriptions are read in a zigzag manner from left to right. While the images themselves can be understood in isolation, their sequential order portrays a coherent narrative of trade related activities crucial in the ancient art of storytelling.

These early developments attest that the art of sequential pictorial narration has been in existence for centuries with other examples like architecture structures of Greek friezes

and paintings like Benozzo Gozzoli's *Dance of the Salome and the Beheading of John the Baptist*. But to what extent can these developments be associated to comics? Though there are comic theorists and studies that attach the evolution of comics to sequential art prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century (McCloud, 2004; Hayman and Pratt, 2005), others (Saraceni, 2003; Meskin, 2007) are critical of the relationship between ancient civilization, sequential art and comics. Saraceni (2003a) highlights that the form of comics today was first created in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in England. Like Saraceni, Meskin (2007) argues that by:

“Establishing the existence of artistic pictorial narrative prior to the nineteenth century might seem to offer a way to establish the art status of comics, but comics have earned the right to be considered art on their own merits...anachronistic rhetoric is unnecessary” (p. 376).

Interestingly for Carrier (2000), the speech balloon is considered a “defining element of the comic because it establishes a word/image unity that distinguishes comics from picture illustrating a text” (p. 4). Carrier's assertion itself distinctly scaffolds the views of both Meskin and Saraceni. In addition, Carrier sees comics as “a composite art: when they are successful, they have verbal and visual elements seamlessly combined” (ibid). This study supports Meskin's and Saraceni views that comics deserve to be considered as an art by itself without any reference especially to that of early civilization.

Rodolphe Topffer, a Swiss who wrote light satire picture stories in the mid-1800s is considered the father of modern comics. McCloud (1994) observes that Topffer “employed cartooning and panel borders, and featured the first interdependent combination of words and pictures seen in Europe” (p. 17). In 1884, *Ally Sloper*, the first comic hero was featured in the first regular comic strip in Britain. In 1896,

American Richard Fenton Outcault's *The Yellow Kid* is noted as the first comics' character that appeared in the Sunday edition of *The New York World*. In the early 1930s, a few publishers compiled these strips into books, hence, the jargon 'comic book'. In Europe, there was also an increased interest in comics featured in children's magazines (Saraceni, 2003). Belgian Georges Remi who is known by his alter ego Herge, was one of those who revolutionized comics in Europe with *Tintin*.

Lee Falk's legendary *The Phantom*, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's *Superman* and Bob Kane's and Bill Finger's *Batman* made their debuts in the 1930s. The end of 1940s saw the decline of the popularity of superheroes as the genre of horror, romance and crime comics gained momentum among readers. Publication of comic books like *Archie* and *Tales of the Crypt* was a cause to worry especially among anti-comic crusaders simply because their content was considered detrimental to their readers specifically on the "morality of young people" (Groensteen, 2000, p. 31). In addition, this development is further supported by psychologists Dr. Frederic Wertham in the United States of America (hereafter USA) and George Pumphery in Britain who propounded the supposedly detrimental influences. In his seminal book, *The Seduction of the Innocent* first published in 1954, Wertham (1996) argued that American comics were obsessed with sex, violence, drugs and adult content. This culminated into their denouncement of comics during the mid-1950s and the enactment of the Comics Code.

Nevertheless, the series of *Classics Illustrated* by Albert Kanter in 1941 could be considered as a move to buttress the stigma attached to the perceived negative influences of comics on children. The adaptation of classics into comics gained much popularity (more on literary adaptations will be discussed later). This revolutionary

development can be seen as the beginning of the elevation of comics through literary significance by adapting the original classics into a medium that hybrids text and image.

The 1950s marked an era of anti-comics movement as people took notice of the criticisms against comics. In addition, some comics propagated adept critical social commentaries like *Peanuts* by Charles M. Schulz in 1950. A few publishers also decided to create self-contained and independent stories besides the monthly issues to enhance marketability. This bold move was the initial stage in the publication history of graphic novels.

Kannenberg (2008) points out that comics fan and critic Richard Kyle created the term graphic novel in 1964 but it was only used within a group of diehard comic books fans. Consequently, the term was popularized by Will Eisner with the publication of *A Contract with God* in 1978. This move was seen by many as a way to give his work weight and to avoid the stigma attached to the lesser regarded comics. The publication of various genres of graphic novels also witnessed increasing interest in graphic novels among literary circle and academics. Spiegelman's Pulitzer winning *Maus*, a much acclaimed graphic novel among academicians, narrates the horrors of the Holocaust using mice, cats and pigs as a metaphor.

Though the USA and Britain are considered the founding lands of comics, the introduction of *manga* (comics in Japanese) and anime in the 1980s to the Western world created another wave in the world of comics. With defining works from authors such as Osamu Tezuka and Machiko Hasegawa, the popularity of *manga* kept soaring all over the world. The 1990s and the new millennium witnessed the publication of many adult graphic novels with serious themes. This trend continues and a broad range

of genres encompassing mystery, horror, fantasy, science fiction, romance, western, war, politics, history, biography, classics and contemporary fiction are published these days (Cary, 2004). The advent of the digital era sees the exploration of new possibilities among writers of both comics and graphic novels. In Jacob's (2007b) own words, "comics have indeed, emerged from the margins into the mainstream" (p. 19) while Duncan and Smith (2009) assert that it is as an attempt "to rehabilitate the image of comic books" (p. 4).

### **2.3 Comics, Comic Books and Graphic Novels: Beyond Definitions**

The complexity of the definition of comics, comic book and graphic novel has been a bone of contention raising theoretical debates about their sequence, image, narrative, text, artwork and even their relation with other genres like children's literature. For Magnussen and Christiansen (2000), this never-ending discussion has developed a level of consciousness for the subject of comics and "its existence acknowledges the fact that the means of communication change and develop over time, according to their substance as to the way in which they are perceived" (p. 11). In concurring with Jimenez (2013) who feels that "graphic novels and comics have defied strict definitions, and experts do not agree on how to classify the medium" (p. 9), a concrete definition certainly seems difficult to nail on.

Historically, most comics were based on humour in the USA and Britain in the early days. As a result, the term 'comics' (derived from the word 'comic' which means funny) was used. Will Eisner popularized the term 'graphic novel' to describe what many consider as 'comics'. Artists like Eisner and Scott McCloud have successfully redefined the medium of comics by isolating the form from the content. This enables



the distinction and emphasis of the unique formal properties of the art form. McCloud (1994) defines comics as a “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer” (pg. 9). However, Meskin (2007) argues that this definition is only to support a “closed and a historical artistic category...to legitimate their place in the world of art” (p. 374).

The main differences between comics, comic strips, comic books and graphic novels need to be established as these terms are frequently confused by many. Comics is a medium or an art form that features a series of static images in a fixed sequence narrating a story. This medium is usually printed on paper and comes in a few formats; namely newspaper comic strips, the magazine formatted comic books (some label this as comics) and the non-serialized thicker bound graphic novels. In Malaysia, newspapers like *The Star* and *The New Straits Times* publish comic strips daily. As Duncan and Smith (2009) put forth:

“Comic books and comic strips are different types of artefacts, created by different bodies of principles. Even though there might be sharing of *vocabulary*, each is a medium with its own unique *language*” (p. 4).

Duncan and Smith (2009) further add that “as an art form, a comic book is a volume in which all aspects of the narrative are represented by pictorial and linguistic images encapsulated in a sequence juxtaposed panels and pages” (p. 4). The differences between comic strips and comic books by their art forms are noted in Table 2.1.

**Table 2.1:** The Differences in Art Form a Comic Strip and a Comic Book  
(drawn from Duncan and Smith, 2009)

A Comic Strip		A Comic Book
1	• Contains very few panels	• Contains many panels
2	• The panel is the only unit of encapsulation	• Units of encapsulation include the panel, the page, the two-page spread and inset panels
3	• Layout is normally rigid	• Layout can be creative
4	• Composition is usually simple	• Composition can be complex

Table 2.1 lists the four common differences between a comic strip and a comic book which include the number of panels, the encapsulation of their units, the layouts and style of composition.

Eisner (2008) defines a graphic novel as a novel whose narrative is expressed through a combination of text and art. It contains a whole narrative and is about 40 to 50 or more pages in a comic-strip format and presented as a book. The stories are told in sequential illustrations and can look much like the traditional comic book but there might also be pictures and artwork. Rothschild (1995) on the other hand, defines a graphic novel as “a sturdy, lengthy comic book that contains a single story or a set of interrelated stories...” (p. xiii). Sabin (1993) believes that at “on one level, as a piece of marketing hype, the idea of an evolution from ‘comics’ to ‘graphic novels’ had a specific purpose – to add prestige to the form and thus to sell more product” (p. 235). In short, graphic novels are seen as a ‘new wave’ in literature as graphic novels were clearly associated with novels.

Sabin (1993) further reiterates:

“In essence, they were what they said they were: novels in graphic form. More specifically, they could be defined as: ‘lengthy comics in book form with a thematic unity’ (p. 165).

Nevertheless, Boerman-Cornell (2012) feels that the term graphic novel is a generic term, “referring to any book that uses the conventions of a comic book to convey meaning; even though many graphic novels are not novels at all, but non-fiction works” (p. 21). It must be reiterated here that due to the evolution of graphic novels which stemmed from comic books (which are also known commonly as comics), many use both terms interchangeably, thus the difficulty of ‘nailing down’ the terminology.

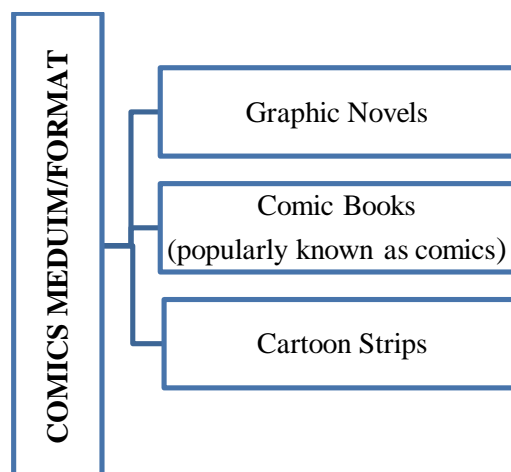
However, it is important to note that there are several differences between comic books and graphic novels. The primary differences between graphic novels and comics are pointed out in Table 2.2.

**Table 2.2:** The Primary Differences between Graphic Novels and Comics (drawn from Weiner, 2002)

Graphic Novels		Comics
1	• Relatively thicker than comics and hard bound cover	• Usually thin, with a soft paper cover • Staple-bound or saddle-stitched
2	• Tend to cover one story wholly	• Sequels and serials are common
3	• An entire story bound and published in a single release	• A short instalment of a larger story released at regular intervals
4	• Has a beginning, middle and end	• Conversely might start a story, begin in the middle of things, or end a story
5	• Most graphic novels are not written for kids	• Usually written for kids or young teen audiences
6	• Its shelf life is permanent because there are reprints	• Considered ephemeral
7	• Given an International Standard Book Number (ISBN)	• Given International Standard Serial Number (ISSN)

Table 2.2 lists the main differences between graphic novels and comics. These differences include thickness, bounding style, shelf span, narrative structure, audience and indexation.

Graphic novels are entering the realms of literature that go beyond graphic art. In a way, it gives the license to tell longer and more ambitiously complex stories, preferably with better and more interesting character development. Weiner (2010) confirms that graphic novels and comic books cannot be labelled as a genre but a medium. For Crutcher (2011), “medium is the form of these graphic novels and embodies much of the theory and scholarship...stories are the narratives” (p. 58). This study adopts this stance that graphic novels are a medium and not a genre. In addition, the study also embraces the common term graphic novel as a book length work that uses the conventions of comics. It also espouses that a graphic novel is a comic book as “there is a close kinship between comic books and graphic novels” (Duncan and Smith, 2009, p. 4). It must be clarified that other studies which are presented and discussed in the current study commonly use the term comics to refer to a comic book though the term ‘comics’ actually refers to the medium or format of comics. The encapsulation of these terminologies is depicted in Figure 2.8.



**Figure 2.8:** Relationships between the Terms

Figure 2.8 illustrates the medium or format of comics which contains identifiable conventions specifically sequential art (images in a sequence) which constructs the identity of graphic novels, comic books and cartoon strips. The following section discusses the different genres of graphic novels which are commonly available.

### **2.3.1 The Genres of Graphic Novels**

Graphic novels are generally full stories which follow the Aristotelian model of a beginning, middle and end and they come in many different genres. Topics for graphic novels can range from adventure, humour, horror, fantasy, superheroes, social issues, or even graphic adaptations of modern and traditional literary works. Okum (2005) contends:

“It is important to think of comics as a medium, not a genre. It is a way of telling a story, not the story itself. Comics encompass all kinds of genres: history, drama, biography, romance, science fiction, fantasy, horror, comedy, action adventure and many more” (p. 110).

It is pertinent to note that though this selection of genres is inconclusive, it gives an idea of some of the more popular and impactful genres available widely today. Bookracks specified for comic books and graphic novels in many renowned and established bookshops obviously support the popularity of this medium and its many types of genres among readers. Weiner (2002) posits six different categories of graphic novels. Table 2.3 denotes the six common categories of graphic novels, their characteristics and an example of a novel for each category.

**Table 2.3:** Categories of Graphic Novels  
(drawn from Weiner, 2002)

Type	Characteristics	Example
Superhero stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characters most familiar to readers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batman: The Dark Knight Returns (Frank Miller)</li> </ul>
Manga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japanese comic, an outgrowth of anime</li> <li>• Rich with teen characters</li> <li>• Usually based on science fiction, fantasy or adventure stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolf (Osamu Tezuka)</li> </ul>
Human interest story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covers a broad range of subjects</li> <li>• Similar to those found in regular fiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ghost World (Dan Clowes)</li> </ul>
Adaptations/ Spinoffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About famous characters, films, classic literature, pop culture</li> <li>• Adapted versions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Book (Craig Russell)</li> </ul>
Satire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions political systems or social mores</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dante's Divine Comedy: A Graphic Adaptation (Seymour Chwast)</li> </ul>
Non-fiction works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not novels but narrative in nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Cancer Year (Harvey Pekar)</li> </ul>

Table 2.3 shows the six common categories of graphic novels which are superhero stories, manga, human interest stories, adaptations or spinoffs, satire and non-fiction graphic novels.

Nonetheless, Duncan and Smith (2009) pose other categories of popular graphic novels' genres. These are mainly categorised as superheroes, teen humour, romance, funny animals, horror and memoir. The vastness of the many types of genres shows the expanse and diversity of the dynamic medium of graphic novels. Nevertheless, the novels used in this study are adaptations from the genre of adapted classics. The following discussion will concentrate on the topic of literary adaptations.

### 2.3.2 Literary Adaptations

The substantial adaptations from mediums like literary works, computer games, poems and even films have largely influenced the development of graphic novels. These mediums have been crucial and contributing in enriching the narratives of graphic novels. The three graphic novels used in the study are *Black Beauty* (hereafter *BB*), *Journey to the Centre of Earth* (hereafter *JttCotE*) and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (hereafter *TBVM*). The original *BB* was written by Anna Sewell in 1877 and the science fiction novel, *JttCotE* was written by Jules Verne in 1864. The other graphic novel, *TBVM* is based on a short story written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle which was first published in 1891. This short story is the fourth of the twelve stories written in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Beardsley's (1937) classification though dated, still resounds so much today. His definition of classics as any literary production of some dignity of general acceptance by competent judges of literature is still relevant today. On the other hand, Carruth (1989) posits a more current definition:

“Classics: In literature, productions of surpassing excellence. They represent the highest standards in literature. In a narrower sense, the classics are the works of the ancient Greek and Roman writers. In general, the classics are those works that are read and enjoyed by successive generations” (as cited in Martin, 1992, p. 19)

For Kovacs and Marshall (2011), the *classics* is termed as “a discipline that embodies, even in its name, the high- culture associations and aspirations of Western culture” (p. ix). In concurring with these definitions, all three novels of the study can be categorised as classics as they have been widely read and enjoyed over the many generations. Besides being published as graphic novels, interestingly, all three books have also been adapted into movies in keeping up with times as part of popular culture.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed an era of proliferation of adapted literary works both in Europe and the USA. One of the earliest adaptations in the USA is a comic book version of *Swiss Family Robinson* (Jonathan Wyss) in 1921. This was then followed by other classics like *Ivanhoe* (Sir Walter Scott) and *The Three Musketeers* (Alexandre Dumas). Dan Malan (1991) in his book, *The Complete Guide to Classics Collectibles* establishes Russian born publisher, Albert Lewis Kanter as the pioneer of the adaptations of classics. Kanter's *Classics Illustrated* series created the adaptations of classics into the comic book format in the 1940s. Kanter believed that this medium was inherent to introduce young readers to literary classics. On the distinct features of these *Classics Illustrated* comics, Sabin (2008) asserts that:

“They stood apart from the other comics on the racks because they were lengthy, self-contained stories, and because they were obviously meant to be educational: For this reason they tended to be bought by parents rather than children” (p. 76).

Through the publishing house Elliot Publishing Company (renamed as Gilberton Company Incorporated), many great literature classics were reintroduced to the public in the exciting new style and format of comics. The 1950s witnessed the American publishing house EC Comics adapting the works of writers like Ray Bradbury and specialized in satire, fantasy, horror and crime comics. This advent development shows that there was a growing interest in the adaptations of other genre of books besides the classics. The adaptations of novels and literary works into graphic novels were prevalent in the 1970s. The following years were prominent years in the development of graphic adaptations from writers all around the world and this trend remains to this day. To date, publishers like Marvel, Image, Barron, Penguin and Stone Arch Books have published various graphic novels: from adaptations, classic works with information to the reinterpretation of classic texts. Incidentally, both *BB* and *JttCotE* which are used in the current study are originally published by Stone Arch Books.



Letcher (2008) believes that graphic novels have the ability to transport readers to another era, just like any other literature. He further reiterates that the adaptations do not ‘dumb down’ the source material but rather elucidate the original language.

The discussion above traces the history of adaptations of classics into the format of comics. The commitment from various publishers towards adapting the classics shows that there is much demand for these books. It must be noted that the literary merits of original works are here to stay but their co-existence with their adaptations offer far greater benefits in introducing them to a wider audience. This shows that literary works can be simplified and illustrated without any great loss of storyline through the medium of graphic novels.

## **2.4 An Overview of Multimodality**

Contemporary semiotics known as multimodality is a functional approach that stresses on the functions of semiotic modes. The many multiple meanings associated with multimodality shows that the term is largely adapted to fit into the idea that it refers to the amalgamation of various modes. For Baldry and Thibault (2006):

“...the term *multimodality* covers a diversity of perspectives, ways of thinking and possible approaches. It is not a single principle or approach. It is a *multipurpose* toolkit, not a single tool for a single purpose” (p. xv) (emphasis added)

It must be noted that the reign of multimodality is not something new as people all over the world have embraced multimodality to communicate through speech, writing, image, gesture and movement, music and sound. From the traditional means of novels, magazines to the newer means of embracing the Internet (websites, blog, etc.), radio,

television and social media (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter etc.), the increase in the number of different means is dynamic and continuously evolving.

Jewitt (2011) believes multimodality approaches the modes of representation, communication and interaction as something more than a language. She reiterates that:

“...the starting point for multimodality is to extend the social interpretation of language and its meaning to the whole range of representational and communicational modes or semiotic resources for making meaning that are employed in a culture – such as image, gesture, gaze, speech, posture” (p. 1).

This study adopts the definition that multimodality is the coexistence of various semiotic modes within a context to elicit meanings. This concurs with Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn and Tsatsarelis (2001) who assert that “in the multimodal world, meaning is always made using a multiplicity of modes, so that the question of choice of mode arises immediately” (p. 7). As such, the meaning making properties and choices of both writers and illustrators are pertinent elements in this study.

It cannot be denied that there is a considerable amount of studies published on the literary and pedagogic value of graphics (Hughes, King, Perkins, & Fuke, 2011; Serafini, 2010; Griffith, 2010; Gillenwater 2009). There also has been an increasing amount of literature in describing the role of multimodality in enhancing literacy (Serafini, 2011; Jacobs, 2007; Schwartz & Rubinstein-Ávila, 2006; Walsh, 2006; Duncum 2004) in recent years and this will be discussed in Chapter 8. The focus of these studies in both areas of multimodality and visual literacy further proves that there is a definite pedagogic value in implementing the reading of graphic novels in the classroom. The multimodality of this genre also suggests that they enrich the literacy grasp among students of various levels and abilities, thus paving way for increased

understanding and proficiency. The non-dominance of either modality is clearly noted especially in graphic novels and comics. Veloso and Bateman (2013) postulate:

“...that comics, as a powerful – and profitable – pop cultural artifact, need to be examined both from a critical perspective, as they represent a further source of media re-construal deployed for further possibly controversial agendas, and from a discourse perspective that incorporates appropriate means for addressing multimodality” (p. 441).

To date, Veloso’s studies offer insights in comics through a multimodal discourse analysis. Veloso’s (2012) study is based on the superhero genre through a social-semiotic perspective lens. This particular study focused on how language and images convey meanings from a social-semiotic perspective in the comic book *Superman: Peace on Earth* focusing on the tragedy of 9/11. Using Halliday’s SFL, Kress and van Leeuwen’s Grammar of VG and Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis, his study reveals how the 9/11 terror attack is represented, the construing of participants (the citizens of the USA and terrorists) and the discourse of terror embedded in this comic book. Veloso and Bateman (2013) also explored the multimodal meaning construction of acceptability towards the USA PATRIOT Act in Marvel’s *Civil War* comics series focusing on embedded ideological positions based on a model propounded by Bateman. In addition, Moya’s 2014 book, *A Multimodal Analysis of Picture Books for Children* offers an insightful perspective of the intersemiosis relationship of words and images though the subject of the study concentrates on picture books.

These recent studies indicate that there is a need to focus on other genres of comic book and graphic novels besides the superheroes genre. Concentrating on the genre of adapted classics, the objective of the study is to explore how textual and visual components are construed in evoking meanings through a multimodal lens. The objective addresses the gap in this particular research area. In addition, this study

differs for it concentrates on graphic novels pertaining to adapted literary classics. The following section traces the relationship between multimodality and graphic novels.

#### **2.4.1 Multimodality and Graphic Novels**

The current study is grounded in the field of semiotics and multimodality. Siegel (2006) affirms that “semiotics is uniquely suited to understanding multimodality because it offers a way of thinking about meaning and text that does not privilege language over all other signs” (p. 68). Graphic novels are considered a hybrid text (Groensteen, 2000) as both image and text are brought together and whose functions influence each other. For example, the most recognizable graphic component of the visual language of comics is a panel which is also evident in graphic novels.

A panel is a demarcated frame of the image content put into discrete sequences, thereby seeming to be the primary unit of expression (Cohn, 2013a). Thus, the distinctive sequential art of comics denotes multimodality within each panel which also applies to graphic novels. These panels are similar to the notion of screens as advocated by Kress (2008) which encompass multimodality. The medium specific codes of comics are related to their conventions. The coming together of words and pictures are considered as two languages which combine strengths according to Schwarz and Schwarz (1991). Though related to picture books, their assertion also supports the conventions inherent in graphic novels. Schwarz and Schwarz (1991) add that:

“The verbal one progresses in a linear fashion, with every word, every line, every page coming before or after every other one: this sequential order of the text guarantees comprehension. The picture, on the other hand, is an area, a surface usually representing space, with all its parts and details appearing in front of our eyes simultaneously” (p. 4).

As graphic novels contain different modes which are organised concurrently, the focus on the modes and their interrelationship must not be isolated in the constructing of meanings (Hammond, 2009).

## **2.5 Literature in Malaysian Schools**

It cannot be denied that there is an abundance of research on the teaching of literature in Malaysian schools (Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010; Sidhu, Fook & Kaur, 2010; Ganakumaran 2003). These studies clearly reveal that literature teaching as a whole is receptive to creativity, innovations and fresh impetus. In relation to language learning, factors like better teaching strategies, classroom and social environment play a role in combating negative attitudes. In contrast, Ganakumaran (2003) feels that there are still a large number of teachers who have limited knowledge on how to teach literature in school as many have not been sent for proper trainings. With the current concentration on the policy of Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening the Command of English, it is pertinent that teachers adopt innovation in their classrooms to make the study of literature interesting and informative. The importance of the learning and teaching process of being non-burdensome with an emphasis on enjoyment is also stressed (CDD, 2010).

The traditional methods of relying too much on stylistic elements needs to be reviewed and it's pertinent to adopt new applications of pedagogical strategies and styles (Pillai & Vengadasamy, 2010). Sidhu, Fook and Kaur's (2010) study on the other hand, clearly supports the need for teachers to focus on instructional practices and higher order thinking skills. Little attention to comprehension instructs and minimal integration of literary elements and creativity in organizing tasks for students seem to be some of the

most common problems. With the introduction of graphic novels in Forms 1 and 4 (equivalent to Years 7 and 10 of the British Curriculum) in 2010, there is an urgent need to relook at the attitudes of both students and EL teachers towards the learning and teaching of the literature component in addition to the ways to teach literature in schools. The studies mentioned above clearly scaffold the notion that more could be done to make literature more enjoyable and interactive for learners. As such, this study further reinforces the need to utilise graphic novels wholesomely in the classroom rather than just skimming through the pages without understanding how images and words interplay to create meanings.

The mismatch between the language of the texts selected and students' language abilities which occurs often is the main challenge in learning literature from the researcher's own experience. Additionally, teachers in schools tend to drill literary elements like moral values, plot, theme, setting and characters of a story to prepare students for examinations. As a result, many teachers are left with little time and few choices in addressing a more meaningful engagement in the process of teaching and learning. Graphic novels offer both great stories and informational topics, appealing to diverse students, including reluctant readers. The use of graphic novels complements current methods which mainly emphasize stylistics, hence supporting the usage of innovative and creative pedagogy in the classroom.

Studies by Sarjit Kaur and Sidhu (2007) and Nallaya (2010) further reiterate the efficacy of encompassing multimodality in the classroom. It must be noted though that studies within the Malaysian context on the pedagogical implications of graphic novels and comics are scarce and very much in its infancy. Other existing studies on graphic novels concentrate on the effects of reading graphic novels and the advantages of using

graphic novels in the Malaysian classrooms (Sabbah, Masood & Iranmanesh, 2013; Yunus, Salehi, Tarmizi, Idrus & Balaraman, 2011; Chandaran 2009; Muniran & Yusof, 2008). For one, Muniran and Yusof's (2008) study only explored the benefits of using comics to promote literacies while Chandaran (2009) looked into how graphic supplements like graphic novels are added advantage in the classroom. Though Yunus, Salehi Tarmizi, et al. (2011) investigated how the usage of digital comics are effective in ESL writing, the results propounds the effectiveness of multimodality. Their study clearly indicates that digital comics can attract and encourage low achieving language learners to write in English. Sabbah, Masood and Iranmanesh (2012) focused on the effects of reading a graphic novel on the comprehension of Malaysian Year 5 students in using comics. Their study reveals that visual learners outperformed verbal learners while using higher level graphic novels.

These studies indicate that much of the research in Malaysia concentrate on the effectiveness of utilising graphic novels in the classroom without a detailed focus on how these novels can be exhausted effectively by taking advantage of their surface layout and the conventions of comics. The current study addresses the apparent gap in the area of content analysis of graphic novels within the Malaysian context. Though the books analysed are based on adaptations of Western literature, the findings will be able to help Malaysian teachers and students comprehend how multimodality is construed in these novels which are compulsory reads for the literature component. To date, there is yet a comprehensive study to look into the multimodality of graphic novels in Malaysia through text analysis.

## 2.6 Graphic Novels and Pedagogy

Stafford (2011) feels that the medium of comics has been often considered the ‘enfant terrible’ of literature (pg. 54), but nevertheless the medium has moved into the literary mainstream especially in Britain and the USA. Today journals like *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, *Journal of Comic Studies* and *International Journal of Comic Art* have established themselves as front runners in the realm of academia. This further indicates that both comics and graphic are being accepted as a “valid form of art” (Stafford, 2011, p. 54) and worth to be researched. In short, this medium significantly contributes to not only as a fulfilling reading experience just like any other types of literature but also provides data for research. Certainly the interplay of words and images through reading comics involves the unravelling of various relationships between two forms of language that create meaning.

The acknowledgement of comic books and graphic novels being effective educational tools has been substantiated by various studies. In addition, the readability and quality of some of these novels have made them popular in public libraries and schools (Weiner, 2002). These novels also challenge those students who are fluent in more traditional literature (Griffith, 2010; Seglem & Witte, 2009). According to Schwartz and Rubeinstein-Alvila (2006), graphic novels can be adapted strategically by literacy educators in an increasingly visual culture especially for young adults. Studies on graphic novels and comics have indicated that they inculcate reading habits, encourage multiple literacies and other benefits (Romagnoli, 2013; Burke, 2012; Serafini, 2011; Harris, 2008). Martinez and Harmon (2012) add that instructional strategies that focus on the interplay of pictures and texts contribute significantly in revealing literary elements like characterisation, mood, plot and setting among students of different ages.



A further detailed discussion on the merits of graphic novels as pedagogic tools is seen in Chapter 8. Graphic novels are considered as a new medium of literacy which embraces value, variety and aesthetic appreciation. It cannot be denied that the unique interpretations of the classics have many benefits especially pedagogic advantages.

## **2.7 Previous Research on Comics and Graphic Novels**

It cannot be denied that scholarly works on graphic novels still is an uncharted territory in Malaysia unlike in Europe and the USA where comics and graphic novel studies are popular and well documented. Nevertheless, to date, John Lent's *Asian Comics* (2015) offers a first comprehensive look into the history, trends and issues in Asian comic scene including Malaysia. It must be noted here that Japan and South Korea are the frontrunners in the world of comics and their *mangas* and *manhwas* are popular among readers around the world. Lent in an interview with Rulistia (2013), published in the *The Jakarta Post* puts forth that "There's been snobbery. People felt that if they read comics, they're not intellectual. That's ridiculous, because they're not just for fun" and his assertion supports the reality of embracing comic books and graphic novels. Nevertheless, the scene in Malaysian is slowly changing and this current study is one example of the interest in the field of comics among researchers and academicians.

Studies in the field of comics emerge from multiple disciplines ranging from art to history. Besides academic studies, publications like Robert C. Harvey's *The Art of the Comic Book: An Aesthetic History* (1996) traces the history of comic books while David Carrier's *The Aesthetics of Comics* (2000) gives a philosophical account of the comic strip. In addition, Varnum and Gibbons' *The Language of Comics* (2001) focuses on a

collection of essays touching on the investigation of words and images. These publications clearly indicate the deep immersion of the medium in the academics of the West and the due recognition the medium is gaining as compared to its counterparts specifically in Asia.

Recent years have definitely witnessed a steady increase in the number of studies related to the content analysis of graphic novels and comics concentrating on their structures, conventions and even embedded ideologies. It is interesting to note that the last decade as seen such diverse studies in the field of comics. Yoong's (2009) study, for one, discusses how discursive and intertextual elements are deployed in Japanese anime and manga. The study reveals how the discourses of history, warfare, socio-politics, mythology, musical among others are implicitly embedded in these novels to provide complex narratives. On the other hand, Atkinson (2010) looks into how metafiction devices are employed in Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli's graphic adaptation of Paul Auster's *City of Glass*. El Refaie's (2010) concentration in revealing semiotic resources in David B's graphic memoir *Epileptic* denotes the importance of the convention of comics to convey the subjective experiences of temporality.

In considering the graphic trinities of languages, literature, and word-in-pictures, Johnston's (2012) analysis of Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* uncovers how these three components are vital in describing "the use of traditional language as illustration, and the use of image as language" (p. 421). On the other hand, Dallaqua (2012) focuses on how literary devices like symbolism, allusion and mood could be explored in graphic novels through an investigation of recurring themes. She concludes that graphic novels scaffold the teaching of literary elements as they are considered "sophisticated and challenging texts" (p. 367). Interestingly, Veloso and Bateman (2013)'s thought

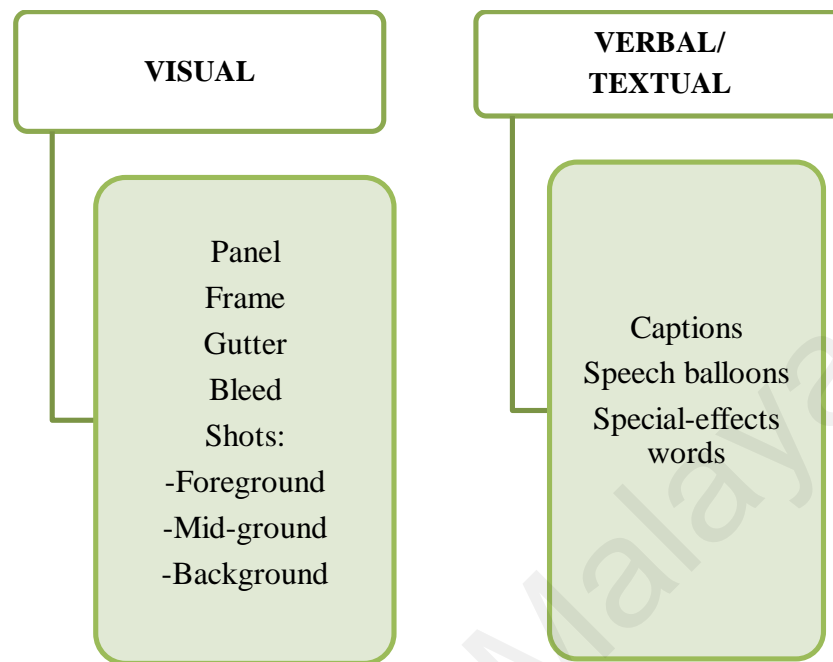
provoking research looked into how the narratives of comics are construed to propagate controversial policies as in Marvel's *Civil War* comics series based on a multimodal analysis. Their multimodal discourse analysis reveals that the USA PATRIOT Act introduced to arrest terrorism is propagated through visual and textual means to construct acceptability.

These studies indicate that there is a focus on the dissection of the various genres of comics and graphic novels to reveal ideologies, beliefs and propagandas. As a result, the current study adds on to the dynamic interdisciplinary study of comics and graphic novels by concentrating on the genre of adapted classics presented in the form of graphic novels which is gaining acknowledgement within the Malaysian English Literature component. A brief overview on the many components of comics is discussed in the ensuing section.

## **2.8 An Overview of the Components of Comics**

It must be noted that this study establishes a few conventions of comics which are common in the world of comic books and graphic novels. The language of comics adheres to specific conventions to construe them as comics. More importantly, it is pertinent to note that comics are a format or medium and not a genre (Weiner, 2010; Hammond, 2009). Versaci (2007) concludes that both comics and graphic novels commonly use the same conventions as they share the same traits of visual language. For Eisner (2008), "comics employ a series of repetitive images and recognizable symbols" (p. 2). He further posits that they become a language with continuous use in eliciting similar ideas.

Figure 2.9 summarises some key terms synonymous in both comics and graphic novels.



**Figure 2.9:** Some Common Terms and Elements of Graphic Novels

The terminology and elements as denoted in Figure 2.9 is pertinent to this study as it underpins different elements in graphic novels which will be used in the analysis of the data. The two prerequisite components of comics medium are the visual and textual (verbal) components. Within the visual realm, the panel, frame, gutter, bleed and the types of visual shots are that of foreground, mid-ground and background. The textual components encapsulates captions, speech balloons and special-effects words. These elements are discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

Nevertheless, like any other language which continues to evolve, these conventions are those which are common. Illustrators and writers are constantly challenging themselves to produce works that denote the evolvement of style and aestheticism, thus, adhering to these conventions based on their own discretion. It must be noted that there are studies which support the importance of recognising the conventions of comics to become good

readers (Hatfield, 2000; Hammond, 2012). Culler (1980) opines that “without this knowledge of the rules, or of the literary conventions, literature would not be intelligible as literature” (as cited in Hammond 2012, p. 24). Hatfield (2000) adds that good readers are aware of these conventions while Hammond (2012) asserts that conventions are important for they form rules or “the reader’s internalized grammar of the literature” (p. 24). These terms will be revisited in detail in Chapter 3. McCloud (1993) succinctly sums it by positing that:

“The comics creator asks us to join in a silent dance of the seen and the unseen. The visible and the invisible. This dance is unique to comics. No other art form gives so much to its audience while asking so much from them as well” (p. 92).

## **2.9 An Overview of Systemic Functional Linguistics**

Malmkjaer (1991) posits language as an “instrument by means of which people can enter into communicative relations with one another” (p. 141). Traditional grammar describes language in ‘parts of speech’ which are fragmented and could not efficiently provide interpretation for the overall organization of language as a system. Language being essentially used for communication involves expressions of meanings beyond the formal restrictions of rules. Thus, there was a need to look into the relationship between language and its functions in social settings or as Fairclough (1992) puts forth, “using language is the most common form of social behaviour” (p. 2). SFL started as a theoretical response of the Prague School and by J.R. Firth, the founder of modern British linguistics. This was followed by a more systematic and comprehensive theory of language through the work of Firth’s successor, Michael Halliday. SFL is also known as Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), Hallidayan linguistics and systemic linguistics.

The term 'systemic' in systemic-functional refers to the internal relations in language as a system of networks, while 'functional' is concerned with language use (Bloor & Bloor, 2004). The two forms the framework of SFL where language is related to its use and in its analytical task adopts an entire text as its unit of analysis rather than a sentence. This means that people have alternative choices available in producing linguistics utterances and texts. This is a major shift from the earlier traditional studies of grammar, namely Chomskyian perspective where isolated sentences which are far removed from actual contexts are focused upon.

Some distinguishing features of the SFL model are summarized by Christie and Unsworth (2000, p. 2) as follow:

- it describes language as a set of choices of meaning
- the object of language study should be a whole text and not a decontextualised sentence or utterance
- language study should focus on meaning and ways in which choices are exercised to make meaning
- it considers language to be internally organized into three major components or metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual

Eggins (1994) reiterates that the use of language is functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic, thus describing it as a functional semantic approach to language. This is the core argument of Halliday's (1994) SFL where he asserts, "language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them" (p. 106). Here, language is concerned with the mechanism of text structure, function and the meaning of language.

In isolating the verbal text through a transitivity analysis, this research focuses upon how linguistic choices frame an adapted genre of graphic novel. The 1980s witnessed linguists like Roger Fowler (1981) and Ruqaiya Hasan (1987) arguing for the demystification of the *language of literature* through a linguistic analysis of literary texts. Specifically, they believe that the employment of the SFL framework is extremely useful in uncovering meanings of literary texts. The seminal study on the language of William Golding's *The Inheritors* by Halliday (1971) discusses the patterns of transitivity materializing in a clause or sentence. Montgomery's (1993) study of Ernest Hemingway's *The Revolutionist* shows that the attributes of the revolutionist is distinct through the employment of Relational Processes. Hubbard's (1999) study also employs transitivity to explore Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Cunanan (2011) on the other hand, focuses on raising awareness through the stream of consciousness technique using transitivity to analyse Virginia Woolf's *Old Mrs. Grey*. A more recent study by Alcantud-Diaz (2012) explores how violence is present in the fairy tale *Cinderella* through transitivity and a critical discourse analysis.

These studies indicate that Halliday's notion of lexicogrammar, specifically transitivity is important in the overall construction of meanings in literary texts; and also in exploring ideologies, themes and other elements in literary texts. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) believe that the construction of socially motivated linguistic choices denote the manifestation of social functions. These findings clearly indicate that the focus of previous studies was mainly on the analysis of conventional literary texts. To date, there are hardly any in-depth studies on a transitivity analysis of graphic novels and comics. This study intends to address that gap by investigating how clausal structures are constructed in creating meanings in adapted classics through graphic novels by the employment of transitivity.

### 2.9.1 The System of Transitivity

One of the contributions of SFL as a research tool is the insights that it offers on the internal organization of language in performing three major functions (known as metafunctions) which are termed as ideational, interpersonal and textual. Together, they form the systemic model that offers an analyst a multi-analytical perspective on language use in actual instances, therefore allowing a more extended and descriptive interpretation. This is discussed in depth in Section 3.4.1.1 in Chapter 3.

Table 2.4 shows the roles of the three metafunctions and their related systems of Theme, Mood and Transitivity mapped onto the structure of the clause.

**Table 2.4:** The Simultaneous Metafunctions in the Structure of the Clause

METAFUNCTION	SYSTEM	The Clause Analysed			
		<i>In the open glade</i>	<i>the wild rabbits</i>	<i>danced</i>	<i>with their shadows.</i>
Textual	Theme	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Rheme</b>		
Interpersonal	Mood	<b>Residue</b>	<b>Mood Block</b>		<b>Residue (2)</b>
Ideational	Transitivity	<b>Cir: Location</b>	<b>Actor</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Cir: Accompaniment</b>

Table 2.4 exemplifies how three different strands of functional descriptions appear when the same clause is compared through a Transitivity analysis.

This study focuses on how meanings are construed in adapted classics through its focus on the ideational metafunction, In addition, the ideational metafunction is also in tandem with the Representation Process of Kress and van Leeuwen's VG (which will



be discussed later) that is used as the visual analysis tool in exploring the images in the novels. The following discussion will focus on the ideational metafunction as only this metafunction will be used in the textual analysis. The ideational metafunction is in tandem with the Representation analysis of VG, focusing on the elements of Processes, Participants and Circumstances.

### **2.9.2 The Ideational Metafunction**

The ideational metafunction concerns human experience which is an interpretation of the happenings around and inside us. It consists of two parts which are the experiential and the logical. Experiential refers to the “representation of the processes themselves” (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1999, p. 511) while logical refers to the “representation of the relations between one process and another (ibid. p. 511). For the purpose of this study, only the experiential component realised by transitivity will be employed.

#### **2.9.2.1 Transitivity**

Halliday (1971) opines that transitivity is “the cornerstone of the semantic organization of experience” (p. 359). This experience includes our outer experience (the happenings around us) and inner experience (the goings-on in our consciousness). In addition, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) postulate that a clause is extremely important as it links a word to its meaning.

As semantic categories the Process, Participants and Circumstances construe our experience of the world “as linguistic structures” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.178). This is termed as transitivity or “the grammar of processes” (Halliday &

Matthiessen, 1999, p. 11) which realises our experience (the goings-on) into a set of process types such as “actions and events, mental processes and relations” (ibid. p. 11). The six major process constituents are the Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioural, Verbal and Existential Processes. Participants are categorised as Actor, Goal, Senser, Phenomenon, Carrier, Attribute, Token, Value, Behavior, Sayer, Verbiage and Existent based on their Process types. On the other hand, Circumstances constitute Extent Location, Manner, Cause, Contingency, Accompaniment, Role and Matter.

## **2.10 An Overview of Visual Grammar**

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) clearly elucidate that the ‘grammar of visual design’ intends:

“...to provide inventories of the major compositional structures\_which have become established as conventions in the course of the history of visual semiotics, and to analyse how they are used to produce meaning by contemporary image-makers” (p.1).

They contend that visual readings based on a systematic approach articulate visual meaning. Extrapolating Halliday’s metafunctional theory of SFL as a ‘key heuristic’ (Kress and van Leewuen, 2002, p. 346), they propose a corresponding system of ‘grammar’ to study visual images. Thus, Halliday’s model is applied to their own resources of visual communication to form ‘grammatical systems’. As a “tool for visual analysis” (p. 12), Kress and van Leeuwen’s (1996) proposition of the VG constitutes a description on how language experts use or combine visuals to construct meaning and is pivotally functionalist in nature. Unsworth (2001) states that VG structures as proposed by researchers like Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) and O’Toole (1994) acknowledge

that images represent material reality and the interpersonal interaction of social and semiotic realities through images cohering into textual compositions.

The deployment of the VG as a framework is popular among many multimodal studies which focus on the analysis of images. Though Kress and van Leeuwen advocate, “some things can be ‘said’ only visually, others only verbally” (p. 2), what is important is that rarely there is an individual study focusing on just VG itself. VG as a tool is always used in tandem as a resource for a multimodal discourse analysis with other frameworks like SFL and Critical Discourse Analysis. Though there are a few studies in Multimodal Discourse Analysis adopting Kress and van Leeuwen’s VG (see Veloso, 2012; Veloso and Bateman, 2013), this section focuses on studies which particularly deploys VG as a main focus.

In the last decade, studies in the field of VG have been reaching great heights. Almeida (2006) compared the discourse of Brazilian and North American advertisements of *Suzi* and *Bratz* dolls respectively. Her study asserts that the status quo of existing social structures are buttressed through selective verbal and visual choices using both Halliday’s (1994) System of Transitivity and Kress and van Leeuwen’s VG (1996). Fortuna (2010) proposes a grammar of film by embracing and building on Kress and van Leeuwen’s VG in enabling an “emancipatory literacy learning” (p. 22). Hayik’s (2011) study adopts VG and explores how social injustice is represented in middle school students’ multicultural sketches based on selected picture books. Despite the fact that Wang’s (2012) study on e.e. cummings’ shape poem *in Just*, adopts both SFL and VG as part of a multimodal discourse analysis, the findings doesn’t clearly indicate the intricacies of both theories in representing the linguistic and typographical choices of the poet. Yang and Yi’s (2014) study investigates how English editorials are represented in the *Economist* from the lens of a multimodal discourse analysis adopting

SFL, VG and Royce’s inter-semiotic complementarity theories as the tools of analysis. The study reveals that English editorials place almost equal weight to visuals and texts that synchronise and integrate in accomplishing the functions of explaining, commenting and even judging various issues.

### 2.10.1 The Elements of Visual Grammar

Unsworth (2001) believes that a theoretical approach which integrates the resources of VG with existing verbal grammar is pertinent for “learners to develop the critical multimodal literacies that are necessary for taking an active interpretive role in the societies of the information age” (p. 71). Unsworth’s assertion clearly denotes that the function of visuals in a text is crucial in understanding how these elements convey meanings just like language itself as denoted in Table 2.5 where there is a clear bridgement between the textual and the visual.

**Table 2.5:** The Metafunctions and their Corresponding Visual Components and Elements (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006)

Halliday’s SFL	Kress and van Leeuwen’s VG	Visual Analysis Tools
Interpersonal	Interaction	Contact social distance power
Ideational	Representation	narrative process conceptual process
Textual	Composition	information value salience framing

Table 2.5 represents the three metafunctions of SFL and their corresponding visual elements of VG. It must be noted that the link that bridges Halliday’s SFL and Kress and van Leeuwen’s VG is manoeuvred concurrently within the metafunctions.

Though there are detractors like Moya and Sanz (2008) towards Kress and van Leeuwen's focus on non-textual component in their model of VG, this study focuses on Kress and van Leeuwen's framework simply because graphic novels are essentially a hybrid of both text and image (Groensteen, 2007). As such, a concentration on text and image individually and how they cohere would be able to shed an insight on how writers and illustrators of the novels construe meanings. In addition, the VG is fundamentally a visual take drawn from Halliday's SFL. Thus, the deployment of both VG in tandem with SFL would be able to reveal a better understanding of a multimodal description of the three graphic novels. This is also extremely pertinent to this study as both writers and illustrators of these novels did not work together. This study focuses on the Representation Process as it corresponds with the ideational metafunction in construing how meanings are elicited in the adapted graphic novels. In addition, the study only focuses on Narrative and Conceptual Processes and discusses their Participants concurrently. The element of Circumstances is not discussed due to the nature of the study which involves an indepth analysis of various meaning making elements in a graphic novel which include other elements like the conventions of comics. The Representation Process (hereafter RP) denotes the relationship between participants (in this study being animate beings) and is subdivided into Narrative Process (hereafter NP) and Conceptual Process (hereafter CP).

### **2.10.2 Narrative and Conceptual Processes**

This study identifies the images in the panels of the graphic novels and looks into the representation element of the visuals to understand their functions and meanings in the texts. Similar to Halliday's ideational metafunction, the relationship among participants (people, places and things) is constructed through the visual representational meaning as

portrayed in an image. The three important elements of narrative representation are Participants which are denoted portrayed in the panels. A NP happens when vectors link the Participants in panels. Table 2.6 denotes the NP and its sub-processes in detail.

**Table 2.6:** The Narrative Process and its Sub-processes  
(adapted from Ferreira, 2003, cited in Grunschy, 2007)

Type of Representation	Process	Type of Participants
Narrative (presence of vectors)	<u>Action</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transactional</li> <li>• Non-transactional</li> </ul>	Actor/Goal Actor
	<u>Reaction</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transactional (eyeline vectors)</li> <li>• Non-transactional (eyeline vectors)</li> </ul>	Reactor/Phenomenon  Reactor

Table 2.6 shows that a Narrative Representation encapsulates Action Processes which are either transactional or non-transactional. In a transactional process, the Participants are known as an Actor and a Goal while a non-transactional process Participant is known as an Actor. In a transactional Reaction Process, the Participants are a Reactor and Phenomenon while a non-transactional Participant is termed as a Reactor.

The second representation is the Conceptual Process which is subdivided into three namely Classification, Analytical and Symbolic Processes. These processes are devoid of vectors and mainly “define, analyse or classify people, places and things” (Jewitt and Oyama, 2001, p. 142). Table 2.7 on the following page further details CP and its sub-processes.

**Table 2.7:** The Conceptual Process and its Sub-processes  
(adapted from Ferreira, 2003, cited in Grunsky, 2007)

Type of Representation	Process	Type of Participants
Conceptual (no vectors)	Classificational	Superordinate/Subordinates Superordinate/Subordinates
	Analytical	Carrier/Possessive Attribute
	Symbolic	Carrier/Symbolic Attribute

Table 2.7 shows that the CP carries a didactic function and is further subcategorised into Classification, Analytical and Symbolic Processes and their corresponding Participants.

The discussion above clearly justifies the need to use VG in the analysis of images within the panels of the graphic novels. More importantly, VG provides a toolkit to allow multiple readings of the visual text that provides meanings established by the syntactic relationships between the Participants.

## 2.11 An Overview of Cohesion

Cohesion is an imperative and fundamental feature in a graphic novel as it construes meaningfulness and coherence of a text; in this case a hybrid text whereby both textual and visual components interplay. Cohesion is important to reinforce continuity and to establish meanings in a text. Importantly, the pertinent interplay and interaction of image and text scaffolds the structural and semantic foundation of a graphic novel. In narrating a story for instance, Chatman (1980) notes that “narrative existents must remain the same from one event to the next” (p. 30) and this is the basis of cohesion. If this does not occur, an overt or covert explanation needs to be given. In short, cohesion

is essential to make sense of the identity of existents which are fixed and continuing. In addition, Saraceni (2003a) affirms that cohesion is:

“The patterns of language created within a text, mainly within and across sentence boundaries, and which collectively make up the organisation of larger units of the text such as paragraphs. Cohesion can be both lexical and grammatical” (p. 107).

According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), cohesion materializes “when the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another”(p. 4). Though their ground-breaking work, *Cohesion in English* (1996) posited a systemic understanding of how textuality is achieved through cohesion, this study will not be adopting an SFL approach to look into cohesion through linguistic structures (substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion). On the contrary, it investigates how cohesion occurs between images in the panels of the graphic novels by adopting McCloud’s Panel-to-Panel Transitions (hereafter PtPT). The study also further explores the interaction between text and images by deploying Nikolajeva and Scott’s (2000) Text Image Interaction (hereafter TII) framework. In addition, it also looks into how cohesion is realised through two page spreads, splash pages, overlap panels.

One the most defining elaboration on the importance of cohesiveness can be traced back to David Lewis’ (2001) assertion in his seminal book, *Reading Contemporary Picturebooks: Picturing Text*. Though Lewis’ assertion is focused specifically to picture books, it is also applicable to graphic novels because both textual and visual elements are dependent on a symbiotic relationship. For Meek (1992), words are “pulled through the pictures...and pictures and words on a page *interanimate* each other” (as cited in Lewis, 2001, p. 35). The act of *interanimation* scaffolds how these



texts and images construe meanings through cohesion and interaction. Lewis (2001) further adds that:

“A text in this sense is something woven together, a cohesive patterning of inter-related strands that adds up to more than a mere accumulation of individual parts. For this interweaving to proceed, however, we need to have images and the words displayed before us in fairly close proximity to each other” (p. 33).

In investigating cohesion in graphic novels, Postema (2010) argues that the gap between panels is a necessity in creating sequence and continuity from a series of individual panels. Stainbrook's (2003) study on the other hand, dissects comics' textuality through the application of linguistic and non-linguistic principles. To date, Strainbrook's thorough study on the theoretical analysis of textuality and discourse in the comics medium focuses on the structure of textual cohesion in comics by providing a matrix of cohesiveness by highlighting graphical representation, comics iconography and linguistic utterances as cohesive devices. Melnichuk's (2013) more recent study on cohesion and coherence in the graphic novel *In the Shadow of No Towers* by Art Spiegelman affirms that non-textual and textual components both work dependently and independently to actualize cohesion “in a homogeneous verbal text and a verbal-visual text of a graphic novel” (p. 501). As such, there is a definite gap in studies focusing on graphic novels of the adapted classics genre as only a few studies have delved on cohesion in graphic novels.

Conversely, Moya and Sanz (2009) adopted an amalgamated framework of TII and Halliday's (1978) SFL to investigate the interaction of image and verbal text in Sam McBratney's picture book, *Guess How Much I Love You* (1994). Their study reveals

the deployment of more symmetrical and complementary interactions as a technique which is accessible for younger children. Besides this, Yang's (2006) study on Anthony Browne's *Gorilla* concentrates on theoretical frameworks grounded in Nikolajeva and Scott's TII and David Lewis' (2001) ecological perspective. Lewis' (2001) ecological perspective posits "words and pictures in picture books act upon each other *reciprocally*, each one becoming the *environment* within which the other lives and thrives" (p. 54; emphasis added). In short, Yang's study offers an insight on how an analysis of word image interaction in *Gorilla* helps as an instructional tool. Other studies concentrating on Nikolajeva and Scott's TII largely focus on the discussion of its framework as an interanimation between visual and textual elements (Moya, 2014; Ommundsen; 2011) specifically in picture books. The dearth of research in investigating how interaction and cohesion is established in graphic novels is an impetus to explore this subject. In addition, this study adds on to the existing studies in providing an analysis based on two important frameworks in the realm of comics (McCloud, 1994) and picture books (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006).

This study investigates how the various modes in graphic novels cohere into eliciting meanings. It is noted that as static images, comics communicate by combining visual elements of the various surface elements of the text. Lewis (2001) further adds that "comic words, comics graphics and comics iconographic features have been interpreted in the context of meaning-making by the comics reader" (p. 60).

### **2.11.1 Components of Cohesion**

Kaindl's (2004, p. 183) definition of macro and micro structures are adopted to simplify and categorise the elements involved in the analysis of panels. The macro-structure

element involves the positioning of panels through their layouts in promoting cohesion. The micro-structure element which focuses on the elements inside the panel focused on cohesion between panels through McCloud's PtPT. In addition, text image cohesion is revealed through Nikolajeva and Scott's TII. This study adopts an amalgamated framework based on the works of McCloud (1994) and Nikolajeva and Scott (2006). It was Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) who affirm that "Scott McCloud's comprehensive study of comics contains many useful tools for picture book analysis" (p. 140). This study goes one step further by revisiting their own framework to the analysis of graphic novels in tandem with McCloud's PtPT.

### **2.11.2 Macro-structures**

Macro-structures are elements which concerns the layout of the panels in establishing cohesion. It cannot be denied that the relationship between the different panels contributes to the internal coherence which encapsulates the logic of the narrative. This analysis specifically focuses on splash pages and overlap panels in realising cohesion. A detailed discussion on how cohesion is realised through a splash panel and overlap panel is discussed in Sections 3.6.1.1 and 3.6.1.2 of Chapter 3 respectively.

### **2.11.3 Micro-structures**

Micro-structures concentrate in establishing cohesion on images within the panels which are both textual and visual. The PtPT concentrates on transition from one panel to another based on the images or visual in the panels. TII on the other hand, emphasises how text and image interact accordingly in realising cohesion. The

following discussion will look into how the panels and their layouts are important for cohesion in graphic novels.

**a. McCloud's Panel to Panel Transitions (PtPT)**

The mediums of both comics and graphic novels are based on sequential art. In sequence, the importance of cohesion is inherent to determine meaning. In his seminal book, *Understanding Comics* (1994), McCloud posits the concept of 'closure' and panel-panel transitions. He denotes closure as an act of "observing the parts but perceiving the whole" (p. 63). In addition, Stafford (2011) clearly asserts that the way panels are structured and ordered is pertinent to the understanding of the text as a whole. Here, the readers' role in filling the blanks with their imagination or prior knowledge is pertinent to the storytelling. To surmise, a reader experiences closure when parts of sequential panels are viewed and the incomplete bits are pieced together with his imagination or background experience. Both writers and illustrators rely on the reader's use of closure when panels are created with texts and images, thus creating panel-to-panel transitions. The six important transitions encapsulated in McCloud's PtPT are that of Moment-to-Moment, Action-to-Action, Subject-to-Subject, Scene-to-Scene, Aspect-to-Aspect and Non-Sequitur. These transitions are discussed in detail in Section 3.6.2.1 of Chapter 3.

**b. Text-Image Interaction (TII)**

It must be noted that while McCloud's PtPT concentrates on panel to panel cohesion, Nikolajeva and Scott's (2000) taxonomy on picture book interaction lists "a broad

spectrum of word-image interaction” (p. 225). An interesting analogy is drawn by Lewis (2001) whereby he asserts that:

“...reaching from symmetry at one end to contradiction at the other, symmetry being, roughly speaking, an equivalence of word and image, contradiction, a maximal dissonance. At various points along the continuum between these two poles they locate what they consider to be significant forms of interaction” (p. 38).

Nevertheless although Nikolajeva and Scott (2000) explore the interaction of text and image within the pages of picture books, the framework supports the elicitation of cohesion within the panels of graphic novels. The five categories of text image interaction are symmetry, enhancement, complementary, counterpoint and contradiction. These elements are discussed in detail in Section 3.6.2.2 in Chapter 3.

## **2.12 Summary**

This chapter provided an insight of the research by providing discussions on the various aspects of the study specifically the area of semiotics, the medium of comics and the different frameworks.. It first discussed the area of semiotics and its relationship with graphic novels. The chapter continued with a historical review of comics, comic books, graphic novels and their evolutions. It also explained the fluidity of definitions and continued with a detailed discussion of the different genres of graphic novels which include adapted literary classics. An overview of multimodality was provided, followed by a section on literature in Malaysian schools. A discussion on graphic novels and pedagogy was also presented. Subsequently, previous research on comics and graphic novels were featured. Finally, an outline of the major frameworks that underpin the study was discussed.

The multidisciplinary research on comics and graphic novels are still very much in its infancy especially in Malaysia. The multidisciplinary context of research in comics and graphic novels offers opportunities for research and the discussion pertaining to this addresses the gap in research. This study examined how comics, textual and visual components are presented in the genre of adapted classics and cohere to construe meanings through specific layouts, panel transitions and text image interaction.

In the following Chapter 3, a detailed discussion of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks will be provided.

## CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Like anything new, you have to cultivate an interest. It's like an opera.

You have to go a couple of times to appreciate it"

(Marjane Satrapi, author of *Persepolis*)

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter explores the various theoretical foundations for the analytical tools used in the study. The theoretical foundations then form the core of the conceptual framework that scaffolds the research. As logical structures of meanings, frameworks are pertinent to the development of this comprehensive and in-depth study. This study encompasses the analysis of comics elements that are present in the graphic novels used in the Malaysian literature classrooms. It also investigates how textual and visual components are realised in the texts. In addition it aims to analyse how these multimodal components of graphic novels are made cohesive.

The chapter is divided into six major sections which see the discussion of different frameworks adapted to answer the four research questions. Sections 3.1 and 3.2 present an introduction to comics and pertinent terminology used in the study. Section 3.3 focuses on the analysis of components of comics conventions based on an adapted framework supported by the works of Will Eisner (1985, 2008), Scott McCloud (1994), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005). The textual analysis using Halliday's (1994, 2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) framework will be discussed in Section 3.4. Section 3.5 enlightens on the visual analysis framework embracing Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Grammar of Visual Design. Section 3.6 focuses on cohesion

within the macro and micro structures of the graphic novels. Its subsections concentrate on cohesion of splash and overlap panels and also follows with a discussion of McCloud's (1994) Panel-to-Panel Transitions and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) framework of Text Image Interaction in investigating the cohesion of both the textual and visual components. Section 3.7 touches on e-mail interviews and their respondents. The conceptual framework of the study is presented in Section 3.8 and finally, a summary of the chapter is presented in Section 3.9.

### **3.1 The Multimodality of Graphic Novels**

Multimodality emphasizes the significance of the many modes of semiotics and the language-in-use in account of meaning making, thus creating a "multimodal ensemble" (Hammond, 2009). Representations produced and seen around us like image, music and gesture are stressed upon, hence placing new emphasis on multi-semiotic complexity. Based on social semiotics, visual social semiotics is a way of interpreting visual mode. Graphic novels are multimodal in nature as they embrace the many modes like images, words and colours. As these different modes are entwined, it is crucial that one considers the interrelationship of all modes. This shows that to construct meaning, the combination of all modes in a text is pertinent. In graphic novels, the elements of comics, textual and visual components are mandatory in construing meanings. In short, graphic novels fuse text and art, and "neither mode carries the narration independently, but both must be processed together as a whole" (Hammond, 2009, p. 10). This supports the content analysis of semiotic variables wholly. This is further stressed by Bell and Milic (2002) who feel that "semiotic analysis has the advantage of enabling a richer analysis of texts by focusing on the objective formal relationships" (p. 203 – 204).



In the case of graphic novels, the combination of sequential art and text in creating a narrative text is crucial for the readers. In short, for readers, the art of seeing the whole is pertinent in making sense of the text. For Barthes (1985), the effect of relaying is crucial in cartoons and comic strips as “here language...and image are in complementary relation; the words are then fragments of a more general syntagm, as are the images, and the message’s unity occurs on a higher level; that of the story” (p. 30). Hammond (2009) adds that “the sequential art of comics demonstrates multimodality within each panel and as a whole product or semiotic event” (p. 34). A certain sequence must be adhered in reading these panels for the meaning in the text to be constructed. And hereby, the element of coherence is important to make sense of the interplay between text and image within the panels of a graphic novel. As a representation of the screen, the panel carries a heavy burden as the emphasis is on image and the layout of the panel. For the reader of graphic novels, this involves the transfer of multimodality in their reading skills.

Research Question 1 (hereafter RQ1) extrapolates the components of comics that make up the graphic novel of the genre of adapted classics. This is pertinent for the study as there is a need to understand the elements that constitute graphic novels through the comics format. The understanding of the different elements of comics conventions enables teachers to use these novels more exhaustively in the classroom. In addition, this would be beneficial for Malaysian teachers in dissecting the novels effectively to teach various literary elements (Rajendra and Taib, 2014). Moreover, there is also an urgent need to examine the three novels to reconsider their terming as graphic novels by the MOE. Nevertheless before embarking on the discussion of the framework that supports the components of comics analysis, it is important to know the widely accepted terminology in graphic novels presented in the following section.

### 3.2 Terminology in Graphic Novels

Both comic books and graphic novels commonly use the same terminology as they share the same or similar elements of visual language. It is common for researchers and writers to use these terms interchangeably between the mediums of comic books and graphic novels. Comic books are also simply termed as comics most times. This study adopts the term comics as a medium and comic books and graphic novels are genres which embrace comics. It must be noted though that many extracted quotations in this study do refer comic books as comics.

Comics as a medium consists of a varied vocabulary derived from the works of authors like Will Eisner, Scott McCloud, R.C. Harvey, Dylan Horrocks and Mort Walker. The language of comics is constantly evolving, just as any other language. Deviations from standard norms are common among the creators of comics to enhance new means of eliciting meanings. Lyga and Lyga (2004) further expound:

“It is not necessary to have an understanding of art theory to appreciate or read a comic book...the new newcomer should be aware of two things: (1) that there are a *wide variety of styles* employed in the medium, and (2) that each style has its own attendant strengths and weaknesses” (p. 19) (emphasis added).

This is to say that as readers, we must be aware of the components of comics to appreciate graphic novels. This also clearly supports the importance of knowing the many elements of comics. Table 3.1 denotes specific comics terminology adopted in this study.

**Table 3.1:** Comics Terminology and their Descriptors

Term	Description
Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contains images that are normally enclosed within borders</li><li>• Depicts a single moment</li></ul>
Panel frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The border and lines that edges a panel</li></ul>
Splash page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contains an image that extends to or beyond a page</li></ul>
Bleed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When an artwork runs to the edge of each page or runs into the gutter space</li></ul>
Speech balloon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An enclosure to denote a dialogue of a character</li></ul>
Caption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A narrative device to convey information, contained in boxes</li></ul>
Gutter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The space between panels</li><li>• Connects panels into a sequence</li></ul>
Emanata/symbolia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Iconic representations</li></ul>
Sound effect words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Onomatopoeic in nature</li></ul>

Table 3.1 lists the 9 important terms that construe the typical feature of the medium of comics. These are panel, panel frame, splash page, bleed, speech balloon, caption, gutter, emanata or symbolia and sound effect words. An understanding and a knowledge of the components of comics is necessary to understand the meanings inherent. For McCloud (1994):

“The comics creator asks us to join in a silent dance of the seen and the unseen. The visible and the invisible. This dance is unique to comics. No other artform gives so much to its audience while asking so much from them as well” (p. 92).

This study adopts the definitions presented in Table 3.1 and the visual examples of each feature are presented in the following discussion.

### 3.3 The Components of Comics Analysis in Graphic Novels

Graphic novels contain medium specified codes which are known as the conventions of comics which were discussed at the beginning in Section 3.1. These conventions are pertinent to convey meaning to the reader. Gravett (2005) points out that these conventions adopt a large lexicon of symbols which are deployed as graphic devices. Encompassing sounds, motions, emotions and meanings, these signs are the prerequisites of the language of comics. As discussed earlier, as both comic books and graphic novels are similar in formats, the conventions of comics are used interchangeably in graphic novels. The convention of comics contains a range of components which are essential in the structuring of a graphic novel. The component analysis of this research attempts to answer the following RQ1.

*1) What are the components of comics that constitute the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?*

RQ1 identifies the various components of comics which construe the graphic novel of the genre of adapted classics. In the book, *The Power of Comics*, Duncan and Smith (2009) postulate “one of the most intriguing elements of comic book composition is the combination of the pictorial and the linguistics” (p. 145). Lester (2011) reiterates that though a cartoon looks simple within its frame, it actually embodies a complex semiotic analysis. He further opines that “no other art form, in print or screen media, combines words, pictures and meanings in such an interwoven way” (p. 256). These assertions clearly support the play between both linguistic and visual elements in a text to creating a hybrid of text and image, in this case the graphic novel. This study proposes a framework for the analysis which is drawn from the works of comic theorists Eisner (1985, 2008) and McCloud (1994).

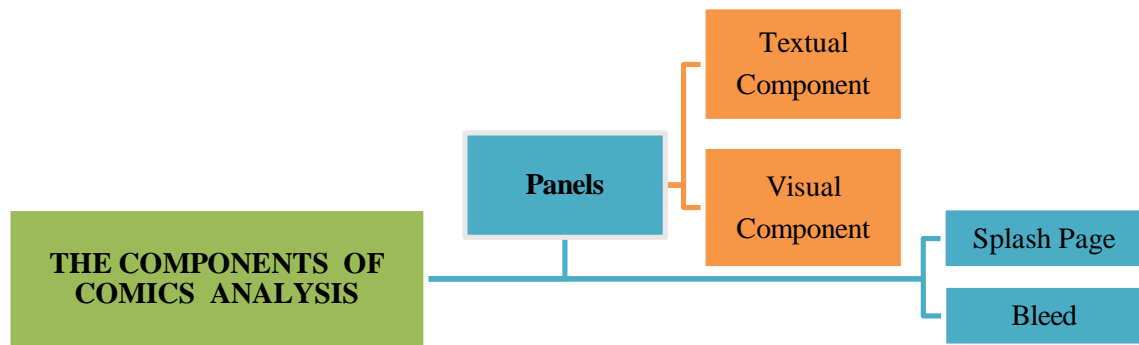
In addition, other elements of the comics format are also considered, namely from Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005). Though both Eisner and McCloud offer in-depth discussions on selected conventions of comics, there is a gap in the identification of the many different comics components. The works of Okum and McKenzie who are both illustrators address this gap. The following discussion explores the different elements which constitute the framework. On assessing Eisner's work, Sabin (2008) posits:

"The first notable attempt in English to assess these properties was Will Eisner's *Comics and Sequential Art*, 1985 (though in Europe there has been a tradition of semiotic analysis dating back to the 1960s). Eisner himself was (and is) a greatly respected comics creator, and the book gave an insider's view of the creative process..." (p. 9).

McCloud's success in dissecting the many elements of comics is also attested by Sabin (2008):

"Scott McCloud's superb *Understanding Comics* (1993), which drew many of the threads together, was a book so confident in its claim that comics are capable of expressing anything that it was itself produced as a graphic novel" (p. 9).

The framework of the analysis focuses on the panels, splash pages and bleeds of the graphic novels. Prior to investigating the textual and visual components, the number of panels, splash pages and bleeds are identified. The textual component analysis focuses on verbal elements in the panels which encompass speech balloons, captions and sound effect words. The visual component on the other hand concentrates on the shapes and positions of panels, background types and emanatas. Figure 3.1 on the subsequent page illustrates the framework that scaffolds RQ1.



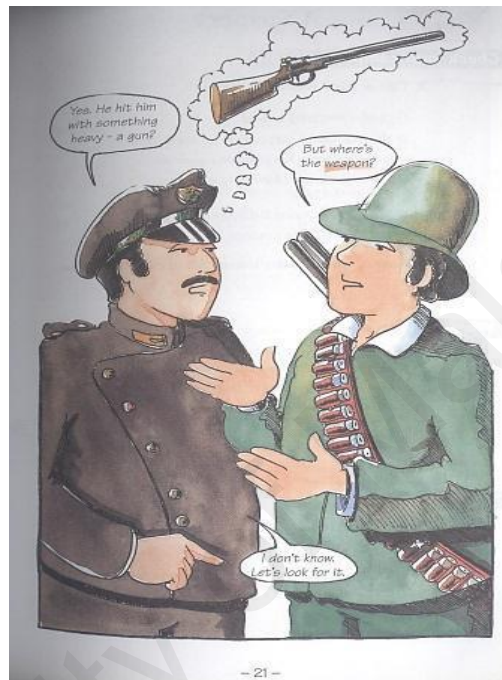
**Figure 3.1:** The Theoretical Framework of the Components of Comics Analysis

The theoretical framework of the analysis of the components of comics as denoted in Figure 3.1 illustrates the various components that structure the layout of graphic novels. This framework is derived from the works of Will Eisner (1985, 2008), Scott McCloud (1994), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005). The three main elements focused in the analysis are panels, splash pages and bleeds. It is important to note that the unique characteristics of the layout of both the splash page and bleed warrant a separate and individual focus though these two components are considered as panels. Panels are further subdivided into textual and visual components. This study focuses on both these components separately due to their unique characteristics. The following section discusses panels and subsequently splash pages and bleeds which are crucial configurations that add on to dramatic and aesthetic perspectives of graphic novels.

### 3.3.1 Splash Page

A splash page contains a full paged image which is usually used to enhance the first inside page of the story. This page also includes the title and credits of the book. The type of splash that does not appear on the first page is considered as an interior splash.

A panel which is larger than other panels is also termed as a splash panel. In addition, a page is also considered a splash page when a panel consists of a whole page. Hence, though splash pages are considered panels, their unique characteristics evoke a totally separate analysis to reveal their various functions.



**Figure 3.2:** A Splash Page in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 21).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 3.2 shows an interior splash page where Moran, the gamekeeper and a policeman talk about the missing weapon which was used on Charles McCarthy. On the other hand, a double splash usually appears across two pages as shown in Figure 3.3. A splash page is used to establish characters, settings or even to draw the reader's attention or to depict the climax of the story. A splash is also used to highlight important scenes and to create maximum impact (McKenzie, 2005, p. 64).



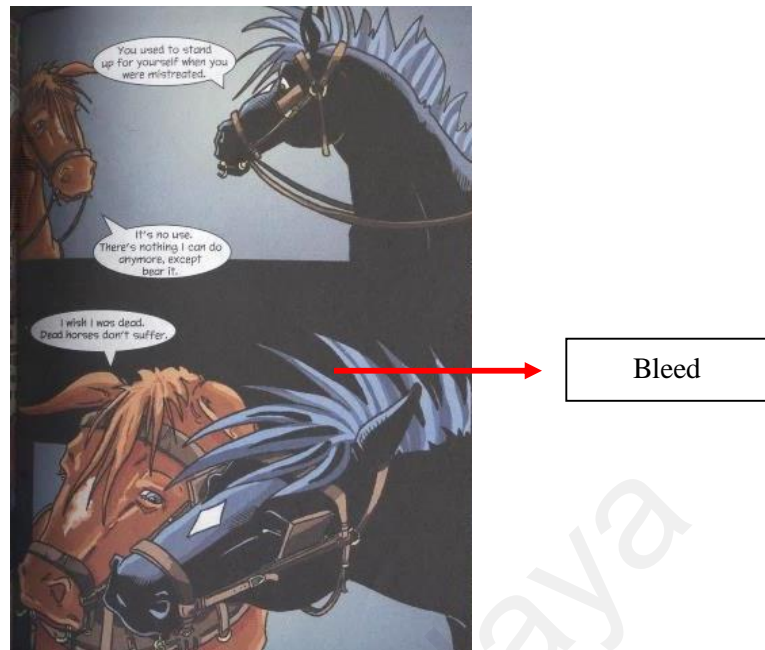
**Figure 3.3:** A Double Splash Page in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 50-51).  
©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 3.3 that depicts the scene of a thunderous storm is stretched over two pages, indicating how a splash page is illustrated.

### 3.3.2 Bleed

When an image runs off the edge of a page as illustrated in Figure 3.4, it is known as a bleed. For McCloud (1994), “time is no longer contained by the familiar lines of the closed panel, but instead haemorrhages and escapes into timeless space” (p. 103). On a comic book cover for instance, a full bleed is commonly illustrated. This curtails the common white border around the illustration. At times, bleeds are utilized on internal panels to portray the illusion of space or to focus on an action. Just like splash pages, this study isolates bleeds to provide a comprehensive analysis which involves the breakout of an image.





**Figure 3.4:** A Bleed in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 53). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.4, the image of both Ginger's and Black Beauty's heads have spilled over the panel in place, thus illustrating a bleed that runs into the black gutter space.

### 3.3.3 Panels

In quoting Stafford (2011), "Panels are to comics what prose is to the novels" (p. 56), the construction of panels requires much thought from the illustrator as they represent the individual units of comic books or graphic novel stories. Eisner (1985) concludes that the shapes of frames or unframed images are part of the narrative itself in conveying the dimension of sound and emotions, thus playing an important role in creating the environment and ambience of a page. Eisner's belief clearly supports McCloud's (1994) notion that a panel acts as a general indicator denoting the division of time and space. He asserts that "Comic panels fracture both time and space offering a jagged, staccato rhythm or unconnected moments" (p. 67). The connectivity between these moments are realised through closure where a reader uses his background

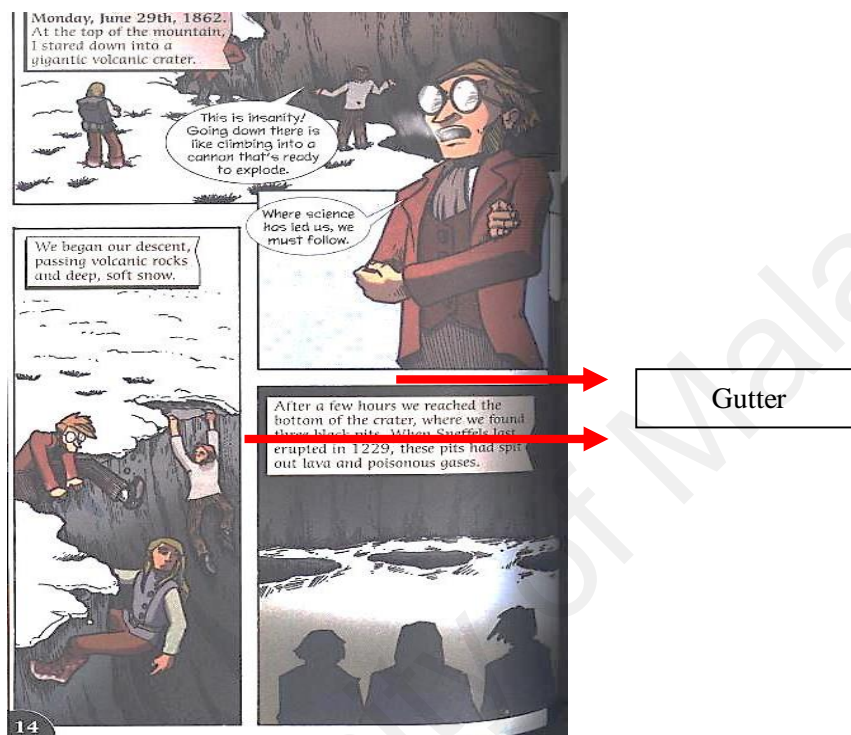
knowledge to combine panels mentally into events. McCloud (1994) posits that “if visual iconography is the vocabulary of comics, closure is its grammar” (p. 67). Here, it is pertinent to note the importance of the reader in constructing closures as the reader is considered a “silent accomplice” (p. 68) to the artist or illustrator as posited by McCloud (1994) in constructing closures.

McKenzie (2005) further defines panels as the “snapshots of the action, rather like selected images from a movie reel” (pg. 64). They are more often than not a short series of frames read from left to right, beginning to end (in the western culture). A frozen key moment of the story is contained in each panel. These illustrated panels are arranged in a storytelling sequence. As a result, the panels help readers to focus their attention, thus limiting the urge to wander all over a page, indicating that “when comics present depictions of closely linked successive scenes, their methods of narrating are closely akin to those found in novels” (Carrier, 2000, p. 53).

The usage of non-frame on the other hand, consumes unlimited space, thus creating impact while reading. For Moebius (1986), “framed, the illustration provides a limited glimpse *into* a world. Unframed, the illustration constitutes a total experience, the view from *within*” (cited in Nodelman, 1988, p. 52). Likewise, Okum (2005) posits different shapes of panels “hold the eye of the reader” (pg. 110) and this creates an interest among the audience. In addition, sometimes, characters break out of panels to evoke a strong graphic effect or mood.

The space between panels is known as a gutter. A gutter separates the page of art into a sequence of narrative images. A graphic novel becomes harder to comprehend when a gutter is omitted as it is essential for the flow of the narrative. According to McCloud

(1994), readers construct closure while reading between the gutters and panels, thus synthesizing separate images into a single idea. There are times when the artist omits the inclusion of gutter to create impact. Figure 3.5 extracted from *JttCotE* illustrates samples of gutters.



**Figure 3.5:** Gutters in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 27). ©Stone Arch Books.

As indicated by the red arrows, Figure 3.5 illustrates gutters which are evident in *JttCotE*. In this example, the gutter space is white in colour though other colours may be used by illustrators.

### 3.3.3.1 The Textual Component of Panels

The textual component which supports the linguistic aspect of graphic novels is crucial in constructing multimodality. The analysis of textual components is based on the text

or linguistic elements found in balloons, captions and the sound effect words in the panels.

#### a) Balloons (Speech Balloons, Thought Balloons)

Balloons come in all shapes and sizes, usually having a small point or arrow (also called the tail) pointing towards the speaker. Saraceni (2003a) maintains that “the function of the tail is equivalent to that of clauses like ‘he said’ or ‘John thought’ in a reported speech or thought” (p. 9). For Carrier (2000), “Speech balloons and closely linked narrative sequences—these are the crucial, the defining elements of comics” (p. 64). Besides panels, many people identify speech balloons as the most explicit and distinct feature of a graphic novel. Balloons contain dialogues that speakers verbalise and usually have smooth, jagged or irregular edges. Commonly, smooth balloons represent a regular balloon where the verbal text or a character is contained. Jagged balloons can represent a character screaming or shouting whereas irregular balloons could denote other types of speeches where emotions of fear, coldness and others are encapsulated. A reported speech is contained in a speech balloon whereas thoughts are encapsulated in thought balloons which usually have fluffy edges as depicted in Figure 3.6.



**Figure 3.6:** Examples of a Speech Balloon and a Thought Balloon in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 20). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 3.6 shows examples of speech balloons and a thought balloon whereby a dialogue is established between James and Patience, the gamekeeper's daughter. Concurrently, both of them are thinking of different circumstances of episodes: James thinking of his dead father while Patience wondering about the blood on James' arm.

The lettering inside a balloon also denotes the emotion and nature of speech (Eisner, 2008). For example, the yelling balloon shows the character is shouting. On the other hand, the expressive balloon represents various expressions portrayed by the character; icicles dripping at the lower edge of a balloon denote an icy or a scary tone (Okum, 2005). Jagged or rough borders represent anger or distress and thin, wavy borders represent spookiness. On the other hand, double-bordered balloons portray loud shouting and rounded panel corners or uneven borders represent flashbacks. These are just the common examples and are not necessarily adhered to by each and every illustrator, as the conventions of comics continue to evolve. Balloons may not always contain wholly textual information as there are instances when even individual punctuation marks, pictograms and images are included in balloons like that in Figure 3.7.






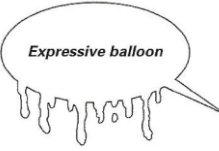

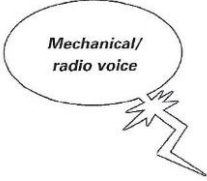
**Figure 3.7:** A Pictogram Balloon (retrieved from tvtropes.org on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2015)

Figure 3.7 shows a pictogram balloon whereby the lady wants an enemy to be killed by any means which include using weapons like a dagger, a pistol, an axe or even through poisoned cheese. Nevertheless, a quick scan through all three novels reveal that such balloons are non-existent in these graphic novels. Similarly, the pictogram thought balloon shown in Figure 3.6 (p. 91) denotes Charles McCarthy's dead body.

The types of balloons discussed demonstrate that deviant balloon forms are related to the emotions and states of mind of the characters to which they are tailed to. Petersen (2011) reiterates the importance of balloons, "Speech balloons take all kinds of shapes, or no shape at all, and by their design can change the way the text is read" (p. xx). However, he further asserts that the shapes of balloons are dynamic in nature, with some ascertained as standard conventions. Each and every illustrator has his own interpretation of the variations of balloons. Eisner (2008) postulates that "while there is no universally agreed upon convention for expressing tense through the outline of the frame, the character of the line as in case of sound, emotion or thought creates a hieroglyphic" (p. 44).

In order to have standardised types of balloons, this study adopts characteristics of common types of balloons as proposed by Okum (2005). However in this study, the balloon categorised by Okum as narrative caption is considered as a separate entity and termed caption. This is mainly because the function of captions which will be discussed in the following sub-section differs from that of speech balloons. As such, there is a need to focus on captions as individual and distinct elements rather than being tied up with speech balloons. In addition, this study further includes the category of 'others' to codify balloons that differ from those proposed by Okum (2005). Table 3.2 lists out the different types of speech balloons and their visual representations.

**Table 3.2:** Standard Range of Speech/Text Balloons (adapted from Okum, 2005, p. 125)

Type	Name	Definition
	Round/ oval word balloon	The balloon is a smooth oval or circle drawn with a continuous and even line.
	Rectangular straight balloon	The balloon is square or rectangular, with straight edges and rounded corners.
	Thought balloon	The balloon has a fluffy cloud-form and a tail consisting of a sequence of bubbles.
	Expressive balloon	The balloon has icicles dripping from the bottom of the balloon and a tail.
	Yelling balloon	The balloon protrusions with sharp edges to form a regular or irregular contour.
	Mechanical/radio balloon	The balloon has jagged edges and a tail shaped as a lightning bolt, representing the static and crackly sound quality
Others	Different from the others	Any range of balloons which are not listed in the earlier six categories.

As depicted in Table 3.2, there are 6 types of speech balloons as proposed by Okum (2005). These balloon types are either round, rectangular, thought, expressive, yelling or mechanical types of speech balloons. The speech balloon types identified by the study which are unlisted by Okum are categorised as ‘others’.

## b) Captions

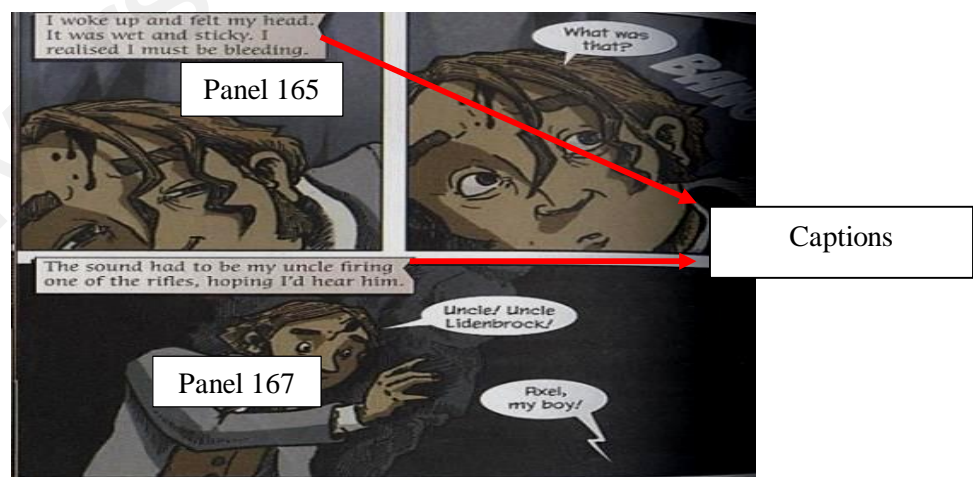
Captions contain linguistic elements which tell something that is happening in the scene or that happened before the scene in a panel. A caption as a tool can be used for



narration, transitional text (*After twenty years...*) or even as an off-panel dialogue. Captions are commonly embedded in rectangular borders and are formally distinguished from balloons by being contained in boxes at the top or bottom of panels. They are devoid of tails or thought bubbles. Sometimes captions can be borderless and the texts are considered using *floating letters*. This characteristic is important because it denotes that captions elucidate information from an external source of the story world. In its simplest form, a typical example of a caption will contain words like ‘meanwhile’ or ‘later’ in a rectangular box. Captions can be bordered or borderless captions. According to Saraceni (2003a, p. 10), the narrative caption functions:

- to add information to the dialogues contained in the rest of the panel
- to indicate space and/or time
- to provide information that assists a reader reconstruct the flow between panels

Two examples of captions, denoting essential information from *JttCotE* are shown Figure 3.8



**Figure 3.8:** Captions in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 34). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 3.8 contains two captions whereby the first one in Panel 165 is “*I woke up and felt my head. It was wet and sticky. I realised I must be bleeding*” whereas the second



caption in Panel 167 is “*The sound had to be my uncle firing one of the rifles, hoping I’d hear him.*” It can be deduced that these captions support the visuals of the panels with extra information.

### c) Sound Effect Words

Sound effect words are added in graphic novels to encapsulate the excitement and dynamism in the stories, thus capturing the very essence of sound. These words are also onomatopoeic as they resemble the sound they represent. Bredin (1996) asserts “in onomatopoeia it is the *sound as related to something* that constitutes its essential nature” (p. 557, author’s emphasis). In comics, onomatopoeic words are usually large and colourful in nature, embracing interesting fonts as featured in Figure 3.9.

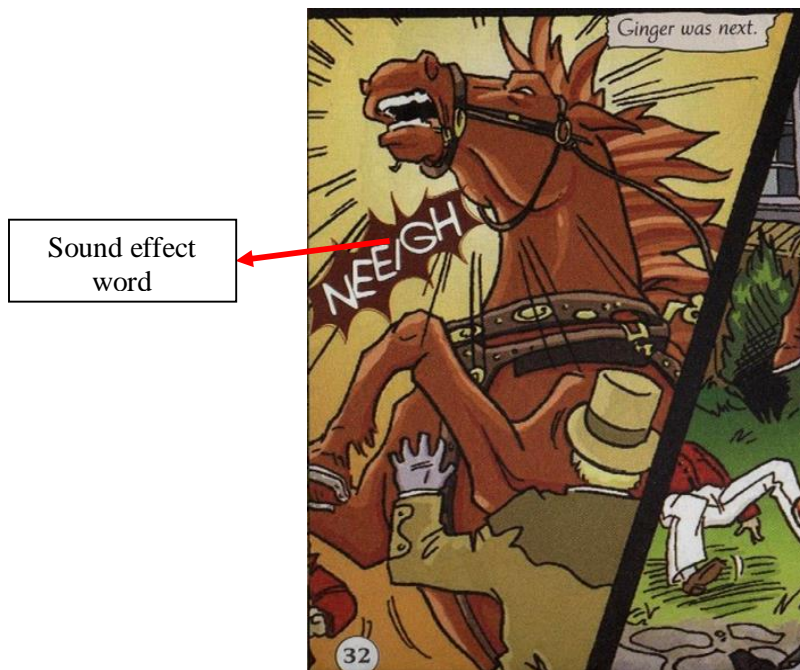


**Figure 3.9:** A Montage of Sound Effect Words  
(retrieved from [www. cartoonsolutions.com](http://www.cartoonsolutions.com) on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012)

Figure 3.9 represents a montage of sound effect words commonly deployed in graphic novels and comic books. Bredin (1996) further lists out three different types of onomatopoeic words namely direct onomatopoeia, associative onomatopoeia and

finally, exemplary onomatopoeia. Direct onomatopoeia “occurs whenever two criteria are satisfied: (1) the denotation of a word is a class of sounds; and (2) the sound of the word resembles the sound that it names” (p. 558). This means that the sound of the word resembles the sound that it names. Common comic books examples are THUD, BUZZ, KRACK and BANG. Associative onomatopoeia occurs “whenever the sound of a word resembles a sound *associated with* whatever it is the word denotes” (p. 560, author’s emphasis). Sound effect words associated with this category are WHIP and SMASH. Exemplary onomatopoeia is the third type and the basis of this category lies on the character of the physical work used by the speaker in saying the word. Bredin’s describes his final type of onomatopoeia words as “words such as *nimble* and *dart* require less muscular and pulmonary effort than *sluggish* and *slothful*. Also, their stopped consonants encourage a speaker to say them sharply and quickly, whereas the latter two words can be drawn out slowly and lazily” (p. 563, emphasis added).

Nevertheless, it must be stressed here that the current analysis will only focus on special effect words of direct and associative onomatopoeic words which are represented in various fonts, shapes and colours. These words are not part of the text contained either in speech balloons or captions as shown in Figure 3.10.



**Figure 3.10:** Sound Effect Words in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 32). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.10 for instance, the direct onomatopoeic sound NEEIGH comes from the word NEIGH which means the high pitched sound made by the horse. Here, NEEIGH is added to show the horse is irritated and this is supported by the visuals. In most instances, these words are represented by floating letters. At times, they form a crucial part of an image and this insertion helps in the creation of impact and effect.

In addition, Stafford (2011) stresses that sound effect words are a form of compensation for the non-existence of aural elements. These types of words also represent specific noises and construct comics aesthetics. Many illustrators commonly highlight these words by underlining, italicizing or boldfacing them. It must be noted that in traditional linear texts these practices are applied sparingly. Examples of sound effects words include BANG (for a crash), CRASH (for glass breaking) and POW (for a punch). McCloud (1994) reiterates that the power to express the invisible world of senses and emotions are clearly evident in words as compared to other visual symbols. He further

posits, “Words can take even seemingly neutral images and invest them with a wealth of feelings and experiences” (p. 135).

### **3.3.3.2 The Visual Component of Panels**

There are a few important components which add dimension to the panels visually. These elements are pertinent in the composition of multimodality in graphic novels. Gravett (2005) acknowledges that the usage of large lexicon signs as effective graphic tools are crucial to show motion, emotions, sounds and meanings. This study looks into the elements of panel shapes and positions, shots in panels, background used in panels and emanatas that constitute the visual component in panels.

#### **a) Panel Shapes**

The shapes of panels contribute to the narrative process and aids storytelling. According to McKenzie (2005), shape, number and layout “allows the writer and artist to convey mood and meaning with great economy” (p. 64). The type and size of panels affect the focus specified to a moment in the panel, as compared to moments in other panels. As such, the layout and concentration of panels in a page clearly determines how the creator intends to portray his narrative in the best possible way. These shapes and positions also add an aesthetic impression that creates the ‘wow’ factor for the reader in appreciating graphic novels. Interestingly, McCloud (1994) ascertains that “panel shapes vary considerably though, and while differences of shape don’t affect the specific “meanings” of those panels vis-à-vis time, they can affect the reading experience” (p. 99).

However, it must be stressed that a definite listing of panel types is impossible as the convention continue to evolve. As Eisner (2008) puts forth, “while there is no universally agreed upon convention for expressing tense through the outline of the frame, the “character” of the line...creates hieroglyphic” (p. 44). Eisner proposes four types of panel shapes or borders namely rectangle, wavy, cloud like and jagged types. Nevertheless, this study adopts McKenzie’s (2005) listing as it is a more exhaustive. Table 3.3 illustrates common panel types as posited by McKenzie (2005) who identifies 8 types of panels. Nevertheless it must be stressed that this is not an exhaustive list as the dynamics of the conventions continues evolving. A ninth category termed as ‘others’ is created to classify panels which are unlisted. Table 3.3 denotes the range of common panels.

**Table 3.3:** The Standard Range of Panels (McKenzie, 2005)





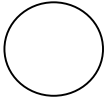

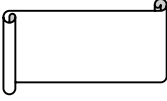

Type	Name	Description
	Rectangle/Regular Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standard form</li><li>• The most neutral</li></ul>
	Jagged Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Represents noise or violence or an impactful event</li></ul>
	Cloud like panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Indicates events in the past or future or a separate reality like a parallel dimension</li></ul>
	Geometric	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adds interest to the layout</li></ul>
	Circular	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depicts a key event</li></ul>
	Wavy panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Denotes something in the past or secret information.</li></ul>
	Scroll-shaped panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shows a separate part of a narrative</li><li>• Can be a flashback or a historical fact</li></ul>
	Index card shaped panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Denotes stories which are narrated through files</li></ul>
Others	Any other panels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Other unlisted irregular panels like L-shaped or silhouette type panels</li></ul>

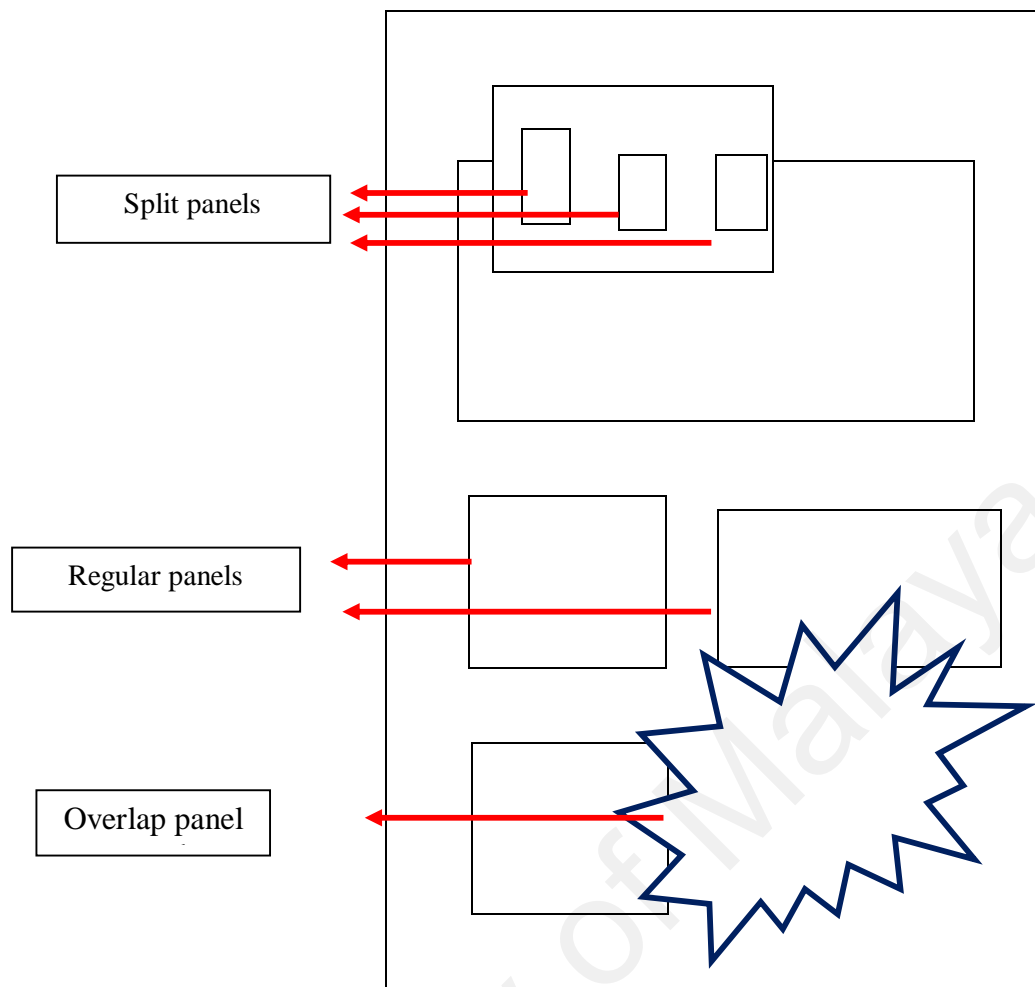
Table 3.3 depicts 9 types of panels namely rectangle or regular, jagged, cloud like, geometric, circular, wavy, scroll-shaped and index card shaped panels. The category of ‘others’ lists other panel types which are not considered by McKenzie (2005).

## **b) Panel Positions**

In their book *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture* (2009), Duncan and Smith believe that:

“Choosing the sequence of moments to encapsulate is important, because adjacent panels can interact to create a level of meaning that does not exist in individual panels alone. Finally, the choice of which and how many moments to encapsulate on a particular page determines to a great extent, how successfully the page operates as a unit” (p. 10).

For Eisner (2008), the choice and treatment of panels indicate the effort to “deal with the viewer’s emotions” (p. 61) paving way for an increased emotional involvement with the story. The three common types of panel types are regular, split and overlap. The regular panel refers to a standard rectangular panel which constructs the main organisation of the page. A split panel which is divided into sections presents the illustrator a chance to express a brief sequence of events quickly. An overlapping panel can be used to depict an event crucial to what is happening within other panels. Groensteen (2007) suggests that splits and overlaps embody a “dialectical relation between the part and the whole, which places a view of the ensemble and of an element of the same scene in relation, separated and enlarged” (p. 87). Groensteen’s assertion indicates that positions play a major role in the comprehension of the text as a whole. The different types of panel types commonly deployed in graphic novels are illustrated in Figure 3.11.



**Figure 3.11:** Different Types of Panels  
(adapted from McKenzie, 2005, p. 64)

Figure 3.11 represents the different types of panels which are split, regular and overlap panels as posited by McKenzie (2005).

### c) Panel Shots

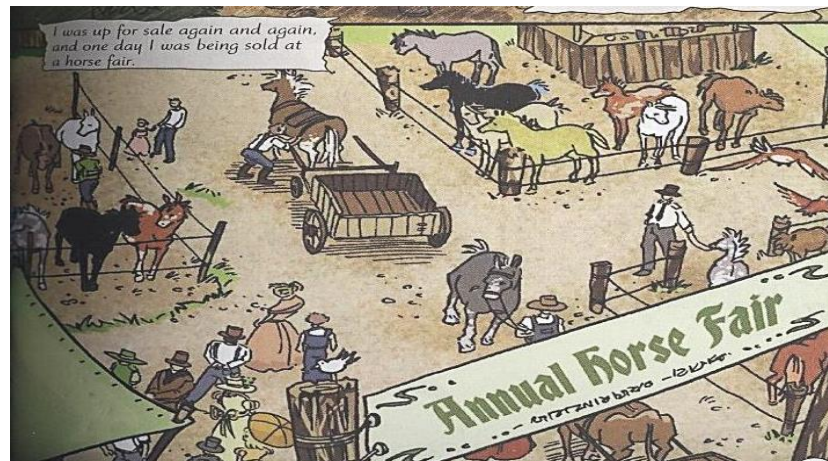
Panel shots in graphic novels are important just like film shots that run for an undisturbed period of time. These shots visually tell a story or emphasize specific points or parts of the story. The following Table 3.4 summarises the basic elements of panel shots as proposed by Okum (2005).



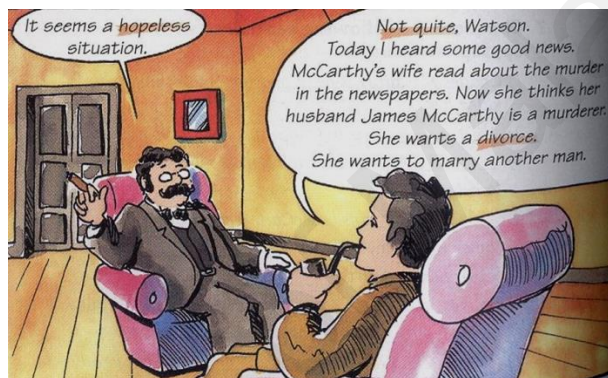
**Table 3.4:** Descriptors of Panel Shots (adapted from Okum, 2005, p. 116)

Types of Shots	Description
Extreme long shot (Establishing shot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes setting</li><li>• Foreground, middle ground and background highlighted</li></ul>
Long shot (Full figure)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on entire figure</li><li>• Background details important but should not compete with the focus of the panel</li></ul>
Knee Shot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Useful to clarify complex actions</li></ul>
Medium shot (Waist up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows a clearer view of details, expressions and actions</li></ul>
Medium close-up (Chest up)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on expressions and details of face but provides information on the character's costume and surroundings</li></ul>
Close-up (Head shot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expresses emotions or reaction shots</li><li>• Could show other details like feet, hands or an object</li></ul>
Extreme close-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focuses on specific element or detail (eg: an object, facial feature)</li></ul>

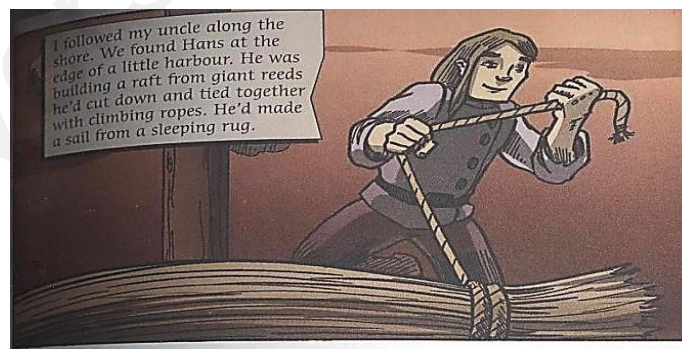
The 7 types of shots as listed in Table 3.4 are an extreme long shot (hereafter ELS), long shot (hereafter LS), knee shot (hereafter KS), medium shot (hereafter MS), medium close-up (hereafter MCU), close-up (hereafter CU) and extreme close-up (hereafter ECU). Examples of these shots from the data are represented in Figures 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17 and 3.18.



**Figure 3.12:** An Extreme Long Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 41). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.13:** A Long Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 56). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 3.14:** A Knee Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 43). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.15:** A Medium Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 50).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 3.16:** A Medium Close-up Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 49). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.17:** A Close-up Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 55). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.18:** An Extreme Close-up Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 34).  
©Stone Arch Books.

Figures 3.12, 3.13, 3.14, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17 and 3.18 represent the 7 different types of shots as based on the criteria proposed by Okum (2005) listed as in Table 3.4.

#### **d) Background**

A background is another important element in determining the reader's perception of a story (McKenzie, 2005). The two types of common backgrounds proposed by McKenzie are minimalist and detailed. A detailed background provides comprehensive background like that in Figure 3.19 where the detailed elements of intricate illustrations of explosion, waves and smoke are depicted. Conversely, the minimalist background is uncluttered and tends to be clean as seen in Figure 3.20 whereby only the sky dominates most of the panels. The omission of a background altogether denotes the emphasis and the importance of a particular scene and this is identified as 'sans background' which this study would like to add on which is illustrated in Figure 3.21. Figures 3.19, 3.20 and 3.21 illustrate the three backgrounds from the three novels.

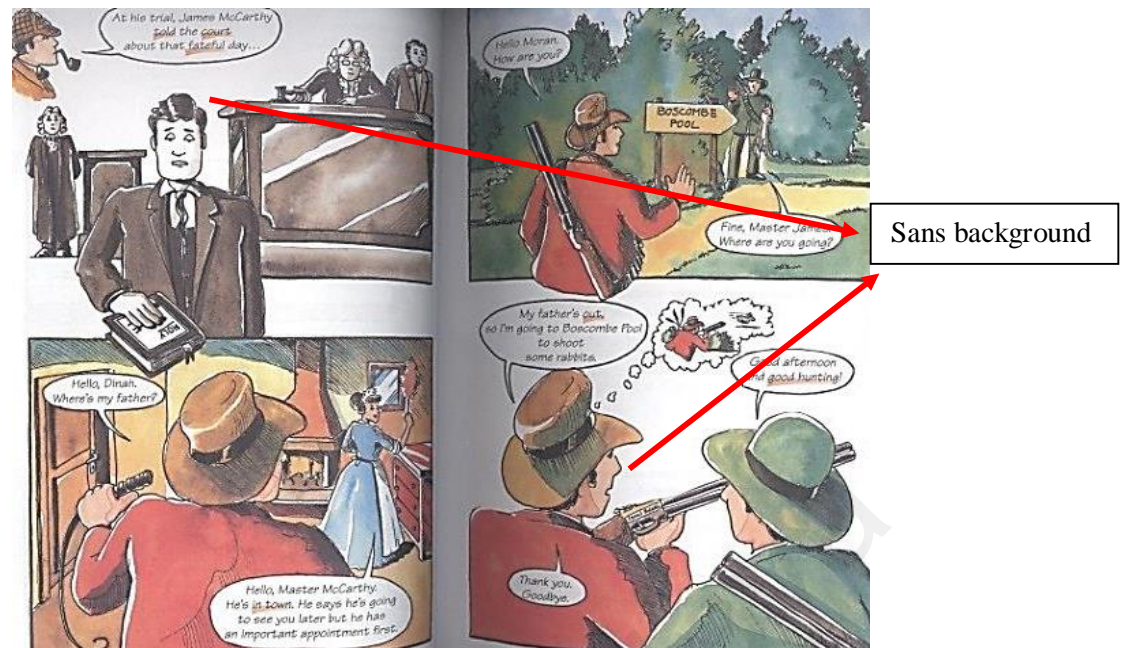




**Figure 3.19:** A Detailed Background in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 60-61).  
©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.20:** A Minimalist Background in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 8-9).  
©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 3.21:** Sans Background in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 32-33).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

This study will analyse the different types of background based on McKenzie's (2005) assertion which are detailed and minimalist, and adding a third category which is sans background, a contribution of category to the study.

#### e) **Emanata**

Emanata are symbols that represent what is going on in a character's head, embodying the non-verbal (McCloud, 1994). The term emanata is derived from the word 'emanate' because these graphic signs usually emanate from the body or head of a character. They are iconic in nature and are usually inserted in balloons but can also be placed outside balloons. Examples include ??? to indicate confusion, ♥♥♥ to denote love, ZZZ for sleeping and @\$%#\$ to show anger. An emanata denoting the notes of a song is shown in Figure 3.22 from the novel *BB*.





Emanata

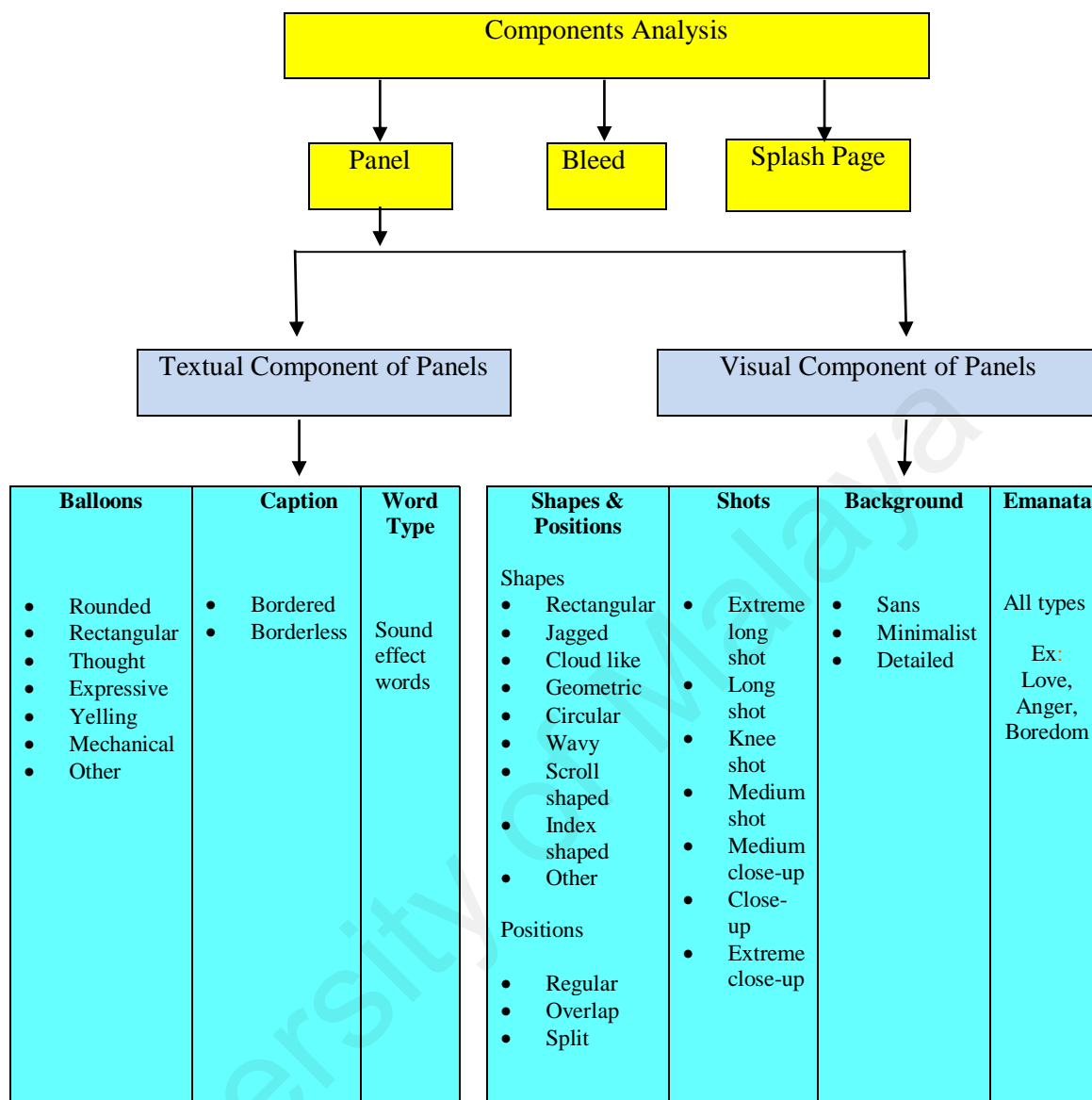
**Figure 3.22:** An Example of Emanata in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 23). ©Stone Arch Books.

As shown in Figure 3.22, the emanata represents Joe, the stable boy singing. This study analyses the frequency illustrators resort to emanata to accentuate the aestheticism and realism of their images.

### 3.3.4 The Detailed Conceptual Framework of the Components of Comics

#### Analysis

The following Figure 3.23 illustrates the detailed conceptual framework of the components of comics analysis. This framework is grounded in the works of McCloud (1995), Eisner (1985, 2008), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005) as mentioned earlier.



**Figure 3.23:** The Detailed Conceptual Framework of the Components of Comics Analysis

Figure 3.23 shows a detailed conceptual framework of comics component analysis based on different works of comics scholars. Importantly, this framework provides an overall view of various elements that need to be considered in the construction of a graphic novel. This analysis will also confirm to what extent the components of comics are evident in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics specifically the ones used in Malaysian classrooms. This study also deems that this type of analysis is important to expose teachers to exhaust the novels effectively in the classrooms by understanding the construction of a graphic novel.



Such an emphasis on comics conventions also supports Serafini's (2011) belief that "calling students attention to the elements used to construct visual images...provides a focus and develops a working vocabulary for discussions about how various visual elements are perceived and eventually interpreted" (p. 344). For Nodelman (as cited in Leithead, 2004), the operative conventions of pictures are crucial as he attests that "just as our understanding of language depends on our knowledge of the grammar that gives it shape, our understanding of pictures depends on our knowledge of the conventions they operate by" (1996, p. 242). These assertions denote the importance of considering the many conventions and this study takes it further by providing a workable conceptual framework that could be used by teachers in analysing graphic novels and comic books.

### **3.4 Textual Analysis in Graphic Novels**

The textual component found in graphic novels specifically those contained within the speech and balloons are also analysed through a linguistics theoretical framework specifically Halliday's SFL. To date, such a linguistic analysis is yet to be administered on graphic novels which are based on adapted classics. The textual data would be able to enlighten on how writers construe meanings in adapting a classic into a graphic novel.

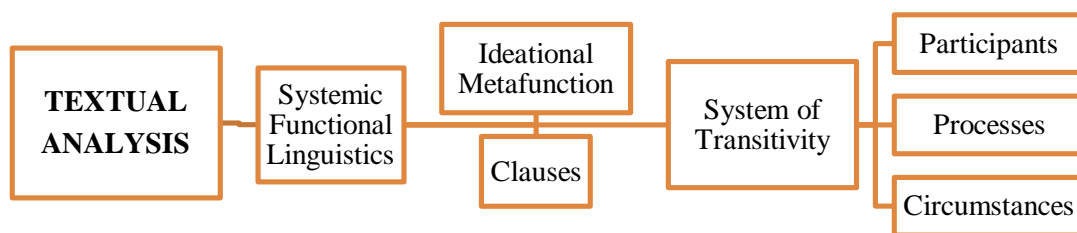
Graphic novels allow for a new approach to the juxtaposition of textual and visual elements in presenting diction, imagery, syntax, structure, and language. Syntax for instance becomes an examination of the sentence structure within a panel while the image provides the visual representation. In the graphic novel, *JttCotE*, when Otto Lidenbrock says, "*Forward, my friend. Forward to the greatest adventure of all. Forward to the centre of the earth!*" (p. 15), the utilisation of the continuous verb

‘Forward’ clearly relates the importance of the impending journey to make a grand new discovery. This example clearly supports Yates’ (2011) assertion that the text gives the visual the scope to explore other aspects of the scenario on a panel through reinforcing the message.

The analysis of the textual component answers the first part of Research Question 2 (hereafter RQ2). As part of a mode in a total multimodal analysis, the textual component analysis investigates the linguistics choices of the authors, through the use of SFL, specifically the Systems of Transitivity (hereafter SoT) as proposed by Halliday (1994). In analysing a graphic text, a Hallidayan framework is useful as it adds a semantic dimension in deducting the differences in meanings. Through the use of the SoT, the deployment of Process Types, Participants and Circumstances in illustrating the experiential meanings in the three novels are extrapolated. The first part of the question termed as Research Question 2a (hereafter RQ2a) is as follows:

**2) a) *How are textual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

RQ2a focuses on how textual elements are represented in selected graphic novels through the use of SFL specifically the SoT as the tool of analysis. The focus on context and textual organization enables an in-depth study of the construction of text, forming the basis of Hallidayan’s SFL. In this study, it is beneficial to know how the writers of the texts have adapted the original classics to be condensed into a graphic novel through the choice of linguistic structures and the SoT allows just that. Figure 3.24 denotes the pertinent elements in analysing the verbal structures of the graphic novels.



**Figure 3.24:** The Theoretical Framework of Textual Analysis

Figure 3.24 represents the theoretical framework of the textual analysis which answers RQ2a. As illustrated, the ideational metafunction of SFL is focused upon and the analysis is conducted after isolating the clauses (in this study, the clauses will be numbered in terms of ‘sentences’ as it makes referencing and discussion easier). The Transitivity analysis focuses on Processes, Participants and Circumstances. The following section will describe in detail the linguistics branch termed SFL and its important considerations.

### 3.4.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics

In the previous chapter, Section 2.9 provided an overview of SFL while this section looks into the whole system in detail. As noted, SFL was established by British linguist, Micheal Alexander Kirkwood Halliday (1994) and was further expanded by Christian Matthiessen. Language is a system of meanings through the SFL approach and the relationship within the language is dynamic while the text is considered a social exchange of meanings. Bloor and Bloor (2004) add that “when people use language, their language acts produce or more technically, *construct* meaning” (p. 2). In short, meanings are made through our choice and use of words and other grammatical forms. When a text is read, the reader can reconstruct the context of the text by looking into the

field, tenor and mode of the text. This clearly supports the notion that having SFL as a framework helps in the understanding of why a text is written in the way it is.

The term metafunction is used in SFL to show that function is a fundamental component within SFL (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004). The three metafunctions or types of meanings are components of the semantic system realized by distinct systems at clause rank in the lexicogrammar. The systems which encode ideational (for construing experience), interpersonal (for enacting personal and social relationships) and textual (for the constructing of text) meanings are the grammatical systems of transitivity, mood/modality and theme respectively. In summary, Halliday (1978) points out that “it is the demands posed by the service of these functions which have moulded the shape of language and fixed the course of its evolution” (p. 22). Table 3.5 shows the relationship of metafunctions in SFL.

**Table 3.5:** Metafunctions and their Realisations (adapted from Taib, 2010)

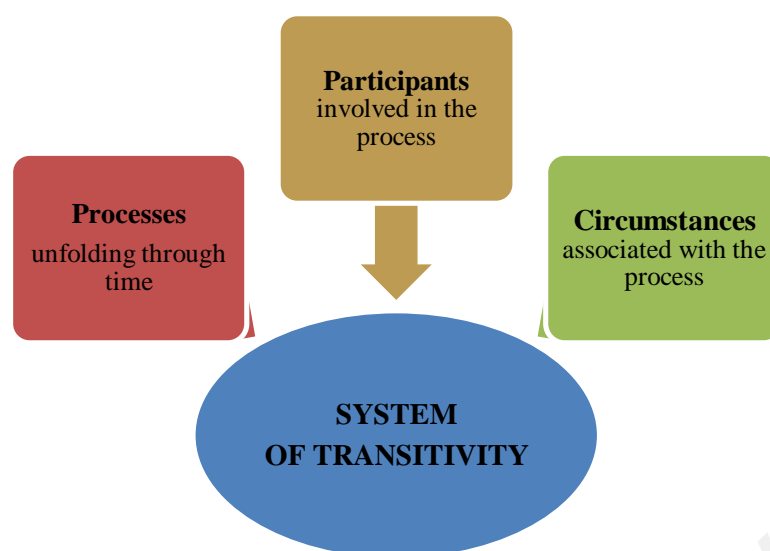
<b>Context</b>	<b>Metafunction (meanings)</b>	<b>Lexicogrammar (wordings)</b>
Field (what’s going on)	Ideational	Transitivity
Tenor (social relations)	Interpersonal	Mood
Mode (contextual coherence)	Textual	Theme

Table 3.5 denotes the three metafunctions of SFL and their realisations. The ideational metafunction is chosen as the element of analysis as this study focuses on the construction of experience through linguistic choices of the Processes, Participants and Circumstances.

### 3.4.1.1 System of Transitivity

The ideational metafunction is categorised in two modes which are *experiential* and *logical*. The experiential is mainly focused on content or ideas while the logical is concerned with the relationship between ideas. This study relies on the experiential mode of the ideational metafunction, realized through the SoT as the study is only concerned with the content of graphic novels in realizing the textual conventions. Halliday's SFL espouses that the experiential meaning expresses the content. This means that the expression of the processes and other phenomena of the external world including feelings and thoughts are crucial (Halliday, 1978, p. 48).

The classification of the different kinds of 'doings' and 'beings' which represent human experience is the crux of the SoT (Halliday, 2004, p. 170-171). Experiential meanings relate to the goings-on in the world or the field; 'happening', 'doing', 'sensing', 'meaning' and 'being' and 'becoming'. In short, the SoT is a resource for construing events, happenings, goings-on, mental states, sayings, behaviours and relations of different kinds. The ideational component or the semantic content of language is represented through SoT. The SoT constitutes three components mainly Processes, Participants and Circumstances as illustrated in Figure 3.25. The clause is a configuration of a Process and the Participant involved in it while the Circumstance acts as an attendant (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 169).



**Figure 3.25:** The Relationships between Processes, Participants and Circumstances  
(drawn from Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 175)

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) further postulate that “the transitivity system construes the world of experience into a manageable set of PROCESS TYPES” (p. 170). The analysis of these various process types is used to realize the experiential meanings in the data, thus acting as the framework in the analysis of the textual resources in graphic novels. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) assert that through the SoT, one is able to construe his or her inner or outer experience into a set of Process types, thus one’s experience is foregrounded and organized in the grammar of clause. The inner experience refers to one’s consciousness and imagination while the outer experience refers to the happenings in the world around him or her. Table 3.6 identifies the grammar units which are prerequisites in the analysis through the SoT.

**Table 3.6:** Typical Experiential Functions of Group and Phrase Classes  
(drawn from Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 177)

Elements	Realisations
Process	Verbal group
Participant	Nominal group
Circumstance	Adverbial or prepositional group

Table 3.6 represents the relationships between the experiential functions of SFL with their traditional grammar equivalents. The following discussion lists out the elements of Processes, Participants and Circumstances.

#### a) The Process and Participant

This section sees the discussion of both a Process and its Participant concurrently as they correspond directly to each other. In a clause, Participants are directly involved in the Processes. A verb in traditional grammar which is similar to a process is the systemic correspondence. Processes are realized by verbal groups whereas Participants are realized by nominal groups. Table 3.7 shows the typical realization of Process, Participant and Circumstances in the SoT.

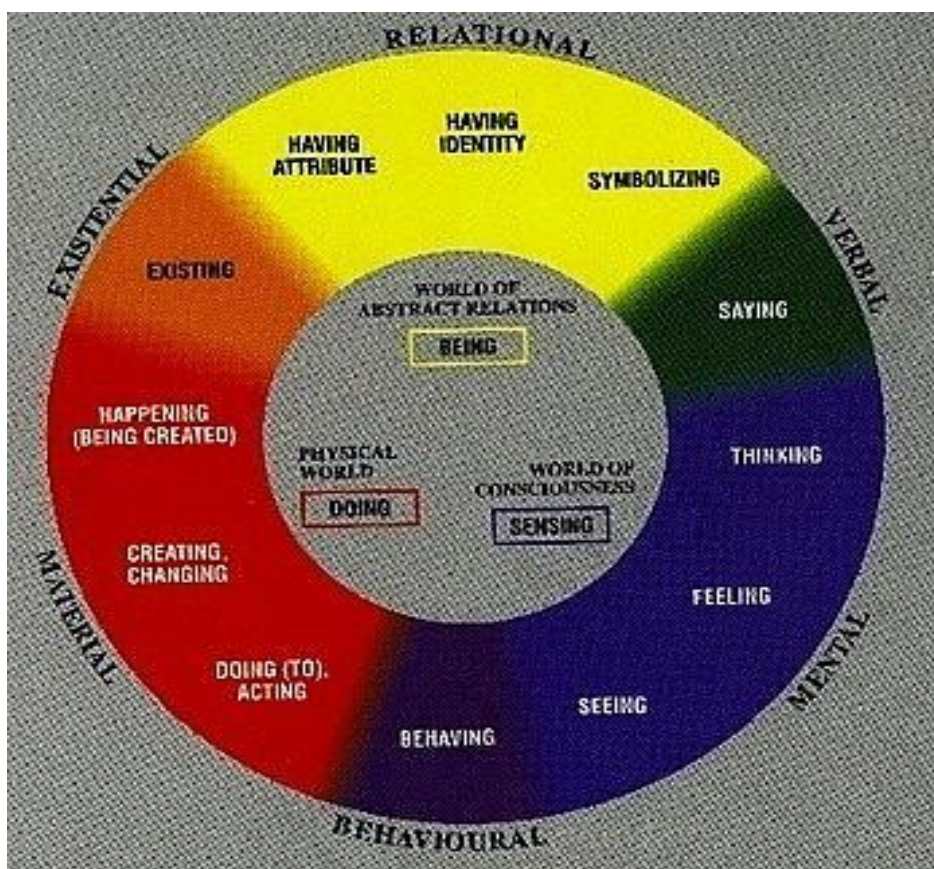
**Table 3.7:** Typical Grammatical Realization of Process, Participants and Circumstances, (drawn from Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 177)

Type of Element	Typically Realised by	Example
Participant	Nominal group	I
Process	Verbal group	stayed
Circumstance	Adverbial group or prepositional phrase	as part of my training; two weeks; at a neighbour's farm

In Table 3.7, the clause “*As part of my training; two weeks* (Circumstance) *I* (Participant) *stayed* (Process) *at a neighbour's farm*” (Circumstance), all three elements of Process, Participant and Circumstances are clearly evident. In this example, both Circumstances are added to give details to a simpler clause that is “*I stayed.*”

Figure 3.26 represents Halliday's grammar of experience which represents the types of Processes in the English language. By observing the transitivity system, we can say

more about the text; particularly the patterns of Processes, Participants and Circumstances.



**Figure 3.26:** The Grammar of Experience: Types of Processes in English, (Halliday, 2004, p.172)

(retrieved on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2012 from ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael\\_Halliday](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Halliday)))

Figure 3.26 denotes the 6 types of Processes which scaffolds Halliday's SoT. These processes are Material, Behavioural, Mental, Verbal, Relational (Attributive and Identifying) and Existential Processes. The physical world of 'doing' is represented by the Material Process while the world of consciousness of 'sensing' is denoted by the Mental Process. The Behavioural Process is between both these processes. The world of abstract relations or the state of 'being' is represented by both Relational and Existential Processes. A Verbal Process denotes the act of saying and its many



manifestations. Table 3.8 further lists out the representation of these processes and also includes the types of Participants involved in realising the ideational metafunction.

**Table 3.8:** Types of Processes and Participants (Butt, Fahey *et al.*, 2000, p. 62-63)

Process Types	Representation of Process	Central Participants	Additional Participants
1) Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical action, doing</li> </ul>	Actor, Goal	Range, Beneficiary
2) Mental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking, feeling, knowing</li> </ul>	Senser, Phenomenon	-
3) Relational a. Attributive b. Identifying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the features of somebody/ Something</li> </ul>	Carrier, Attribute Token , Value	-
4) Behavioural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physiological</li> <li>Psychological</li> </ul>	Behavior	Range
5) Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking, telling</li> </ul>	Sayer, Verbiage	Receiver, Target
6) Existential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signalling the existence of something/ Someone</li> </ul>	Existent	

Table 3.8 lists out all 6 process types, their representations and both their central and additional Participants. The major Participants in a Material Process are Actor and Goal with both Range and Beneficiary being its additional Participants. Senser and Phenomenon are the central Participants for a Mental Process. The Relational Process is further subdivided into Relational Attributive and Relational Identifying. For the process of Relational Attributive, its Participants are Carrier and Attribute while for Relational Identifying, its Participants are Token and Value. The Verbal Process has Sayer and Verbiage as its major Participants with both Receiver and Target holding additional roles. Finally, the Existent is the Participant for Existential Process.

## b) Circumstances

Circumstances are represented by adverbial and prepositional phrases. They provide the description of circumstantial features surrounding the processes. For Halliday (2004), “circumstantial elements are almost always optional augmentation of the clause rather than obligatory components” (p. 175). According to Thompson (1996), circumstances “essentially encode the background against which the process takes place” (p. 104). Representing the adjectival word group, circumstances set the contextual framework of space and time of the action and on the participants. Incidentally, when circumstances are omitted from a sentence, they do not affect the completeness of the sentence thus functioning as a provider of peripheral information. The different categories and subcategories of circumstances are shown in Table 3.9

**Table 3.9:** Types and Subcategories of Circumstances  
(adapted from Martin, Matthiessen & Painter, 1997, p. 104)

Circumstance Type	Subcategory	Subcategory Probe
Extent	Temporal	for how long?
	Spatial	how far?
Location	Temporal	when?
	Spatial	where?
Manner	Means	by what means?
	Quality	how?
	Comparison	what like?
Cause	Reason	why?
	Purpose	for what purpose?
	Behalf	on whose behalf?
Contingency	Condition	under what conditions?
	Concession	despite what?
	Default	lacking what?
Accompaniment	Comitative	who/what with?
	Additive	and who/what else?
Role	Guise	what as?
	Product	what into?
Matter	-	what about?
Angle	-	says who?

Table 3.9 denotes the 9 types of Circumstances and their subcategories. This study will identify and analyse the frequency in the utilisation of the Circumstances in the three adapted graphic novels.

Table 3.10 provides a sample of an analysis of Process-types, their corresponding Participants and Circumstances based on an extract from *BB*. It must be noted here that the abbreviations of Par for Participant, Pr for Process and Cir for Circumstance is used throughout the discussion due to space constraints. In addition S1 stands for Sentence 1 and P15 denotes Panel 15.

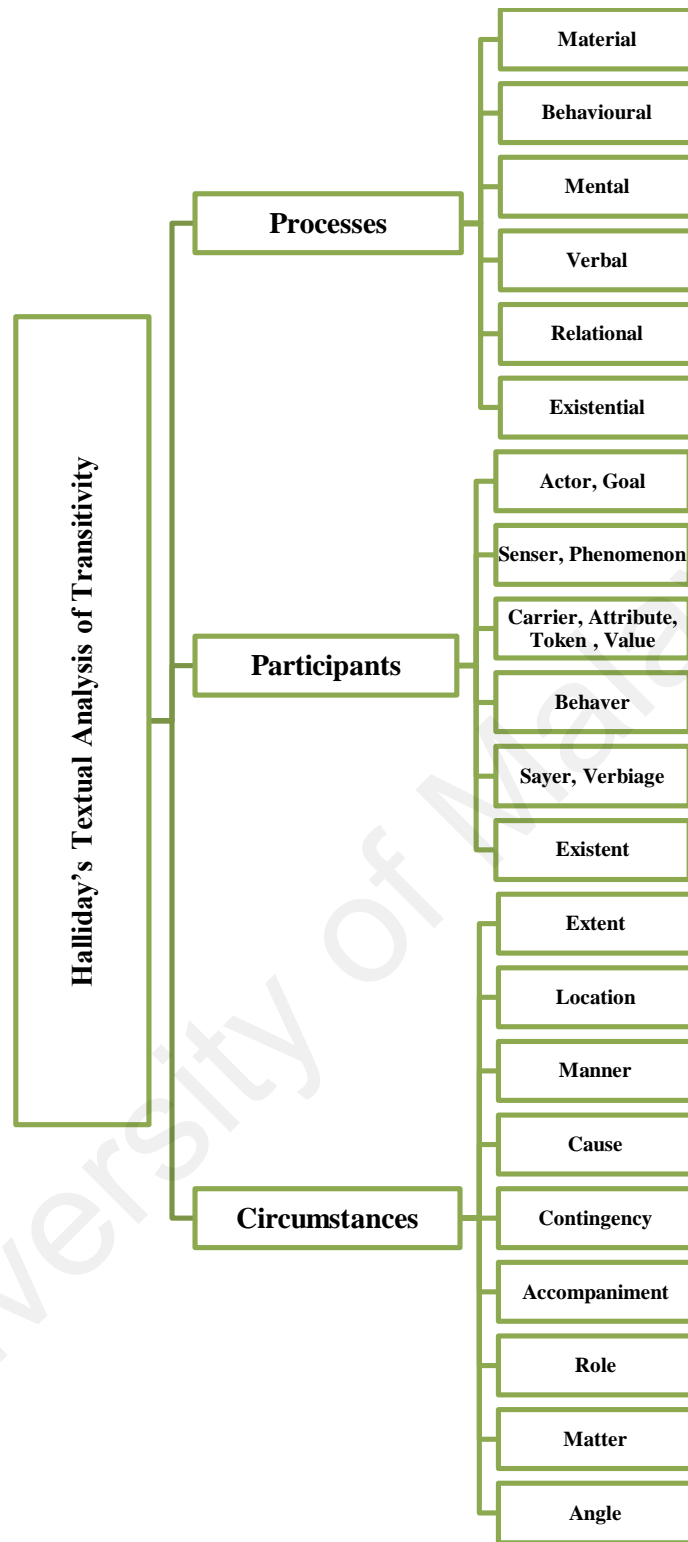
**Table 3.10:** An Example of Transitivity Analysis in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P15	As part of my training,	I	stayed	two weeks
	Cir:Cause	Par: Actor	Pr:Material	Cir:Extent
	at a neighbour's farm.			
	Cir:Location			

Table 3.10 demonstrates an example of a Transitivity analysis from the novel *BB*. A list of short forms and abbreviations is provided on page xxvii to xxviii.

### 3.4.2 The Detailed Theoretical Framework of Textual Analysis

Figure 3.27 on the following page illustrates the detailed theoretical framework of the textual analysis based on Halliday's SFL.



**Figure 3.27:** The Detailed Theoretical Framework of Textual Analysis

Figure 3.27 illustrates the detailed theoretical framework that is adopted in the analysis of the textual elements encapsulated within the speech balloons and captions of the graphic novels. Through Halliday's SFL specifically the SoT, the linguistic choices of

the writers of these adapted classics into graphic novels would be able to reveal how and why these choices are made.

### 3.5 Visual Analysis in Graphic Novels

E.H. Gombrich (1996) accentuates that “the visual image is supreme in its capacity for arousal” (p. 82) (as cited in Nodelman, 1988, p. 4). The graphic novel, increasingly popular with students and educators, permits teachers the opportunity to explore the “rhetoric” of the visual-print world. In addition, it also offers the opportunity for students to become media literate. As the history of graphic novels stems from the introduction of comics, the interrelationship between both these mediums are deep-rooted. To paraphrase Varnum and Gibbons (2001), “like film, television and the Internet, comics systematically combine words and pictures” (p. ix), this statement further proves the importance of visuals. By relating the functions textual and visual elements as derived from Nikolajeva and Scott (2006)’s *How Picturebooks Work*, it ascertains that both elements are equally crucial in the development and the reading of a graphic novel. Nikolajeva and Scott put forth that:

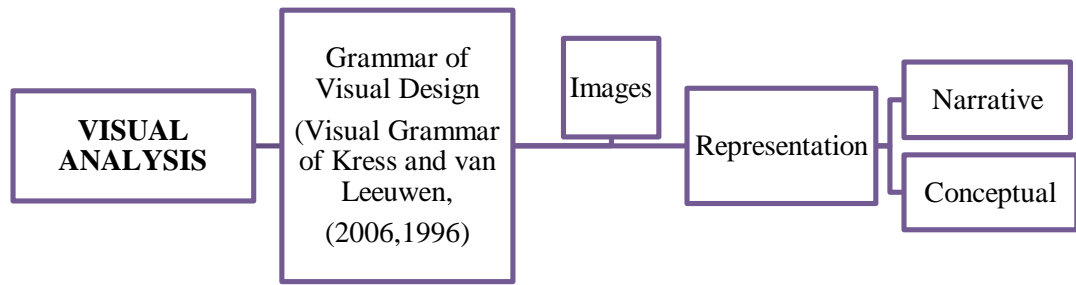
“Pictures in picture books are complex iconic signs, and words in picture books are complex conventional signs; however, the basic relationship between the two levels is the same. The function of pictures, iconic signs, is to describe or represent. The function of words, conventional signs, is primarily to narrate. Conventional signs are often linear, while iconic signs are nonlinear and do not give us direct instruction about how to read them” (p. 1-2).

Though Nikolajeva and Scott (2006)’s work is associated with picture books, their argument is pertinent to graphic novels as the interplay between words and images cannot be discounted. As another mode in a total multimodal analysis, the visual

element analysis investigates the visual representations as exemplified by the illustrators. The visual elements are analysed by employing the visual analysis framework embracing Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Grammar of Visual Design (hereafter VG). Through the employment of VG, the exploration in the deployment of Narrative and Conceptual Processes is investigated. The analysis of the visual elements answers the second part of Research Question 2b (hereafter RQ2b).

**2. b) *How are visual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

In answering RQ2b, the analysis identifies images in the panels of the graphic novels and looks into the Representation Process (hereafter RP) of the visuals to understand their function and meanings in the texts. As mentioned earlier, the representational component of VG corresponds to the ideational metafunction. As the study is focused on how the textual and visual conventions are realized in graphic novels, a relational semiotic mode was chosen; thus the RP of VG and the Ideational mode of SFL. Similar to Halliday's Ideational metafunction, the relationship among participants (people, places and things) is depicted through the visual representational meaning as portrayed in an image. More importantly, both these functions are in tandem and they provide a more comprehensive focus in how meanings are construed. The framework analyses the visuals illustrated in the panels of graphic novels in terms of representation; focusing on the narrative and conceptual aspects of the visual elements as illustrated in Figure 3.28.



**Figure 3.28:** The Theoretical Framework of Visual Analysis

Figure 3.28 represents the theoretical framework of visual analysis whereby the Grammar of Visual Design which is also known as Visual Grammar is adopted through the analysis of images using the element of Representation. The Representation element is divided into Narrative and Conceptual Processes. Narrative Processes denote the presence of vectors with their Participants being people, animals, things and places. The Narrative Process encompasses 4 sub-processes and they are Action, Reaction, Speech and Mental Processes. Conversely, the Conceptual Process is further divided into Symbolic, Analytical and Classification Processes.

### 3.5.1 The Grammar of Visual Design/ Visual Grammar

Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) clearly elucidate that the ‘grammar of visual design’ intends:

“to provide inventories of the major compositional structures which have become established as conventions in the course of the history of visual semiotics, and to analyse how they are used to produce meaning by contemporary image-makers” (p. 1).

In a nutshell, their assertion denotes that visual readings are based on a systematic approach that articulates visual meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen’s formulation of VG constitutes a description on how language experts use or combine visuals to construct

meaning (1996, p. 2). The VG is in fact adapted from the work of Halliday (1994) which provides a means for visual analysis that is pivotally functionalist in nature. The idea of using SFL to images is elicited from Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996) argument that:

“...like linguistic structures, visual structures point to particular interpretations of experience and forms of social interaction...For instance, what is expressed in language through the choice between different word classes and clause structures, may, in visual communication, be expressed through the choice between different uses of colour or different compositional structures” (p. 2).

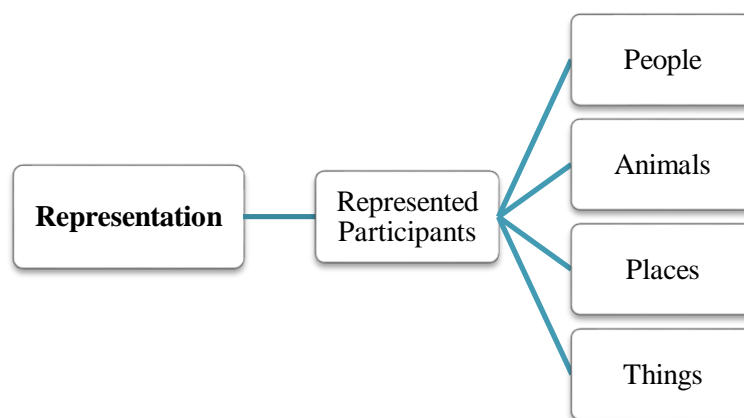
In short, while textual language concerns verbs, nouns, mood and theme-rheme components, Kress and van Leeuwen's VG is analogous to framing, colour saturation and semiotic modality. In designing a descriptive framework to facilitate the analysis of images based on a linguistic model, Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) further posit:

“...both, language and visual communication, express meanings belonging and structured by cultures in the society and this results in a considerable congruence between the two” (p. 17)

#### **3.5.1.1 Representation Analysis**

In the realm of representation of VG, people, places or things are embodied as Represented Participants. These two processes depicted by Represented Participants can be either Narrative or Conceptual Processes. Figure 3.29 illustrates a visual summary of the variables in the Representation analysis of images within the Narrative Process. The category of animals is deliberately included as it is fundamental in the analysis of data of this study. The roles of animals, mainly in *Black Beauty* is pertinent to its narrative.





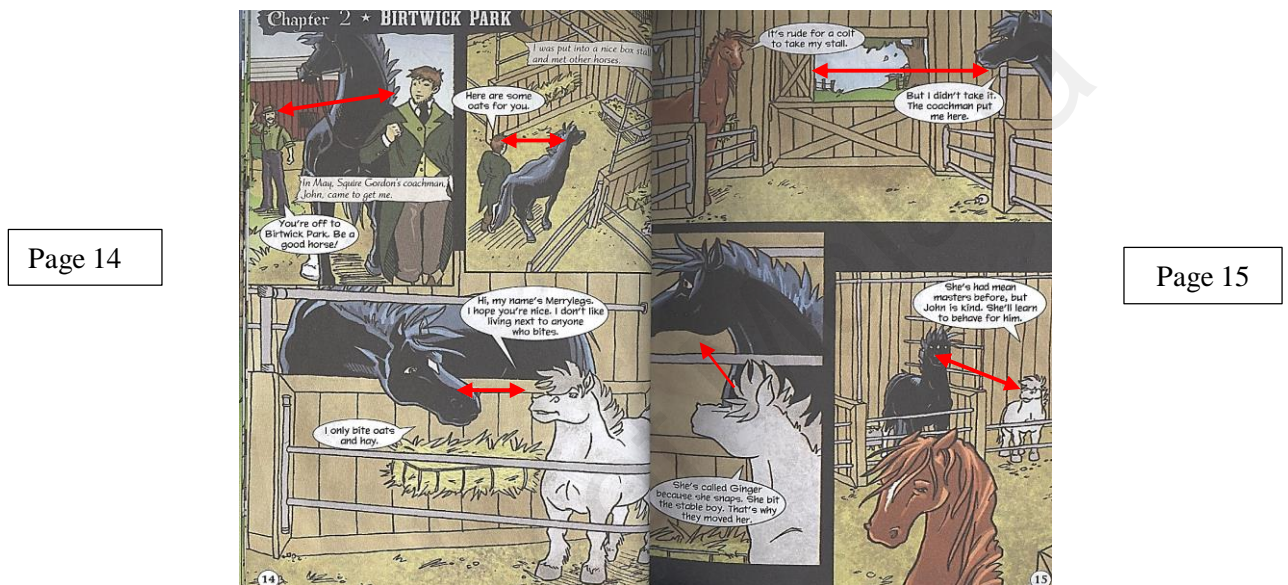
**Figure 3.29:** A Visual Summary of Variables in Representation Analysis

Figure 3.29 denotes the four variables of people, animals, places and things which are pertinent as represented Participants in Representation Analysis. The analysis of the Participants will be in tandem with the analysis of both Narrative and Conceptual Processes. In addition, only major Participants would be focused upon as the study involves a deep analysis of other visual components like the conventions of comics and visual cohesive ties in answering all RQs. Also, due to the detailed nature of the study, the element of Circumstance will not be discussed. The following section focuses on the Representation Analysis in detail through its Narrative and Conceptual Processes.

#### **a) The Narrative Process**

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), a narrative process functions “to present unfolding actions and events, processes of change, transitory spatial arrangements” (p. 59). In a Narrative Process, two objects may be represented as involved in a process of interaction which could be visually realized by vectors” (ibid., p. 42). A vector which connects participants is seen as a representation of them ‘doing’ something to or for each other, in an action movement. Participants can be either *interactive* or *represented*. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) surmise that a vector is usually a diagonal line which

can be formed by bodies or limbs, or tools in action. In abstract graphic elements, on the other hand, the explicit feature of directionality (usually an arrowhead) is pertinent to realize a narrative representation to show that something ‘is connected to’, is conjoined to’, or ‘is related to’. Figure 3.30 shows how vectors are constructed in a Narrative Process from a sample extracted from the graphic novel *Black Beauty*.



**Figure 3.30:** Vectors in a Narrative Process in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 14-15).  
©Stone Arch Books.

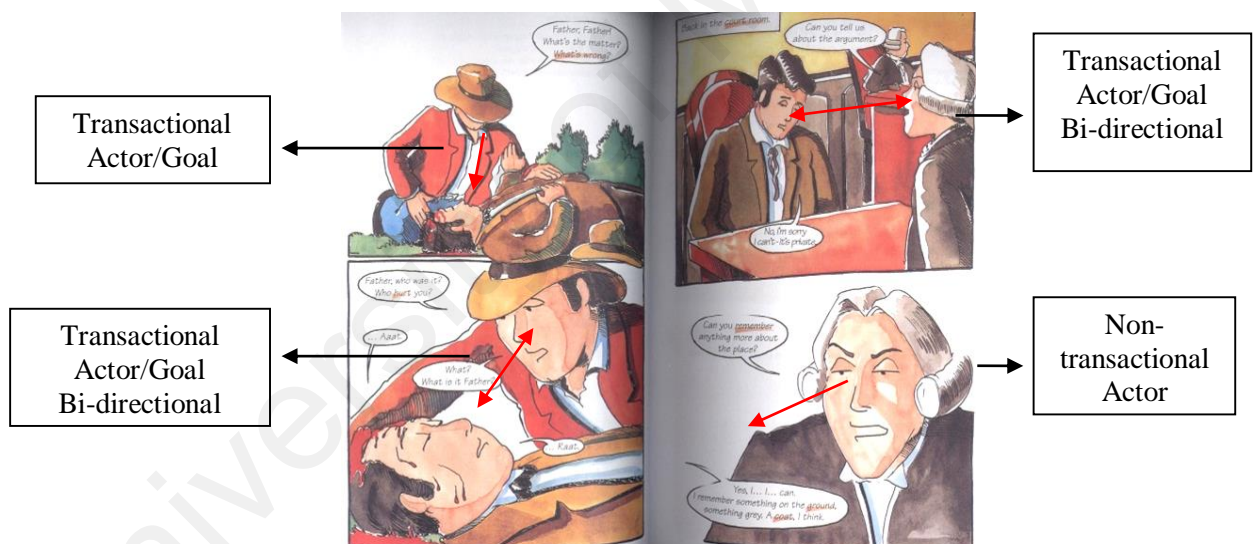
The red arrows in Figure 3.30 represent the vectors present in the various panels of Pages 14 and 15. The following discussion looks into the different types of Participants involved in a Narrative Process.

- **Participants in a Narrative Process**

The participants in a narrative process can be referred to as:

- Actor and Goal
- Reactor and Phenomenon
- Sayer and Utterance
- Senser and Phenomenon

An image is transactional when there are an Actor and a Goal connected by a vector. When there is an absence of a Goal, the image is seen as non-transactional. In addition, when a vector is “formed from the eye line of one or more participants” (Unsworth, 2001, p. 76), the process is seen to be more of a reaction than action. The thing being looked at is noted as a Phenomenon rather than a Goal and it is termed as a transactional reaction. If there is no clear Phenomenon at what the participant is looking at, the image becomes a non-transactional reaction. Nevertheless at times, an image maybe more of an interaction rather than an action thus referred to as bi-directional. Figure 3.31 illustrates the different types of processes and participants in a Narrative Process.



**Figure 3.31:** Types of Processes and Participants in a Narrative Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 38-39). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 3.31 represents the different types of processes and participants in a narrative process of *TBVM*. In addition to both Action and Reaction Processes, Kress and van Leeuwen also identify two other processes which are Speech and Mental Processes. Nevertheless, it must be stressed here that Speech and Mental Processes which are

inherent in graphic novels are represented by text containers. These containers are speech balloons and thought balloons.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), both processes are transactional and connect to animate beings through attendant speech or thoughts (p. 67). Balloons embody one of the most defining visual conventions of comics, thus being a prerequisite in graphic novels. Both Speech and Mental Processes are omitted from the study as they are a prevalent feature in graphic novels. Speech Processes are inherent through the existence of speech balloons and Mental Processes are evident through thought balloons. In a Speech Process, the participant is referred to as the Sayer whereas in a Mental Process, the participant is termed as a Senser.

#### **b) The Conceptual Process**

The Conceptual Process represents “participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure or meaning” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 79). For Nalon (1997), Conceptual Processes “are about unfolding events or actions but tend to present more generalised aspects of the participants, their intrinsic nature or permanent characteristics in terms of class, structure and meaning” (p. 143). According to Jewitt and Oyama (2008), a Conceptual Process “define, analyse or classify people, places and things” (p. 143), and this includes abstract visuals. The absence of vectors is mandatory to the Conceptual Process. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) further reiterate that the Conceptual Process is described as a process of ‘being’ or ‘having’ while the Narrative Process is seen as a process of ‘happening’ or ‘doing’). As such, a vector is always present in the Narrative Process while it is never present in a conceptual process. The three main sub-

processes of the Conceptual Process are Classification, Symbolic and Analytical Processes.

- **Classification Process**

A Classification process is a kind of Conceptual Process where different people, places or things are brought together in one picture, highlighting their common characteristics. The arrangement of people, places or things in a given visual space denoting similarity shows that they belong to the same order, category or class. In covert classification, different people, places or things in an image is distributed systematically across to show a common trait example belonging to the same class. Overt classifications are structured with a vertical orientation and have different levels and participants. Here, the same kind of relation is represented through levels and hierarchies. An example of this category is shown in Figure 3.32.



**Figure 3.32:** Depiction of a Classification Process in a Conceptual Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 13). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.32, the various trekking gears like compass, rope and lanterns among others are prominently put together, thus eliciting a sense of classification.

- **Symbolic Process**

A participant's identity utilising obvious and salient attributes are ascertained through symbolic structures. Based on iconography, elements like size, colours, positioning,



usage of lighting and others are regarded as ‘carrier-attribute’ type of relation (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996). The use of conspicuous tones, exaggerated sizes, foregrounding, props, salience, lighting and sharp focus are examples of elements which contribute to a symbolic structuring as shown in Figure 3.33.



**Figure 3.33:** Depiction of a Symbolic Process in a Conceptual Process in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 30-31). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.33, both arrowed illustrations denote the symbolic attribution of pain subjected to the horses.

- **Analytical Process**

Analytical structures depict participants in terms of a part-whole relation. Jewitt and Oyama (2006) reiterate that “analytical structures always have two key participants: the carrier (the whole) and any number of ‘possessive attributes’ (the parts)” (p. 144) as exemplified in Figure 3.34.



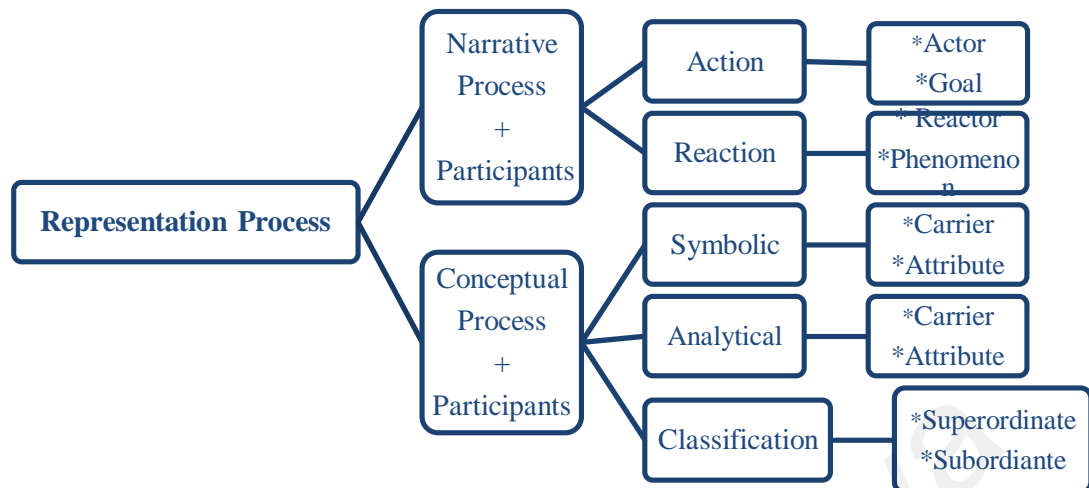
**Figure 3.34:** Depiction of an Analytical Process in a Conceptual Process in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 32). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.34, the analytical attributes of the lady of the mansion defines her as a rich lady. Her clothing represents 18<sup>th</sup> century Victorian Age in all its finery and grandeur of the rich upper class.

In summary, the function of Representation as a tool of VG is to realize the Ideational metafunction of SFL. As such, the analysis in this study will include identifying the meanings and functions of images on the panels of the graphic novels by investigating what the images portray through a thorough analysis of these represented Participants and the kinds of Processes involved in portraying them.

### 3.5.2 The Detailed Theoretical Framework of Visual Analysis

Figure 3.35 illustrates the detailed theoretical framework of the visual analysis based on Kress and van Leeuwen's VG.



**Figure 3.35:** The Detailed Theoretical Framework of Visual Analysis

As seen in Figure 3.35, the detailed conceptual framework of the visual analysis relies on Kress and van Leeuwen's VG, namely the Representation Process which encompass two important sub-processes, namely Narrative and Conceptual Processes. However, it must be noted that for the purpose of this study, only Narrative and Reaction Processes are analysed as graphic novels are constructed upon verbal and mental images, thus making the analysis of Speech and Mental Processes through VG redundant. The Speech Processes of VG are depicted through speech balloons and captions while thought balloons represent Mental Processes. Thus, analysing these elements through VG is deemed superfluous. In addition, this study also focuses on the Conceptual Process and its sub-categories of Symbolic, Analytical and Classification Processes. The identification of the prevalent Processes would be able to shed a light on how the artists of these novels adhere to the original narrative of the classics through their illustrations. In addition, it must be stressed here that Participants would be discussed in tandem with the Processes to give a clearer insight.



### 3.6 Cohesion between Textual and Visual Components in Graphic Novels

The written text can be considered a clarification of the image. It must be noted that graphic novels substitute figurative imagery with images themselves but the interplay of what is written and what is drawn makes for an important point of analysis. Baldry and Thibault (2006) further reiterate that both the written and visual components are crucial tools in the elicitation of meaning.

According to Wright and Sherman (1994, p. 45), “illustration and prose, interacting within each panel, provide a redundancy of information that aids understanding” (cited in Saraceni, 2001, p. 445). However, the process of meaning making and signification in graphic novels are more complex. With the inclusion of comics elements like gutters, splash pages and bleeds, readers play a huge role in the interpretations of the novels. “Words and pictures do not have to refer to the same thing, and creators can play with juxtaposition to create a variety of dramatic moods” (p. 9), Sabin (1993) reiterates. He further adds, “a strip does not ‘happen’ in the words, on the pictures, but somewhere in between, in what is sometimes known as the marriage of texts and images” (p. 9). And within these lines, Widdowson’s (2011) assertion resounds well whereby “how far texts are made cohesive depends on the judgement of the producers of the texts (in speech or writing) about what meanings they can assume the text receivers can work out for themselves by invoking what they know about the world” (p. 49).

Importantly, this study ascertains that there are two major areas of focus in this study to establish cohesion. The two areas to establish cohesion are that of outside panels and within panels. To ensure that sufficient attention is dedicated to the various elements involved in constructing cohesion, Kaindl’s (2004, p. 183) definition of macro and

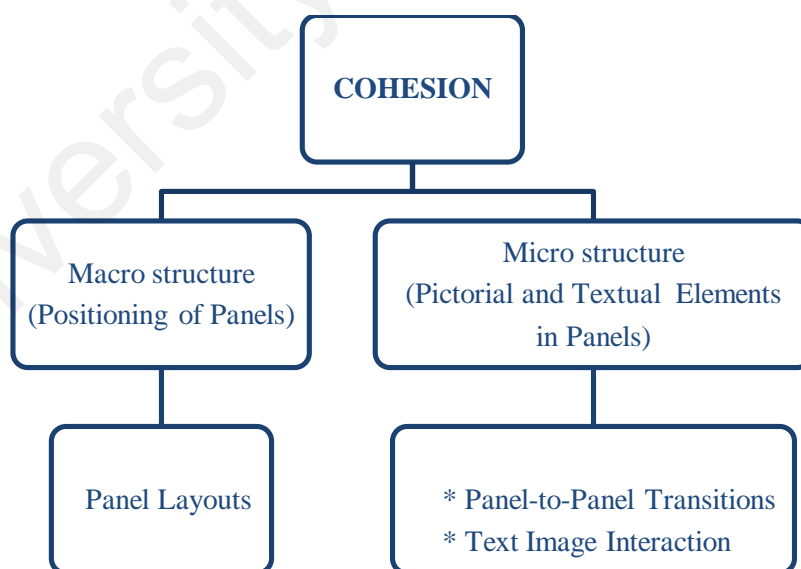
micro structures are adopted to simplify and categorise the elements involved in the analysis of panels. This move also provides a clearer parameter to investigate cohesion between and within the panels of graphic novels which is built upon sequential art. Macro structures involve elements outside the panels while micro structures focus on elements within the panels. At the macro structure level, the analysis focuses on panels and their layouts and how these components contribute in realising cohesion. The components considered are splash panels and overlap panels.

The micro structure level focuses on both textual and visual elements within the panels. The relationship between the different parts of a text contributes to the internal coherence which encapsulates the logic of the text. In investigating how textual and visual elements cohesively elicit meaning, a framework based on panel transitions (McCloud, 1994) and text image interaction (Nikolejeva and Scott, 2006) is used. McCloud's Panel-to-Panel Transitions (hereafter PtPT) offer an in-depth focus on transitions from one panel to another through 6 different transitions based on the images within the panels. On the other hand, Nikolajeva and Scott's Text Image Interaction (hereafter TII) focuses on the interaction between textual structures (speech balloons and captions) and their corresponding images within the panels.

In addition, the data on cohesion is further triangulated with information obtained from the data of interview acquired from the writers and illustrators of the novels. With data obtained from these interviews, the research will also further triangulate how cohesion realises the inherent narrative structure of the original texts through their graphic adaptations. The cohesion analysis of this study answers the following question which is termed as research question 3 (hereafter RQ3):

3) *How is cohesion established among the multimodal components in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?*

RQ3 seeks to investigate how cohesion is ascertained between the various elements of comics specifically splash pages and panel overlaps; and texts and images outside and within the panels of the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. As panel layouts and their compositions are discussed in RQ1, elements like splash pages and overlaps are focused upon at macro structure levels. Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006, p. 140) affirmation of the benefits of McCloud's work certainly motivated this study to integrate their text image analysis with McCloud's PtPT to investigate the element of cohesion within the panels in this study. A visual framework of the theoretical framework that scaffolds both macro and micro structures and their elements in realising cohesion is provided in Figure 3.36.



**Figure 3.36:** The Theoretical Framework of Cohesion Analysis

As shown in Figure 3.36, the study adopts an amalgamated framework which incorporates a focus on panel layouts, McCloud's (1994) PtPT and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) TII in establishing cohesion in graphic novels.

### **3.6.1 The Macro Structures**

The discussion that pertains to macro-structures in establishing cohesion centres on panels and their layouts as panels facilitate a smooth transition without perplexing readers. This study looks into the analysis of cohesion ascertained through panel layouts based on selective sampling from all three novels. As such, frequency counts are not analysed. The analysis of macro structures focuses on splash panels and overlap panels. This is further ascertained by Stainbrook (2003) who feels that panels are beneficial for a reader to "parse units of meaning" (p. 99) though they cannot be relied upon as primary elements. This is true for the construction of cohesion between text and image needs the consideration of various variables in establishing meanings.

#### **3.6.1.1 Splash Panel**

Full paged illustrations employed to establish characterization, setting or even to draw attention are the main elements of splash pages. In these types of panels, cohesion is achieved through the focus on pertinent episodes of the narratives. Figure 3.37 on the subsequent page exemplifies one example of a splash panel (Panel 205, p. 63) in *JttCotE*.

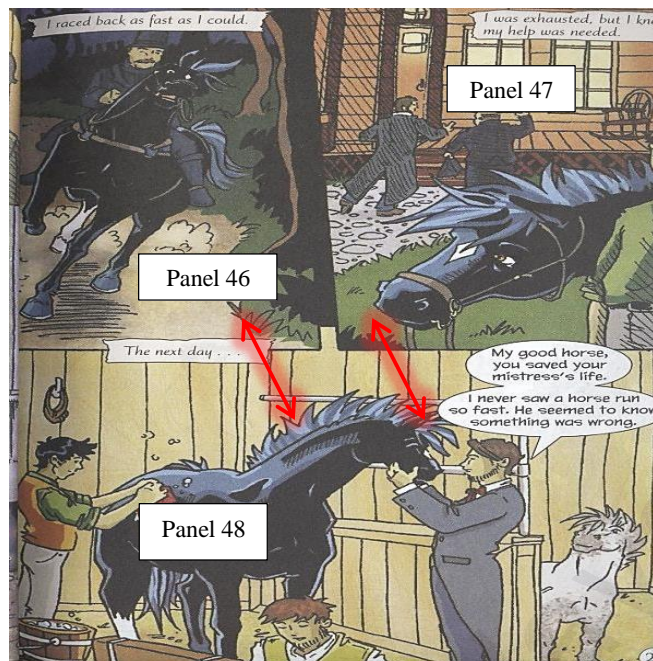


**Figure 3.37:** Cohesion through a Splash Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 50-51). ©Stone Arch Books.

The splash page as denoted in Figure 3.37 focuses on the storm that the travellers had to experience. Cohesion between the various panels in this image is derived from the technique of embedment whereby the smaller panels are embedded within the splash page to show the travellers on the raft. In addition to placement of panels, cohesion is also achieved through the repetition of the depiction of strong waves and storms indicated either visually or textually in all smaller panels.

### 3.6.1.2 Overlap Panels

The deployment of panels which overlaps shows that a continuous scene has been subjected to a temporal move from one panel to another. Figure 3.38 shows the overlap of Panels 46 and 47 into Panel 48 of *BB*.



**Figure 3.38:** Cohesion through Overlap Panels in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 25).  
©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.38 for example, the overlap panels indicate a sense of cohesion in depicting an incident where Black Beauty is portrayed as being selfless in serving his master. The overlaps suggest a distinct cohesion within the panels which are connected to each other through placements. Sometimes an overlap also deals with a figure or figures stretching (breaking out) between two or more panels, indicating a sense of connection between the panels thus helping in the cohesion of the text. The explicit continuity between panels like these does not need the discernment of the readers. The sequential nature of overlap panels shows that overlaps are necessary at times to enhance the continuity of a story through a highlighted focus.

### 3.6.2 The Micro Structures

The analysis of cohesion based on micro structures focuses on images and texts within the panels. The following subsections discuss how PtPTs and TIIs realise cohesion in the graphic novels.

### 3.6.2.1 Panel to Panel Transitions

As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, the medium of comic books and graphic novels is based on sequential art. In sequence, the importance of cohesion is inherent to determine meaning. In his book, *Understanding Comic* (1994), McCloud posits the concept of ‘closure’ and panel to panel transitions (hereafter PtPT). He posits closure as an act of “observing the parts but perceiving the whole” (p.63). In addition, Stafford (2011) clearly asserts that the way panels are structured and ordered is pertinent to the understanding of the text as a whole. Importantly a reader’s role in filling the blanks with his or her imagination is pertinent to the storytelling. To surmise, a reader experiences closure when parts of sequential panels are viewed and the incomplete bits are pieced together with his imagination or background experience. McCloud (1994) further reiterates that:

“Comics panels fracture both time and space, offering a jagged staccato rhythm of unconnected moments. But closure allows us to connect these moments and mentally a continuous unified reality” (p. 67).

Both writers and illustrators rely on the reader’s use of closure when panels are created with texts and images, thus creating panel-to-panel transitions. McCloud proposes six types of PtPT.

- Moment-to-Moment (hereafter M-t-M)
- Action-to-Action (hereafter A-t-A)
- Subject-to-Subject (hereafter Sub-t-Sub)
- Scene-to-Scene (hereafter Sce-t-Sce)
- Aspect-to-Aspect (hereafter As-t-As)
- Non-Sequitur (hereafter NS)

A detailed descriptor for each transition is provided in Table 3.11 while Figure 3.39 represents the illustration of panels denoting these transitions.

**Table 3.11:** Description of Panel to Panel Transitions (PtPT)  
(McCloud, 2006, p. 15-17)

Types of Transitions		Description
1	Moment-to-Moment	<p>A single action portrayed in a series of moments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ between small increments of time</li> <li>• Slows the action down</li> <li>• Increases suspense</li> <li>• Captures minimal changes</li> </ul>
2	Action-to-Action	<p>A single subject (person, object, animal etc.) in a series of actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between full arrays of actions</li> <li>• Extends plot in each panel efficiently</li> <li>• Keeps the pace brisk</li> </ul>
3	Subject-to-Subject	<p>A series of changing subjects within a single scene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between characters or objects in a scene</li> <li>• Moves the story forward efficiently</li> <li>• Directs reader attention through change of angles</li> </ul>
4	Scene-to-Scene	<p>Transitions across significant distances of time and/or space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between different scenes</li> <li>• Assists in compressing story</li> <li>• Allows a range of time spans and a breadth of location</li> </ul>
5	Aspect-to-Aspect	<p>Transitions from one aspect of a place, idea or mood to another</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Between aspects of a scene or an environment</li> <li>• A time stand still</li> <li>• Creates a strong sense of place and mood</li> <li>• Popular in mangas</li> </ul>
6	Non-Sequitur	<p>A series of seemingly nonsensical unrelated images and/or words</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Having no apparent meaningful relation</li> <li>• Gives the occasional nonsense gag in otherwise rational stories</li> <li>• Popular in experimental comics</li> </ul>



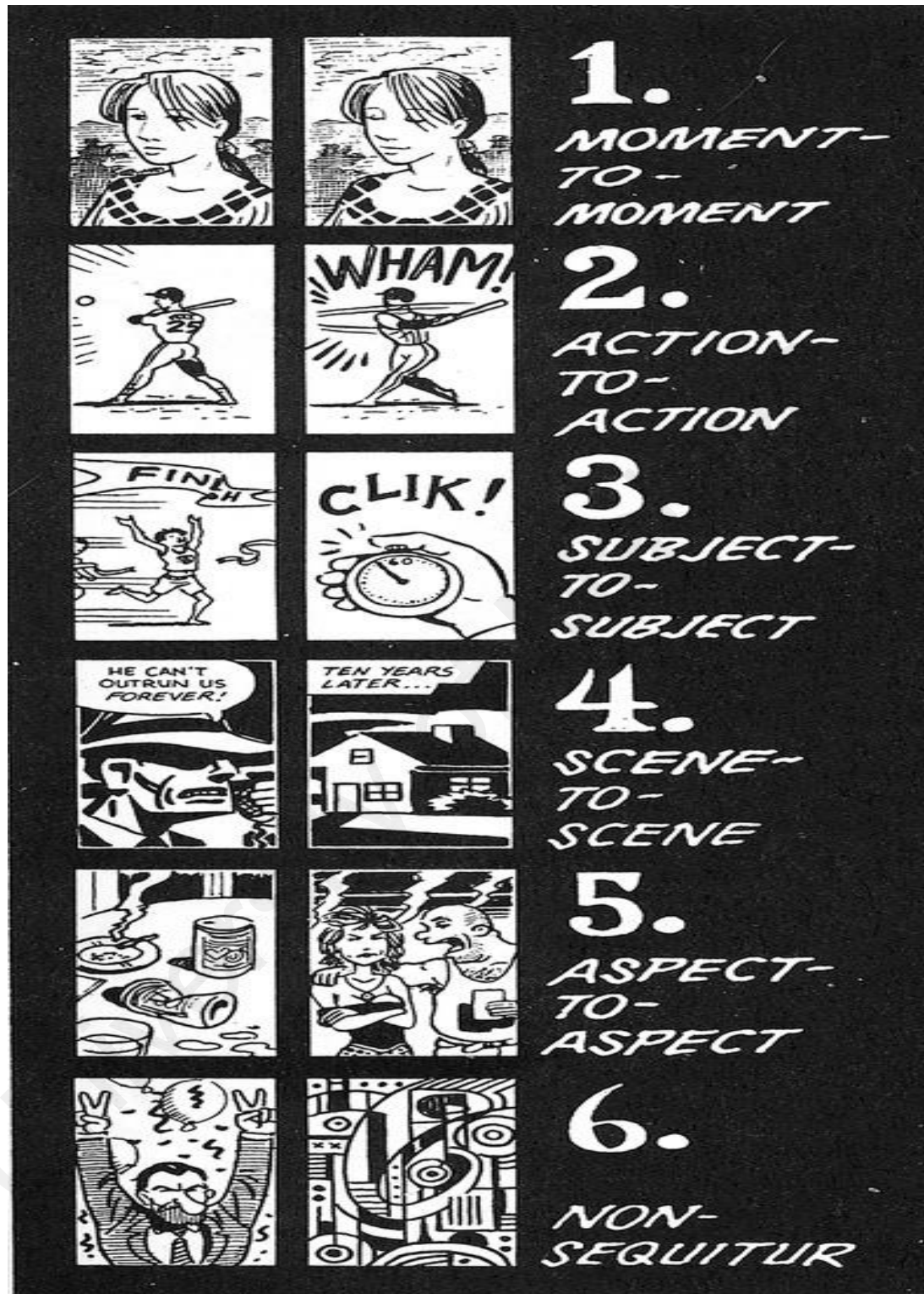
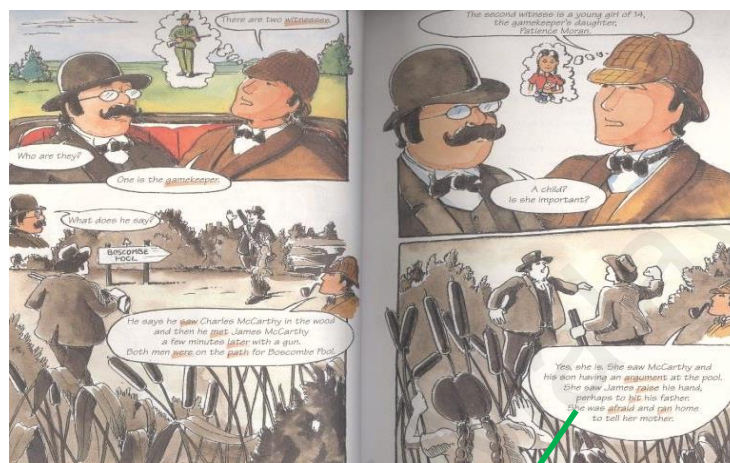


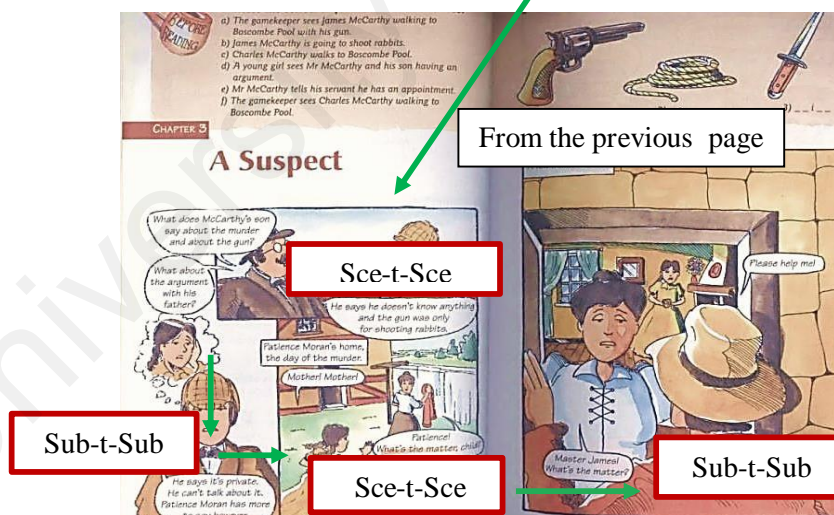
Figure 3.39: The Visual Descriptors of Panel-to-Panel Transitions (PtPT),  
(McCloud, 1994, p. 70-72). ©HarperPerennial

According to McCloud (1994), Action-to-Action transition is the most popular especially in American comics, followed by Subject-to-Subject and Scene-to-Scene

transitions. These three transitions are popular because they show “things happening in concise, efficient ways” (p. 76). As graphic novels are narratives, these transitions are essential to storytelling. Figures 3.40 and 3.41 illustrate a sample of McCloud’s PtPT in *TBVM*.



**Figure 3.40:** PtPTs in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 15).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 3.41:** PtPTs in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 18-19).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figures 3.40 and 3.41 show how a PtPT is realised in two pages of *TBVM*. The previous panel on page 15 denotes an earlier scene of Holmes narrating how Patience Moran witnesses McCarthy and his son arguing. This is followed by the next chapter

(p. 18 -19) and the subsequent panel shows Holmes and Watson still discussing the case while sitting in the carriage (Pages 16 and 17 contain exercises). The panel also shows Holmes talking about Moran's eyewitness account indicating a Subject-to-Subject transition and the next panel shows Moran's outburst at her home, showing a Scene-to-Scene transitional change, as the scene moves from the conversation on the carriage to Moran's home; yet remaining on the same subject. Finally, the last panel shows Master James appearing at Moran's house, indicating a change of subject (Subject-to-Subject transition). The sample of this analysis shows how the various transitions are pertinent in structuring the story to a coherent whole.

This study will analyse the frequency of the various transitions and how they assist in creating coherence to construct a meaningful narrative.

### **3.6.2.2 Text Image Interaction**

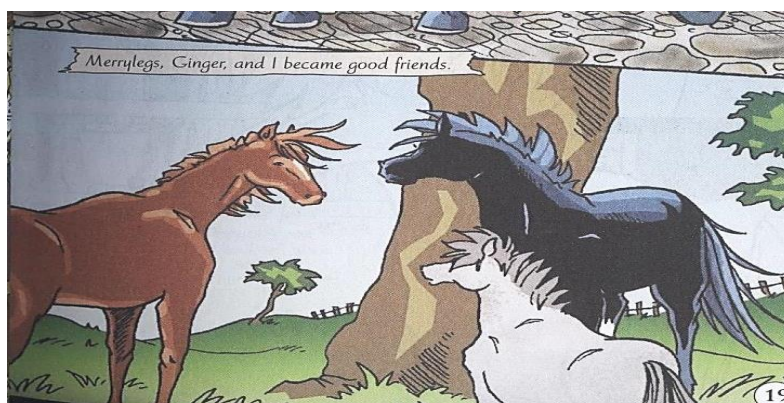
William Moebius (1986) explains, "Word and image constitute separate plates sliding and scraping along each other" (p. 143-144, as cited in Sanders, 2013, p. 57). Groensteen (2007) takes this further by asserting comics "codes weave themselves inside a comics image in a specific fashion, which places the image in a narrative chain" (p. 7). And certainly within these lines lays the importance of considering the fact that cohesiveness is ingrained in the way images tie one to another (through PtPT) and word to image (through TII). The categories and descriptors of TII as propounded by Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) are listed in Table 3.12. This particular framework is chosen to reveal the types of text image interactions within the panel as it is also a pertinent element in construing coherence. In addition, it is noted from the review of literature that none such analysis has been conducted on comic books or graphic novels, clearly addressing the gap within the realm

of using TII which is more popular with the analysis of picture books (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006; Moya, 2010).

**Table 3.12:** Categories and Descriptors of Text Image Interaction  
(drawn from Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, p. 11-18)

Category	Characteristic
Symmetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Image and text come as close as possible to conveying the same information or tell the same story</li> <li>They echo each other</li> </ul>
Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Image and text relationships where one element significantly changes the meaning</li> <li>Image provides more in-depth explanations than the text or vice-versa</li> </ul>
Complementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Occurs when enhancing interaction becomes very significant</li> <li>Image and text work together to intensify effects</li> </ul>
Counterpoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Image and text provide different types of information that readers need to discern</li> <li>Image and text collaborate to elicit meanings beyond the scope of either one individually</li> </ul>
Contradiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An extreme form of counterpoint</li> <li>Image and text relay totally different meanings</li> <li>Relies on active participation from the viewer to appreciate the intended meaning.</li> </ul>

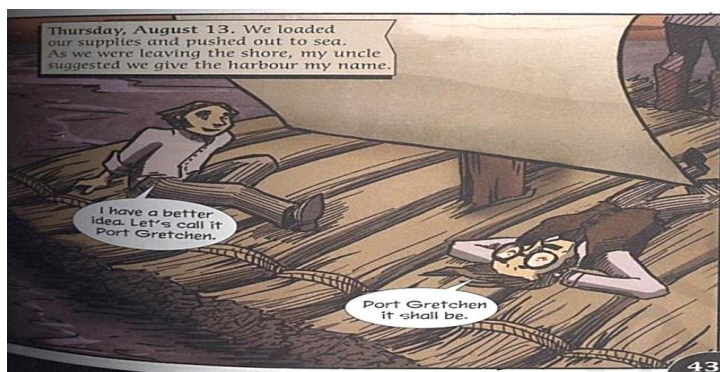
Figures 3.42, 3.43, 3.44, 3.45 and 3.46 represent the types of TII found in a few selected sample panels from the pages of the graphic novels used in this study.



**Figure 3.42:** A Symmetrical Text Image Interaction in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 19).  
©Stone Arch Books.



In Figure 3.42, a Symmetrical TII is established as the caption “*Merrylegs, Ginger and I became good friends*” conveys the same meaning as that of the image where all three horses are placed together, looking at each on the plains of a meadow.



**Figure 3.43:** An Enhancement Text Image Interaction in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 43). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 3.43 represents an Enhancement TII as the image shows both Lidenbrock and Axel relaxing on their raft. The text in the caption that says “*...and pushed out to the sea. As we were leaving the shore...*” forms a direct relationship with the image but the additional text “*We loaded our supplies*” shows the presence of additional information that enhances the image.



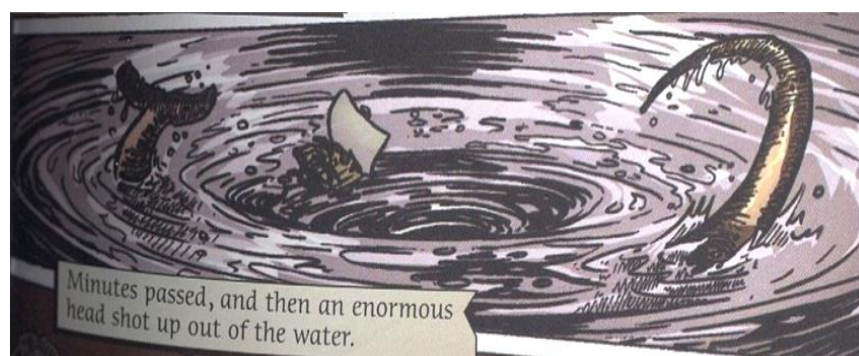
**Figure 3.44:** A Complementary Text Image Interaction *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 50). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

A complementary TII is evident in Figure 3.44 as the speech balloon contains the exclamation of a chilling “Aaaahhhh!” beyond the forestation near Boscombe Pool while James runs away from the scene. In this panel, readers have to discern what happens beyond the forestation and why is James running away, thus realising a complementary TII.



**Figure 3.45:** A Counterpoint Text Image Interaction in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 51). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 3.45, a Counterpoint TII is ascertained as the image shows both horses looking at each other in a stable while the stable boy is carrying a bag of horse feed. The captions represent “*For a cab horse, I was treated well*” and “*But that was not the case for all horses.*” These textual features are not directly related to the image but readers have to make that connection which relays the information that Black Beauty is treated well.



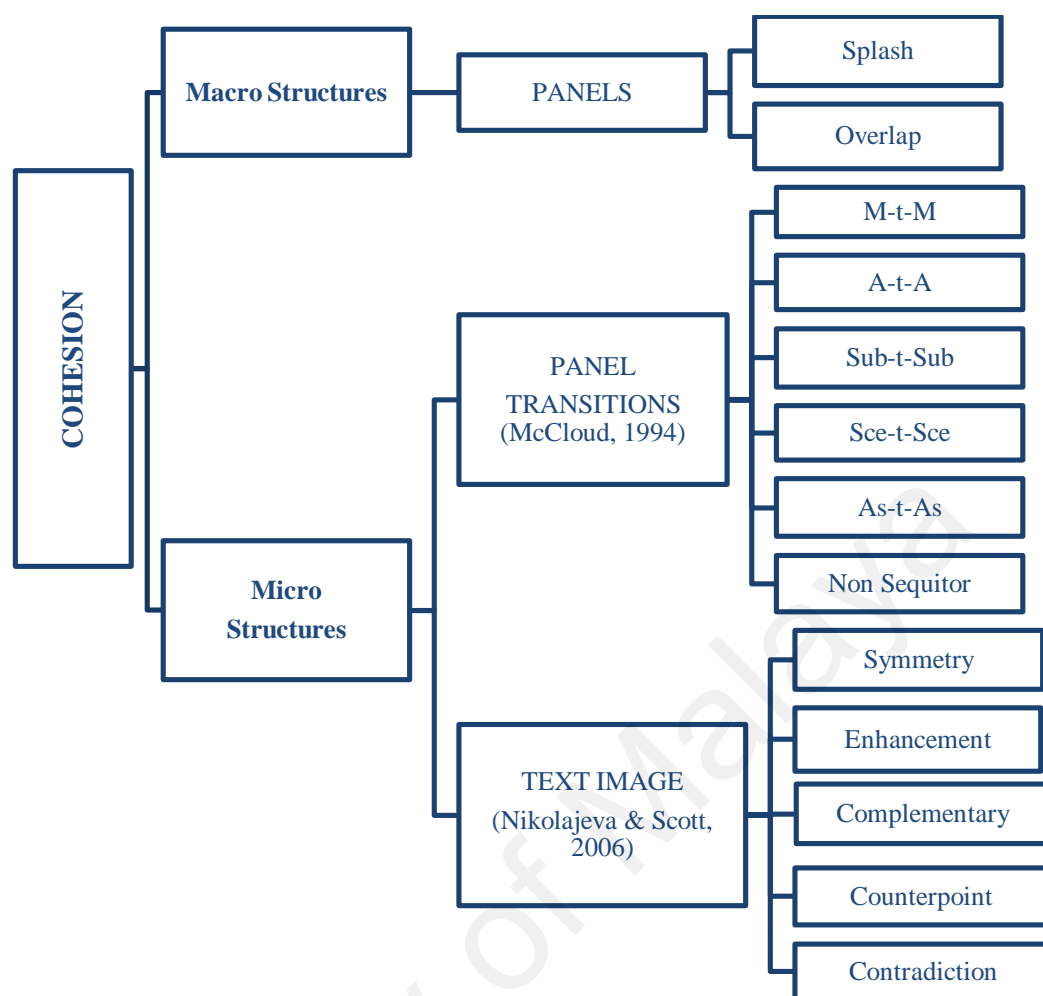
**Figure 3.46:** A Contradiction Text Image Interaction in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 49). ©Stone Arch Books.

Finally, Figure 3.46 represents a Contradiction TII as the caption “*Minutes passed, and then an enormous head shot up out of the water.*” The image contains no head of either sea creatures and as such, readers have to establish a connection that such an event would eventually take place.

The discussion above on how TII is established reveals that the element of cohesion is important in structuring the continuity of meaning between these texts and images in the graphic novels. What is also crucial is the reader’s own knowledge which is related to context and experience in comprehending these novels wholly, thus ensuring cohesion within these novels.

### **3.6.3 The Detailed Conceptual Framework of Cohesion Analysis**

Figure 3.47 illustrates the detailed conceptual framework of cohesion analysis based on macro and micro structures of the graphic novels. More importantly, the macro structures concentrate on panel layouts specifically the layouts which encompass splash pages and overlap pages. Conversely, the micro structures analysis investigates inter-panel cohesion and text image cohesion within panels. The whole analysis is based on McCloud’s (1994) PtPT and Nikolajeva’s and Scott’s TII (2006).



**Figure 3.47:** The Detailed Conceptual Framework of Cohesion Analysis

Figure 3.47 presents the detailed conceptual framework for the analysis of cohesion outside and within the panels of the three graphic novels. The analysis focuses on panel splashes and overlaps; and transitions and interactions within the panels.

### 3.7 The Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks of the Study

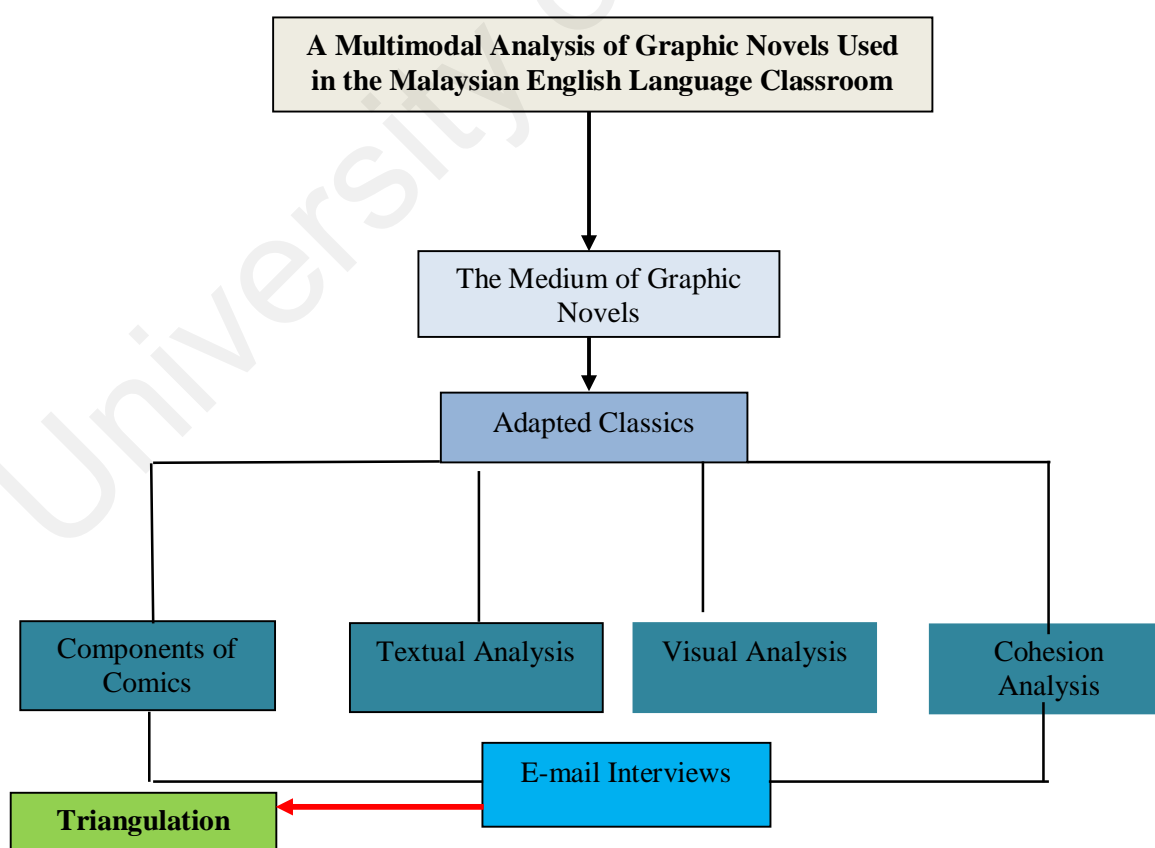
Table 3.13 summarises the key theoretical frameworks adopted in the analysis of the study.



Components of Comics Analysis	Textual Analysis	Visual Analysis	Cohesion Analysis
<i>Components of Comics Analysis</i>  of Eisner (1985, 2008) McCloud (2004) McKenzie (2005) and Okum (2005)	<i>Systemic Functional Linguistics</i>  of Halliday (1994, 2004)	<i>Visual Grammar</i>  of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006)	<i>Panel Layouts</i>  Splash & Overlap  <i>Panel of Transitions</i> of Scott McCloud (1994)  <i>Text Image Interaction</i> of Nikolajeva and Scott (2006)

**Table 3.13:** The Primary Theoretical Framework of the Study

Based on the theories and works propounded by various scholars as shown in Table 3.13, a primary conceptual framework for each question was adopted encompassing specific ideas within the larger theoretical frameworks as presented in Figure 3.48.



**Figure 3.48:** The Primary Conceptual Framework of the Study

The framework presented in Figure 3.48 is based on key theories and relationships among these theories to establish multimodality in graphic novels of the adapted classics genre namely *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. In addition, e-mail interviews were also conducted for triangulation and this is discussed in detail in Chapter 4. This framework represents and interprets the underlying theories of the study.

### 3.8 Summary

This chapter outlines the theoretical frameworks adopted in analysing the various elements of multimodality in graphic novels. The first framework focuses on analysing the components of comics in the graphic novels based on an amalgamation of theories and concepts proposed by Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (2004), McKenzie (2005) and Okum (2005). Halliday's (1994, 2004) SFL is used to analyse the textual components in the graphic novels using the SoT. The third framework is based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) VG and it aims to reveal the various visual components using the system of representation. Finally, the last portion of the analysis focuses on cohesion. The analysis is based on McCloud's (1994) PtPT and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) theory of TII, besides concentrating on splash pages and panel overlaps. This data is triangulated with information obtained from e-mail interviews of the writers and illustrators of the novels.

The following Chapter 4 presents an in-depth discussion on the methodology of the research.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“The goal is to understand the process,  
to see the process in the types and meanings of the documents under investigation”  
(Altheide, 1996, p. 43)

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology and discusses the elements involved in addressing the research questions. It also presents how the methodology intends to accomplish the aims of the study. Sapsford (2006) believes that methodology is “a philosophical stance of worldview that underlies and informs a style of research” (p. 175). Research methodologies include the design used in the study which consists of the strategies, instruments, data collection and analysis methods. It also explains the stages and processes involved in the study.

The chapter first outlines the philosophy that scaffolds the approach of the research and includes a brief discussion of the components of research like triangulation and validity in Section 4.1. This is followed by a discussion of the research design in Section 4.2 and a description of the data in Section 4.3. The discussion on instruments is presented in Section 4.4. Section 4.5 touches on the pilot study conducted on one selected text. This is followed by an outline of the procedures for data collection which is found in Section 4.6 while a discussion of how data is analysed is covered in Section 4.7. The chapter ends with a summary in Section 4.8.

The data obtained from the three graphic novels was analysed based on theoretical frameworks grounded in the works of various scholars. First, the theoretical framework

for the comics component analysis that make up the graphic novels is based on the works of Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (1994), McKenzie (2005) and Okum (2005). Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar (hereafter VG) outlines the framework for analysing the visual elements present in the novels and Halliday's (1994, 2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) is used in analysing textual elements. Finally, the cohesion analysis is based on McCloud's (1994) Panel to Panel Transitions (hereafter PtPT) and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) Text Image Interaction (hereafter TII) frameworks. In addition, the positions of splash pages and overlap panels were also taken into consideration for the analysis of cohesion. All these data were further enriched with data obtained from e-mail interviews with both the illustrators and writers of the graphic novels and an official from the MOE of Malaysia.

#### **4.1 Research Philosophy**

A philosophical perspective in underpinning the research methodology is crucial in providing standards in conducting a research. Such standards are known as a paradigm and this is pertinent in providing ontological, epistemological and methodological groundings to a research. McBurney and White (2007) label a paradigm as "a set of laws, theories, methods and applications that form a scientific research tradition" (p. 24). Conversely, Bogdan and Biklen (1992) describe it as a "loose collection of logically held together assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research" (p. 33). These definitions indicate that a paradigm is a worldview which sets the boundaries and provides the intellectual structure to scaffold a research. Though Rossman and Rallis (2012, p. 45) highlight four different paradigms (positivism, interpretivism, critical humanism and critical realism), the two primary paradigms are

positivism and interpretivism. Table 4.1 summarises the common characteristics for both research paradigms.

**Table 4.1:** Characteristics of Positivist and Interpretivism Research Paradigms

Characteristic	Positivist Paradigm	Interpretivism Paradigm
Method	Quantitative	Qualitative
Beliefs	Objectivist (one truth exists)	Subjectivist (many truths and realities)
Basis of data	Scientific (measurable)  Deductive	Humanistic (descriptive and explanatory) Inductive

The research philosophy chosen for the study is grounded in the philosophy of interpretive research, thus adopting a qualitative research methodology. Nevertheless, the quantitative paradigm which provides statistical evidence is utilised to provide an in-depth and convergent analysis of the data. In addition, as the validity of results using qualitative methodology maybe questioned, triangulation is imperative to mitigate this problem and to provide a multidimensional understanding.

## 4.2 The Research Design

This research is based on the content analysis of three graphic novels which are from the genre of adapted classics. For Bell (2008), “the materials analysed by means of content analysis may be visual, verbal, graphic, oral – indeed, any kind of meaningful visual/verbal information” (p. 14-15) and further adds that these elements can be further broken down into “constituent elements” (p. 15). This notion supports Duncan and Smith (2009) who argue that “a systematic content analysis allows researchers to lay some claim to a better understanding of the trends presented within the content of the medium’s messages” (p. 283).



**Table 4.2:** Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Data Collection and Types of Data  
(adapted from Cresswell, 2012, p. 549)

Quantitative Research		Qualitative Research	
Methods of Data Collection	Data	Methods of Data Collection	Data
Analysis of Graphic Novels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component analysis</li> <li>• Visual analysis</li> <li>• Textual analysis</li> <li>• Transition and interaction analysis</li> </ul>	Numeric scores	Open-ended interviews (E-mail Interviews)  Discussion of component, visual, textual and cohesion analyses	Text data from transcribed interviews  Data from graphic novels

#### 4.2.1 Triangulation

The term triangulation in social research represents the employment of a few procedures to draw out a total picture of a phenomenon. According to Foster (2006), triangulation brings “more than one method or researcher or source of information to bear on the same area of investigation” (p. 92). Triangulation as a form of respondent validation, ensures the problem of biasness and validity can be mitigated. Triangulation also improves the accuracy of a certain judgement as different data are collated for the same phenomenon. The practice of corroborating results from different data is crucial to gather multiple perspectives to confirm validity.

In this study, data obtained from electronic interviews are used to increase the richness, validity and reliability in producing convergent evidence. This is also important in extrapolating the final outcome of the study.

#### 4.2.2 Validity and Credibility

The issue of validity was dealt by first triangulation, in which multiple sources of data and multiple methods were used to confirm findings to assure that the information from various sources were consistent. Data was collected from multiple sources (illustrators, writers and an MOE official) through email interviews and from the graphic novels. This method clearly enabled the data to be verified.

The second method in ensuring validity and mitigate biasness was by using co-raters. The two co-raters were selected based on their expertise in the area of linguistics. Samples of data were analysed concurrently and discrepancies were discussed and moderated to mitigate problems in analysis. In addition, agreements were reached upon specifically on terming and labelling the various elements that make up the conventions of comics, the SoT, VG, PtPT and TII. The two co-raters were requested to look into the analysis of the data specifically the labelling of the different components of comics, analysing transitivity in textual data, analysing representational elements in visual data and cohesion analysis based on splash and overlap panels, transitions and interaction within panels. Babbie (2013) asserts that:

“...the concreteness of materials studied in content analysis strengthens the likelihood of reliability. You can always code your data and then recode the original documents from scratch” (p. 177).

This assertion definitely supports the very act of using co-raters in assessing and commenting on the study's analysis.



### 4.3 Description of the Data

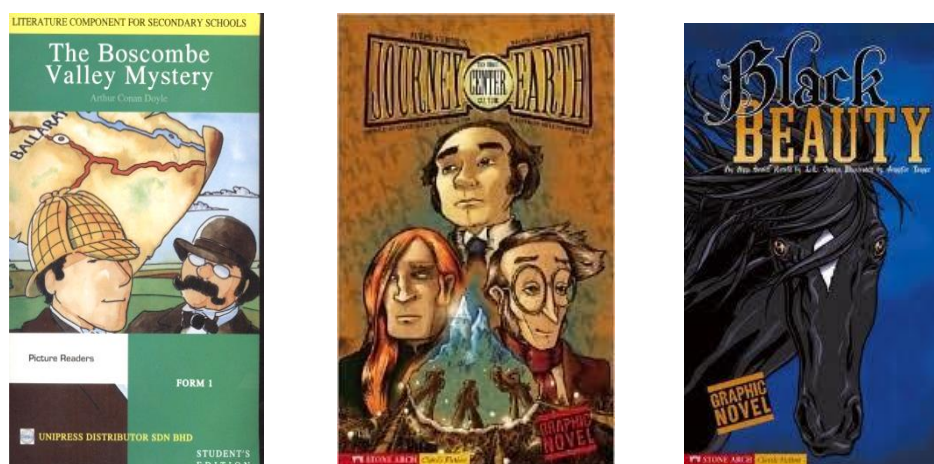
The following section describes the data used in the research. The first set of data was derived from the three graphic novels used in the Malaysian schools while the second set of data was obtained from email interviews administered on the writers and illustrators of the graphic novels. In addition, data was also obtained from an official from the MOE. The coalescing of these sets of data was able to produce in-depth and rich findings. Though quoted in relation to case studies, Merriam's (2009) view that "formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development; the force of a single example is underestimated" (p. 53) clearly resounds in this study as only three graphic novels were used to elicit descriptive case specific results that provides pertinent insights on the genre of adapted classics.

#### 4.3.1 The Texts

The three graphic novels used in the analysis of this study were:

- a) The Boscombe Valley Mystery (hereafter *TBVM*)
- b) Journey to the Centre of the Earth (hereafter *JttCotE*)
- c) Black Beauty (hereafter *BB*)

It must be stressed here that these were the only three graphic novels used in Malaysian schools during the first cycle (2010-2014) of the teaching of the literature component. Figure 4.2 on the following page illustrates the front covers of the three novels used in the study.



The Boscombe  
Valley Mystery

Journey to the Centre  
of the Earth

Black Beauty

**Figure 4.2:** A Montage of the Covers of the Three Novels

The bibliographic details of these graphic novels are featured in Table 4.3. It must be stressed here that there was no mention of the illustrator of *TBVM* in any of the pages of the novel.

**Table 4.3:** Bibliographic Information of the Novels

Title of Graphic Novels	Author	Retold By	Illustrator	Publisher	Pages
Journey to the Centre of Earth	Jules Verne	Davis Worth Miller / Katherine Mclean Brevard	Greg Rebis	IMS Trading (2010)	65
Black Beauty	Anna Sewell	L.L Owens	Jennifer Tanner	IMS Trading (2010)	63
The Boscombe Valley Mystery	Arthur Conan Doyle	Terry Tomscha / Peggy Albers	Not mentioned	Unipress Distributor Sdn. Bhd. (2009)	79

The three graphic novels were also assigned by the MOE to different states in Malaysia as shown in Table 4.4. This means that students in the respective states only used the assigned graphic novel in their literature classes.

**Table 4.4:** Assignments of Novels in Malaysia

<b>Title of Graphic Novels</b>	<b>States Assigned To</b>
Journey to the Centre of Earth	Johor, Pahang, Terengganu, Sabah, Sarawak, Wilayah Persekutuan Labuan
Black Beauty	Perlis, Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, Kelantan
The Boscombe Valley Mystery	Selangor, Wilayah Persekutuan (Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya), Negeri Sembilan, Melaka

Table 4.4 lists out the distribution of the assigned novels to different states in Malaysia.

### **4.3.2 The Synopsis**

In the subsequent sections, a summary of all three graphic novels and their plots are presented to provide an understanding of the narrative structure of the novels.

#### **4.3.2.1 Black Beauty**

As an autobiography of a horse, the story is narrated by a horse named Black Beauty. It traces his early years with his mother Duchess as a happy colt. He was treated with much affection and respect. In his later years, he was passed to one owner to another. Illness and despair soon became a crucial part of his life. The characters he interacted with in the course of his life, both humans and horses exposed him to the vulnerability of life. Black Beauty experiences the kindness of some people and the mistreatment of others all through his life. The novel tells the stories of horses which are well cared off and those which are mistreated. These mistreatments include the beating of horses by their owners, the pulling of overloaded wagons, the wearing of bearing reins and the *docking* (cutting short) of tails to improve appearances. Black Beauty's hardship and sufferings finally comes to an end when he finds a new home with kind-hearted masters. In short, the novel is a recount of episodes of kindness, hardship, cruelty and mistreatment of horses.

The main theme of cruelty is deeply embedded in this novel through the many events. In addition, other themes like kindness, friendship and perseverance are also conspicuous in the narrative. The main characters of horses in the novel are Black Beauty, Duchess (his mother), Merrylegs, Ginger, Max and Captain. The human characters are Farmer Grey, Squire Gordon, Jerry Barker and Farmer Thoroughgood who were his owners. The coachmen are John, Little Joe Green and Mr. York and James, the stable boy.

### **The Plot**

#### **Exposition**

- Black Beauty lives happily in Farmer Grey's farm with his mother and friends
- He is sold to Squire Gordon

#### **Rising Action**

- He stays in Birtwick Park for three years
- His good friends are Merrylegs and Ginger
- Unfortunately Mrs Gordon is taken ill and the Gordons move out to a warmer place to live
- Black Beauty is sold off to the owner of Earls Hall Park
- Here, he is forced to check rein which causes much pain

#### **Climax**

- Using a loose horseshoe, Black Beauty is injured when Reuben Smith takes him on a dangerous ride
- Smith dies during a tragic fall and Black Beauty injures his knees

#### **Falling Action**

- Black Beauty is sold off again
- He becomes a cab horse again and Jerry, the cab owner treats him kindly

- Life as a cab horse is difficult having to work in harsh conditions
- Black Beauty is seen unfit after three years and sold off at a fair

#### Resolution

- Farmer Thoroughgood buys him
- He meets Joe, his old groom from the days at Squire Gordon's farm
- He is well treated and loved
- He finally leads a happy life

#### **4.3.2.2 Journey to the Centre of Earth**

As a science fiction and a fantasy novel, *JttCotE* explores the unusual expedition undertaken by two Germans; Professor Lidenbrock and his nephew Axel, and their Icelandic guide, Hans. The journey was initiated after Axel deciphers the code detailing the journey to the centre of the earth. This code was encrypted in a message written by Arne Saknussemm which was discovered by Lidenbrock. Soon they head to Iceland and hire Hans who lead them to the extinct volcano named Snaefells. From here onwards, they head downwards through a crater into the vast series of geological layers beneath the Earth's surface. Determined throughout the journey, Lidenbrock is obsessed in accomplishing his goal while Axel spends a lot of time worrying about real and imaginary dangers. Hans, on the other hand, carries out Lidenbrock's instructions faithfully. From a huge subterranean world with plants and animals, to electrical storm and an extensive body of water as large as the Mediterranean, their treacherous journey is enveloped with a series of misadventures and rollercoaster thrills. Finally, they are blown up through a caldera to Stromboli in the Lipari Islands near Sicily through a volcanic eruption. All three of them return home as heroes in the end. Lidenbrock becomes famous and Axel marries his sweetheart, Gretchen.

The themes embedded in this novel are making choices, loyalty and seeking knowledge. It also includes the spirit of adventure and exploration. The themes of the wonders of the human mind and of Science are also evident in the novel. The main characters of the novel are Otto Lidenbrock (a professor), Axel Lidenbrock (the professor's nephew), Han Bjelke (the guide), Arne Saknusemm (a famous Icelandic) and Gretchen (Axel's girlfriend).

## **The Plot**

### **Exposition**

- Professor Lidenbrock and his nephew, Axel decode a written message by a famous Icelandic explorer, Arne Saknusemm
- Saknusemm describes his journey to the centre of the earth and how he accomplished it
- The Professor insists Axel accompanies him in his adventure
- Axel is reluctant to leave his beloved Gretchen but follows his uncle
- They travel by ship for ten days to Iceland
- There, the uncle hires Hans Bjelke as their guide
- On Monday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, after ten days, the group reach the top of Mount Sneffell
- The shadow of the sun exposes the crater they should descend

### **Rising Action**

- They descend to the bottom of the pit
- Coming across to two tunnels, the Professor chooses the one on the right
- Traversing the underground for several days, they run out of water and realise they are on the wrong track after coming to a dead end
- Axel collapses
- They then continue to descend into the other tunnel and come across a clear white chamber

- Hans discovers an underground river
- The professor succeeds in estimating their position and location
- Axel regains consciousness and finds himself alone
- He retraces his steps but becomes lost

#### Climax

- Axel is finally reunited with his uncle and Hans
- They come across the Lidenbrock Sea
- They also discover a forest of giant mushrooms
- They come across gigantic trees and a skeleton of a mastodon
- The Professor decides to cross the ocean and Hans builds a raft from giant reeds
- As they leave the shore, they name it Port Gretchen
- A fish is caught and they realise it is from a prehistoric era
- Soon, two huge sea monsters surface and they fight among themselves
- A storm hits the sea and the waves carry them back to Port Gretchen

#### Falling Action

- They explore the coastline and find a blocked passageway which has been marked by Saknussemm
- They plan to blast the passage
- They discover a bottomless pit beyond the rock fall and not a passage to the centre of the earth
- After hours being swept along on their raft, the raft ends up inside a volcanic chimney
- The water and magma eject them to the surface through the stifling heat
- When they come to, they realise they have been ejected from an active volcano on the Isle of Stromboli

### Resolution

- They learn from a young boy that they are on the island of Stromboli in Italy
- They have entered through one volcano and came out from another., located 3,000 miles apart
- They finally return to Hamburg after 4 months of adventure and were treated like heroes

#### **4.3.2.3 The Boscombe Valley Mystery**

A mystery genre, *TBVM* starts with Dr. Watson reading a telegram from his friend, Sherlock Holmes who mentions a murder mystery. Holmes relates to Dr. Watson about the murder during their train journey to Boscombe Valley to solve the mystery. Nevertheless, Holmes feels suspicious of the outcome of the case and pinpoints something just doesn't seem right. Soon, both men begin their investigation on the horrid death of Charles McCarthy, a tenant of John Turner, the largest landed proprietor in the area. Both Turner and McCarthy met by chance in Australia years ago. Coincidentally, Turner once robbed a stagecoach full of gold and McCarthy happened to be the stagecoach's driver. He recognises Turner as the robber and goes on to blackmail him years later. McCarthy is supposedly murdered by his son, James, based on circumstantial evidences. Nevertheless, Holmes discovers contrasting evidences and also discovers a set of footprints. Holmes figures out that the perpetrator of the heinous murder is a man who smokes Indian cigar but he doesn't disclose the identity of the murderer. Soon Turner visits Holmes and confesses to the murder of Charles McCarthy, a bitter enemy from their days in Australia. In addition, James is forced to marry Alice, Mr. Turner's daughter to inherit Turner's wealth. James apparently objected his dad's desire the day his dad got killed. In the end, both Mr. Turner and Holmes reconcile and



agree to keep the case confidential. This decision is concluded for the sake of the innocent James and Alice Turner who both recently got married.

The major themes from this novel are the importance of wisdom, trust and the determination to discover the truth. Other themes include maintaining law and order, being knowledgeable. The main characters are Sherlock Holmes (a famous detective), Dr. John Watson (a medical doctor and Holmes' friend), Charles McCarthy (the murdered victim), James McCarthy (the victim's son), John Turner (a rich man from Australia), Alice Turner (James' girlfriend), Patience Moran (a witness), Mr. Moran (a witness), Mrs Moran (a witness) and Inspector Lestrade.

### **The Plot**

#### **Exposition**

- Sherlock Homes invites Dr Watson to solve a murder case in Boscombe Valley
- Charles McCarthy is found dead by his son James who was later accused of killing his own father
- Patience Moran saw both father and son arguing
- James mentions hearing the word 'Cooe' from his father and ran towards him
- James finds the father on the ground and his last word was 'Raaf'
- He refuses to divulge what both he and his father were arguing about

#### **Rising Action**

- Holmes and Watson meet Inspector Lester later meet Alice Turner who believes James is innocent
- Her father, John Turner and Charles McCarthy were friends back in Australia
- Alice reveals both James and his father were arguing about her as both she and James wanted to get married
- Holmes visits James in the prison

- Holmes later goes to Boscombe Pool to gather evidence
- He follows the footprints and finds the murder weapon
- Holmes discloses that the murder is a tall man who limps on his right leg and smokes Indian cigar

#### Climax

- Holmes reveals to Watson that 'Cooeee' is an Australian word and 'Raar' is the short form for Ballarat, a place in Australia
- The footprints he discovered belongs to a person who limps
- The murderer is also a left hander as he hit Charles on the left side of his head
- There were ashes of an Indian cigar which is usually smoked by rich people

#### Falling Action

- John Turner visits Holmes and confesses of killing Charles
- He confesses about his dark past as Black Jack of Ballarat and only Charles knew about it
- He moves to London to start a new life but is soon discovered by Charles who blackmails him
- Holmes asks John to write a confession letter to be used if James was found guilty
- If he is not, the letter will be destroyed

#### Resolution

- John passes away 7 months later
- James and Alice finally marry and Holmes destroys John's letter of confession

#### **4.4 Instrumentation**

There is only one type of instrument used in this study which is the interview that is exploratory in nature. The semi-structured interview explored a number of key questions related to the background of the writers and illustrators and also the production of these adapted graphic novels. The interview questions for both writers and illustrators were adapted from Stafford (2011) who interviewed Timothy Knapman (writer of the *Mungo* series of picture books) and Adam Stower (*Mungo*'s illustrator). The questions were selected based on their relevance in eliciting data on how writers and illustrators of adapted classics execute their tasks in producing the graphic novels. In addition, a similar type of interview was also administered on an official from the MOE to look into the background of the introduction of graphic novels by the ministry. The interview scripts specified for the writers, illustrators and MOE official are presented as Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C respectively at the end of the discussion of this thesis.

##### **4.4.1 Email Interviews**

An email interview is a computer mediated communication tool which allows data to be obtained from interviews administered in different parts of the world. The main purpose of the interviews is to elicit a deeper understanding of the inner minds of both writers and illustrators of the graphic novels where personal, professional development and ideological beliefs are enquired. Here, the interviewees' beliefs, attitudes and thought processes are also taken into consideration (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1996, p. 447). The data from these interviews are also able to provide accurate documentation for quotations and illustrations to support the interpretation of data. There are many

benefits of email interviews and a few advantages among the many posited by Meho (2006) are that they allow access to diverse research subjects and the inclusion of anecdotes of interviewees' through self-disclosure. These data also serves as a link between both quantitative and qualitative data of the text analysis and this underpins the discussion.

E-mail interviews were the preferred method with participants from the USA as a few did not have Skype accounts at the point of interview and overseas phone interviews are expensive. An official from the Ministry of Education (MOE) was also interviewed through e-mail as that was the way preferred by the interviewee rather than a face-to-face interview. It must be noted that as decisions from the MOE are collective, only one officer who is attached with the Curriculum Development Centre was deemed sufficient to partake in this study.

The type of interview chosen for the study was a semi-structured approach as this type of interview enables inherent flexibility in exploring the interviewee's views. Table 4.5 presents comprehensive details pertaining to the interviewees (illustrators and writers).

**Table 4.5:** Details of Interviews

<b>Title of Graphic Novels</b>	<b>Names</b>	<b>Designation</b>	<b>Status</b>
Journey to the Centre of Earth	Davis Worth Miller	Writer	Non-contactable
	Katherine Mclean Brevard	Writer	
	Greg Rebis	Illustrator	Contactable
Black Beauty	L.L Owens	Writer	Contactable
	Jennifer Tanner	Illustrator	Contactable
The Boscombe Valley Mystery	Terry Tomscha	Writers	Passed on
	Peggy Albers		Contactable
		No mention of illustrator	-

Table 4.5 shows that only the writer and illustrator of *BB* were available for the email interview. Both writers of *JttCotE* were non-contactable. However, the illustrator of *JttCotE* provided interesting and in-depth insights of the adaptation. The illustrator of *TBVM* was not mentioned in the book and one writer answered the interview questions offering detailed information on the production of the novel. An e-mail interview was also conducted with an official from the Curriculum Development Division (hereafter CDD) of the MOE to establish the reasons why the ministry decided to introduce graphic novels and the justification over the choices of the selected novels. Only one officer was interviewed as that was the condition set by the CDD.

#### 4.5 Research Stages

The research design which encompasses the stages of a research is a pertinent consideration before embarking on the process of conducting the research proper. The following discussion centres on the stages of the research design formulated for the study. As noted earlier, RQ1 is as follows:

**RQ 1: *What are the components of comics that constitute the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

This research design pertaining to RQ1 embraces a qualitative approach using an amalgamated Components of Comics Analysis Framework established through the works of Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (1994), McKenzie (2005) and Okum (2005). It encompasses five stages as shown in the Table 4.6. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out here that prior to analysing the data, the three texts were scanned as Word documents and the panels were labelled numerically for easy identification and analysis. These copies are saved as softcopies in CD forms which are attached at the end of the thesis

(refer Appendix E). Due to the large amount of images used in the analysis, this move is seen as a necessity to limit the number of pages of the thesis.

**Table 4.6:** Stages of Components of Comics Analysis

Stage	Description	Step
1	<b>The Identification, Analysis and Interpretation of Splash Page</b>	
	Counting and examining splash page choices	i
2	<b>The Identification, Analysis and Interpretation of Bleed</b>	
	Counting and examining bleed choices	i
3	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Components that Contain Textual Elements within Panels</b>	
	The classification of speech balloons * Round/Oval * Yelling * Rectangular * Mechanical * Thought * Expressive * Other	i
	The classification of captions * Bordered * Borderless	ii
	The identification and analysis of word type * Sound effect words	iii
	Counting and examining textual choices	iv
4	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Components that Contain Visual Elements within Panels</b>	
	The classification of panel shapes * Rectangular/Regular * Wavy * Jagged * Scroll shaped * Cloud like * Geometric * Circular * Other	i
	The classification of panel positions * Regular * Overlap * Split	ii
	The classification of panel shots * Extreme long shot * Medium shot * Long shot * Knee shot * Medium close-up * Close-up * Extreme close-up	iii
	The classification of panel background * Sans Background * Minimalist * Detailed	iv
	The identification and analysis of emanate	v
	Counting and examining visual choices	vi
5	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The interpretation and discussion of the configuration of splash, bleed, textual and visual elements in panels	i

As Table 4.6 indicates, there are five stages in the analysis of RQ1. The first and second steps are the identification, analysis and interpretation of splash pages and bleeds respectively. This is followed by the analysis and categorisation of the components that contain textual elements like speech balloons, captions and sound effect words individually in the following stage three. The fourth stage involves the analysis and classification of visual elements like shapes, positions, shots, background and emanata. Finally, these data are interpreted and discussed in the final stage.

The following section sees the stages in answering the first part of RQ2 which is as follows:

**RQ2(a): *How are textual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

The SoT as proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) is utilised to answer the first part of RQ2. The analysis is conducted in three stages as shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7:** Stages of Textual Analysis (adopted from Tan, 2008, p. 85)

Stage	Description	Step
1	<b>The Electronic Transcription of Data</b>	
	The processing of raw data into typed documents	i
	Sentence labelling	ii
2	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Data</b>	
	Transitivity analysis of sentences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The classification of each process type</li> <li>• The classification of participants</li> <li>• The classification of circumstances</li> </ul>	i
	Counting and examining ideational choices	ii
3	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The interpretation and discussion of the realisation of the textual components	I

Table 4.7 shows the three important stages of the textual analysis. The first stage is the transcription of data and their labelling at sentence level. This stage is followed by the transitivity analysis of the sentences. Finally the data is interpreted and analysed. It must be stressed here that the labelling is done at a sentence level and not at a clause rank level. This is due to simplification and easy understanding specifically during discussions. Rather than discussing at clause levels, sentence levels would be able to reveal a clearer comprehension.

The following discussion sees how the analysis to answer RQ2(b) is realised.

**RQ2(b): *How are visual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

Employing a qualitative approach, this research design is based on the VG espoused by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006). It concentrates on the Representation Process specifically the sub-processes of Narrative and Conceptual Processes. These processes were identified by the more dominant features of images to draw a conclusive parameter as the study itself offers an in-depth focus on various modes that construe meanings in graphic novels. This is also the reason why the analysis does not include a specific focus on Participants as this element is discussed in tandem with the Processes. Also, Speech and Mental Processes are not taken into consideration as speech balloons and thought balloons are prerequisites to the convention of graphic novels. Nevertheless, the very few Mental Processes will be discussed to justify their deployment in the novels, together with both Action and Reaction Processes. The research design encompasses four stages as shown in Table 4.8.



**Table 4.8:** Stages of Visual Analysis

Stage	Description	Step
1	<b>The Identification of Narrative and Conceptual Processes in Panels</b>	
	Counting and examining Narrative and Conceptual Processes	i
2	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Narrative Processes</b>	
	The classification of Narrative Processes * Action                      * Reaction                      * Mental	i
	Counting and examining narrative choices	ii
3	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Conceptual Processes</b>	
	The classification of Conceptual Processes * Classification                      * Symbolic                      * Analytical	i
	Counting and examining conceptual choices	ii
4	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The interpretation and discussion of the configuration of Narrative and Conceptual Processes	i

There are four stages in the analysis of the visual elements as depicted in Table 4.8. The Representation Process of VG is first categorised into Narrative and Conceptual Processes within the panels. This is followed by the analysis and classification of both Narrative and Conceptual Processes and their sub-categories respectively in both stages 2 and 3. Finally, these data is interpreted and discussed.

The following discussion denotes how RQ3 is answered in this study.

**RQ3:** *How is cohesion established among the multimodal components in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?*

This question is answered using a two pronged approach based on Kaindl's (2004, p. 183) definition of macro and micro structures to present a clearer parameter to investigate cohesion between and within the panels. At a macro-structure level, splash and overlap panels and their roles are focused upon in eliciting cohesion. The investigation focuses on random sampling in all three novels. The micro-structure level focuses on the pictorial elements (both textual and visual) elements within the panels concentrating on McCloud's (1994) PtPT and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) TII. The

research design encompasses seven stages as denoted in Table 4.9 on the following page.

**Table 4.9:** Stages in Cohesion Analysis

Stage	Description	Step
1	<b>The Random Selection and Discussion of Macro Structures in Realising Cohesion</b>	
	*Splash Page      * Overlap Panel	i
	<b>The Discussion of Micro Structures in Realising Cohesion</b>	
2	<b>The Identification of Panel to Panel Transitions</b>	
	The labelling of panels according to PtPT * Moment-to-Moment      * Action-to-Action * Subject-to-Subject      * Scene-to-Scene * Aspect-to-Aspect      * Non –Sequitur	ii
3	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Panels</b>	
	PtPT analysis of panels	i
	Counting and examining the transition choices	ii
4	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The identification of the configuration of transitions between panels	i
	The interpretation and discussion of transitions	ii
5	<b>The Identification of Text Image Interactions</b>	
	The labelling of panels according to TII * Symmetry      * Enhancement * Complementary      * Counterpoint * Contradiction	i
6	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Panels</b>	
	Counting and examining text image interaction choices	i
7	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The identification of the configuration of interactions between panels	i
	The interpretation and discussion of transitions and interactions	ii

The first stage in the analysis of cohesion involves the discussion of how cohesion at the macro level is realised through splash pages and overlap panels. Random samples are used to illustrate this type of cohesion from all three novels. This is followed by the realisation of cohesion through micro structures specifically panel transitions and text word interactions. Firstly, the six PtPT types of transitions are identified and labelled,

followed by the counting and examining of transition choices. Then, the identification of configuration of transitions between panels ensues. The different types of transitions are then analysed and discussed in the third and fourth stages respectively. The fifth stage involves the identification of the five types of interactions based on TII within the panels. These data is then analysed and classified in stage six and the final stage encompasses a discussion of the data.

To answer the research questions, the research stages above were planned in drawing out a comprehensive analysis of data. In discussing the analysis of data derived, this research supports the notion proposed by Creswell (2012) where constant comparative data analysis procedures draw on new information with existing theories and categories to verify new information elicited from the development of the research. A secondary source of data was supplemented by email interviews to explain issues in relation with the analysis. This move was conducted to triangulate the study. Table 4.10 lists out the data collection and analysis stages in administering the e-mail interviews.

**Table 4.10:** Stages in the Analysis of E-mail Interviews

Stage	Description	Step
1	<b>Designing the interview script</b>	
	Preparation of script	i
	Vetting by supervisor	ii
2	<b>Background Check on Writers and Illustrators</b>	
	Obtaining information on writers and illustrators	i
	Contacting writers and illustrators	ii
3	<b>The Administration of E-mail Interviews</b>	
	Forwarding e-mails and interview scripts	i
	Receiving e-mails and interview scripts	ii
5	<b>The Analysis and Classification of Data</b>	
	Identifying common and uncommon trends	i
6	<b>The Interpretation of Data</b>	
	The interpretation of data	i
	The extraction of data to support other analysis	ii

As shown by Table 4.10, the e-mail interview sessions administered on the writers, illustrators and an official involve six crucial stages that include the construction of the interview script, checking the background of the interviewees, the administration of the interviews and finally; the analysis, classification and interpretation of data.

## **4.6 Data Analysis**

The following discussion on data analysis will go in tandem with the research stages to give a clearer picture in understanding how the analysis will be conducted.

### **4.6.1 The Components of Comics Analysis**

The components of comics analysis involves five stages that scaffolds RQ1. The following section lists out these stages in detail.

#### **4.6.1.1 Stages of Analysis**

There are five stages involved in the research design to answer RQ1. The stages involved in the analysis of the textual component are listed below:

a) Stage 1: The identification and classification splash pages

This step sees the identification and analysis of splash pages and the data will be tabulated as seen in Table A in Appendix D (a).

b) Stage 2: The identification and classification of bleeds

This stage sees the identification and analysis of bleeds as depicted in Table B in Appendix D (b).

c) Stage 3: The Analysis and Classification of Components that Contain Textual

Elements within Panels (speech balloons, captions and sound effect word)

This stage incorporates four steps mainly:

i) The classification of speech balloons

The types of balloons typically used in graphic novels can be rounded, rectangular, thought balloon, expressive, yelling balloon, mechanical or others as denoted in Table 3.2 of Chapter 3. Table C in Appendix D (c) is the table to be used in listing the types of balloons used in the novels.

ii) The classification of captions

Captions will be identified as to whether they are bordered or borderless. Table D in Appendix D (d) represents how these captions are tabulated.

iii) The identification of sound effect word

For this element, the total amount of sound effect words inherent in each novel is counted to determine the number of words used. For example, a quick tabulation of sound effect words in BB shows there are 5 types of words which are SNAP, WHUMP, THUNK, KRAAACK and NEEIGH. Table E in Appendix D (e) represents the table for the number and types of sound effect words.

iv) Tabulating and examining textual choices

After a tabulation of the counts, the discussion focuses on components that contain textual elements.

d) Stage 4: The Analysis and Classification of Components that Contain Visual Elements within Panels

This stage involves five steps in the analysis of visual components within the panels of graphic novels which are:

i) The classification of panel shapes

The types of panel shapes can be rectangular, jagged, cloud like, wavy, scroll shaped or others. Table F in Appendix D (f) will denote the frequency of the different types of panels found in these graphic novels.

ii) The classification of panel positions

The three types of positions of regular, split and overlap. Table G in Appendix D (g) represents the table used to tabulate the types and frequency of occurrences.

iii) The classification of panel shots

The classification of shots are divided into extreme long shot, long shot, knee shot, medium shot, medium close-up, close-up and extreme close-up. Table H in Appendix D (h) represents the table used to tabulate the frequency of the different types of shots in the graphic novels.

iv) The classification of the background of panels

This category looks into the three main types of background which are minimalist, detailed or sans background. Table I in Appendix D (i) represents the table used to tabulate the backgrounds and their frequency of occurrences.

v) The identification of emanata

In this category, the usage of emanata in the novel will be tabulated as illustrated by Table J in Appendix D (j).

vi) Tabulating and examining visual choices

Once again, the analysis is tabulated and the different visual choices are revealed.

e) Stage 5: The Interpretation of Data

The final stage in the component of comics analysis only involves one step which is the overall interpretation on the representation of the conventions of comics in these graphic novels based on the earlier results and data,

## 4.6.2 The Textual Component Analysis

The textual component analysis answers RQ2(a) and the following discussions list out the three stages of analysis.

### 4.6.2.1 Stages of Analysis

As discussed earlier, there are three stages involved in the research design to answer RQ2(a). There are three stages involved in the analysis of the textual component. They are:

a) Stage 1: The Electronic Transcription of Data

This stage sees the execution of the analysis in two steps. The first step sees the processing of raw data into typed document as shown in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11:** An Extract of the Text in Captions and Speech Balloons

PAGE	PANEL	CAPTION	SPEECH BALLOONS
Chapter 1 My Early Home 1	1	My first home was with Farmer Grey. I can still picture his pleasant meadow and the pond of clear water.  I lived there with my mother, duchess. She was proud that we came from a long line of fine horses.	
2	2	One day while I was playing with the other colts on the farm – -she reminded me just how proud she was	Son, come here.

The next step in Stage 1 is the coding of raw material which involves the isolation of text into the different sentence levels.

The abbreviations denote the following: BB-*Black Beauty*; PG-Page; P-Panel; C-Caption; SB-Speech Balloon and S-Sentence. It must be stressed once again that the Transitivity analysis is done at a sentence level rather than clause rank level for simplification purpose. Each sentence is labelled numerically based on their sequence in the texts as shown in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12:** Labelling at Sentence Levels

BB/PG1/P1/(C) (the text)	My first home was with Farmer Grey. I can still picture his pleasant meadow and the pond of clear water. I lived there with my mother, Duchess. She was proud that we came from a long line of fine horses.
	▼
BB/S1/P1	My first home was with Farmer Grey.
BB/S2/P1	I can still picture his pleasant meadow and the pond of clear water.
BB/S3/P1	I lived there with my mother, Duchess.
BB/S4/P1	She was proud that we came from a long line of fine horses.

b) Stage 2: The Analysis and Classification of Data

This crucial stage involves the Transitivity analysis of clauses (this study looks into sentences as a whole to simplify the analysis) where Process types, Participants and Circumstantial elements are identified.

This stage encompasses three steps which are:

i) Transitivity analysis of sentences

This stage sees the Process, Participant and Circumstances type classified through Transitivity analysis of the labelled sentence. The analysis encompasses identifying Process Types, Participants and Circumstantial elements to determine the experiential meaning. As the graphic novel includes speeches, this will be termed as “Quoted”.



When it comes to a quote, it refers to the utterances of the sayers who can be animate or non-animate. Table 4.13 provides an example of how the clause *He quickly translated the document* is analysed.

**Table 4.13:** The SoT Analysis of a Sentence  
(example taken from data, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, p. 9)

BB/S1/P1/ (C) Sentence	He	Quickly	translated	the document.
Analysis	Actor	Circumstance: Manner	Pr:Material	Goal

ii) Counting and examining ideational choices

A qualitative descriptive analysis is conducted to elicit the experiential meanings in the graphic novel after the identification of Processes, Participants and Circumstantial elements. Nevertheless, a quantitative analysis which includes a frequency count and percentage calculation is administered to emphasise the preferred Processes, Participants and Circumstantial choices of the writer.

Tables K, L and M in Appendix D (k,l,m) illustrate how the data from the frequency and percentage count will be then produced, compared and calculated to analyse each element in all three novels.

c) Stage 3: The Interpretation of Data

This stage involves the interpretation and discussion of data obtained through a Transitivity analysis. This analysis is tied to the findings in Stages 1 and 2. This stage has two steps which are:

- i) The identification of the configuration of Process, Participants and Circumstances types
- ii) The interpretation and discussion of the realisation of the textual components

Nevertheless, the findings from the qualitative and quantitative analyses will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

### **4.6.3 The Visual Component Analysis**

The visual component analysis is based on VG and answers RQ2(b). The following discussion lists out the three stages of analysis.

#### **4.6.3.1 Stages of Analysis**

In analysing the visual components of the graphic novels based on Kress and van Leeuwen's narrative representations, four stages are identified:

a) Stage 1: The Identification of Narrative and Conceptual Elements (in Panels) of Representation

This stage only involves one step which is the identification of narrative and conceptual choices. The identification is based on the existence of vectors within the images. Those images with vectors are termed as Narrative Representations and non-vectorial panels are categorised as Conceptual Representations.

b) Stage 2: The Analysis and Classification of Narrative Processes

The following stage sees the analysis and classification of the sub-processes of Action, Reaction and Mental within the panels of Narrative Processes.

c) Stage 3: The Analysis and Classification of Conceptual Processes

This stage sees the step of classifying the various conceptual elements.

i) The classification of Conceptual Processes into sub-processes of Classification, Symbolic and Analytical Processes

ii) Counting and examining Conceptual Processes

Table N in Appendix D (n) denotes how the number of Narrative and Conceptual Processes and their sub-processes will be tabulated and analysed.

It must be noted that for the discussion of VG, all data and findings are subsumed in one table for easier reference. The associated panels which have been labelled make up the data. In addition, each book is discussed separately as the analysis is in-depth and includes many variables.

d) Stage 4: The Interpretation of Data

This stage involves the interpretation and discussion of data based on the visual analysis based on the findings of in Stages 1, 2 and 3. This stage comprises one step which is:

i) The interpretation and discussion of Narrative and Conceptual Processes

The findings from the qualitative and quantitative analyses will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

#### **4.6.4 The Cohesion Analysis**

There are two major stages in the analysis of cohesion that involves the macro and micro structures whereby cohesion is established through the focus on splash and overlap panels; panel transitions and word image interactions. It must be noted here that two co-raters were asked to analyse the novels for cohesion and discrepancies were moderated. The discussion then led to the fine tuning of the analysis to avoid biasness and sustain validity. More importantly, prominent features of images were focused upon to avoid confusion and enhance clarity for at times, there were cases of ambiguity.

#### 4.6.4.1 Stages of Analysis

Stages 1 to 3 provided an analysis based on PtPT while the following three stages look into cohesion from a TII point. The six stages are:

a) Stage 1: The Random Selection and Discussion of Micro Structures in Realising Cohesion

This stage sees the random selection of splash and overlap pages and the discussion pertaining to the realisation of cohesion in all three graphic novels.

b) Stage 2: The Identification of Panel to Panel Transitions

The step of identifying the panels according to PtPT involves the categories of Moment-to-Moment, Action-to-Action, Subject-to-Subject, Scene-to-Scene, Aspect-to-Aspect and Non-Sequitur. Table O in Appendix D (o) denotes the classification of PtPT into its different categories according to the ascertained novel.

c) Stage 3: The Analysis and Classification of Data

This stage involves the overall analysis of the data derived from the analysis of PtPT. The two steps involved are the PtPT analysis of panels and the tabulating and examining of transition choices.

d) Stage 4: The Interpretation of Data

This stage involves the interpretation and discussion of data based on PtPT analysis of the findings of Stages 1 and 2. Data was analysed inductively for salient themes or issues by qualitative methods expounded by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Patton (1990). Again, the findings from the qualitative and quantitative analyses will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

e) Stage 5: The Identification of Text Image Interactions

The step of identifying the type of text image interaction involves the categories of symmetry, enhancement, complementary, counterpoint and contradiction. This is depicted in Table P in Appendix D (p). For those panels void of any text, they are grouped into 'None'. In addition, the analysis is based on chapters and specific novels.

f) Stage 6: The Analysis and Classification of Data

This stage involves the overall analysis of the data derived from the analysis of TII. The two steps involved are the analysis of how texts and images interact within the panels and the tabulating and examining of the interaction choices. More importantly, choices pertaining to speech balloon-image interaction and caption-image interaction are looked into.

g) Stage 7: The Interpretation of Data

This stage involves the interpretation and discussion of data centred on the TII analysis based on the findings of Stages 1 and 2. The findings construe the qualitative and quantitative analyses that will be discussed in Chapter 5.

#### **4.6.5 E-mail Interview**

The analysis was further triangulated with the data from the analysis of interview scripts administered to various parties. These interviewees are the writers and illustrators of the graphic novels and a representative from the MOE. As mentioned earlier in Section 4.5.1, only one person was allowed to be interviewed CDD as a procedural requirement from MOE.

The three steps involved in this stage are:

- i) Sending out email interview questions to writers, illustrators and CDD officer
- ii) Transcribing the data
- iii) The interpretation and discussion of elicited data

These individual responses were analysed and categorised and subsequently triangulated with the earlier analysis of textual and visual components and interpreted to draw conclusions. Quotations from each of the interviewees were selected to support the views expressed by them. In addition, a cross analysis of the responses from both illustrators and writers is also established to avoid biasness and subjectivity (Patton, 1990).

#### **4.7 Pilot Study**

Prior to the analysis of the graphic novels, piloting of the research methodology frameworks were administered on the first chapter (Chapter 1: My Early Home) of *Black Beauty*. The earlier findings indicated problems with the reliability of data due to biasness as the study is qualitative and the analysis was conducted by the researcher only. This was mitigated with the inclusion of co-raters as indicated in Section 4.2.2.

#### **4.8 Summary**

This chapter outlines the research paradigm, methodologies, strategies and design administered in this study. It also includes the procedures, participants, data collection tools, data collection and analysis methods. It must be noted that the methods administered in any study is influenced by the needs and decision of the research investigation. The design for the present study is based on a qualitative method design.

Adhering to a descriptive and interpretative text analysis, both qualitative and quantitative methods are adopted. Frequency counts were undertaken to complement the qualitative data, thus providing answers to the research questions. The inclusion of quantitative procedures enables the optimal analysis of the collected data. In addition, triangulation was established through interviews to elicit an in-depth and wholesome discussion to answer the questions. Finally, detailed explanation was given as to the method and the statistical analyses used to process and analyse the data to answer the research questions.

The following Chapter 5 discusses the findings to establish the components of the conventions of comics through the representation of textual and visual elements in answering RQ1.

## CHAPTER 5: THE REALISATION OF THE CONVENTIONS OF COMICS

“Some of the most interesting, most daring,  
most heart breaking art being created right now,  
of both the verbal and visual varieties, is being published  
in graphic novels”.

(Grossman, 2003, as cited in Schwarz, 2004, p. 17)

### 5.0 Introduction

The objective of the current research in answering RQ1 is to examine how different multimodal components of the conventions of comics encompass textual and visual elements are represented in graphic novels of the genre of adapted classics. This is an important facet of the study because there is a need to establish how these conventions are represented in these adapted classics. An understanding of these conventions would be able to help Malaysian educators to exhaust the novels effectively especially in the English Language classroom. To date, there is yet any study that has specifically concentrated on the whole spectrum of the conventions of comics and why these conventions are represented in a particular way in graphic novels. This study intends to fill that gap particularly in the field of graphic novels based on the genre of adapted classics. This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the two major modalities that construct the three graphic novels analysed which are based on adapted classics. The two modalities which are textual and visual elements contribute to the multimodality of these texts. In addition, the elements identified are also pertinent for the discussion of how textual and visual elements are represented and how cohesion is constructed to construe meanings.



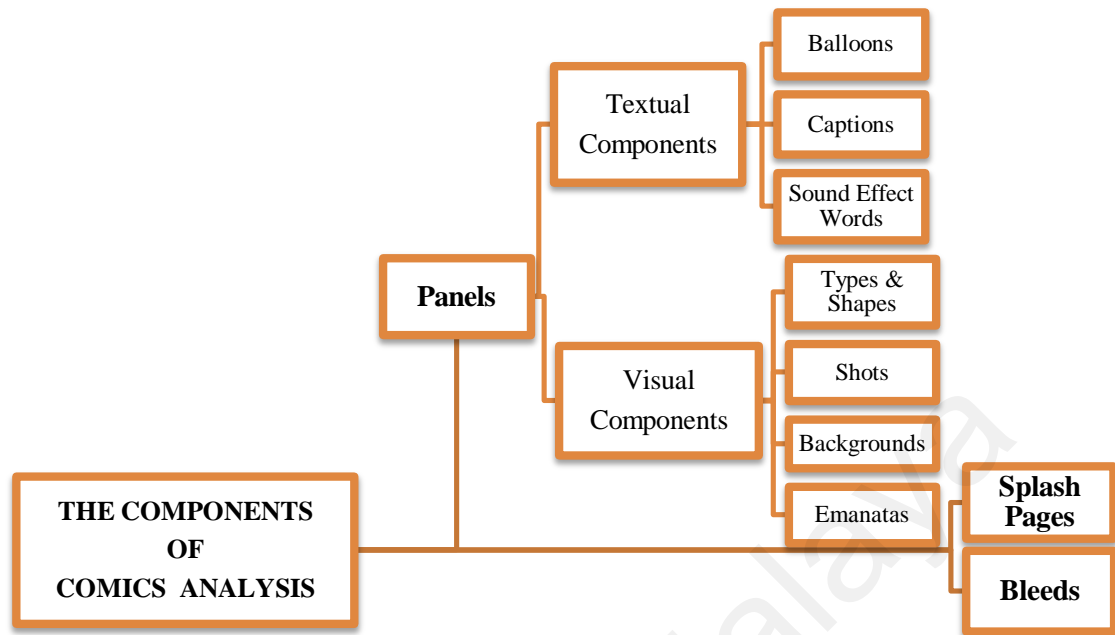
The chapter starts with an introduction in Section 5.0 followed by an overview of the background of RQ1 in Section 5.1. Section 5.2 discusses the compositional structure of the graphic novels. In answering RQ1, Section 5.3 focuses on the element of splash page while Section 5.4 concentrates on bleeds. The structures of components that contain textual elements of the conventions of comics are presented in Section 5.5 and its subsections. Similarly, the structures of components that contain visual elements are discussed in Section 5.6 and its subsections. The summary of the chapter is presented in Section 5.7

## **5.1 An Overview**

This chapter is dedicated to answer RQ1 through specific components of comics analysis of the research. It attempts to answer the following question:

***RQ1) What are the comics components that constitute the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

In analysing the data to answer this question, the page and the panels within the page are focused upon. The three main steps here were analysing the frequencies of splash pages, bleeds between panels and both textual and visual components of comics within the panels. In order to extrapolate the multimodal components, both textual and visual features were identified according to the framework in Figure 5.1 and the descriptors are summarized in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 respectively. The framework that scaffolds RQ1 is based on several works of comics experts namely Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (1994), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005). A comprehensive and detailed description of the framework is furnished in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3.



**Figure 5.1:** The Conceptual Framework of the Conventions of Comics Analysis

Figure 5.1 provides the conceptual framework in analysing the various components of comics in three graphic novels of the adapted classics genre. These novels are *Black Beauty* (hereafter *BB*), *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (hereafter *JttCotE*) and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (hereafter *TBVM*). The three main elements of the components of comics analysis are splash pages, bleeds and panels. Again, it is stressed here that both splash pages and bleeds are isolated from panels due to their unique features. Firstly, the elements of splash page and bleed are analysed and this is followed by an analysis of panels. Within the element of a panel, there is a further subdivision of textual and visual components. These specific components are important characteristics in the construction of panels.

Figure 5.2 on the following page denotes the types of textual components and their discussion revolves around their structural characteristics.

BALLOONS	CAPTIONS	SOUND EFFECT WORDS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Round</li> <li>•Rectangular</li> <li>•Fuzzy (thought)</li> <li>•Expressive</li> <li>•Yelling</li> <li>•Mechanical</li> <li>•Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Bordered</li> <li>•Borderless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Onomatopoeic Words</li> <li>*Direct</li> <li>*Associative</li> </ul>

**Figure 5.2:** Structures of Components that Contain Textual Elements in Detail

The three important components of analysis are balloons, captions and sound effect words. Round, rectangular, thought, expressive, yelling, mechanical and other types make up the shapes of balloons. Captions are either bordered or borderless. Onomatopoeic words can be either direct or associative. It must be noted that though sound effect words are not contained in receptacles like balloons and narrative boxes, this study identifies them as an important element of the conventions of comics and as such, is included in this analysis.

Pedagogically, an understanding of the conventions of comics ascertains a good dissection of the novels both textually and visually. As such, the inherence of these elements in graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics enables the unpacking of the elements of the conventions of comics effectively. Nevertheless, the linguistic representations of textual elements is also analysed through Halliday's SFL which focuses on clauses and this makes up RQ2(a) while RQ2(b) looks into the visual representations of the images through Kress and van Leeuwen's VG to give a better insight on the representations of meanings.

PANEL SHAPES & POSITIONS	PANEL SHOTS	PANEL BACKGROUND	EMANATA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Shapes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rectangular</li> <li>• Jagged</li> <li>• Cloud like</li> <li>• Wavy</li> <li>• Scroll shaped</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul> </li> <li>•Positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular</li> <li>• Overlap</li> <li>• Split</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Extra long shot</li> <li>•Long shot</li> <li>•Knee Shot</li> <li>•Medium shot</li> <li>•Medium close-up</li> <li>•Close-up</li> <li>•Extreme close-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•None</li> <li>•Minimalist</li> <li>•Detailed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Stand alone</li> <li>•Within balloons</li> </ul>

**Figure 5.3:** Structures of Components in Panels that Contain Visual Elements in Detail

Figure 5.3 denotes in detail the types of visual elements apparent within the panels. The four main components are shapes and positions, shots, background and emanata. Shapes of panels are either rectangular, jagged, cloud like, wavy, scroll shaped or other types of shapes. The positioning of a panel could be a regular panel which is the most common or either an overlap or a split. Extra long shot, long shot, knee shot, medium shot, medium close-up, close-up or extreme close-up are types of shots identified for the use in this study. In addition, the backdrop of a background is either sans background (none), minimalist or detailed. Emanata are either stand alone or within balloons. The following discussion focuses on the external compositional structure of the graphic novels.

## 5.2 The Compositional Structure

The understanding of the compositional structure of the three graphic novels is pertinent to determine the overall layout of the three novels. As prerequisites of a comic book or

a graphic novel, panels, balloons and captions make up most of the pages of the novels. As such, the following analysis looks into how the three graphic novels are compositionally laid out. Table 5.1 represents an overview of the total pages and the components of panels, balloons and captions evident in the three graphic novels.

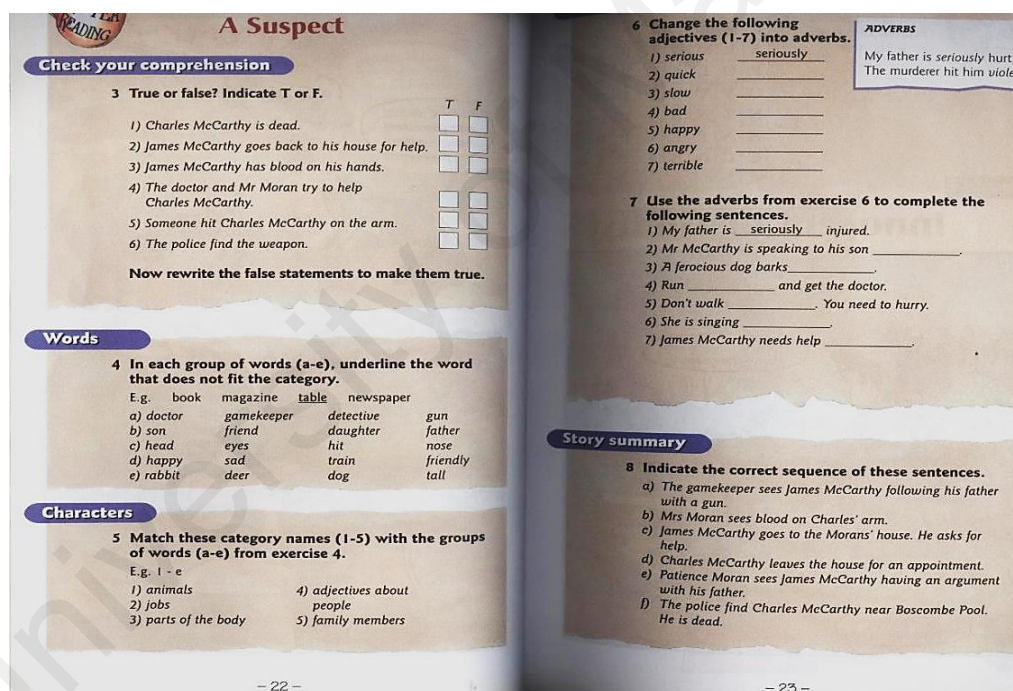
**Table 5.1:** Compositional Elements of the Three Novels

<b>Title</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Panels</b>	<b>Balloons</b>	<b>Captions</b>
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	4-63 (60 pages)	136	132	93
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )	4-65 (62 pages)	212	159	123
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	4-76 (73 pages)	111	238	18

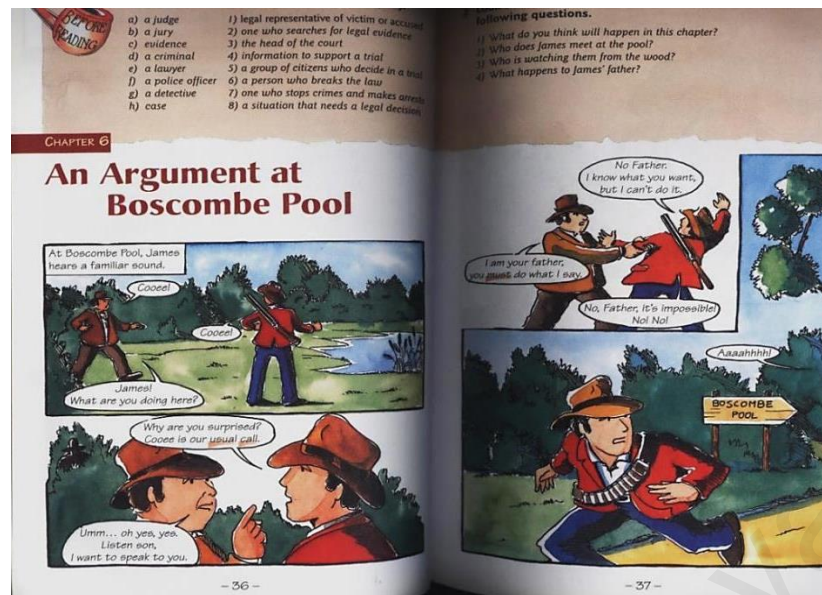
Table 5.1 represents the total number of structural elements for all three novels. The 60 paged *BB* contains 136 panels, 132 balloons and 93 captions. *JttCoE* on the other hand, is made up of 62 pages, 212 panels, 159 balloons and 123 captions. Though *JttCoE* is only 2 pages more than *BB*, the author and illustrator of the novel have included extra 76 panels, 27 balloons and 30 captions in the novel, indicating a variety which presumably accommodates a better narration of the original work. The use of a prevalent number of balloons and captions denotes much information is included through these receptacles and shows the importance of text in condensing the original texts. This data concurs with Versaci (2007) who posits that the added length of graphic novels helps “for the additional space gives the adaptors more room to stay true to the original story” (p. 199).

According to Cohn (2013b), a single image contains more information than an individual word and as such, the adoption of many panels in *JttCoE* shows that “the combination of images may be closer to the structure used between whole sentences: a narrative structure’ (p. 65). As an adaptation from a literary work, the inclusion of many

panels is necessary and crucial to condense the novels as closely as possible without neglecting important narratives from the original work itself. Conversely, *TBVM* carries 73 pages and contains 111 panels, 238 balloons and 18 captions respectively. Though *TBVM* contains the most pages at 73 pages, it must be noted that these pages are inclusive of exercise pages that have been inter-spread between the chapters. There are also instances where these exercises share a page with the narrative panels. As such, the consideration as a non-exercise page could not be labelled for such a type of page. Figures 5.4 shows a full page exercises while Figure 5.5 denotes a shared page exercises.



**Figure 5.4:** A Sample of Full Page Exercises in in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 22-23). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



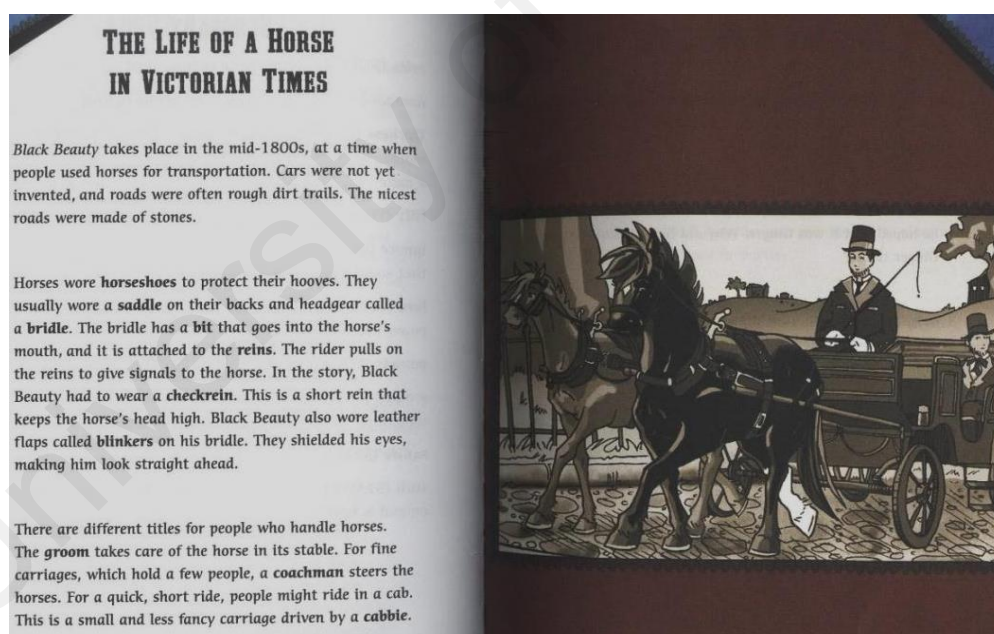
**Figure 5.5:** A Sample of Shared Page Exercises in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 36-37). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

All three novels also carry a one page introduction of the respective authors at the end of the book. This section is probably introduced to give background information of the original writers (Sewell, Verne and Doyle) which is pertinent to readers as these books are used in the English Language Literature Component classrooms. From the researcher's own classroom observations, readers are also able to understand texts better when they learn about these authors' backgrounds to a certain extent.

In *BB*, there is a page assigned for a short note on 'The Life of a Horse in Victorian Times' as shown in Figure 5.6. In addition, three pages are dedicated for Glossary, Discussion Questions and Writing Prompts. A similar layout is also seen in *JttCotE* where 4 pages are allocated for the sections 'More About Earth's Centre' as depicted in Figure 5.7 and for the sections of Glossary, Discussion Questions and Writing Prompts respectively. In short, it can be concluded that both *BB* and *JttCotE* embrace a similar layout unlike *TBVM* which will be discussed next. It must also be noted that both *BB* and *JttCotE* were published by Stone Arch Books, thus explaining the similar structural layout of panel pages, activities, fact pages and glossary pages.

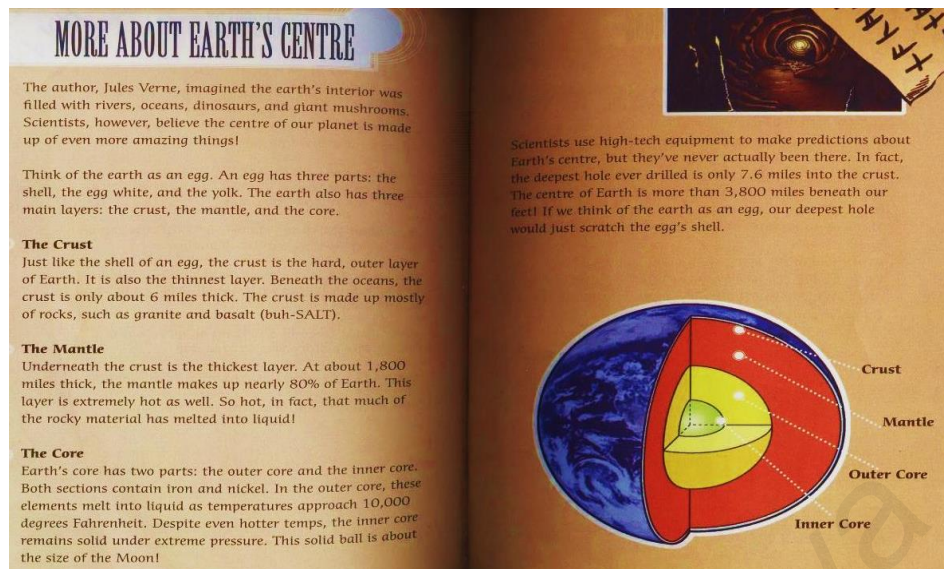


As this is the first time graphic novels are included in the Malaysian English Language curriculum, there are many possible reasons in these inclusions. In comparing these novels to Marvel's adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma* by Nancy Butler and Janet Lee (Marvel:New York, 2011) for example, *Emma* is devoid of any such inclusions. As an educator myself, it is clear that these books are meant for the classrooms and as such, activities are incorporated within the texts. Interestingly, all three novels have write-ups as shown in Figures 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8, denoting a stress on important facts connected to the stories. In addition, these fact pages provide readers with some background knowledge specifically for readers unfamiliar with the novels. These elements of differentiation clearly distinguish the graphic novels used in the Malaysian classrooms to the more traditional form of graphic novels readily available in bookshops.



**Figure 5.6:** Notes in *Black Beauty* (2010). ©Stone Arch Books.





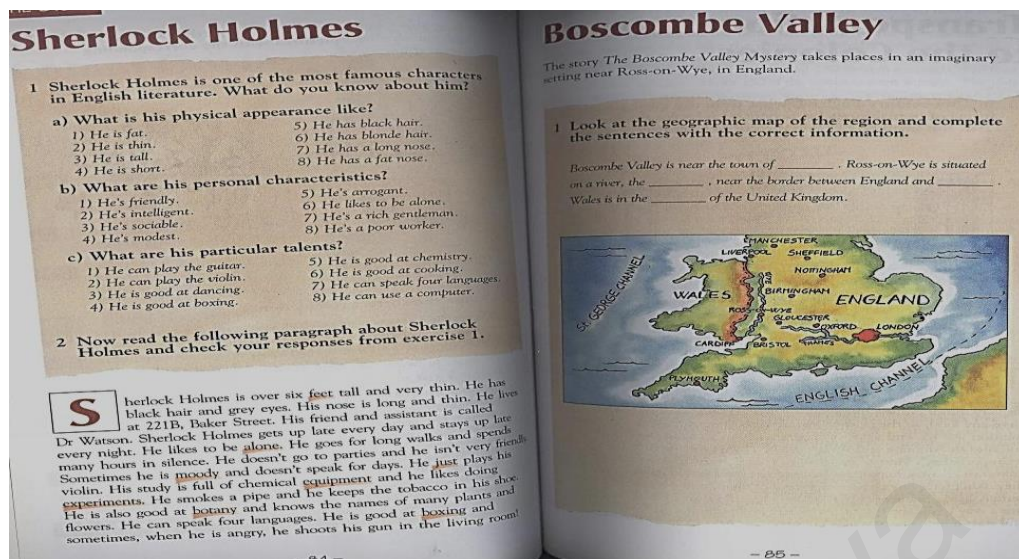
**Figure 5.7:** Notes in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* .(2010)  
©Stone Arch Books.

At this juncture, it can be argued that the MOE's acknowledgement of *TBVM* as a graphic novel is highly debatable due to the characteristics of the novel specifically the interspersed activities within its chapters. In addition, pages 82 to 96 contain a set of comprehension activities based on several short passages. It also must be noted here that the activities were not commissioned by the MOE but came originally published in the books. This is supported by the writer's affirmation in Extract 5.1.

#### Extract 5.1

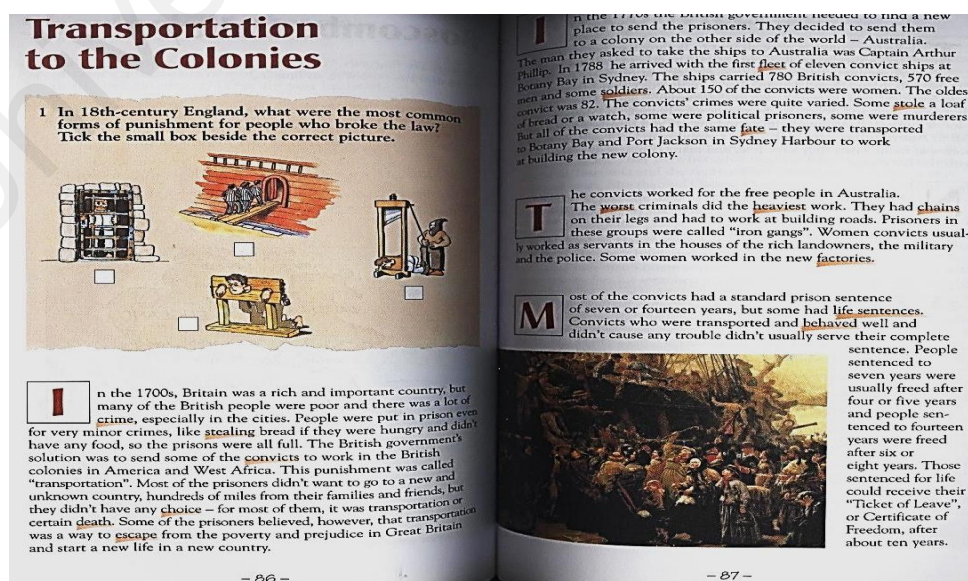
I wrote the adaptations and ..., who was more skilled at understanding English learners, rewrote the text to fit the syntactic structures that we wished to emphasize in these books. Both of us worked together *on the activities associated* with these books, and we each read and edited each other's work. (emphasis added)

Figure 5.8 on the subsequent page shows the two activities on pages 84 and 85 are atypical to comics and graphic novels.



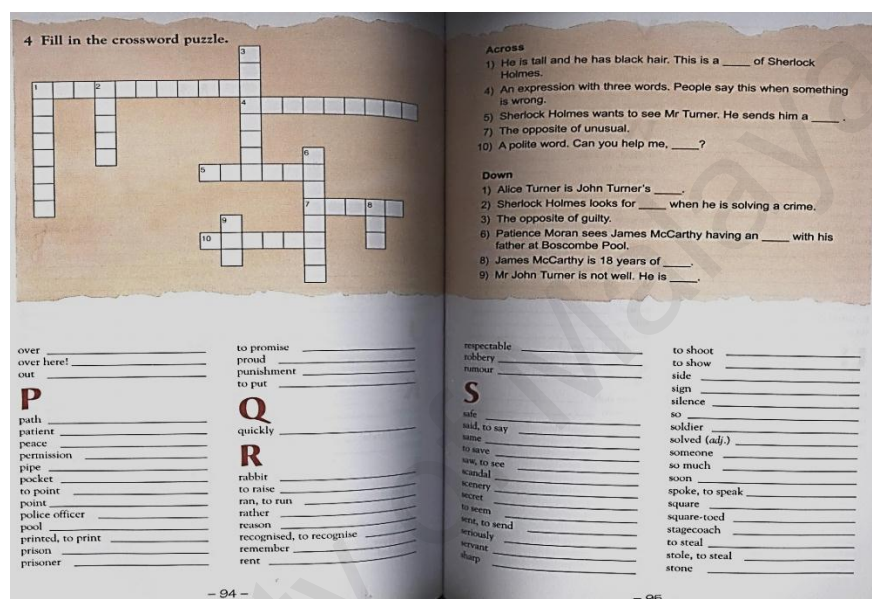
**Figure 5.8:** Notes on Sherlock Holmes and Boscombe Valley in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 84-85). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In page 84, the multiple choice questions are based on Sherlock Holmes while the close passage exercise on page 85 is focused on the map of the United Kingdom. These features are not a norm in graphic novels but are usually part of picture readers or illustrated readers. In addition, several pages are also allocated for extra information on certain subjects like transportation and convicts during the peak of the British Empire (pages 86 – 87) as shown in Figure 5.9.

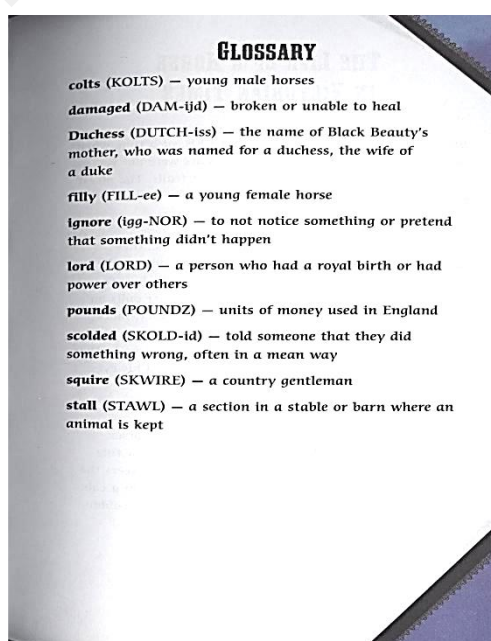


**Figure 5.9:** A Sample of Notes Pages in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 86-87). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In addition, a word glossary is included from pages 90-96 as shown in Figure 5.10. This word glossary differs from that of *BB* and *JttCotE*. In both these novels, the glossaries carry meanings and pronunciation guide as shown in Figures 5.11 and 5.12 respectively but in *TBVM*, the glossary only contains an alphabetical order word list without any definitions.

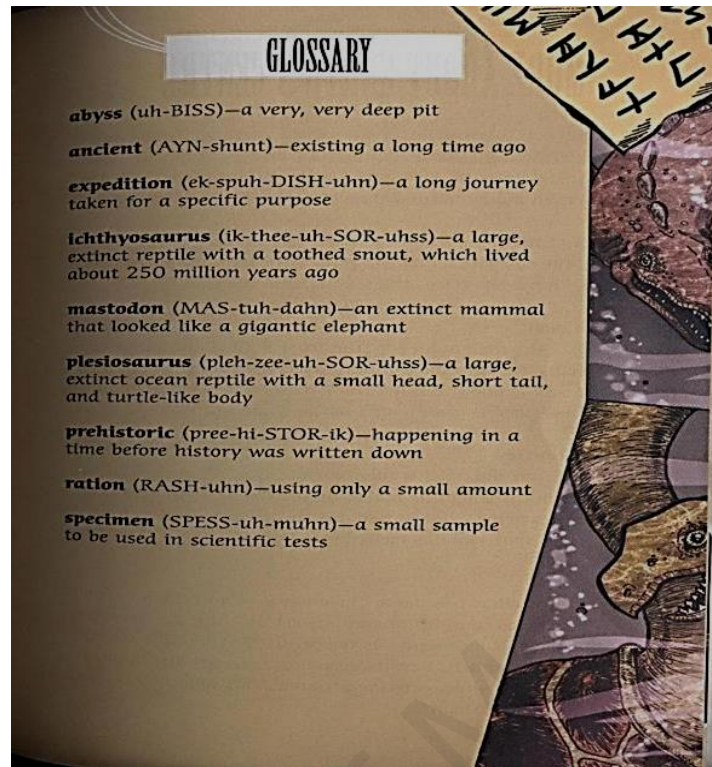


**Figure 5.10:** The Glossary Pages in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 94-95). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 5.11:** A Glossary Page in *Black Beauty* (p. 65, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.





**Figure 5.12:** A Glossary Page in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (p. 67, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

Though sections on notes and glossary are evident in both *BB* and *JttCotE*, they are devoid of any form of exercises like comprehension and vocabulary questions like those in *TBVM*. Again, such features are commonly found in many readers. The brief analysis on the additions in the novels reveals that all three novels do not adhere to common graphic novel conventions.

Nevertheless, these novels are termed graphic novels by the MOE of Malaysia. This is mainly due to the fact that these novels are used in the classrooms as texts to cater for the English language literature component, thus these graphic novels are more suitable for young readers. In addition, one of the major objectives of the introduction of graphic novels as an aesthetic component in the syllabus is “to promote the love for books and encourage the reading habit among pupils between the ages of 13 and 17 in secondary

schools”, according to the former Director General of Education, Alimudin bin Hj. Mohd. Dom (2010) in his foreword in all three graphic novels.

The following discussion will look into the analysis of various components and their representations in relation to the three graphic novels. It begins with two independent components which are splash and bleed pages that are analysed from a structural point of view. This study identifies both splash pages and bleeds as independent components because they are prominent features outside panels. The textual and visual structural elements inside the panels are analysed separately.

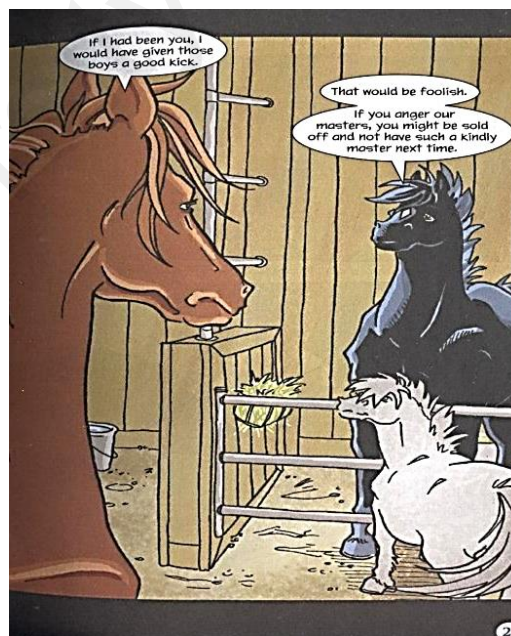
### **5.3 Splash Page**

A splash page is a full page of image and according to Okum (2005), it happens “when one or two large panels dominate an entire page” (p. 120). It must be ascertained here that a splash page is considered as a panel, as asserted by Okum (2005). In addition, a splash page is devoid of panels and the entire page is taken up by an image. Most splash pages are rich in details and they usually represent important episodes in a story or for emphasis. A Double Page Spread (hereafter DPS), on the other hand, covers a splash on two pages. On its purpose, Groensteen (2007) succinctly puts forth, “in a book in which all the other pages are regular, a page that is suddenly distinguished by a special configuration carries an extremely strong impact” (p. 97). This assertion supports the fact that such a page is meant to engage a reader into the action of the narrative. The total number of splash pages in all three novels is denoted in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2:** Number of Splash Pages and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Number of Splash Pages and Percentage	Related Pages
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	5 (8.33%)	21, 31, 35, 54, 63
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )	6 (9.68%)	38, 63 40 & 41, 50 & 51 (DSP)
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	1 (4.76%)	21

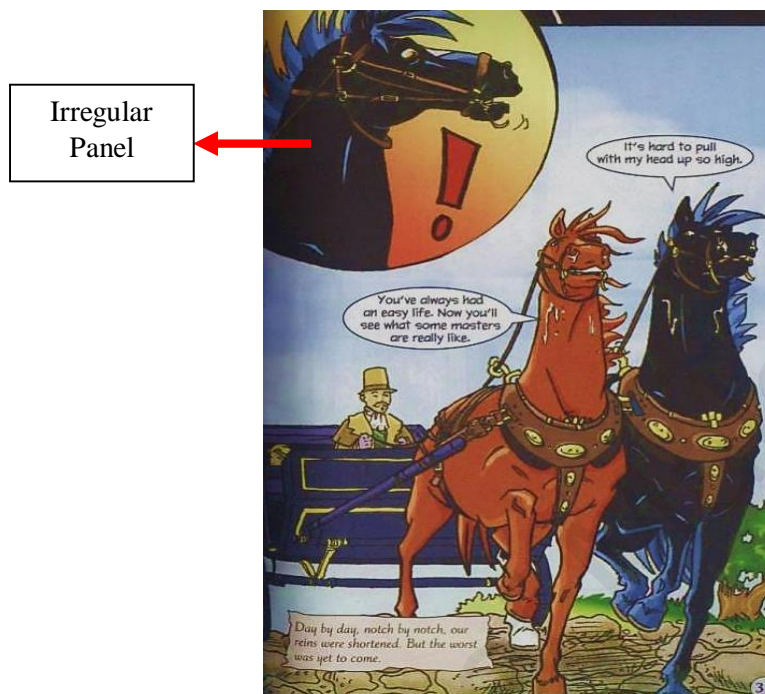
As indicated by Table 5.2, a total of 5 (8.33%) splash pages were illustrated in *BB* and one example is represented by Figure 5.13. In this splash page, Ginger advises her new friends Black Beauty and Merrylegs to retaliate if their masters illtreat them. Nevertheless, Black Beauty feels such actions are foolish and only warrants more misery. This splash page denotes Black Beauty's wisdom and resilience in overcoming tribulations, a focus on elements that construe the theme of perseverance.



**Figure 5.13:** A Typical Splash Page in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 21.) ©Stone Arch Books.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that at times the illustrator does not adhere to the actual convention of a splash as in page 31, denoted in Figure 5.14 where an irregular panel is

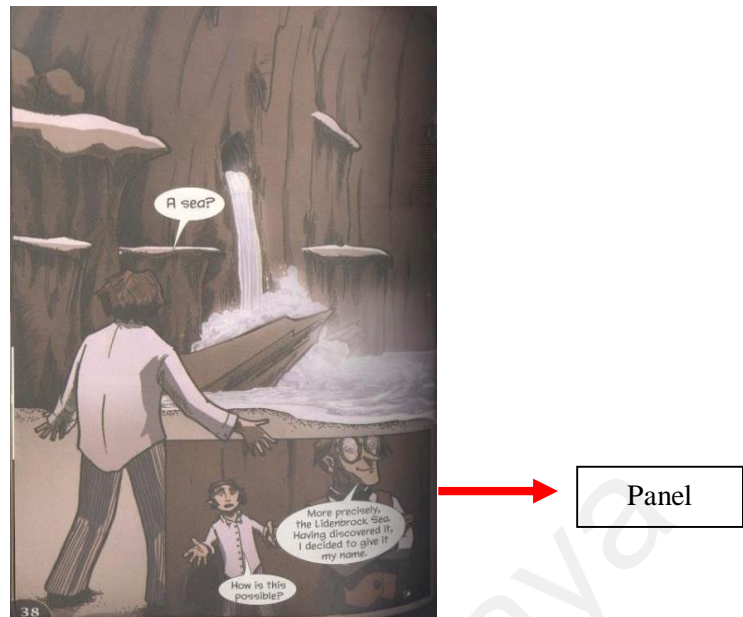
included within the splash page. This embedment suggests that at times there is a need to include other panels to further enforce events or episodes that contribute to the enhancement of the plot of the story.



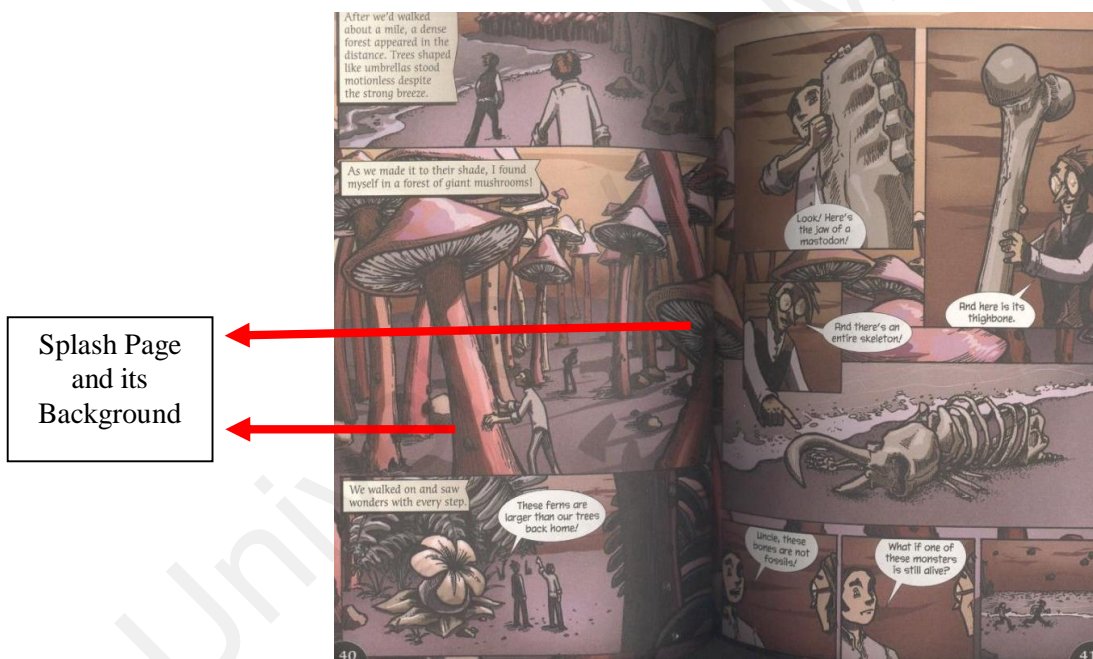
**Figure 5.14:** An Irregular Splash Page in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 31). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 5.14, the irregular panel shows a close up of Black Beauty in great pain. The inclusion of this panel within the splash panel or page suggests there is a need to emphasize the element of pain and misery suffered by Black Beauty as depicted in the panel. The other 4 pages in *BB* are regular splash pages.

Similarly 6 (9.68%) pages were splash pages in *JttCotE* in which there were two sets of double spread pages (DSP). 2 examples of these splashes are shown in Figures 5.15 and 5.16 respectively.



**Figure 5.15:** An Irregular Splash Page in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 38). ©Stone Arch Books.



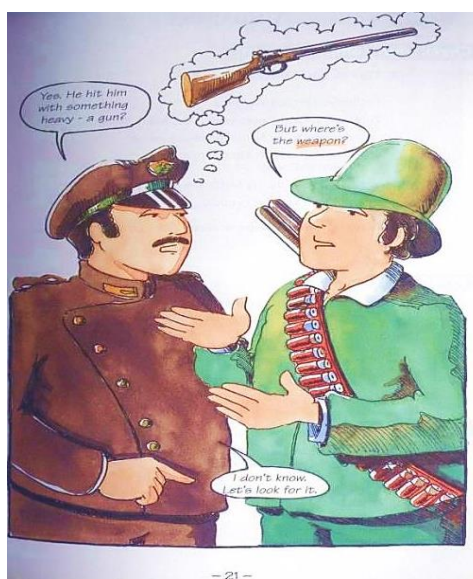
**Figure 5.16:** A Double Spread Page in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 40-41). ©Stone Arch Books.

Interestingly, the illustrator of *JttCotE* did not adhere to the common convention of a splash page by illustrating a full paged splash. Rather, all the splashes in *JttCotE* are irregular types. Figure 5.15 shows Axel's bewilderment of discovering a sea in the middle of the Earth and this discovery is further emphasized by naming it Lidenbrock



Sea by his uncle, Otto Lidenbrock. The embedment of a panel for this purpose designates this splash page as irregular. Pages 40 and 41 as shown in Figure 5.16 represent a DSP. The images of gigantic mushrooms serve as a background for the discovery of a living open space within the bowels of Earth. In addition, several panels are constructed within the DSP to prove the existence of dinosaurs. These embedded panels are also known as insets (Groensteen, 2007) and are introduced by the illustrator “to highlight a detail of his “picture”, similar to the effect of a cinematic zoom” (Groensteen, 2007, p. 88). Similarly the DSP on pages 50 and 51 sets the scene of the protagonists traversing through a thunderous storm as a background. This again is another important episode in the novel.

*TBVM* has only 1(4.76%) page out of the 73 pages reserved as a splash page as shown in Figure 5.17. Clearly, the illustrator of the novel has adhered to a simple layout focusing on panels rather than utilizing splash pages to accentuate important episodes in the story. Nevertheless, the only splash page in the novel shows the identification of the murder weapon used to kill Charles McCarthy, an important element in the story.



**Figure 5.17:** A Splash Page in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 21).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The use of splash pages in all three novels indicates that these illustrators have resorted to different techniques in presenting important and crucial episodes and events in all three stories. In *BB*, the illustrator had closely followed the actual convention of a splash page by adhering to full paged splashes of images rather than deviating from the norm except for one particular page as shown in Figure 5.14. On the other hand, the illustrator of *JttCotE* has used splash pages in a variety of layouts including that of a DSP. In addition, panels are also embedded in a few splash pages (insets). These panels and their images enable the reader to scan quickly to create an impression of speed and action.

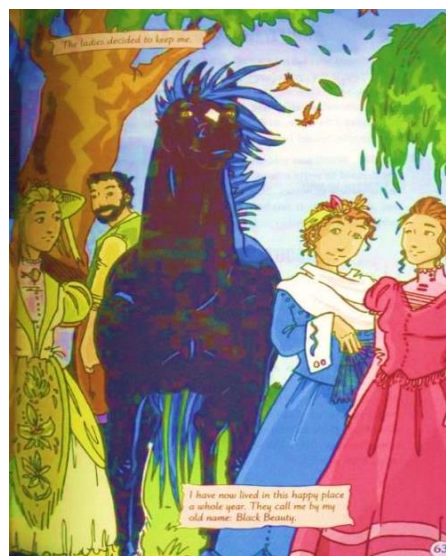
Clearly, the illustrator's choice of panels successfully speeds the narrative and stresses on the effects of determination, hope and courage in Verne's classic of *JttCotE*. In addition, the inclusion of several panels within a splash page creates a sense of unity within the background of the splash page. These insets add different extra details to panel layouts to elicit meanings. In *TBVM* on the other hand, the simplicity of the borderless splash page only concentrates on one major event – the identification of the murder weapon used to kill Charles McCarthy. What is apparent in *TBVM* is the limitation of variety from the illustrator who tends to favour simplicity and clear lines. This may be due to the fact that *TBVM* has been established as a reader or an illustrated story rather than a graphic novel by the author of the novel from the beginning as stated in the following excerpt:

Excerpt 5.2:

We did not write a book with speech bubbles—ours was an illustrated story. There is a difference between graphic novels and illustrated stories, ours was the latter.

As such, the conversion of the written narrative to a graphic novel was done by the illustrator after obtaining the text from the publishing house. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier, this study adopts the notion that *TBVM* is a graphic novel based on the acknowledgement from the MOE of Malaysia.

Though the illustrators have used different styles and illustrations of splash pages ranging from plain to intricate types, it is noted that they are pertinent to convey the original narratives as close as possible by ‘opening up’ (Versaci, 2007) the story. In addition, the illustration of these splash pages clearly supports what Eisner (2008) opines whereby “properly employed it seizes the reader’s attention and prepares his attitude for the events to follow” (p. 64). These types of pages denote the importance of transporting readers closer to the events thus influencing their positions as spectators (Eisner, 2008, p. 92). This type of pictorial structure also elucidates a sense of absolute order and fosters an aesthetic mystical quality. Nikolajeva and Scott’s (2006) term of “visual symbolism” (p. 140) that conveys messages and represents direct reality is evident in some of these pages as shown in Figures 5.18 and 5.19 respectively.



**Figure 5.18:** A Typical Splash Page in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 63). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 5.18, the symbolic representation of freedom and happiness is envisaged in that particular splash page of *BB*. Here, the happiness on the faces of Black Beauty's new owners is evident. In addition, Black Beauty's posture is straight up with his mane upright (probably due to shaking his head), indicating a sense of confidence in his new found freedom.



**Figure 5.19:** A Double Spread Page in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 50-51). ©Stone Arch Books.

On the other hand, Figure 5.19 from *JttCotE* sees the symbolic visual representation of fear that engulfs the travellers as they battle with giant waves and storm in the centre of the earth. In addition, the four insets or embedded panels give further details to enhance the whole splash page. The use of splash pages in these instances reveals the focus on visual symbolism through the images and how the events depicted denote crucial episodes of the actual narrative.

### 5.3.1 A Summary of the Analysis of Splash Pages

Though talking about comic books, the data of this study also concurs with the opinion of Irene Hess, the Coordinator of Classics Illustrated at the Berkeley Publishing Group

that “individual artists and authors adapt the stories as they see fit, unlike the processes utilized by the original comics, which used only two or three individuals to illustrate all the various comics” (cited in Martin 1992, p. 5). It must be stressed that the word ‘comics’ here refer to comic books. As mentioned earlier, many interchange the terms freely. Though Drucker (2008) meant it for the complex use of colour in graphic novels, her assertion also resounds well for the utilisation of splash pages which “allows the readers to dwell in the story, to participate in the experience of its unfolding in a framework that is itself an articulation of the emotional tenor of character’s interior life” (p. 50). It is evident within these panels that the plethora of visual images supports the text of the adaptation from literary classics. In addition, visual symbolism is also clearly depicted within these splash pages and they further augment the element of literariness through the study of visuals. Interestingly, this is one technique that can be exploited by classroom teachers in using graphic novels effectively.

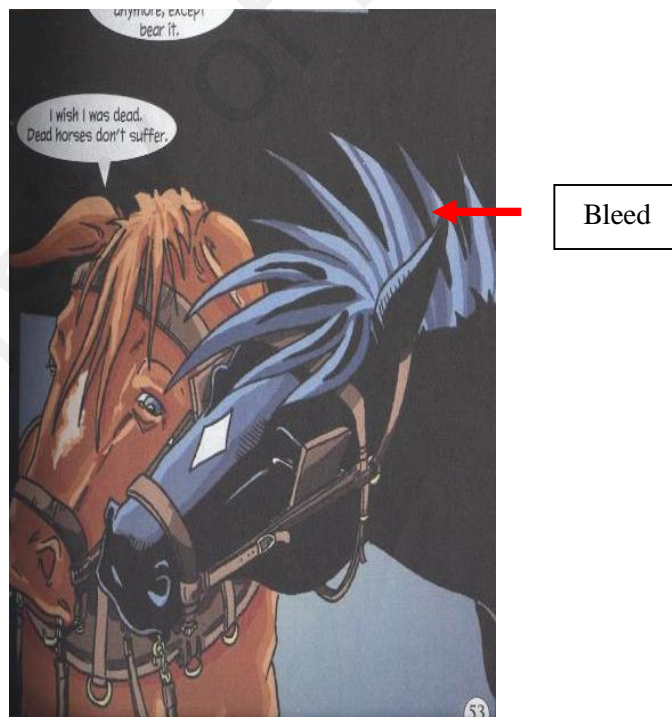
#### **5.4 Bleeds**

A bleed is termed as an image that runs off the edge of a page without any framing element. On a comic book cover for instance, full bleed is commonly illustrated. When the art is illustrated to *run* towards the edge of a page, it is considered full bleed. This curtails the common white border around the illustration. At times, bleeds are utilized on internal panels to portray the illusion of space or to focus on an action. Table 5.3 shows the number of bleeds prevalent in each novel.

**Table 5.3:** Number of Bleeds and Percentage of Occurrences

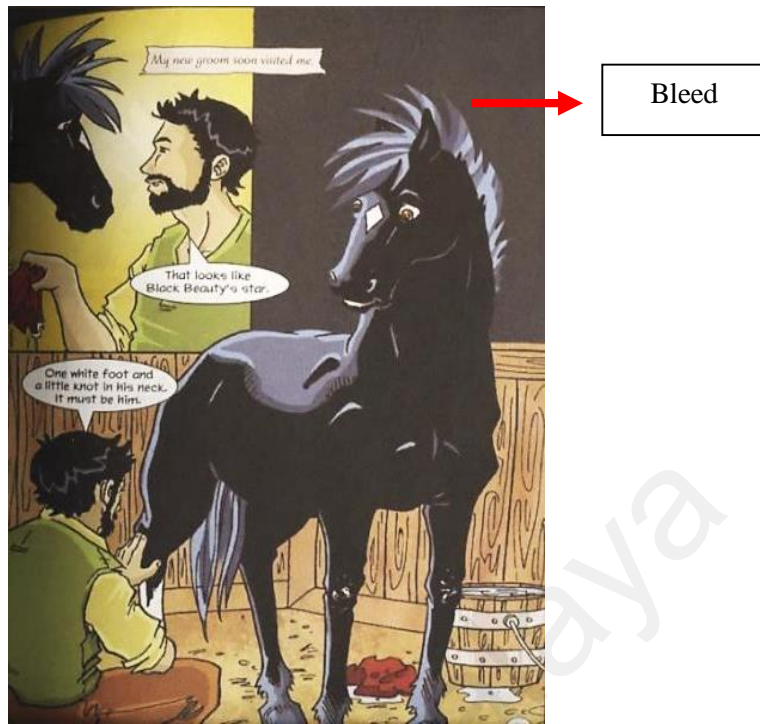
Title	Number of Bleeds	Related Panels
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	8 (5.88%)	9, 36, 57, 68, 115, 118, 130, 133
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )	6 (2.83%)	9, 14, 40, 41, 176, 179
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	0	0

The table shows the most number of bleeds are found in *BB* with a total of 8 (5.88%) bleeds illustrated between the panels. In many instances, the bleeds represent an emphasis on the characterization of Black Beauty as noted in Figures 5.20 and 5.21 respectively.



**Figure 5.20:** A Bleed in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 53). ©Stone Arch Books.





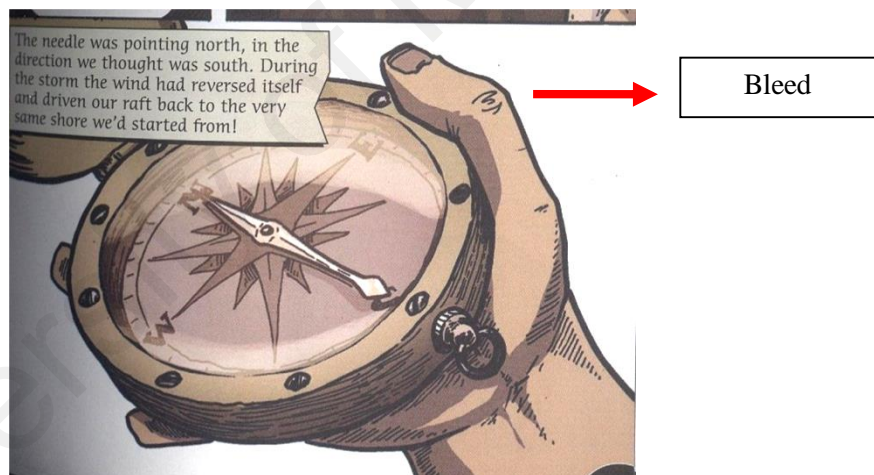
**Figure 5.21:** A Bleed in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 61.) ©Stone Arch Books.

For example, Figure 5.20 illustrates Black Beauty's and Ginger's silhouettes against a blank black background. The use of such vivid a bleed and the removal of frames indicate the focus on these two horses and their agony in being mistreated by men. The image "haemorrhages and escapes into timeless space" (McCloud, 2004, p. 103), thus setting the dark mood that anticipates men's cruelty. In contrast, the bleed in Figure 5.21 focuses on Black Beauty's silhouette which is juxtaposed against a black background that blends until the end of the page. The image illustrates Joe who identifies the stallion as Black Beauty from his days at Farmer Grey's ranch.

*JttCotE* has only 6 (2.83%) bleeds and the images in these bleeds concentrate on important events or episodes. This shows that the illustrator of the novel prefers other techniques like overlaps and close ups as compared to bleeds in depicting the narrative of *JttCotE* that has a low number of bleeds. Figures 5.22 and 5.23 denote two examples of bleeds from *JttCotE*.



**Figure 5.22:** A Bleed in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 17). © Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.23:** A Bleed in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 53). © Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 5.22 for instance, Axel's thoughts of returning to his girlfriend, Gretchen is highlighted through a bleed and in the following borderless panel, Otto's call to continue the journey is depicted through another bleed. Here, Otto's hand is raised into the timeless space of the white background and this is a typical characteristic of bleeds. Otto's authoritative demeanour is clearly explicit in his quest to traverse the centre of Earth regardless of imminent dangers and obstacles though Axel disagrees with him.



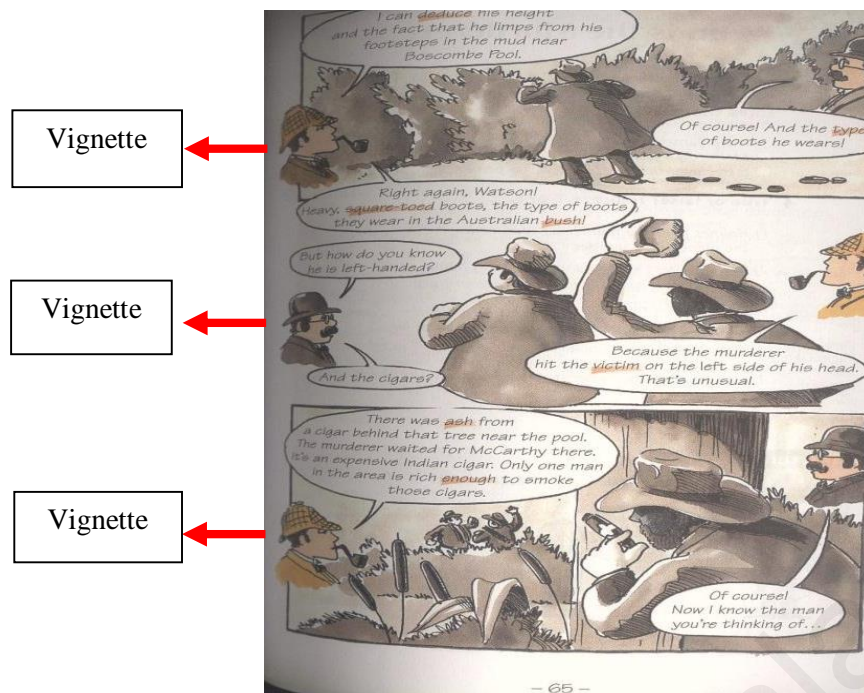
Figure 5.23 highlights another bleed where there is an absolute focus on a compass which is a pertinent instrument in navigating the earth. The deployment of bleeds in these two examples shows that the purpose of highlighting events, characteristics and other important elements in the narrative is achieved by the use of bleeds.

Conversely, *TBVM* contains no bleeds. This suggests that the illustrator is tied with conventional techniques as bleeds is a very recent technique introduced in the West (McCloud, 1994). Nevertheless, an interesting feature which is uncommon in comics and graphic novels is the heavy usage of vignettes as an illustration tool in *TBVM*. According to Lewis (2001), a vignette is “a miniature illustration, usually unframed and with little or no background, placed alongside or near a passage of text, often in the corner of a page” (p. 171). This feature is a common trait in picture books. In this novel however, vignettes are distinguished features resembling human heads. These vignettes are prominently used as part of flashbacks to represent the persons narrating the flashbacks. A total of 15 vignettes are found in this novel as shown in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4:** Number of Vignettes in The Boscombe Valley Mystery

<b>Title</b>	<b>Number of Vignette</b>	<b>Related Panels</b>
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	15	8, 9, 12, 17, 19, 36, 85, 86, 87, 96, 98, 103, 104, 105, 106

Figure 5.24 exemplifies the narrators’ silhouettes as vignettes balancing over the frames. In this example, both Holmes and Watson are reconstructing the events that lead to the murder of Charles McCarthy.



**Figure 5.24:** Examples of Vignettes in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 65).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The deployment of vignettes is an interesting technique in *TBVM* as both the voices of Holmes and Watson are interweaved in the panels through flashbacks, thus giving two voices to the panels of flashbacks. This also reveals the importance of flashbacks in the narrative of *TBVM*.

#### 5.4.1 A Summary of the Analysis of Bleeds

In short, the utilization of bleeds in these graphic novels shows that the illustrators have used this technique to enhance their images by focusing on important events of the novels. In addition, these bleeds also support the artistic impression for aesthetic purposes at times as featured in Figure 5.16. The bleeds illustrated in *BB* and *JttCotE* have been constructed to remove any form of constrictions thus creating a spill-over effect. This breaks the flow of uniformity within the panel and encourages the reader to focus on the bleed itself. In some cases, the images of characters like Black Beauty control the page and evoke a strong emotion in its readers. These bleeds work together

with other conventions and techniques to create an overall effect to the visuals of the graphic novels. It must be noted that the technique of using bleeds is popular in mainstream comic books and graphic novels. The removal of frames within these bleeds gives focus to the characters within, thus creating a more dramatic effect. The data reveals that both illustrators have orchestrated the placements of bleeds to accentuate maximum effect through their illustrations.

Though void of bleeds, the prevalence of a non-comic convention like vignette in *TBVM* clearly distinguishes the novel from the other two. These vignettes only function as the voice of speakers who are either narrating past events (in the case of John Turner, a witness) or retelling a story within a story (in the cases of both Holmes and Watson). More importantly, the deployment of these vignettes also supports Groensteen's (2007) postulation that "the margin is not necessarily virginal. It frequently welcomes a title, a signature, a page number, inscriptions in which the structuring effect is not negligible" (p. 32), and in this case, the inclusion of vignettes.

## **5.5 The Structures of Components that Contain Textual Elements of the Conventions of Comics**

The textual features of graphic novels are contained in balloons and captions. This study includes sound effect words in this category as they are pertinent elements of the conventions of comics. The features are significant as they express the language and importantly, distinguish the voices of the narrators and characters within the narrative of the novels. The textual features are considered "semantic enclaves" (p. 1) as posited by Wallis (1973) and he further elaborates that "they are signs of a different kind from a different system than signs of which the main body of that work of art consists" (as

cited in Carrier, 2000, p. 29). The following discussion will focus on the analysis of all three pertinent features.

### 5.5.1 Types of Balloons

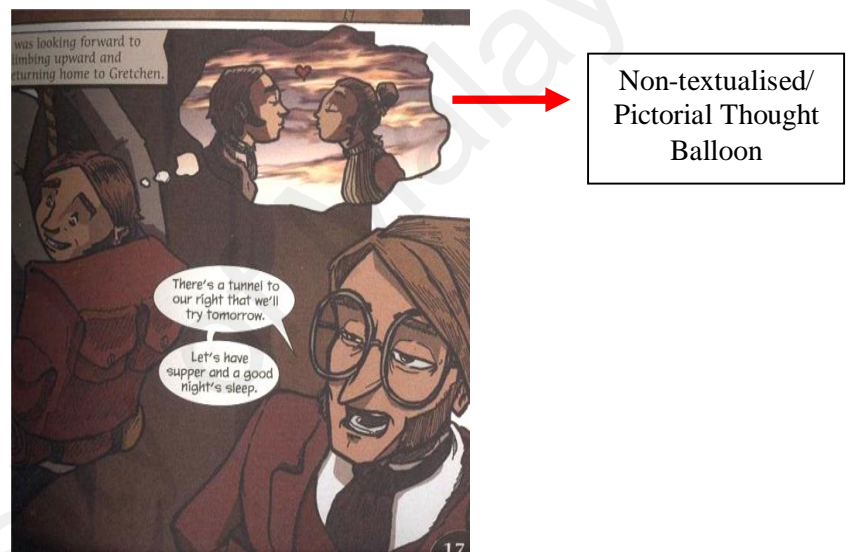
Balloons are key features of comics and graphic novels. Besides denoting what the characters are uttering in speech balloons and thinking (at times) in thought balloons, they are also crucial to control the flow and pacing of a page for the readers. Table 5.5 denotes the total number of balloons and their types which are used in the novels.

**Table 5.5:** Types of Balloons and Percentage of Occurrences

Title / Number	Total Balloons	Type of Balloons						
		Round	Rectangular	Thought	Expressive	Yelling	Mechanical	Other
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	132	132 (100%)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	158 + 1 (159)	158 (99.37%)	-	1 (0.63%) (image)	-	-	-	-
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	226 + 13 (238)	226 (94.96%)	-	12 (5.04%) (image) 1 (0.42%) (textual)	-	-	-	-

As noted in Table 5.5, *TBVM* carries the most number of balloons which are 238 with 226 (94.96%) round balloons and 13 (5.46%) thought balloons. The thought balloons in *TBVM* are represented by 12 (5.04%) non-textualised (pictorial) balloons and 1 (0.42%) textualised balloon. The least number of balloons are contained in *BB* which only has 132 (100%) balloons and they are all round types of balloons. There are no thought

balloons present in *BB* indicating that thought representations are not crucial in its narrative. *JttCotE*, on the other hand, has a total of 159 balloons which encompass 158 (99.37%) round balloons and 1 (0.63%) thought balloon which is a non-textualised thought balloon as noted in Figure 5.25. It is interesting to note that both balloon types in *BB* and *JttCotE* are uniformed round balloons while *TBVM* carries unstructured round balloons. As such, the portrayal of emotions that can be determined by shapes of balloons (yelling balloons for example) are not deployed in these three novels.



**Figure 5.25:** A Thought Balloon in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 17). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.25 denotes a thought balloon in *JttCotE* whereby Axel thinks about Gretchen and she acts as the motivation to continue his journey without losing hope. The thought balloon represents both Axel and Gretchen being in love. Here, the pictorial representation of love between these two characters communicates the message strongly rather than if the illustrator is to convey it through words like “I love Gretchen very much”, thus helping in creating an impression.

Nevertheless in *TBVM*, the employment of 13 thought balloons (12 non-textualised/pictorial and 1 textualised) shows the dependence on thought balloons to identify characters and an item (a gun in Panel 26, p. 21) through thoughts as shown in Figures 5.26 and 5.27.



**Figure 5.26:** Non-textualised/Pictorial Thought Balloons in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 14-15). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 5.27:** Textualised and Non-textualised/Pictorial Thought Balloons in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 20). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia

Figure 5.26 denotes 2 thought balloons in *TBVM*. Interestingly, these two thought balloons are non-textualised and they also actually represent Holmes' speech. In the first instance, Holmes says "One is the gamekeeper" and there is an accompanying thought balloon to that speech balloon. The second panel also carries a similar

representation. This shows that at times the direct speeches of the characters are also represented through direct thoughts and this clearly denotes a symmetrical relationship between the thought and speech balloons within the panel. This feature is only inherent in *TBVM*. Incidentally the one (1) textualised thought balloon as shown in Figure 5.27 shows Patience's suspicion of Master James bloodied hand as represented by the thought line "That's very strange. Master James has blood on his arms". This particular thought balloon is included for the reader to be aware of Patience's suspicion which is an integral point in the novel.

It is interesting to note that Saraceni's (2003a) argument that "in the case of adaptations of classics of literature, for example, the shape of the balloons is often square-this unusual shape is used in order to give more respectability to the publication" (p. 9) does not resound in this study. On the contrary, the illustrators of all three novels prefer round shaped and that of its variation type of balloons. In addition, the deployment of both textualised and non-textualised balloons constitute an important characteristic of a graphic novel. The discussion of the data reveals that at times (specifically in *TBVM*), there are instances of pictorial representations appearing parallel to speech balloons. This shows that mental images are important and it gives definition to the physical characteristics and supports narrative information. Bearing in mind these are adapted works, visual representations are crucial to narrative information.

Drawing from Nikolajeva and Scott (2001) who argue that images possess "a superior ability to convey the spatial position of the character, and especially the mutual spatial relationship of two or more characters, which often reveals their psychological and relative status" (p. 83), the construction of textualised and non-textualised balloons indicate the focus placed on the many characters of the stories, isolating the major and

minor players from the original text. Likewise as Nodelman (1988) believes “the location of objects in relation to other objects can affect the way we understand them” (p. 130), these balloons are arranged in a prescribed sequence whereby they adhere to Western comic conventions that is “left-to-right and top-to-bottom” (Eisner, 2008, p. 24). This discussion on the types of balloons only focused on their types, namely round shaped speech balloons and textualised and non-textualised thought balloons. The textual analysis of the verbal component will be carried out through the SFL framework and that answers RQ2(a) later on.

### 5.5.2 Captions

A caption, as Groensteen (2007, p. 128) defines is a “voiceover” from an explicit narrator. Captions are descriptive in nature and hold a few functions as described in Section 3.3.3.1 (b). At most times, captions are deployed to give voice to the narrator or even to represent a character’s thoughts. The total number of captions used in all three graphic novels is shown in Table 5.6.

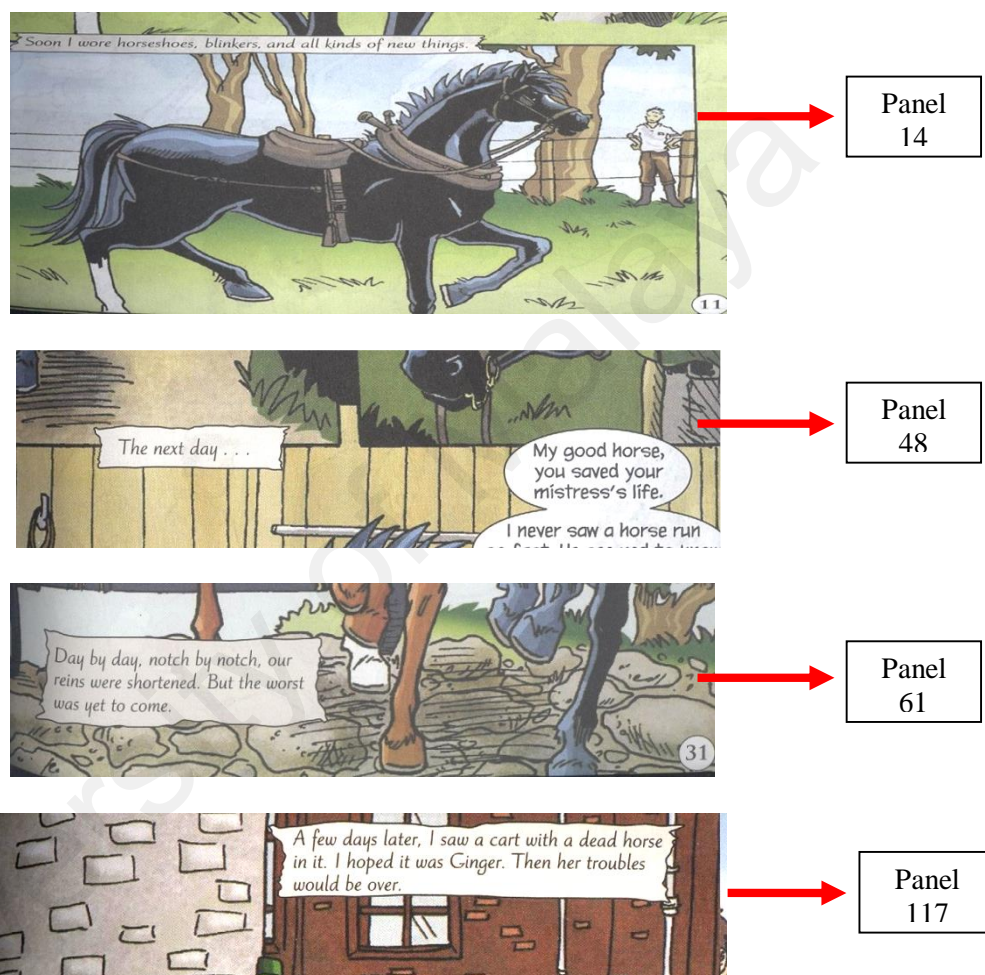
**Table 5.6:** Types of Captions and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Number of Captions	Types of Captions	
		Bordered	Borderless
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	93	93 (100%)	-
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	123	123 (100%)	-
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	18	18 (100%)	-

The data in Table 5.6 shows that all three novels contain bordered captions. This indicates that all three illustrators have adhered to a 100% conventional style of bordered captions. In *BB*, a total of 93 captions are used. What is inherent is that these



captions denote the voice of Black Beauty in narrating the chain of events, his feelings, fears and hopes as depicted in Figure 5.28. *JttCotE* carries 123 bordered captions while *TBVM* has only 18 bordered captions. The bordered caption choices among the illustrators indicate conformity to the usual norms of comics design and conventions.



**Figure 5.28:** A Montage of Captions Word in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 11, 25, 31, 55). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.28 represents a montage of captions in the novel *BB*. For example, in Panel 14, Black Beauty relates about the painful accessories she has been subjected to wear, “Soon I wore horseshoes, blinkers and all kinds of new things” (p. 11), while the caption in Panel 61 asserts his fears about the future, “Day by day, notch by notch, our reins were tightened. But the worst is yet to come” (p. 35). Finally, the caption in Panel

117 describes his hopes, “A few days later, I saw a cart with a dead horse in it. I hoped it was Ginger. Then her troubles would be over” (p. 55). The captions also serve to show a temporal function to indicate time (Saraceni, 2003) as shown in Panel 48, “The next day...” (p. 25). Nevertheless, the phrase “A few days later...” and “After three years...” are embedded in two panels serving as a temporal indicator.

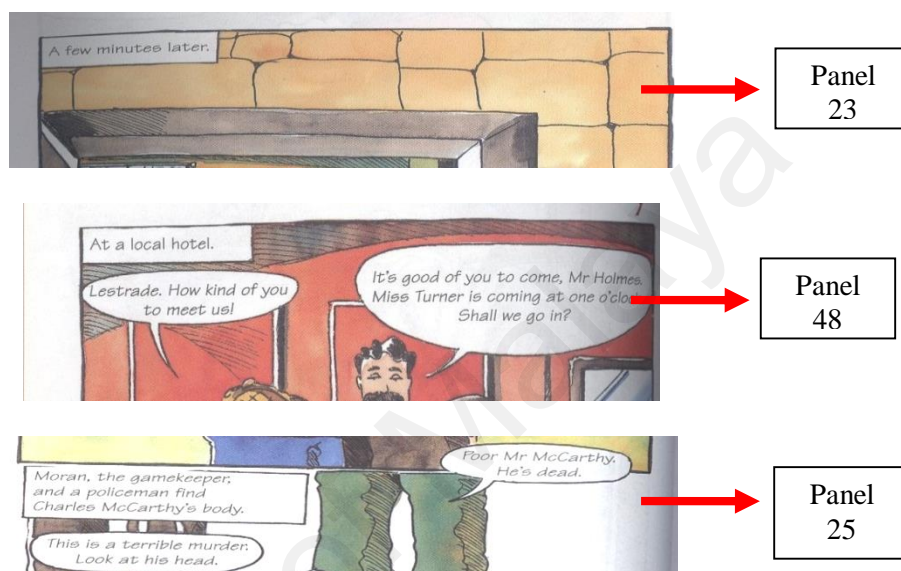
In *JttCotE* on the other hand, a total of 123 captions are used. It can be deduced that the author has heavily relied on captions to complement the information of the dialogues and to indicate time or space. Examples of these captions are denoted in Figure 5.29.



**Figure 5.29:** A Montage of Captions in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 1, 14). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Panel 1 (p. 6) for instance ‘Hamburg, Germany, May 1862’ shows the location of the story and the time it took place. In other panels, phrases like ‘That night...’ (Panel 42, p. 18), ‘by noon...’ (Panel 44, p. 19) and ‘moments later’ (Panel 67, p. 25) are liberally used by the author to signify a lapse of time or even time itself. In Panel 29 on the other hand, the caption “We began our descent, passing volcanic rocks and deep, soft snow” (p. 14) represents a spatial function where an action is described rather than the action being dialogued between the characters.

*TBVM* contains the least number of captions which are 18. The inherent use of more speech balloons than captions shows that the author had used balloons to narrate the story than relying heavily on captions. A montage of captioned panels is presented in Figure 5.30.



**Figure 5.30:** A Montage of Captions in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 19, 44, 20). ©McGraw Hill.

Most of the captions used in *TBVM* function to show time or space like the examples in Figure 5.30 where Panel 23 (p. 19) shows a time span of ‘A few minutes later’ and Panel 48 (p. 44) shows the location of ‘at a local hotel’. Besides these examples, captions like that in Panel 25 (p. 20) represents the choice of the author to provide extra information to elaborate the description of the characters through the line, “Moran, the gamekeeper, and a policeman find Charles McCarthy’s body”. Here, the caption provides pertinent information in the development of the narrative.

The discussion above indicates that the insertion of captions in all three graphic novels addresses the need to particularly provide a background of time and space and to add information. In addition, the choice of bordered captions in all three novels indicates

the need to adhere to typical conventions rather than experimenting with borderless captions. It must also be noted that the writers of the novels have made careful textual choices which are contained in these captions. In *JttCotE* for instance, the author has also used captions to invoke the readers to make sense of the flow of panels (as put forth by Saraceni, 2003). These choices reflect how the authors have used captions to adapt the original versions of the story as close as possible. With limitations of pages, captions provide a great alternative to condense the main elements of the original classics. In *BB*, the caption also functions as a “voice-over” (Saraceni, 2007, p. 63) which is a technique used in films to elicit extra information “beyond the dialogues exchanged by the characters” (ibid). These close-ups offer delicate intimate expressions to be illustrated thus enabling the readers to gauge the character’s feelings and emotions. In many instances, they also invoke a sense of empathy towards the characters like in the case of Black Beauty who is subjected to pain and misery. In addition, Black Beauty’s point of view through his narrations in the captions allows “even more direct access into the character’s mind” (Saraceni, 2003, p. 81). This is further concurred by the author of *BB* who in the email interview, believes “The point of the series it belongs to was to offer young readers a true sense of the longer-length work and to inspire their interest in reading longer works in general by keeping the story active/high interest” (May 12, 2013).

Though limited in use, captions in *TBVM* are mainly used to ascertain time and space, thus indicating the author’s preference to use balloons in detailing the story. The clever deployment of captions in these novels show that there is a concentrated effort by the writer to alternate dialogues and captions and this contributes to what Groensteen (2007) describes as “imparting a rhythm to the narrative sequence” (p. 133).

### 5.5.3 Sound Effect Words

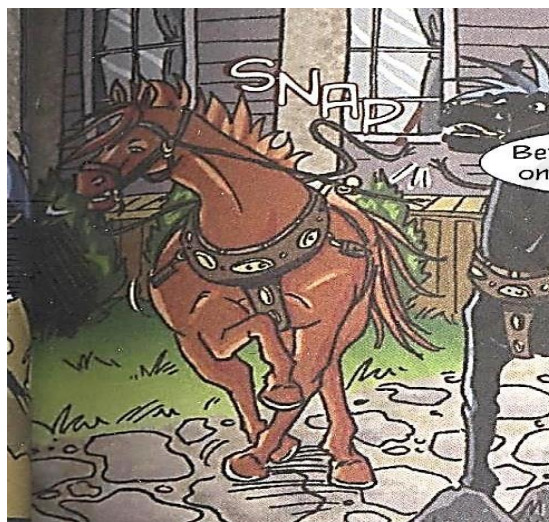
The word type which is commonly found in graphic novels is sound effect words or onomatopoeic words which are not contained within the speech balloons. These words are used to represent sounds which are inherent within a particular panel. Besides enhancing the narrative, a greater sense of action and drama is achieved by deploying sound effect words. All sound effect words in the novels were not contained in speech bubbles. Table 5.7 represents the number of sound effect words and their examples as depicted in the novels.

**Table 5.7:** Number and Examples of Sound Effect Words

Title	Number of Sound Effect Words	Examples
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	5	SNAP, WHUMP, THUNK, KRAAACK, NEEIGH
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )	14	RUMMMBLE, RUMBLE, CLINK, CLANK, CLANK, CLINK, KRAK, BANG, THUD, SNAP, CRACK, KA-BOOM, RRUMBLE, BA-BOOM
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	0	-

Table 5.7 shows that *JttCoE* has the highest number of sound effect words that is 14. *TBVM* only carries 5 sound effect words while *TBVM* has no sound effect words. In *JttCoE*, the illustrator has paid great attention in realizing onomatopoeic elements which augments the vividness of the novel through literary elements. As Bredin (1996) succinctly posits, “it is arguable that onomatopoeia is not a trivial and incidental phenomenon of usage, but answers to a deep-seated need that lies at the heart of the linguistic consciousness” (p. 560). It must be highlighted here that the type of sound effect words used according to Bredin’s (1996) postulation on types of onomatopoeic

words which are direct or associative onomatopoeic words is also taken into consideration. All sound effect words in both these novels are onomatopoeic in nature and are further illustrated through special typography, colour and orientation. An example of the deployment of a sound effect word in *BB* is shown in Figure 5.31 where the sound SNAP (p. 33) resonates the breaking of a riding rein.



**Figure 5.31:** An Example of a Sound Effect Word in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 33). ©Stone Arch Books.

An interesting layout of sound effect words that runs across three panels is featured in *JttCotE* which is shown in Figure 5.32. The sounds of a lantern falling to the ground, ‘CLANK, CLANK, CLINK’ (p. 33) is depicted with artistic motions stretched across three panels.





**Figure 5.32:** Examples of Sound Effect Words in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 33). ©Stone Arch Books.

The deployment of sound effect words clearly adds realism in the presentation of the narrative. This supports Carrier's (2000) assertion that these words which are not spoken is "read as a description of the action" (p. 36), thus igniting vividness and dynamism. *TBVM*, on the other hand, which is devoid of any sound effect words clearly stuck to a narration of simplicity rather than encompassing a sense of sound to selected elements of its narrative.

#### 5.5.4 A Summary of the Analysis on Structures of Components that Contain Textual Elements of the Conventions of Comics

The typographic visual details are capable of transmitting connotative meanings as argued by Stockl (2005) and this by itself is pertinent as a semiotic resource. The systematic arrangement of the textual layout through balloons, captions and sound effect words indicates how verbal discourse is constructed through heteroglossia. This concurs with Kannenberg (2008) who opines, "Comics allows for the simultaneous presentation of convergent or divergent information via the arrangement of various visual elements within the unifying space of the comic page" (p. 307). In addition, meticulous planning is visible in all three novels as the texts themselves are limited as

compared to the images in the panel. This is very important as a precedence of text over images will only render these texts to be illustrated classics rather than adapted graphic novels.

## **5.6 The Analysis on Structures of Components that Contain Visual Elements of the Conventions of Comics**

The visual features of the layout in these graphic novels focus on the panels and this will be discussed in terms of shapes, positions, shots, background and emanata. It must be established here that all three novels are devoid of other visual features of the conventions of comics specifically motion lines. The following discussion will focus on the analysis of all four elements of panels.

### **5.6.1 Shapes of Panels**

Panels are an important structure of comics and graphic novels as each of the frame or panel contains a story which is presented sequentially. The shapes of panels are important and the breaking down of panels into various shapes is a matter of style as they can be manipulated to narrate a story. The common types of shapes for panels are rectangular, jagged, cloud like, geometric, circular, wavy, scroll shaped and index card shaped which is categorised by McKenzie (2005). This study labels other irregular types of shapes as 'others'. Table 5.8 illustrates the different types of panel shapes found in all three graphic novels.



**Table 5.8:** Types of Panels and Percentage of Occurrences

Title/ Number	Total Panels	Type of Shapes								
		Rectangular	Jagged	Cloud Like	Geometric	Circular	Wavy	Scroll Shaped	Index Card Shaped	Others
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	136	116 (85.29%)	-	-	13 (9.56%)	-	-	-	-	7 (5.15%)
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	212	161 (75.94%)	-	-	41 (19.34%)	-	-	-	-	10 (4.72%)
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	111	58 (52.25%)	-	-	5 (4.51%)	-	-	-	-	48 (43.24%)

A total of 136 panels are used in *BB* (as discussed in Section 5.2). Out of these panels, the illustrator has used 116 (85.29%) rectangular panels which are either vertical (Figure 5.33) or horizontal (Figure 5.34).



**Figure 5.33:** A Vertical Rectangle Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 29).  
©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.34:** A Horizontal Rectangle Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 50).  
©Stone Arch Books.

In addition, there are 13 (9.56%) geometric panels and the remainder 7 (5.15%) panels are categorized as 'others'. Figure 5.35 represents a geometric panel while Figures 5.36 and 5.37 denote a L-shaped panel and an irregular shaped panel which are categorised under 'others' in this study.



**Figure 5.35:** A Geometric Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 32). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.36:** A L-Shaped Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 20). ©Stone Arch Books.



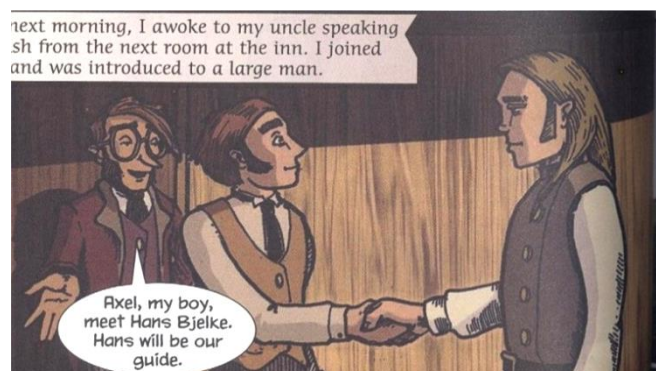
**Figure 5.37:** An Irregular Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 51). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.35 represents a slanted panel as one side of the panel is slanted as highlighted, resembling a trapezium. Figure 5.36 denotes a L-shaped panel as the highlighted frame indicates the shape L. Finally, Figure 5.37 resembles a stall in a stable, thus an irregular panel. In this example, the structure of the panel can also be considered as a platform to reveal the setting of the story (a stable). Panels like these are categorised as ‘others’ as McKenzie’s (2005) taxonomy of shapes does not consider these kind of shapes.

The novel *JttCotE* contains 161 (75.94%) rectangle panels, 41(19.34%) geometric panels and 10 (4.72%) other shaped panels. The rectangle panels are either vertical or horizontally placed just like those in *BB* as shown in Figures 5.38 and 5.39 respectively.



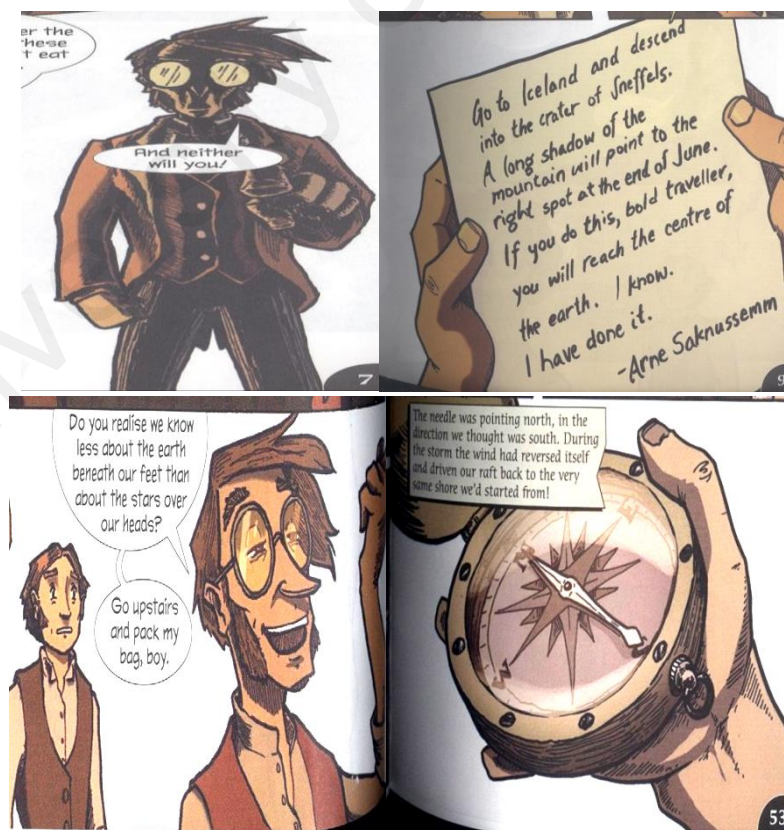
**Figure 5.38:** A Vertical Rectangle Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 20). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.39:** A Horizontal Rectangle Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 12). ©Stone Arch Books.



According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, a silhouette is termed as the shape or outline of something. In this study, a silhouette type borderless panel represents images that appear without framing but has the distinct outline and form of what it represents. These distinct panels are vivid and succeed in grabbing the reader's attention due to its salient characteristic. Figure 5.40 represents a montage of a few examples that include those of Otto (Panel 6, p. 7), Arne Saknussemm's letter (Panel 13, p. 9), Otto's convincement towards a bewildered Axel (Panel 16, p. 10) and the compass which determined their return to the start location (Panel 176, p. 53). As there are no frames bordering these silhouettes, there is clearly a neat and definite demarcation between the previous panels and subsequent panels. As such, at times these images tend to be jarring and distinct but nevertheless, they do fulfil the need to be the centre of the focus. Without a distraction of a background, the focus is wholly on the images and what they represent.



**Figure 5.40:** A Montage of Silhouette Type of Other Panels in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 7, 9, 10, 53). ©Stone Arch Books.

In *TBVM*, 58 (52.25%) rectangle panels, 5 (4.51%) geometric panels and 48 (43.24%) ‘others’ type of panels are used. Just like the other two novels, there is also a preference of interspersing both vertical and horizontal panels as shown in Figures 5.41 and 5.42.



**Figure 5.41:** A Vertical Rectangle Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 26). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 5.42:** A Horizontal Rectangle Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 36). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

With regards to ‘others’ types, besides L-shaped and slanted panels, *TBVM* also contains many silhouette type panels which is a common feature in *JttCotE*. In Figure

5.43, Panel 2 (p. 4) denotes Dr. Watson's deep contemplation in accepting Holmes' offer to solve a mysterious murder case at Boscombe Valley while Panels 10 and 11 (p. 7) introduce the Turners in the narrative through the silhouettes of hands holding photographs.



**Figure 5.43:** A Montage of Silhouette Type of Other Panels in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 4, 7). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The analysis of panel shapes indicate that the illustrators of all three novels conform to the conventional form of panels which are rectangle shapes with a variation of horizontal or vertical layouts as shown in the examples above. Rectangle horizontal panels allow a wider coverage of the background. At times, these panels are stretched to create a cinematic feel that helps in creating the illusion of time. The use of rectangle vertical panels supports the need to focus on the character. In addition, non-traditional geometrical panels are also prevalent specifically in *JttCotE*, suggesting the illustrator has adhered to variation to portray aesthetics in narrating an engaging story. It must also be noted here that the usage of more panels allows the narration of more information. In lieu of graphic adaptations from literary works, the usage of more panels helps in the retelling of the story that offers more information.

Panels listed under the category of ‘others’ are also popular namely slanted and L-shaped panels. The deployment of such panels concurs with Cohn’s (2013) assertion that “panels may take on meaningful shapes that enhance or inherently frame the meaning of the sequence (like a panel in the shape of a heart or the crosshairs of the scope of the gun)” (p. 91). Irregular panels like the one featured in Figure 5.37 from *BB* which resembles a stall in a stable could be considered as a descriptor to the setting of the story. This concurs with Eisner (2008) who posits that these types of panels “while functioning as panels, each is nevertheless also a structure in the setting of the story” (p. 51). Additionally, both *JttCoE* and *TBVM* also include silhouette type panels to emphasis events or characters of the novel and create a specific focus through this tool. This study identifies these types of panels as silhouette types. These silhouettes which break away from the panels create a strong graphic effect which focuses on an action, event or item. In addition, as aesthetic elements, these types of panels also engage readers due to their distinct salient features like prominence and size. This is mainly because as readers of graphic novels, our eyes can indefinitely dwell on an image.

In short, the deployment of various types of panel shapes allows the illustration of eye-catching imagery. In adapting literary works into graphic mediums (in this case, graphic novels), images play a crucial part in sustaining readers’ interest. The findings of the analysis concurs with Eisner’s (2008) who asserts “the use of the panel border as a structural element within the setting that is portrayed, when so employed, serves to involve the reader and encompasses far more than a simple container panel” (p. 51). It must be stressed here that a careful choice of panels and their types and their placements on a page influences reading as it draws the readers’ eyes from left to right (the convention of reading Western comics). This also helps in sustaining the flow of the story within the pages.



### 5.6.2 Positions of Panels

The positions of panels are also part of the visual layout of a graphic novel. It is important to establish their positions because illustrators use them to picture the narratives purposefully and accordingly. Regular, overlap and split positions are the three common positions in graphic novels. A regular panel is a standard rectangular panel that builds the core organisation of the page. A split panel, on the other hand, divides a panel into sections. This type of panel allows the illustrator a chance to express a quick and brief sequence of events. Finally, an overlapping panel is adopted to depict an event crucial to what is happening within other panels. Table 5.9 denotes the different panel positions in all three novels.

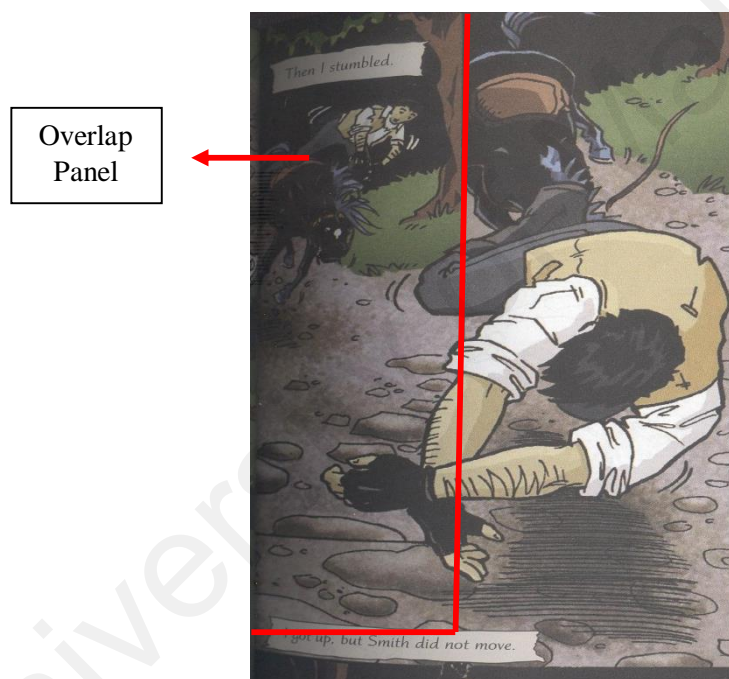
**Table 5.9:** Types of Panel Positions and Percentage of Occurrences

Title/Number	Total Panels	Type of Positions		
		Regular	Overlap	Split
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	136	111 (81.62%)	25 (18.38%)	0
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )	212	144 (67.92%)	67 (31.6%)	1 (0.47%)
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	111	111 (100%)	0	0

The data shows that *BB* has 111 (81.62%) regular panels, 25 (18.38%) overlap panels and no split panels. *JttCoE* on the other hand contains 144 (67.92%) regular panels, 67 (31.6%) overlap panels and 1 (0.47%) split panel whereas all 111 (100%) panels in *TBVM* are regular in their positions.

The analysis indicates that although 111 panels of *BB* are regular in their positions, 25 panels are overlapped and there are no split panels. This shows that there is a variation

in the layout of the panels though not as significant as those in *JttCotE*. The use of regular panels is crucial to “keep readers at bay” (Eisner, 2008, p. 48). It is interesting to note that in *BB*, these panels are used to comply with the narrative structure of this adapted classic. The denouement, rising action, falling action and resolution are mainly featured in regular panels. The climax of the story which revolves around the cruelty Black Beauty is subjected is featured mainly in split panels and an example is shown in Figure 5.44. This analysis reveals a fascinating finding specifically to that of the configuration of placing panels and its relationship with literary stylistics.

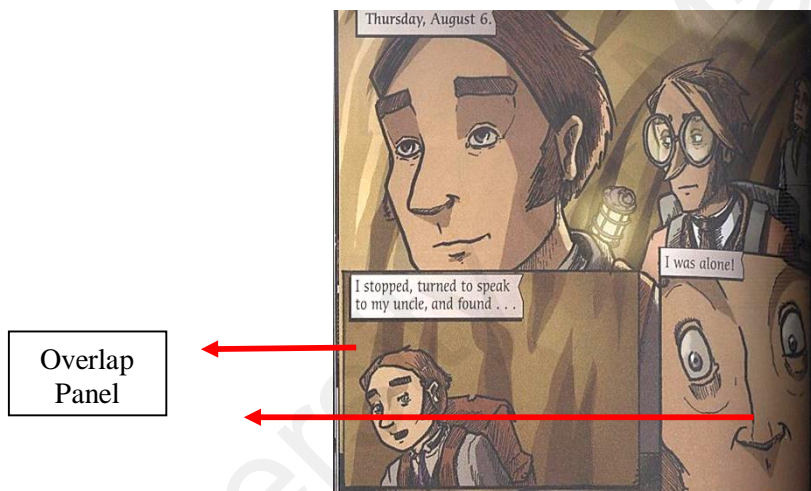


**Figure 5.44:** An Overlap Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 37). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.44 illustrates an overlap panel which focuses on how Black Beauty is forced to travel with a broken horseshoe enduring pain. Besides this example, there are also a few other examples of overlapped panels that denote crucial events in the narrative of *BB*. These include Panel 118 (p. 55) whereby Black Beauty reflects on the cruelty of men which can be deduced from his speech line, “If only men were more caring. They

would shoot us instead of making us suffer so much.” In addition, the use of overlap panels also suggests the focus on the theme of the novel where mistreatment towards animals is purposefully illustrated in these panels.

In *JttCotE*, there are only 144 (67.92%) regular panel as there is an inclusion of 67 (31.6%) overlap panels and 1 (0.47%) split panel. Here, it is obvious that the illustrator’s choice in employing different panel positions is to accentuate storytelling elements besides contributing aestheticism and a sense of complexity to the overall visual layout of the novel.



**Figure 5.45:** An Overlap Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 30). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.45 illustrates two overlap panels. In the first panel, Axel is shown walking alone and the following panel depicts his shock on the discovery that he is alone. In addition to overlap panels, the choice of 1 split panel illustrates four different backgrounds arranged within one panel as indicated in Figure 5.46.



**Figure 5.46:** A Split Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 29). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 5.46 shows that the need to highlight the settings of the centre of earth is crucial to capture the reader's mind and imagination. Furthermore this also helps in condensing the spatial aspects of the story in a panel frame. The caption of the image, "Our toil took us deeper into the earth. Above our heads: rocks, ocean, a continent, entire cities of people" (Panel, 88, p. 29) encapsulates the importance of this background to the narrative of *JttCotE*. In addition, the need to put a series of events (in this case the background) to give a quick outlook as asserted by McKenzie (2005) is also the other benefit of such a technique.

On the other hand, all panels in *TBVM* are regularly positioned, denoting an adherence to a conventional layout which reinforces conformity and repetition without the application of variety as the two other novels. These layouts concur with Brunetti's (2011) assertion that "layout is staging, and it follows narrative function" (p. 51) and hereby lies the careful architecture to either attract a reader or keep him in a distance. This type of regular position clearly keeps the readers at bay (Eisner, 2008) rather

than encouraging them to be involved with the text. It is also evident that the illustrators have embraced a more traditional style of positioning.

The analysis of panel positioning indicates that regular panels are clearly favoured and it shows the conformity to regular conventions of comics. However, the deployment of overlap panels in both *BB* and *JttCotE* denotes the need to emphasis and focus on different elements of the story. In *BB*, the use of overlap panels indicates a focus on the main theme of the novel, specifically mistreatment towards animals. This is obvious from the many overlap panels connected to this theme. It also supports the climax of the story which also dwells on the start of Black Beauty's misery. However, in *JttCotE*, overlap panels are mainly used to concentrate on individuals and their emotions. Nevertheless, what is important is that all overlap panels invite the involvement of readers. This concurs with Eisner's (2008) postulation that "in addition to adding a secondary intellectual level to the narrative, it tries to involve sensory dimensions beyond sight" (p. 48) and this is obvious from the evocation of emotions through the focus on these panels. Importantly, playing with the placement and sizes of the panels creates suspense and drama in these novels.

### **5.6.3 Panel Shots**

The illustrators of all three novels have engaged in different types of image shots to bring alive the narratives of the graphic novels besides augmenting the vividness of the images. The seven shots according to Okum (2005) are extra long shot long shot, knee shot, medium shot, medium close-up, close-up and extreme close-up. Table 5.10 denotes the different types of shots used in the graphic novels.

**Table 5.10:** Types of Shots and their Frequencies of Occurrences

Title	Total Panels	Type of Shots						
		Extra long shot	Long shot	Knee shot	Medium shot	Medium close-up	Close-up	Extreme close-up
Black Beauty (BB)	136	3 (2.21%)	48 (35.29%)	17 (12.5%)	19 (13.97%)	43 (31.61%)	4 (2.94%)	2 (1.47%)
Journey to the Centre of the Earth (JttCotE)	212	13 (6.13%)	52 (24.52%)	17 (8.02%)	30 (14.15%)	37 (17.45%)	43 (20.28%)	20 (9.43%)
The Boscombe Valley Mystery (TBVM)	111	3 (2.7%)	16 (14.41%)	14 (12.61%)	23 (20.72%)	38 (34.23%)	11 (9.91%)	6 (5.41%)

As the aforementioned findings indicate, 48 (35.29%) of shots in *BB* are long shots and almost all the figures in the long shots feature some amount of full figures as shown in Figure 5.47.



**Figure 5.47:** A Long Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 13).  
©Stone Arch Books.



In addition, there are 43 (31.61%) medium close-up shots and Figure 5.48 illustrates one example.



**Figure 5.48:** A Medium Close-up Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 16).  
©Stone Arch Books.

Both knee shots and medium shots are evident in 17 (12.5%) and 19 (13.97%) panels respectively. Figures 5.49 and 5.50 denote the examples of both types of shots respectively.

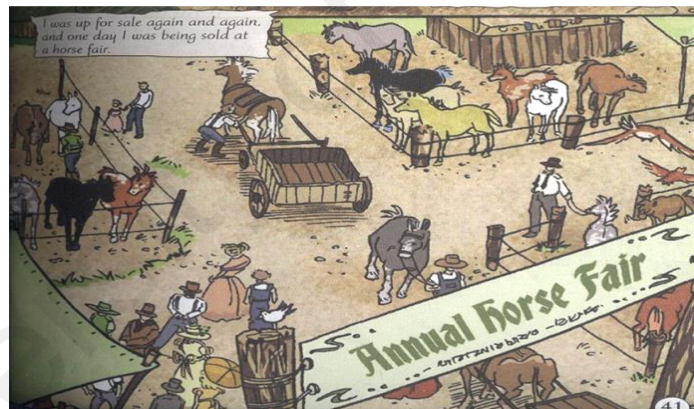


**Figure 5.49:** A Knee Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 16).  
©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.50:** A Medium Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 6).  
©Stone Arch Books.

There are 3 (2.21%) extra long shots and 2 (1.47%) extreme close-up shots in *BB*. Figures 5.51 and 5.52 illustrate two such examples respectively.



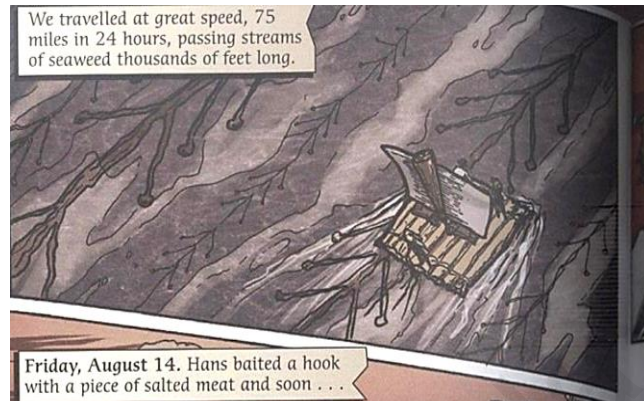
**Figure 5.51:** An Extra Long Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 41).  
©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.52:** An Extreme Close-up Shot in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 30.)  
©Stone Arch Books.



In *JttCotE*, the most number of shots are the 52 long shots (24.52%) and this is followed by 43 (20.28%) close-up shots. Figures 5.53 and 5.54 denote examples of both types of shots.



**Figure 5.53:** An Extra Long Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 44). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.54:** A Close-up Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 48). ©Stone Arch Books.

In addition, medium close-ups are 37 (17.45%) and medium shots are 30 (14.75%). Two examples of these are illustrated by Figures 5.55 and 5.56 respectively.

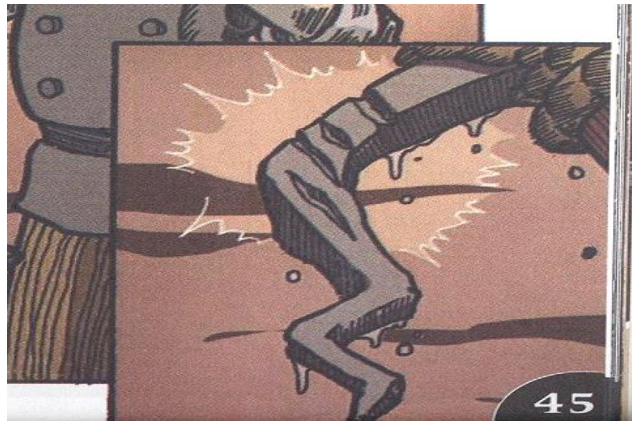


**Figure 5.55:** A Medium Close-up Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 26). ©Stone Arch Books.

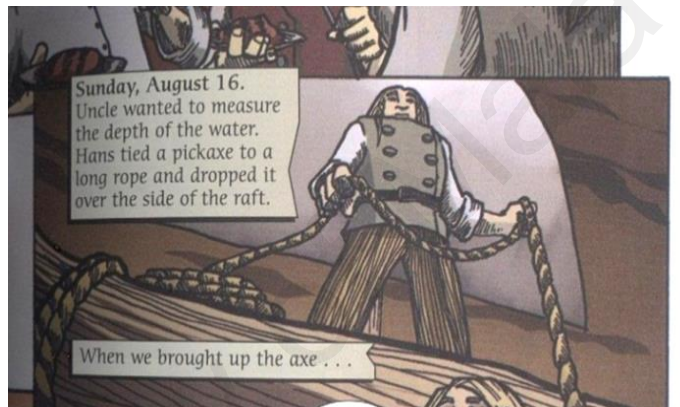


**Figure 5.56:** A Medium Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 43). ©Stone Arch Books.

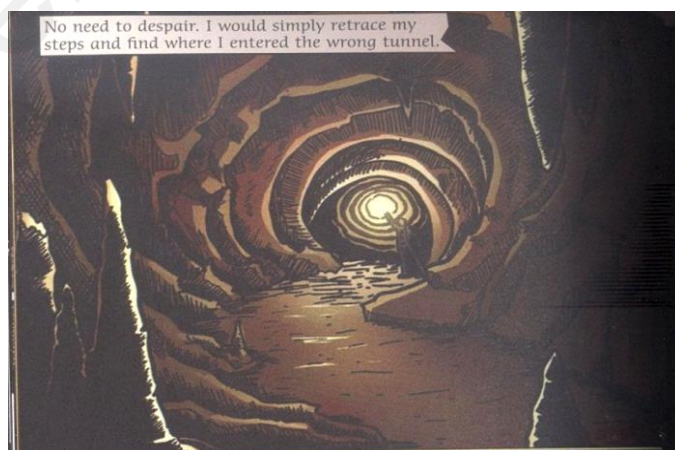
Both extreme close-ups and knee shots are 20 (9.43%) and 17 (8.02%) in numbers, indicating an insignificant difference as represented in Figures 5.57 and 5.58 respectively. A higher percentage of close-ups in this novel suggests the need to establish intimacy with readers through extreme focus on selected images. The least of shots are extra long shots which are only used 13 times (6.13%) and one example is depicted in Figure 5.59.



**Figure 5.57:** An Extreme Close-up Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 45). ©Stone Arch Books.



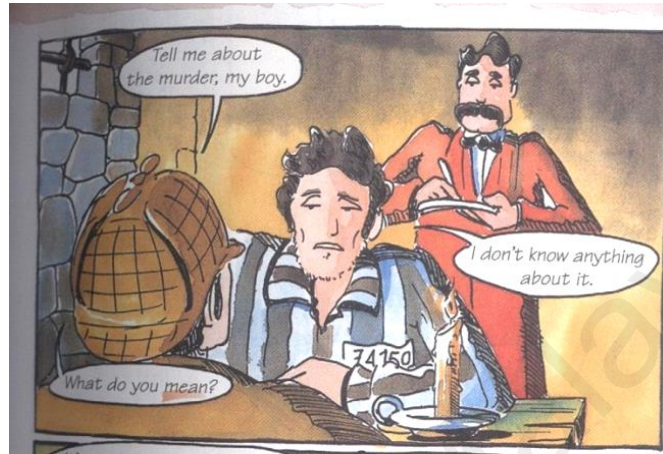
**Figure 5.58:** A Knee Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 45). ©Stone Arch Books.



**Figure 5.59:** An Extra Long Shot in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 32) ©Stone Arch Books



*TBVM* contains medium close-ups the most which is 38 (34.23%) and an example is shown in Figure 5.60 while medium shots are 23 (20.72%) and this is indicated in Figure 5.61.

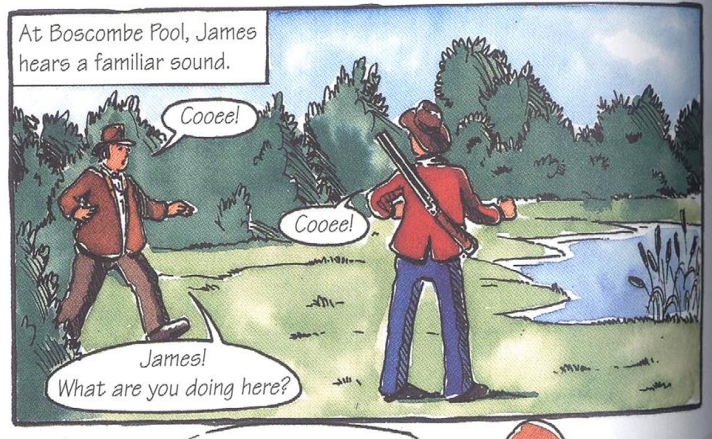


**Figure 5.60:** A Medium Close-up Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 51). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 5.61:** A Medium Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 5). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The other shots are long shots at 16 (14.41%), knee shots at 14 (12.61%) and close-ups at 11 (9.91%). The examples of these shots are illustrated by Figures 5.62, 5.63 and 5.64 respectively.



**Figure 5.62:** A Long Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 36).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



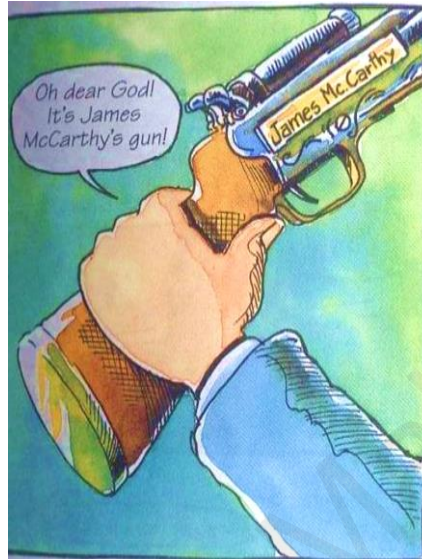
**Figure 5.63:** A Knee Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 30). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



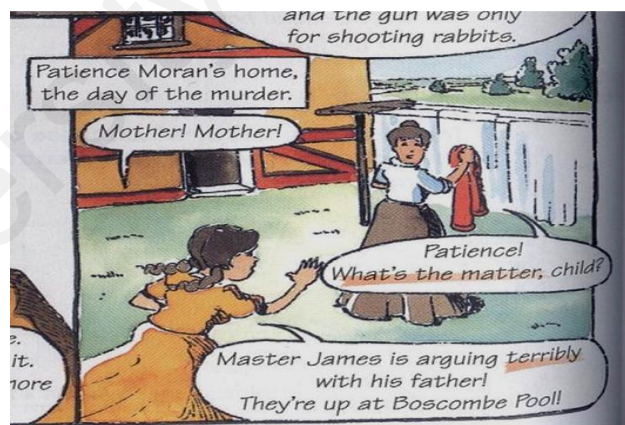
**Figure 5.64:** A Close-up Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 20). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



Extreme close-ups contribute 6 shots (5.41%) and the least used shots are extra long shots which only amount to 3 shots (2.7%). These two types of shots are denoted in Figures 5.65 and 5.66.



**Figure 5.65:** An Extreme Close-up Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 25). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



**Figure 5.66:** An Extra Long Shot in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 51.) ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Although both the illustrators *BB* and *JttCotE* prefer long shots to set the mood and setting of the story, the illustrator of *TBVM* prefers to utilize medium close-ups to focus on the expressions and details of his characters rather than dwelling too much on the

background. Through the rendition of the subject closer to the reader, the focus is on the foreground. Similar to film-making technique, these long shots introduce the beginning of a new scene. It also helps to determine the reader's perception of time, place and foreshadows the following panels.

#### 5.6.4 Background of Panels

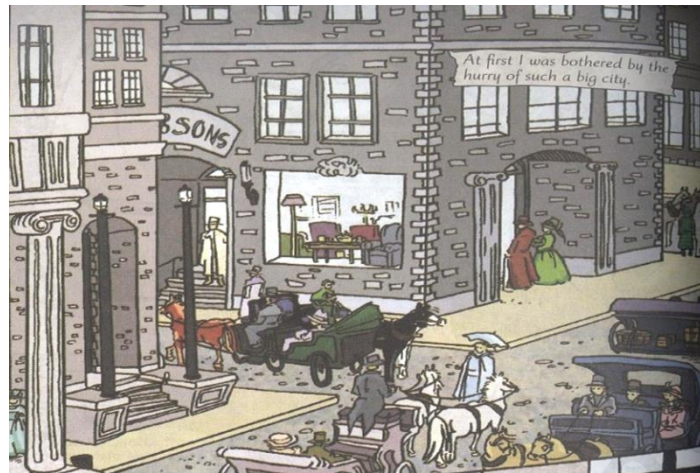
McKenzie (2005) asserts that a background of a panel is crucial in determining the reader's perception of a story. The two typical backgrounds in graphic novels are minimalist and detailed while at times a background might be devoid of illustrations as evident in this study. In relation to that, this research further includes a third type of background identified as 'none or sans background'. Table 5.11 shows the breakdown of the three types of background in these novels.

**Table 5.11:** Types of Backgrounds and Frequency of Occurrences

Title	Total Panels	Type of Background		
		None/Sans	Minimalist	Detailed
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	136	8 (5.88%)	63 (46.32%)	65 (47.79%)
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	212	17 (8.02%)	147 (69.34%)	48 (22.64%)
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	111	41 (36.94%)	37 (33.33%)	33 (29.73%)

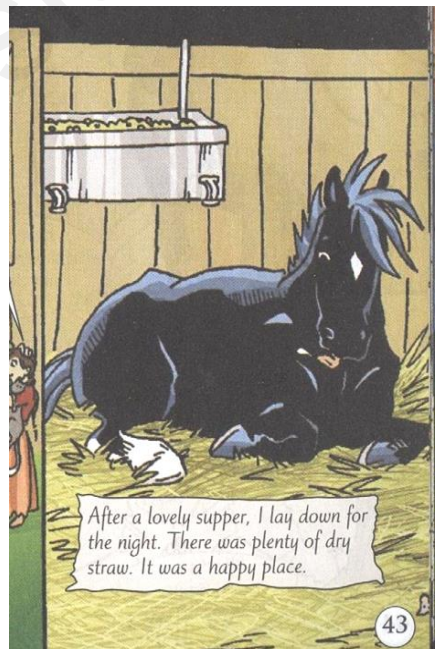
In *BB*, detailed backgrounds are prominent in 65 (47.79%) panels and this shows that the illustrator has focused on the need to augment details to lend credibility to the various backgrounds. Figure 5.67 demonstrates one example of such a background. The figure establishes the background of London and its city features. In its background, stone buildings reminiscent of the Victorian Age (noted for its intricate window frames)

is presented and the mood is further heightened with the greyness of the background.



**Figure 5.67:** A Detailed Background Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 46).  
©Stone Arch Books.

Also 63 (46.32%) panels contain a minimalist background. There is only a negligible difference between the choice of both minimalist and detailed backgrounds in this novel as the difference is only of two panels.



**Figure 5.68:** A Minimalist Background Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 43).  
©Stone Arch Books.



Figure 5.68 illustrates a sample of a minimalist background in *BB*. Here, the background encompasses only the wooden panel of a stable and a horse feeder as compared to Figure 5.67 which contains more details.

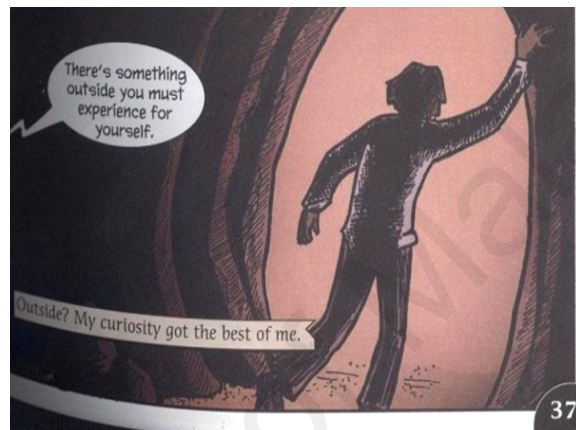
On the contrary, only 8 (5.88%) panels have no background at all. An example of such a panel in *BB* is shown in Figure 5.69. Here, an absence of background provides a sense of serenity to the image and supports the narrative by contributing to the setting of the story while focusing on the figures at the forefront. The depiction concurs with Rose (2001) who asserts that “the spatial organization of an image is not innocent. It has effects. It produces a specific relation between image and spectator” (p. 45). This type of background also helps in directing the eyes to focus on the main elements rather than the background.



**Figure 5.69:** A Sans Background Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 44).  
©Stone Arch Books.

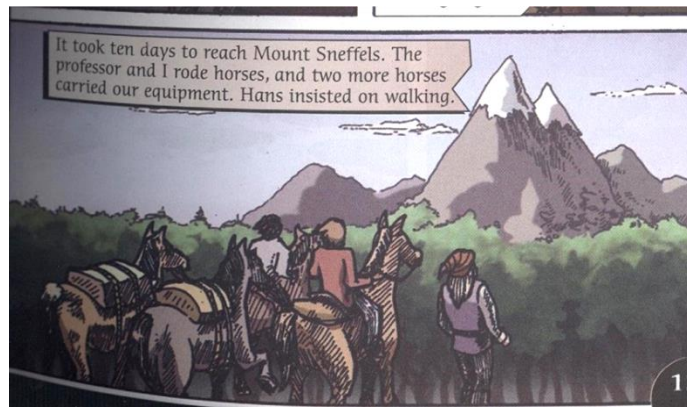
This percentage also denotes the lowest usage of such a background among all three novels. Clearly, the illustrator of *BB* prefers adding details in the background rather than leaving it empty to add vividness and realism in the panels.

*JttCotE* contains the most type of minimalist background in its panels with a total 147 (69.34%) panels. The high percentage of a minimalist background in *JttCotE* shows that the illustrator prefers an uncluttered and relevant background to display his images as depicted by the example in Figure 5.70. Here, the use of few and the barest of elements elicit maximum effect; focusing on simplicity and objectivity. In this panel, the background focuses on the walls of a cave and its opening.



**Figure 5.70:** A Minimalist Background Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 37). ©Stone Arch Books.

A total of 48 (22.64%) detailed background panels are deployed in *JttCotE*. An example is featured in Figure 5.71. The detailed execution of the background involves a backdrop of mountains, skies and a forest. The towering Mount Sneffels stands majestically in the background indicating the setting of an adventure which is about to begin for these unsuspecting travellers.



**Figure 5.71:** A Detailed Background Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 13). ©Stone Arch Books.

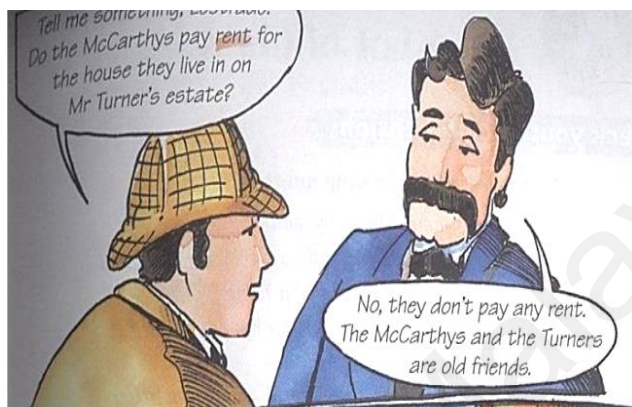
The sans background panel is used minimally in a total of 17 (8.02%) panels as depicted in Figure 5.72. Again, as in *BB*, this background provides an interesting tone to the image and also sets the focus on the character rather than the background.



**Figure 5.72:** A Sans Background Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 54). ©Stone Arch Books.

In contrast, *TBVM* relies heavily on sans background panels on the contrary as compared to other two novels where 41 (36.94%) panels embrace this type of background. Figure 5.73 represents a panel without a background with the focus on the characters rather than the background. In such types of panels, the setting of the event

is unnecessary and the emphasis is on the elements of the message to construe meanings. In many of these panels a blend of a particular colour in different hues creates the backdrop for a panel. It can be summarized that the focus is on the image itself rather than its background to relay information.



**Figure 5.73:** A Sans Background Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 59). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

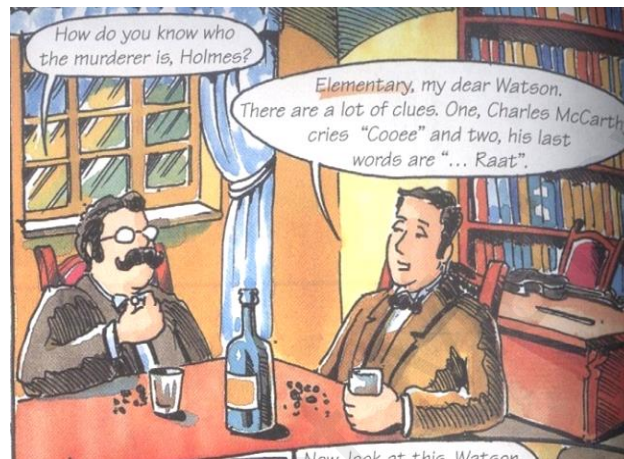
There are 37 (33.33%) minimalist background panels in *TBVM* and one example is shown in Figure 5.74. This panel only has a window and part of a house wall as a background. These two elements add on to the setting of the scene of the event.



**Figure 5.74:** A Sans Background Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 47). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



The least number of background type used in *TBVM* is that of a detailed background. There are 33 (29.73%) such panels in total. Figure 5.75 depicts one such example where the background is rich and full with images. The background indicates the conversation taking place in either a reading room or a living room based on the details provided in the background.



**Figure 5.75:** A Detailed Background Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 64). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

It is evident that all three novels adhered to different types of background in their panels. This indicates that there is a variety in the representation of backgrounds within the panels of the novels. In a detailed background, the element of realism is emphasized with vividness and imagery. In a minimalist background on the other hand, the element of simplicity is established to provide a visual stimulus through the inclusion of minimal elements. Finally, sans background panels which are introduced as an additional category in this study, remain largely unpopular unless there is an extreme need to focus on a narrative that carries a chain of inter-related important events like *TBVM* where there are many flashbacks pictured coming in and out within the narrative. Though all three backgrounds are used with different degrees of consistence, the focus on the main subject of each panel is never neglected. This visual component is vital to inject depth

and mood in the overall visual layout of graphic novels. In the panels of these three novels, backgrounds are crucial to establish the location, settings and tone of the narrative. In addition, different types of backgrounds also paint a general ambiance to the story.

### 5.6.5 Emanata

As McCloud (1994) asserts, emanata are symbols which are non-verbal and represent the *going-ons* in a character's head and embodies the non-verbal (McCloud, 1994). The use of emanata emphasises the emotions of the characters which are not verbalized but rather visualized for the readers. Table 5.12 denotes the number of emanata illustrated in the novels.

**Table 5.12:** Number of Emanata

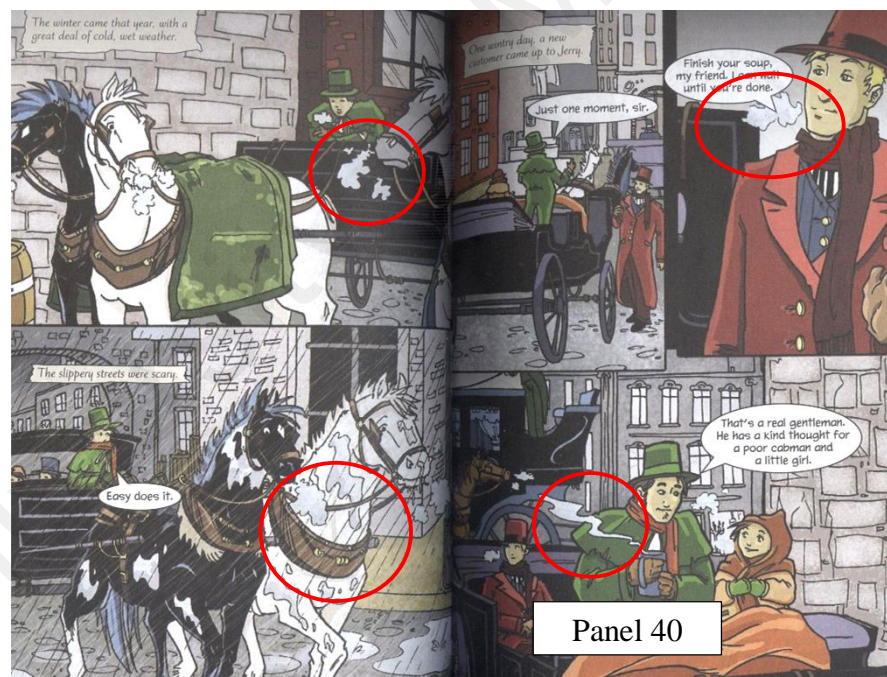
Title	Number of Emanata
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	11
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	8
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	2

The analysis shows that illustrators of the novels have not used emanata extensively in their illustrations. As a tool of choice, it is evident that emanata is not a popular choice though it is a common feature in most comics and graphic novels. They are used sparingly to refrain from symbolizing what is emitted from people or things to represent what is going on. In *BB*, a total of 11 emanatas are prominent. These emanatas represent actions and emotions. For example, Figure 5.76 shows the symbol of musical notes representing Joe singing. On the other hand, Figure 5.77 portrays the coldness of the weather felt by both horses and men represented by a cloud like emanata surrounding them. The emanata on Panel 105 (p. 40) shows squiggly lines indicating a

hot mug of drink being enjoyed on a cold day.



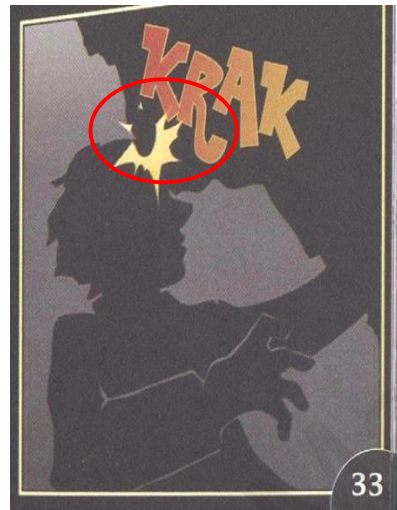
**Figure 5.76:** An Example of Emanata in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 23).  
©Stone Arch Books.



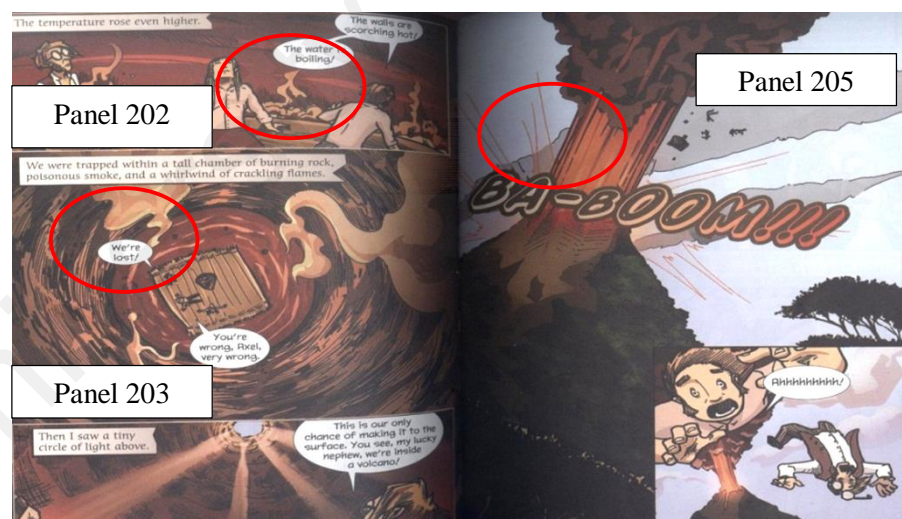
**Figure 5.77:** Examples of Emanatas in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 48-49).  
©Stone Arch Books.

The novel *JttCotE* contains 8 emanatas and a few are noted in Figures 5.78 and 5.79 respectively. The emanata in Figure 5.78 symbolises a hard knock which is further enhanced in presentation with the usage of the special effect word KRAK. The two

emanatas on Panels 202 and 203 (p. 62) in Figure 5.79 represents smoke while the emanata of lines on Panel 205 (p. 63) implies an eruption which again is aided with the special effect word BA-BOOM!!!.



**Figure 5.78:** An Example of Emanata in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 33). ©Stone Arch Books.

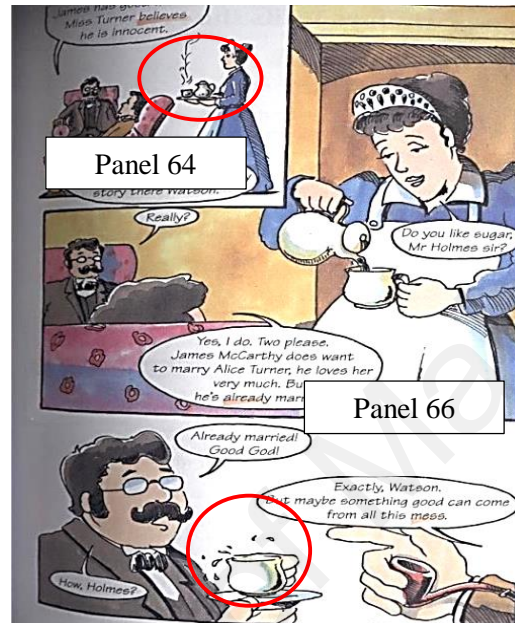


**Figure 5.79:** Examples of Emanatas in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 62-63). ©Stone Arch Books.

In the case of *TBVM*, the only two emanatas found are incidentally related to a hot drink as shown in Figure 5.80. Also, rather than emanating from humans, the emanata in *TBVM* come from an inanimate item of a cup of hot drink. In Panel 64 (p. 49), the



squiggly lines emanating from the cup denotes a hot drink while the second emanata on Panel 66 (p. 53) represents a beverage spillage. The unpopularity of emanatas in this novel shows that the illustrator favours other visual elements like vignettes, shots and backgrounds rather than emanatas.



**Figure 5.80:** Examples of Emanatas in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 53). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Notably, emanatas play a rather insignificant role in all three novels judging from their appearances and functions. As popular visual element in comics and graphic novels, emanatas are sparingly utilized in both *BB* and *JttCotE* and hardly relevant in *TBVM*. In addition, the emanata in *TBVM* does not come from an animate entity as compared to those from *BB* and *JttCotE*. The deployment of emanata by the illustrators supports the notion that they have chosen the most plausible sign-makers to represent the expressions needed which supports the assertion of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996).

### 5.6.6 A Summary of the Analysis on Structures of Components that Contain Visual Elements of the Conventions of Comics

As the aforementioned findings indicate, different writers and illustrators adhere to different styles textually and visually to narrate the stories. This finding concurs with Eisner (2008) who opines that “style of art not only connects the reader with the artist but it sets ambiance and has language value” (p. 150). The deployment of the conventions of comics shows that the adapted graphic versions of *BB* and *JttCotE* conform to a typical comic layout popular with mainstream comic books and graphic novels. In the case of *TBVM*, this study establishes the fact that it should be considered a graphic reader rather than a graphic novel mainly due to its structural composition. In addition the disruptions in between the flow of stories with exercises clearly support the assertion that this novel is suitable to be termed as a reader rather than a graphic novel. It must be noted that though non-conformity is accepted in the production of graphic novels, the layout of *TBVM* does not warrant it to be considered a graphic novel due to the superficial layout discussed earlier which supports it to that of a graphic reader.

The understanding of the conventions of comics is pertinent especially for teachers as these elements could be used effectively in teaching the many literary elements and nuances of literary texts (Alcantud-Diaz, 2012; Basinger, 2012; Dallacqua, 2012). As adapted classics, these graphic novels further facilitate the understanding of their canonical sisters by introducing the more difficult texts and also inculcate an interest to read the original works. Nevertheless, each of the elements is crucial in the construction of multimodality in these graphic novels. Rather than isolating any one element, each element is important to construe meaning in these novels. This is parallel to Serafini’s (2010) assertion that no single perspective should be privileged as each presents

“different lens” (p. 89) and perspective to a multimodal text.

It must be further asserted that though all three novels are adapted from literary classics, the simplification of the texts did not compromise on the content of the novels. This is evident from the assembly of the elements of comics through their many features which have succeeded in capturing the main narratives of the original texts. More importantly, literary features like theme, setting, characterization and tone are all considered in the construction of these graphic novels. This clearly supports Martin’s (2004) notion that “standard stories such as folktales, fairy tales, and *retold classics* create a controlled narrative space that allows illustrators to experiment with visual forms” (p. 18, emphasis added). As Beardsley succinctly puts it way back in 1937:

Evidently the foremost task of the simplifier is to produce a simplification which will not shame the original, which will in fact carry to the student much of the stimulus of the original. Story-value can be easily carried over; style, if at all delicate, runs an excellent chance of being lost. (p. 397)

## 5.7 Summary

This chapter answers RQ1 and looks into how the conventions of comics are represented in the three graphic novels. The first section of the discussion gave an overview of RQ and an illustrated framework of the major components of the conventions of comics in answering RQ1. In addition, prior to answering RQ1, a description of the structural layout of all three novels was given specifically on the total distribution of pages, panels, balloons and captions. This is deemed pertinent as an understanding of the components in the layout provides further data to scaffold the discussion and comprehend the choices of both illustrators and writers of the novels. In answering RQ1, the discussion focused on the independent components of splash pages,

bleeds and also both textual and visual elements within the panels. Both splash pages and bleeds were not categorised under panels because the discussion concentrated on their layouts which are not within the standard panels. The use of splash pages in these novels indicates the focus of the images on pertinent and crucial episodes of the narratives. In addition, these splash pages clearly transport the readers closer to important events in the adapted stories. There is also a clear emergence of visual symbolism through the deployment of splash pages. In *JttCotE*, insets are added to further provide details that enhance the splash pages. The bleeds in all three novels emphasis characterisation and also focus on pertinent events, once again. Interestingly, a third component known as vignettes was also identified specifically in *TBVM*.

The textual component analysis within the panel addressed the distribution of balloons, caption and word types. The structural shape of round speech balloons is the most popular. There is also an emergence of textualised and non-textualised or pictorial types thought balloons. In addition, the illustrators of the novels adhered to a more traditional method in presenting all captions within bordered frames. The use of sound effect words in both *JttCotE* and *BB* indicates a choice based on direct onomatopoeic words. The choices of sound effect words reveal the need to augment vividness and dynamism.

The visual component analysis within the panel focused on the shapes, positions, shots, backgrounds and emanatas. The type of panel shapes preferred is that of the regular rectangular type. Nevertheless, there are also many geometric shaped panels evident. The category of 'other' is also favoured specifically irregular and L-shaped panels. At times, these panels help in grounding the setting of the stories. In addition, a silhouette type of panel is also identified in this study and it is mostly used in *TBVM*. The

variation of shapes clearly allows eye-catching imagery. In the positioning of panels, only the layout in *JttCotE* reveals variation where also three types: regular, overlap and split are used. *BB* contains regular and overlap panels while *TBVM* adheres to a more conventional regular type.

The analysis on panel shots indicate a preference for long shots and medium close ups in both *JttCotE* and *BB* while *TBVM* relies on medium close ups and medium shots. These choices reflect the importance of containing specific mood and the depiction of key elements of the narratives through the choices of shots. The background choices reveal the usage of detailed and minimalist backgrounds as a common setting in both *BB* and *JttCotE* while *TBVM* relies on sans and minimalist background types. The use of emanata is insignificant in all three novels as their number is small. The depiction and layout of all these comics components reveal that careful consideration was put into the construction of these graphic novels which are adapted from literary classics. Critical decisions and considerations are clearly made specifically on compression and extensions in recreating the original in medium that interplays text and images through sequential art. More importantly, there is also a control over the deployment of text over images. This is important to avoid the terming of these novels as illustrated readers.

The assemblage of the various the conventions of comics in these novels and their relevance in signifying various literary elements and also meaning making abilities scaffold the urgency to understand these convention among teachers and students. Hammond's (2009) study echos Annett's (2005) on the need to advise the teaching of the conventions of comics to both teachers and students in order to have a better understanding of comic books and graphic novels. Taking off from here, this study

further highlights how these components are represented in these three adapted classics and how they create meanings for their readers. As such, the multimodality of these novels denotes the various components that educators could exhaust in their classrooms to provide interesting teaching and learning sessions, in addition to understanding the conventions that create meaningful graphic novels.

The following Chapter 6 looks into how both verbal and visual elements are established in graphic novels through RQ2.

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## CHAPTER 6: TEXTUAL AND VISUAL ELEMENTS IN GRAPHIC NOVELS

I *read* a novel, but *see* a picture – these are essentially  
different forms of aesthetic experience.  
(David Carrier, 2000, p. 61).

### 6.0 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the objective of this study is to examine how different multimodal elements like the conventions of comics and both textual and visual elements are represented in graphic novels of the genre of adapted classics. In addition, the study also focuses on how these components cohere to elicit meanings in this specific medium. A study such as this reveals the intricacies that go on in the production of graphic novels of the genre of adapted classics and how meanings are represented in graphic novels. This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the two major modalities that construct the three graphic novels analysed which are the textual and visual components that contribute to the multimodality of these texts. In addition, the identification and analysis of both these elements are also pertinent in revealing how textual and visual elements are represented to construe meanings.

Section 6.1 provides an overview of the research questions that scaffold this chapter. The textual analysis is presented in Section 6.2. The subsections of 6.2 focus on the three main elements of the System of Transitivity (hereafter SoT) namely Processes, Participants and Circumstances and further discusses the categories. The six Processes discussed are Material, Mental, Verbal, Relational, Behavioural and Existential Processes. The Participants are Actor, Goal, Scope, Attribute or Beneficiary (Material

Process); Senser and Phenomenon (Mental Process); Token and Value (Relational Process-Identifying) and Carrier and Attribute (Relational Process-Attributing); Behavior, Behavioural and Range (Behavioural Process); Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver and Target (Verbal Process) and finally, Existent (Existential Process). Circumstances comprise that of Extent, Location, Cause, Accompaniment, Matter, Role, Manner, Contingency and Angle. A summary of the findings of textual analysis is presented in subsection 6.2.4. On the other hand Section 6.3 focuses on the visual analysis and its subsection of 6.3.1 concentrates on the two main processes, namely Narrative Processes and Conceptual Processes. This followed by a short summary of the visual analysis in subsection 6.3.2. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided in section 6.4

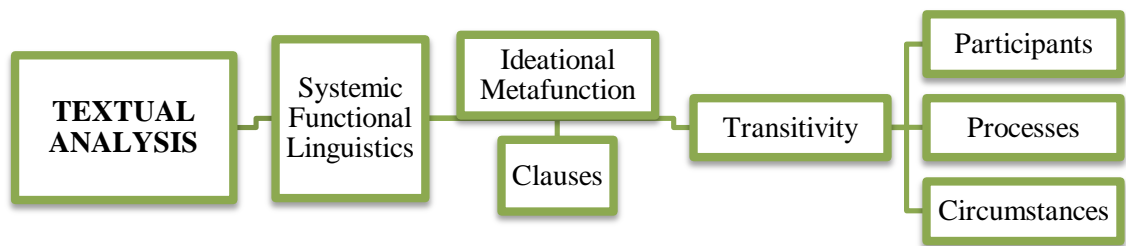
## **6.1 An Overview**

This chapter focuses on answering Research Question 2 (hereafter RQ2) which is divided into two parts. The analysis attempts to answer the following questions:

- RQ2) a. How are textual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***
- b. How are visual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?***

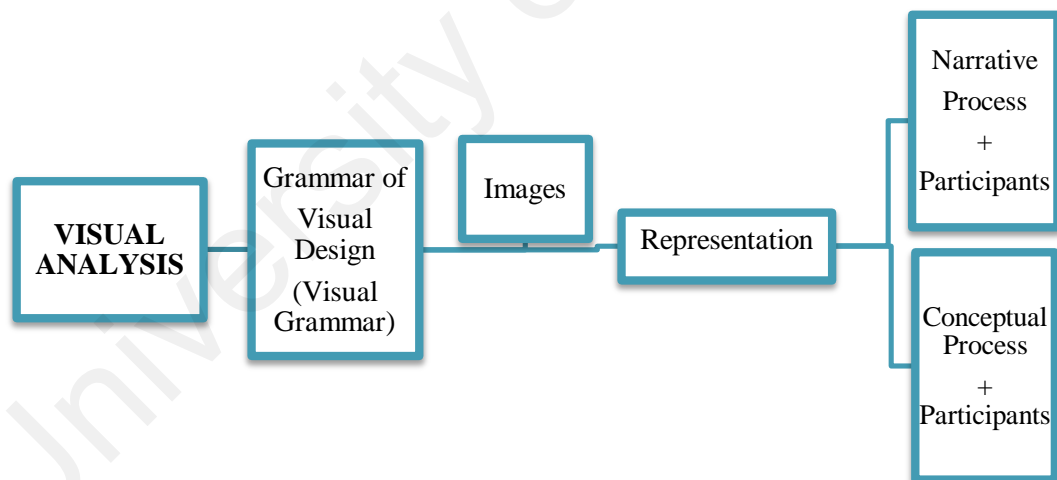
In order to investigate these elements, two frameworks were used namely Halliday's SoT based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) and Kress and van Leeuwen's Grammar of Visual Design or Visual Grammar (hereafter VG). Figures 6.1 and 6.2 represent the theoretical frameworks and their descriptors for both textual and visual analyses. Detailed descriptions of both frameworks are provided in Sections 3.4 and 3.5 respectively in Chapter 3.





**Figure 6.1:** The Theoretical Framework of Textual Analysis

The main framework of the textual analysis as shown in Figure 6.1 is grounded in the field of SFL focusing on clauses (in this case, sentences for simplification purpose) and this study specifically concentrated on the ideational metafunction whereby the focus was on the elements of Participants, Processes and Circumstances based on the System of Transitivity (hereafter SoT).



**Figure 6.2:** The Theoretical Framework of Visual Analysis

The main framework of the visual analysis in Figure 6.2 is established within the VG. It concentrates on images and this study specifically focused on the Representation Process as it corresponds with the ideational metafunction of the linguistic analysis (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 42). In addition, the visual analysis limited itself

only to the Processes and did not focus on Participants and Circumstances. The elements of Participants were discussed in tandem with the Processes. This study purposefully concentrated on only the visual processes as other discussions such as the conventions of comics and cohesion analysis concentrate on many visual representations. This denotes the depth of the study and as such, also involves the issue of word limitation. The element of Circumstances is also not included in the study due to the same reason. For Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), Circumstances are “participants which could be left out without affecting the basic proposition realised by the narrative pattern” (p. 71), and as such, this assertion also influenced the decision to leave out this particular element. In addition, only dominant image representations are taken into considerations due to again, the depth of the study. The study itself purposefully investigated all kinds of textual and visual representations that constitute the graphic novel of the adapted classics and as such embraced a few frameworks in eliciting data.

## **6.2 The Textual Analysis**

As mentioned previously, Halliday’s SFL in particular the SoT, provides the framework for the textual analysis of the three graphic novels. By focusing on the grammar resources which realise the experiential meanings, an understanding of what is going on in the ‘field’ can be deduced.

### **6.2.1 The Processes**

The theoretical framework of the ideational metafunction provides an understanding of how textual elements are construed in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. In concurring with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) who put forth that, “clauses of different process types

make distinctive contributions to the construal of experience in text” (p. 174), the analysis of the different Processes helps in determining the choices made by the writers in adapting the original novels into graphic novels. The six Processes which construe the SoT are Material, Mental, Verbal, Relational, Behavioural and Existential Processes. Table 6.1 on the following page represents the total number of processes in all three adapted graphic novels.

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**Table 6.1:** Types of Processes and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Processes							Total
	Material	Mental	Relational		Behavioural	Verbal	Existential	
			Identifying	Attributing				
Black Beauty (BB)	116 34.73%	58 17.37%	65 19.46%	55 16.47%	27 8.08%	11 3.29%	2 0.6%	334
			120 35.93%					
Journey to the Centre of the Earth (JttCotE)	186 48.82%	23 6.04%	50 13.12%	62 16.27%	44 11.55%	7 1.84%	9 2.36%	381
			112 29.4%					
The Boscombe Valley Mystery (TVBM)	92 22.12%	88 21.15%	87 20.91%	84 20.19%	20 4.81%	35 8.41%	9 2.16%	416
			171 40.86%					

As indicated in Table 6.1, the number of processes is the highest in *TBVM* where there are 416 processes in total. This is followed by *JttCotE* which contains a total of 381 processes while *BB* only has 334 processes. This distribution also synchronises with the distribution of textual features of speech balloons and captions which were discussed in Chapter 5. The related data which is presented in Table 5.1 of Chapter 5 shows a symmetrical relationship between the number of textual features and the number of processes in all these graphic novels. The analysis on the distribution of process types reveals that all three novels do not concur on the allocation of the different types of processes. Both *BB* and *JttCotE* have the Material Processes the most followed by Relational Processes. *TBVM* on the other hand has Relational Processes as the highest number followed by Material Processes. More importantly, this revelation concurs with Gerot and Wignell (2004) who assert the importance of both Material Processes and Relational Processes in the construction of a narrative genre. The following discussion focuses on the various processes and their allotments in the novels.

#### **6.2.1.1 Material Processes**

The externalised Material Processes (hereafter MPs) represent the outer world of actions and events that denote an action verb of doing or happening. The Participants are termed as Actor, Goal, Scope, Range and Beneficiary. The findings indicate that there is a prevalence of MPs in *JttCotE* where 186 (48.82%) instances are found. This is followed by *BB* with 116 (34.73%). *TBVM* only has 92 (22.12%) MPs though the book carries more chapters and pages, in addition to containing more Processes than the other graphic novels.

In *BB*, the 116 (34.73%) clauses of MPs show that the writer has clearly relied on MPs to depict actions and events in the novel. This supports the notion that the selection of verbs in the novel constructs the need to highlight actions. Two examples are denoted in Tables 6.2 and 6.3.

**Table 6.2:** A Material Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 1)

BB/S1/P20	In May,	Squire Gordon's coachman, John,	came to get	me.
	Cir:Location	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Pr:Goal

**Table 6.3:** A Material Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 2)

BB/S2/P40	Take	this horse	while	I	go back	for the other.
	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal	-	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal

In Table 6.2, the verb came to get demonstrates an important life event in Black Beauty's life – his transfer to Birtwick Park where he eventually meets Ginger and Merrylegs, his new friends who would ultimately leave a profound effect on his outlook of life. In Table 6.3, however, the verb Take represents a command and these types of commands are common in *BB*. This shows that at times, commands are used to depict authority of humans over animals through power authorisation of men versus animals, of us (humans) against them (animals).

The preference of the writer of *JttCotE* to rely on 186 (48.82%) MPs as compared to other processes indicates the need to highlight the processes of 'doing' and 'happening' through physical experiences as compared to other processes, similar to *BB*. The high incidences of MPs also show that there is an emphasis to encode experiences in the external and material world as depicted in Tables 6.4 and 6.5.

**Table 6.4:** A Material Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 1)

JttCoE/S1/P9	Uncle	stormed out	of the house.
	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal

**Table 6.5:** A Material Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 2)

JttCoE/S1/P119	Uncle,	have	we	returned	to the surface?
	Vocative	-	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal

In Table 6.4 (extracted from a caption), the verb stormed out shows the frustration of Uncle Lidenbrock of being unable to decipher the meanings of Arne Saknussemm's words found in an ancient book. In Table 6.5 on the other hand, the verb returned denotes Axel's hope of returning to the surface after falling into a deep tunnel. The depiction of these important scenes deploying MPs shows the reliance on action oriented processes to highlight important events as construed in the original version of the text.

However, in *TBVM*, MPs are the second highest process and there is only a negligible difference between the deployments of 92 (22.12%) MPs and 88 (21.15%) Mental Processes (hereafter MenPs). Tables 6.6 and Table 6.7 exemplify the instances of MPs.

**Table 6.6:** A Material Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 1)

BVM/S1/P67	James McCarthy	married	a barmaid	in Bristol
	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal	Cir: Location
	two years ago		in secret.	
	Cir: Time		Cir: Manner	

**Table 6.7:** A Material Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 2)

BVM/S1/P25	Moran, the gamekeeper, and a policeman	find	Charles McCarthy's body.
	Par:Actor	<b>Pr:Material</b>	Par:Goal

In Table 6.6, the verb married shows that the secret marriage between James McCarthy and a barmaid changes the whole outlook of the case for both Holmes and Watson. The verb find in Table 6.7, on the other hand, depicts the discovery of the body by both the gamekeeper and a policeman that leads to further complications in the development of the case.

The deployment of MPs as the most used processes in both *BB* and *JttCotE* clearly indicates the importance of construing the actions of ‘happenings’ and ‘doings’ in these adapted classics which have been constructed on a series of critical actions. These actions lead up to the ultimate outcome in the story: how Black Beauty finally finds a good home in *BB* and how the travellers finally reach home in *JttCotE*. In addition, it also suggests that MPs are a prerequisite in captions and speech balloons, a mandatory salient feature of any graphic novel. Also as speech balloons are the voice of graphic novels, the use of MPs in these novels also signifies the importance of direct voices that embrace MPs to construe events. However, the allocations of processes in *TBVM* differ considerably. The MP is only the second highest process in this novel and this indicates that the author prefers a non-dynamic process (in this case, Relational Processes) to build up the story. In *TBVM*, Mental Processes are also equally important to its narrative as the storyline involves the technique of flashback, a prerequisite in the plot of *TBVM*. This data supports Bloor and Bloor’s (2004) assertion that “in an action-oriented narrative, such processes (MPs) tend to occur frequently, though by no means they are the only type” (p. 110). This revelation supports Carter’s (1997) argument that “language always relate to specific texts and contexts and usually to a context determined by social and sociocultural factors” (p. 12).



### 6.2.1.2 Mental Processes

The findings also reveal that Mental Processes (hereafter MenPs) are inherent in *BB*, *JttCoE* and *TBVM*. The MenP describes the process of sensing and encodes one's inner world of consciousness. The four sub-types of sensing encompass perception, cognition, desideration and emotion. MenPs are accompanied with Participants known as a Senser or a Phenomenon. There are many realizations of MenPs in the data whereby *TBVM* contains 88 (21.15%) MenPs as compared to both *BB* (58 or 17.37%) and *JttCotE* which carry 58 (17.37%) and 23 (6.04%) MenPs respectively. The realisations of these MenPs indicate the consciousness of perception, cognition, desideration and emotion of MenPs.

There are 58 (17.37%) MenPs in *BB* and two examples from the novel are shown in Tables 6.8 and 6.9.

**Table 6.8:** A Mental Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 1)

BB/S3/P55	She	likes	the horses' heads held up high.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par:Phenomenon

**Table 6.9:** A Mental Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 2)

BB/S1/P108	I	wish	there were more gentlemen like you,	sir.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par:Phenomenon	Vocative

In Table 6.8, the Mistress of Earls Hall Park prefers her horses to be fashion statements and as such, her feelings are represented by the verb likes, a type of emotive sensing. On the other hand, the verb wish in Table 6.9 signifies an emotive sensing when Jerry praises two kind gentlemen on the streets of London who ticked off a cruel cab driver. The examples in both Table 6.8 and 6.9 denote the depiction of the theme of cruelty towards horses. Here, the act of holding a horse's head high by using a checkrein is considered fashionable and the incident on the streets of London shows how generally horses are treated by cab drivers during the Victorian times. These events represent the

element of ignorance of the animals' plights on the part of humans depicted in the novel as the sense of empathy and sympathy towards animals is undoubtedly lacking. These examples reveal the importance of processes in revealing stylistics elements, in this case being the exploration of themes.

In *JttCotE*, a total of only 23 (6.04%) MenPs are deployed and these indicate that the process is not popular in the novel. This is mainly due to the structure of the story which concentrates on the adventure itself without resorting to clauses that concern the experience of one's consciousness as shown in the two examples of Tables 6.10 and 6.11.

**Table 6.10:** A Mental Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 1)

JttCoE/S1/P105	I	realized	I must be bleeding.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par: Phenomenon

**Table 6.11:** A Mental Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 2)

JttCoE/S1/P146	Uncle	wanted	to measure the depth of the water.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par: Phenomenon

Table 6.10 represents a cognitive sensing of realisation as Axel recovers from his fall through the usage of the verb realized. On the other hand, Table 6.11 shows the verb wanted demonstrating a desiderative sensing. In this instance, Otto Lidenbrock is determined to measure the depth of the sea in the centre of earth, which by itself is a rare phenomenon. Such deployments peppered in *JttCotE* indicate that the need to expose the stream of consciousness of the characters is limited in this novel and the author prefers the action laden clauses of MPs.

The transitivity analysis reveals that there is only a negligible difference of 0.97% between MPs and MenPs in *TBVM*. The dominance of both processes indicates the presence of both current actions and flashbacks which make up the narrative of *TBVM*.

This data confirms that the technique of flashback is equally pertinent to *TBVM*'s narrative. Tables 6.12 and 6.13 represent examples of MenPs in the novel *TBVM*.

**Table 6.12:** A Mental Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*(Example 1)

BVM/S2/P32	Someone	thinks	James McCarthy is totally innocent.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par:Phenomenon

**Table 6.13:** A Mental Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*(Example 2)

BVM/S5/P51	Mr McCarthy	wanted	James to marry me.
	Par:Senser	<b>Pr:Mental</b>	Par:Phenomenon

In Table 6.12 for instance, the verb thinks suggests that James is innocent, and this is a build up to the climax of the story. This verb also illuminates cognitive sensing. On the other hand, Table 6.13 represents Alice's confession of Mr McCarthy's true intent. It highlights desiderative sensing through the verb wanted and adds on to the complexity of the narrative. This is mainly due to the employment of flashbacks in the novel from the days in Ballarat, Australia to the current setting of London.

The deployment of MenPs suggests that the authors have relied on the processes of feeling, wanting, thinking and seeing to further add realism to the narrative of the story though these novels are adapted. It is also through MenPs that the characters have successfully express opinions, thoughts, wants and tastes that define their existence on earth. In *BB* for instance, there is a number of MenPs which sees Black Beauty as the Senser and this suggests that he is endowed with consciousness. This also supports the novel is anthropocentric in its narrative (Rajendra and Taib, 2014) through the usage of MenPs to show cruelty towards animals. *JttCotE* on the other hand, has the fewest MenPs as compared to the other two novels due to the author's preference to rely on action oriented processes as Otto and his entourage traverse the centre of the earth. All in all, the clauses which carry MenPs support Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004)

assertion that “a mental clause construes a quantum of change in the flow of events taking place in our consciousness” (p. 197).

### 6.2.1.3 Relational Processes

It must be noted that Relational Processes (hereafter RPs) are generously used in all there novels indicating the importance of identifying and classifying the world. A RP is pertinent to relate two concepts that refer to the same thing in some way or other. It conveys the states of ‘being’ or ‘having’ namely through two modes: Identifying Process (IP) and Attributive Process (AP). An IP is used to establish and identify while an AP assigns a quality to something and each of this sub-process comes with its own characteristics and participant roles. The Participants in IP are known as Carriers and Attributes. In an AP, its Participants are known as Tokens and Values.

The most number of RPs are found in *TBVM* which carries 171 (40.86%) processes while *BB* contains 120 (35.93%) in total. Meanwhile, *JttCotE* has 112 (29.4%) RPs in total. In categorising the RPs, *TBVM* has 87 (20.91%) IPs and 84 (20.19%) APs. *BB* carries 65 (19.46%) IPs and 55 (16.47%) APs respectively while *JttCotE* has 50 (13.12%) IPs and 55 (16.47%) APs.

In *BB*, RPs are 120 (35.93%) in total. The sub-processes are divided into 65 (19.46%) IPs and 55 (16.47%) APs. Tables 6.14 and 6.15 denote an AP and IP found in *BB*.

**Table 6.14:** A Relational Process of Identifying Mode (IP) in *Black Beauty*

BB/S2/P69	Max	was	my new carriage partner.
	Par:Token	<b>Pr:Relational</b>	Par:Value

**Table 6.15:** A Relational Process of Attributing Mode (AP) in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P1	My first home	was	with Farmer Grey.
	Par:Carrier	<b>Pr: Relational</b>	Par:Attribute

In Table 6.14, the verb-to-be was identifies Max as Black Beauty's new carriage partner. Here, the importance of descriptive statements to enhance the story of *BB* is clearly shown deploying RPs of the Identifying nature. On the other hand, Table 6.15 exemplifies an AP where the verb-to-be was acts as an attributive verb; attributing Black Beauty's first home was with Farmer Grey. This descriptive nature of the Attributing RP adds to the vividness of the narrative.

In *JttCotE*, there are 112 (29.4%) RPs in total out of which 49 (12.86%) are IPs and 62 (16.27%) are APs. Tables 6.16 and 6.17 respectively exemplify an IP and AP found in *JttCotE*.

**Table 6.16:** A Relational Process of Identifying Mode (IP) in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P4	These	are	Runic symbols.
	Par:Token	<b>Pr: Relational</b>	Par:Value

**Table 6.17:** A Relational Process of Attributing Mode (AP) in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S2/P19	The ten-day trip	was	hard.
	Par:Carrier	<b>Pr:Relational</b>	Par:Attribute

In Table 6.16 the verb-to-be are identifies what constitutes Runic symbols. The verb-to-be was in Table 6.17 attributes the difficulty of a ten-day trip. As in *BB*, the importance of the elements of attribution and identification cannot be ignored as they are pertinent in accentuating the narrative of the novel through careful linguistic choices.

In contrast, *TBVM* carries the highest of RPs and this indicates a heavy reliance on the process in its text. All in all, there are 171 (40.86%) RPs in total. The sub-processes are divided into 87 (20.91%) IPs and 84 (20.19%) APs. Two examples are depicted in Tables 6.18 and 6.19 respectively.

**Table 6.18:** A Relational Process of Identifying Mode (IP) in  
*The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S2/P24	He	's (is)	at the pool.
	Par:Token	<b>Pr:Relational</b>	Par:Value

**Table 6.19:** A Relational Process of Attributing Mode (AP) in  
*The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S1/P24	My father	Is	seriously	hurt.
	Par:Carrier	<b>Pr:Relational</b>	Cir: Manner	Par:Attribute

In Table 6.18, the verb-to-be is identifies McCarthy's father being by the pool while the same verb attributes him being seriously hurt in Table 6.19. This indicates that the author prefers a more static nature of clauses rather than the dynamic MP which is a common norm in narratives. Relational processes "prototypically construe change as unfolding 'inertly', without an input of energy" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 211) and this is clearly revealed in *TBVM*. More importantly, the characters' features, attitudes and qualities are described to enable readers to understand the experiential meanings embedded in these novels.

#### 6.2.1.4 Behavioural Processes

A Behavioural Process (hereafter BP) encodes the processes of physiological and psychological behaviours. In many instances, BPs appears as a borderline between Material and Mental Processes. The obligatory Participant in this process is the Behaver

who is just like a Senser but the process here involves the one of ‘doing’ and not ‘sensing’. In short, the Behaver is behaving and a conscious being.

Amongst the three graphic novels, *JttCotE* carries the highest BPs which is 44 (11.55%) while *BB* contains 27 (8.08%) of these processes. The least is found in *TBVM* which is 20 (4.81%) processes. It can be concluded that based on the statistics, BP is definitely not popularly used by these writers.

In *BB*, there are 27 (8.08%) BPs and Tables 6.20 and 6.21 denote two examples where physiological actions take place.

**Table 6.20:** A Behavioural Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 1)

BB/S1/P5	Those cart horse colts	have not learnt	their manners,	yet.
	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr: Behavioural</b>	Par:Behaviour	Cir:Manner

**Table 6.21:** A Behavioural Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 2)

BB/S1/P17	More and more	trains	puffed and shrieked
	Cir:Manner	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr:Behavioural</b>
	Past	the meadow.	
	Cir:Manner	Cir:Location	

Table 6.20 denotes an example of a BP whereby the verb have not learnt shows that the inherent behavioural process of learning manners have not been mastered by the colts. Table 6.21 shows the acts of puffing and shrieking of the trains and this reveals the personification of these inanimate subjects, adding on to the stylistics elements of the novels.

The novel *JttCotE* largely contains the highest of BP which totals 44 (11.55%) among the three novels. Examples of the depiction of BPs in the clauses of *JttCotE* are shown in Tables 6.22 and 6.23 respectively.

**Table 6.22:** A Behavioural Process in  
*Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 1)

JttCoE/S1/P27	At the top of the mountain,	I	stared down	into a gigantic volcanic crater.
	Cir:Location	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr:Behavioural</b>	Par:Range

**Table 6.23:** A Behavioural Process in  
*Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 2)

JttCoE/S1/P20	...his face	brightened	with a smile.
	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr:Behavioural</b>	Par:Behaviour

The verb stared down as shown in Table 6.22 indicates a physiological action. In Table 6.23, the verb brightened is assigned with a bright smile. Here, the word brightened acts as a metaphor, further enhancing the clever usage of literary devices. By using a metaphor, the author succinctly succeeds in construing an analogy to depict vividness and aestheticism in the text. Again, stylistics elements like personification are inherent through careful linguistic choices.

*TBVM* contains the least BPs and they are all related to humans. As the novel is of a mystery genre, there are no anthropomorphic elements; and many of the behaviour types are clearly evident through images rather than textual representations. Tables 6.24 and 6.25 exemplify two such BPs evident in *TBVM*.

**Table 6.24:** A Behavioural Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 1)

BVM/S1/P14	I	See	the newspapers
	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr:Behavioral</b>	Par:Behaviour

**Table 6.25:** A Behavioural Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 2)

BVM/S1/P40	At Boscombe Pool,	James	hears	a familiar sound.
	Cir:Location	Par:Behaver	<b>Pr:Behavioural</b>	Par:Behaviour



The verbs see and hears as illustrated in Tables 6.24 and 6.25 show physiological BPs. Notably, these BPs which construe human physiological and psychological behaviours are used to add realism in the characterisation of *TBVM*.

The deployment of BPs in all three novels reveals careful consideration of the roles of the characters in the novels. However, BPs are not commonly used as compared to MPs as images better represent physiological and psychological conditions. This revelation concurs with Rajendra and Taib (2014) who posit “the under reliance on physiological and psychological clauses which are better presented through images in this particular graphic novel” (p. 42). In a novel like *BB* that features elements of anthropocentrism, BPs are used to humanise the animals through physiological and psychological means. At times, BPs are also used as elements of personification and this indicate that the linguistic choices in adapting the original works into graphic novels do include literary considerations through stylistics elements. As a fantasy genre, *JttCotE* too relies on BPs to enhance the characterisation of non-human characters like sea-monsters. Again, stylistic elements like personification is prominent to give human like characteristics to non-human entities. Though a mystery genre, the BPs in *TBVM* on the other hand indicate the need to enhance human physiological and psychological characteristics besides relying on action oriented MPs.

#### **6.2.1.5 Verbal Processes**

A Verbal Process (hereafter VP) encompasses the process of saying and it expresses the relationship between ideas created in human consciousness. These ideas are represented in the form of speaking by eliciting the inner world to the outside world. The Participants in VPs are Sayer, Target and Verbiage. Nevertheless it must be reinstated

here that as graphic novels involve the deployment of speech balloons, the verbal elements are a part of the dialogues contained in these receptacles. Thus, the analysis within the speech balloons were conducted when a VP did exist with the usage of verbs that denote an underlying situation of verbal communication with verbs like said, uttered, screamed and whispered, among others. Surprisingly, there are more VPs as compared to Existential Processes (the least of the lot), indicating the need to rely on VPs for reasons like reporting and flashbacks.

It is distinctly clear that *TVBM* contains the most VPs which is 35 (8.41%) followed by 11 (3.29%) in *BB* and finally, only 7 (1.84%) in *JttCotE*. The large number of VPs in *TBVM* is due to the use of flashbacks of events in Australia and London, hence there were many incidences of reporting.

As mentioned earlier, *BB* carries 11(3.29%) VPs and two examples are shown in Tables 6.26 and 6.27.

**Table 6.26:** A Verbal Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 1)

BB/S3/P53	What can	You	tell	me	about these two?
	Par:Verbiage	Par:Receiver	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Sayer	Par:Verbiage

**Table 6.27:** A Verbal Process in *Black Beauty* (Example 2)

BB/S2/P68	But	I	can't tell	the mistress	what to do.
	-	Par:Sayer	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Target	Cir:Role

In Table 6.26, the verb tell shows that there is a need to reveal the background of the horses within the conversation itself while the verb tell in Table 6.27 depicts the fear of the coachman, Mr York towards the Mistress of Earls Hall Park.

*JttCotE* sees the deployment of only 7 (1.84%) VPs and this is the least used process in the novel itself. Tables 6.28 and 6.29 depict two examples of such process.

**Table 6.28:** A Verbal Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 1)

JttCoE/S2/P18	I	Said	goodbye	to my dear Gretchen.
	Par:Sayer	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Verbiage	Par:Receiver

**Table 6.29:** A Verbal Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (Example 2)

JttCoE/S2/P157	Hans	Says	there are only two creatures!
	Par: Sayer	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Verbiage

The verbs said and says in Tables 6.28 and 6.29 illustrate two different contexts to denote the accounts of dialogue in a caption and speech balloon respectively.

*TBVM* carries 35 (8.41%) VPs and these processes represent the highest of the process among the three novels mainly due to the inference of flashbacks in the narrative of the story.

**Table 6.30:** A Verbal Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 1)

BVM/1/P7	Holmes	begins to tell	Watson	about the case.
	Par:Sayer	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Receiver	Par: Verbiage

**Table 6.31:** A Verbal Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (Example 2)

BVM/S2/P20	He	Says	he doesn't know anything and the gun was only for shooting rabbits.
	Par:Sayer	<b>Pr:Verbal</b>	Par:Verbiage

In Table 6.30, the verb begins to tell represents the narration of the case by Holmes to Watson. The verb says in Table 6.31 denotes an act of denial through a flashback. In another example in Panel 15 (p. 13), the VP is integral in a reported speech featured in a letter. Again, the example here depicts a story within the main narrative and this is a typical feature of *TBVM*.

The adoption of VPs rather minimally in graphic novels is clearly justified based on the nature of the text. Speech balloons are important conventions of comics and are dialogic in nature. Thus, only non-dialogic constructed conversations encompass VPs. The commonality of flashbacks in *TBVM* warrants more VPs than in *BB* and *JttCotE*.

#### 6.2.1.6 Existential Processes

An Existential Process (hereafter EP) involves the process of ‘existing’ and ‘happening’. An existential clause typically carries the verb ‘be’ and this word acts as a subject though it has no representational function. Most EPs seem to be always preceded by the word ‘there’. The Participant is known as an Existent and this event or object is being said to exist.

The most number of EPs are found in *TBVM* that carries 9 (2.16%) such processes while *JttCotE* contains 9 (2.36%) in total. The least number of EPs are found in *BB* amounting only 2 (0.6%). The non-favourability of this process among the writers indicates that existing processes are better represented through images.

As mentioned earlier, *BB* has only 2 (0.6%) EPs. An example of an EP in *BB* is provided in Table 6.32.

**Table 6.32:** An Existential Process in *Black Beauty*

BB/S4/P72	There’s (is)	a loose nail	in your horse’s front shoe.
	<b>Pr:Existential</b>	Par:Existent	Cir:Location

The phrase there is above reveals the loose nail on Beauty's shoe which will then lead to his stumble and ultimately the death the horseman, Smith. Though insignificant in number, the EPs here clearly contribute to the importance of the text. In this case, the loose nail will eventually make Black Beauty to lose his balance and fall, killing Smith on impact.

There are 9 (2.36%) EPs in *JttCote* and they are mostly used to depict the settings of the narrative as depicted in Table 6.33.

**Table 6.33:** An Existential Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P41	There's (is)	a tunnel	to our right...
	<b>Pr:Existential</b>	Par:Existent	Cir:Location

In Table 6.33, the phrasal verb There's shows the existent of a tunnel and a prominent circumstantial element of place (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 258). Additionally, in Panel 201 (p. 61), the sentence "When there's life, there's hope" indicates the embedment of values like determination and perseverance through the adoption of EP.

On the contrary, *TBVM* adopts 9 (2.16%) EPs. In comparison to *BB* and *JttCotE*, the EPs in *TBVM* are mostly prominent in the many episodes of flashbacks deployed throughout the narrative. Table 6.34 denotes an example of an EP.

**Table 6.34:** An Existential Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/3/P12	There are	rumours that he gambled a lot.
	Par:Existential	Par:Existent

As shown by the example in Table 6.35, this EP indicates a statement whereby the word he represents Charles McCarthy who is rumoured to be a compulsive gambler.

Interestingly, this is the last sentence of the chapter and there are no further elaborations to it.

As most of these novels concentrate on tangible or physical actions of the participants which outline the crux of the narratives, the EP is minimally deployed. Only on a few occasions were EPs chosen to introduce the presence of a participant as in Table 6.34 or to express positional states as in Table 6.33. In addition, EPs also alert the reader to what will take place or be detailed in the following discourse, as in Table 6.32 clearly foreshadowing the imminent catastrophe. The deployment of an EP certainly enlightens the reader of the scene. Following this, the reader is piqued and is exposed to the element of foreshadowing (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). In addition, the EPs also assist in guiding the Participants in the setting and orientation of the narrative specifically at the beginning of the story (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 257).

In summary, the distribution of MPs in both *BB* and *JttCotE* and RPs in *TBVM* as the highest number processes respectively supports Gerot and Wignell's (2004) assertion of the importance of these two types of processes in a narrative. Incidentally, RPs are the second highest in *BB* and *JttCotE* and MPs in *TBVM*. It is worth noting that in the end, both MPs and RPs are prominent fixtures of clauses in these adapted classics. Though RPs are considered non-dynamic processes, they are used liberally and this suggests the need to counter the more dominant MPs in the text. More importantly, the adoption of Halliday's SFL as an analytical tool helps in unveiling the stratagems of the writers in their choice of linguistic structures to adapt the originals as close as possible. The allocation of EPs is limited in *BB* and this may be due to the fact that most of the chapters have been already given titles with the name of the location or setting (Earlshall Park, My Early Home and others). In *JttCotE* and *TBVM*, though limited,

EPs are widely used to depict settings which enable the readers to have a better picture of the environment.

This study of the SoT realised through the analysis of processes indicates that these writers obviously made informed choices in adapting the original works as best as possible. Considering that images are also pertinent representations of the original works, this study suggests that the verbal group that make up Processes are carefully thought off. The analysis of the grammatical features in these graphic novels reveals “choices about how to signify social (and construct) identities, social relationships and knowledge and belief” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 76).

### **6.2.2 The Participants**

A Participant is established by nominal groups in SFL. In Thompson’s (2004) words, “Every major clause normally includes at least one participant” (p. 87). The identification of Participants through SoT helps in determining their roles in the experiential meaning making through linguistic structures. These Participants can be either humans or inanimate entities. The Participants for a MP are Actor, Goal, Scope, Attribute or Beneficiary; Senser and Phenomenon for MenP; Token and Value for RP (Identifying) and Carrier and Attribute for RP (Attributing); Behaver, Behavioural and Range for BP; Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver and Target for VP and finally, Existent for EP. Table 6.35 illustrates the distribution of Participants in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*.

**Table 6.35:** Types of Participants and the Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Participants																		Total
	Actor	Goal	Scope	Beneficiary	Attribute	Senser	Phenomenon	Token	Value	Carrier	Attribute	Behavior	Behaviour	Sayer	Verbiage	Receiver	Target	Existent	
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	93 15.17%	87 14.19%	6 0.98%	4 0.65%	0 -	57 9.3%	55 8.97%	55 8.97%	55 8.97%	63 10.28%	64 10.44%	24 3.92%	22 3.59%	9 1.47%	8 1.31%	5 0.82%	4 0.65%	2 0.33%	613
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	140 21.51%	143 21.97%	15 2.3%	0 -	7 1.08%	21 3.23%	21 3.23%	59 9.08%	59 9.08%	49 7.54%	50 7.69%	36 5.54%	27 4.15%	7 1.08%	5 0.77%	2 0.31%	0 -	9 1.38%	650
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	69 8.86%	78 10.01%	6 0.77%	5 0.64%	2 0.26%	81 10.4%	80 10.27%	85 10.91%	83 10.65%	90 11.55%	90 11.55%	15 1.93%	11 1.41%	32 4.11%	26 3.34%	12 1.54%	5 0.64%	9 1.16%	779



As Table 6.35 indicates, the most number of Participants is found in *TBVM* (779), followed by *JttCotE* (650) and *BB* (613) respectively. Participants are important entities that scaffold the SoT besides Processes. The allocation of Participants in all three novels suggests a careful consideration of important events in the narratives that scaffold the original classics. The following sections see the discussions of the different Participants from the different Processes.

#### **6.2.2.1 Participants of Material Processes: Actor, Goal, Scope, Beneficiary, Attribute**

The adoption of MPs significantly shows the need to establish importance or significance to its Participants. As denoted in Table 6.35, *BB* and *JttCotE* carry 93 (15.17%) and 140 (21.51%) Actors, in addition to 87 (14.19%) and 143 (21.97%) Goals. The emergence of a high percentage of Actors and Goals shows the importance of Actors as powerful and influential doers of actions and the attainment of Goals in the many MPs. In contrast, *TBVM* only carries 69 (8.86%) Actors and 78 (10.01%) Goals. Interestingly, the high number of Goals in both *JttCotE* and *TBVM* denotes the need to achieve a sense fulfilment in executing activities and movements. The number of other Participants like Scope, Beneficiary and Attributes are relatively low in these three novels

In *BB* for instance, the Actor, Squire Gordon's coachman, John, fulfils the Goal of bringing me (Black Beauty) to Birtwick Park, which is the new home for Black Beauty. This is presented in Table 6.2 earlier. In Table 6.3, the Goal this horse supports James' plea in saving the horses from a blazing stable fire. The Actor I represent James who

goes on to save the other horses. This is represented by the Goal for the other horse which is Ginger.

In *JttCotE* as denoted in Table 6.4, the Actor Uncle is Otto Lidenbrock who walks away from the house. The Goal out of the house depicts Otto's own frustration. In Table 6.5, the Participant we represents Otto and Axel. In this example, the Goal of returning to the surface sets the tone of the resolution of the narrative.

As mentioned earlier, the MPs in *TBVM* are the second highest process and the distribution of its Participants follows this too. Table 6.6 shows James McCarthy as an Actor who is married to a barmaid; the Goal in this instance. This example shows how Participants are used to depict an important event from the past. The action of Moran, the gamekeeper, and a policeman as Actors in locating Charles McCarthy's body (Goal) illustrates the importance of Participants in realising pertinent events of the narrative through action processes.

The other Participants of MPs in the novels namely Scope, Beneficiary and Attributes are rather insignificant in number. Nevertheless, their contributions are significant in the narrative of the story. In short, these Participants help in accentuating the story with "movement and dynamism" (Moya, 2014, p. 80).

#### **6.2.2.2 Participants of Mental Processes: Senser and Phenomenon**

The findings reveal that as MenPs are prominent features in *BB*, *JttCoE* and *TBVM*, so are the roles of the Participants. In short, the Participants' states of mental consciousness succeed in evoking introspective perspectives. The data from Table 6.35 discloses that *TVBM* has the most of Participants from MenPs which are 81 (10.4%)

Sensors and 80 (10.27%) Phenomenon. This is followed by *BB* which has 57 (9.30%) Sensors and 55 (8.97%) Phenomenon. Interestingly *JttCotE* carries only 21 (3.23%) Participants of Sensors and Phenomenon.

The 57 (9.30%) and 55 (8.97%) Sensors and Phenomenon respectively in *BB* are especially crucial to invoke the pain and agony these horses are subjected to. In Table 6.8, the Participant she representing the Mistress of the house is characterised being status conscious and clearly lacking empathy and sympathy towards these horses. The Phenomenon of the horses' heads held up high represents the practice of wearing checkrein. This action which is considered as a fashion statement brings much pain to the horses. Table 6.9 shows Jerry, Black Beauty's cab driver as the Participant I who clearly has a conscience through the Phenomenon there were more gentlemen like you.

Interestingly, *JttCotE* has the same number of Sensors and Phenomenon which totals 21 (3.23%) each. Though the least in number, as compared to the other two novels, the depiction of these Participants at most times represents Otto and Axel. This is evident in Sensor I and Uncle in Tables 6.10 and 6.11 with their respective Phenomenon. The revelation shows that at times, major characters influence the stream of consciousness of a narrative which adds on to the mental imageries. In addition, the elements of perception in these instances enable readers to visualise the happenings in the novels, thus accentuating comprehension of the classics.

As the third highest listing of Participants from the MenPs in *TBVM*, it is obvious that the 81 (10.4%) and 80 (10.27%) of Sensors and Phenomenon play a crucial role in eliciting the inner consciousness of the characters. In table 6.12, the Sensor Someone and Phenomenon James McCarthy is totally innocent denote the importance of these Participants in realising the plot of the original classic *BB* by Anna Sewell. This episode

together of that which is construed through the Senser Mr McCarthy and the Phenomenon James to marry me as shown in Table 6.13 represent two important episodes in *TBVM*.

The utilisation of a high percentage of the Participants of Senser and Phenomenon, as with MenPs insinuates the importance of the action of ‘stream of consciousness’ in these novels. At times, the Participants also use interior monologues (common in *BB*) to further evoke a sense of empathy and other emotional bearings among readers. As postulated by Edouard Dujardin, a prolific French writer, an interior monologue is also pertinent as a “direct introduction of the reader into the interior life of the character, without any interventions in the way of explanation or commentary on the part of the author” and as “the expression of the most intimate thoughts, those which lie nearest the unconscious” (as cited in Wellek and Warren, 1987, p. 224). Thus, the inclusion of these two types of Participants indicates the importance of the act of consciousness in construing meanings in these adapted classics.

#### **6.2.2.3 Participants of Relational Processes: Token and Value (Identifying) and Carrier and Attribute (Attributing)**

As noted in Table 6.35, the most number of Participants of the RPs are found in *TBVM* followed by *BB* and *JttCotE* respectively. In comparison, *TBVM* has the most number of Participants of RPs which are Tokens, Values, Carriers and Attributes. *TBVM* has 90 (11.55%) Identifying Participants for each of the subcategories of Tokens and Values respectively. In addition, it contains 85 (10.91%) Tokens and 83 (10.65%) Values. On the other hand, *BB* carries equal number of Tokens and Values of 55 (8.97%) respectively. Likewise, *JttCotE* too has the same number of 59 (9.08%) Tokens and Values. The Attributive Participants of Carrier and Attributes are equal in number

which is 90 (11.55%) each in *TBVM*. *BB* has the second highest number of Attributing Participants with 63 (10.28%) Carriers and 64 (10.44%) Attributes. *JttCotE* carries 49 (7.54%) Carriers and 50 (7.69%) Attributes.

There are 55 (8.97%) Tokens and Values each in *BB*. As noted in Table 6.14, the Token Max is identified as Black Beauty's new partner through the Value my new carriage partner. Here, the element of identification is pertinent in addressing the different states of Black Beauty's life as a horse; from a happy colt to an over-burdened carriage horse. Additionally, *BB* also contains 63 (10.28%) Carriers and 64 (10.44%) Attributes. In Table 6.15, the phrase My first home acts as a Carrier and its Attribute is with Farmer Grey. This clearly denotes a further exploration of the story.

In *JttCotE*, there are equal number of Tokens and Values of 59 (9.08%) respectively. As shown in Table 6.16, These is a Token ascribed with the Value that is Runic symbols. In this case, the Participants also help in further detailing the narrative of the novel with an introduction to a few elements which are crucial to support the plot of the story. In this case, the identification of the Runic symbols leads to their decoding which sets the adventure to the centre of the earth. In addition, there are 49 (7.54%) Carriers and 50 (7.69%) Attributes. Table 6.17 identifies the Carrier The ten-day trip with its Attribute of hard. In this case, the importance of Carriers and Attributes in further describing the manner of the treacherous trip is vital as the impending journey in the following pages depicts much hardship.

In contrast, *TBVM* carries the highest of RPs indicating heavy reliance on this particular process. As such, this data also supports the number of Participants in the novel. As mentioned earlier, there are 85 (10.91%) and 83 (10.65%) Tokens and Values. In Table

6.18, the Token he is ascribed the Value at the pool, illustrating information about a location. Carriers and Attributes are equal in number amounting in 90 (11.55%). Table 6.19 exemplifies the Carrier My father with its Attribute of hurt. Here, the Carrier and Attribute represent a quality of sensing. The distribution of these processes indicates that the authors of *TBVM* prefer a textual text of descriptive nature through attributes and identifiers.

The preference for Participants of Carriers and Attributes indicate the authors prefer to reveal the quality of the Participants of the story as they are more descriptive and this move augments the vividness of the story. In addition, the utilisation of both these types of Participants helps in the description and evaluation of characteristics and this supports Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) assertion of "characterizing entities" (p. 219). In these novels, the deployment of Tokens and Values reveals the need to familiarise readers with the creation of identities of his characters. As these novels are meant for young readers, these characterisation elements are pertinent to evoke a sense of attachment towards these characters, thus offering instant access to the characters without the overburden of implicit language rich in literary styles.

#### **6.2.2.4 Participants of Behavioural Processes: Behavior and Behaviour**

The highest number of Participants in this category is found in *JttCotE* as denoted in Table 6.35, followed by *BB* and *TBVM*. Though considered the least distinct process of all by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), BPs are deployed generously in all three novels. In, *JttCotE* there are 36 (5.54% ) Behavers and 27 (4.15%) Behaviours. *BB* carries 24 (3.92%) Behavers and 22 (3.59%) Behaviours while *TBVM*, on the other hand deploys only 15 (1.93%) Behavers and 11 (1.41%) Behaviours.

In *BB*, there are 24 (3.92%) Behavers and 22 (3.59%) Behaviours. In Tables 6.20 and 6.21, the Behavers Those cart horse colts and trains are given human like qualities through the assignment of BPs. The Behaviourals of their manners and puffed and shrieked indicate physiological and psychological elements, thus personifying these characters. The use of these types of Participants supports the anthropocentrism of these entities by assigning them human like characters.

The novel *JttCotE* employs 36 (5.54%) Behavers and 27 (4.15%) Behaviours. In Table 6.22, the Behavior I stared down into a gigantic volcanic crater which acts as the Participant of Behaviour. The need to have a 'half-way house' (Eggins, 2004, p. 233) between a MP and MenP necessitates the deployment of these Participants. In Table 6.23, the Behavior his face and Behavioural with a smile support the utilisation of a variety of stylistic elements in the novel.

*TBVM* on the other hand, contains the least of Participants from this category with 15 (1.93%) Behavers and 11 (1.41%) Behaviours. The Behavers I and James and Behaviourals the newspapers and a familiar sound from Tables 6.24 and 6.25 respectively denote activities where both physical and mental are inseparable and indicating humans as the conscious main and only characters.

The deployment of BPs in all three novels reveals the importance of processes which are of physiological and psychological and which do not fall directly into either MPs or MenPs. The emergence of two Participants who are Behavers and Behaviours in all three novels shows the reliance on not on one (as in most cases of BPs) but two Participants.

#### 6.2.2.5 Participants of Verbal Processes: Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver and Target

It must be noted that though VPs and their Participants are represented in the form of speaking texts through speech balloons, they are also liberally peppered in these novels. *TBVM* has the most number of Participants with 32 (4.11%) Sayers, 26 (3.34%) Verbiages, 12 (1.54%) Receivers and 5 (0.64%) Targets. In *BB*, there are 9 (1.47%) Sayers, 8 (1.31%) Verbiages, 5 (0.82%) Receivers and 4 (0.65%) Targets. Finally, the least number of this type of Participants are deployed in *JttCotE* with 7 (1.08%) Sayers, 5 (0.77%) Verbiages, 2 (0.31%) Receivers and there is no representation of Targets in this novel.

As mentioned earlier, *BB* contains 9 (1.47%) Sayers, 8 (1.31%) Verbiages, 5 (0.82%) Receivers and 4 (0.65%) Targets. In Table 6.26 for example, the Sayers me and the Verbiages What can and about these two represent a request from York from Earlshall Park to John about both Ginger and Black Beauty. This denotes that there is a need to further clarify the characteristics of the horses through VPs and this helps in the construction of characterization. In addition, a sense of fear which sets the mood and tone of the story is also represented. Through the Verbiages What can and about these two, Receiver you and Sayer me in Table 6.27, the elements of anxiety and fear are clearly evident. In this instance, York expresses his fear to Black Beauty on going against the Mistress of Earlshall Park on the issue of wearing checkereins.

*JttCotE* embraces the VPs through its Participants of 7 (1.08%) Sayers, 5 (0.77%) Verbiages and 2 (0.31%) Receivers. In Table 6.28, the Sayer I (Axel) wishes goodbye to his sweetheart, the Receiver my dear Gretchen. This example which is extracted from a caption shows that at times, clauses in captions are needed to further enhance the



goings-on in speech balloons. In Table 6.29, the Sayer Hans and Verbiage there are only two show that further extensions are needed in the form of a reported speech to foreshadow the verbal or visual texts in the following panel. Here, these Participants develop the narrative further by additional information that also supports the images in the panels.

As discussed earlier, *TBVM* has the most number of Participants from this category with 32 (4.11%) Sayers, 26 (3.34%) Verbiages, 12 (1.54%) Receivers and 5 (0.64%) Targets. This occurrence is mainly due to the use of flashbacks which is an inherent trait in *TBVM*. In Table 6.30, the Sayer Holmes and Verbiage about the case indicate the start of a narration through a flashback. Here, flashbacks are a prominent feature in *TBVM* and as such, the roles of these Participants are pertinent to contribute to the development of the story. However, in Table 6.31, the Sayer He and Verbiage he doesn't know anything and the gun was only for shooting rabbits refer to James McCarthy confessing to Holmes about his innocence. Here, again the Participants act as crucial contributors in a reported speech.

Though sparsely deployed, the adoption of these types of Participants suggests the importance of VPs which are contained within the speech balloons but they take the form of a verb of a reported clause. Though speech balloons are prerequisites, the deployment of non-dialogic VPs through words like *told* and *said* are crucial for a few reasons. In *BB* for instance, the Participants help in developing characterization and set the mood and tone of the novel. In *JttCotE*, they further extend the story besides foreshadowing the following panels. However, in *TBVM*, they are largely employed to narrate flashbacks and reported speeches such as confessions and admissions, indicating a heavy reliance on these Participants. This study reveals that although speech balloons are not considered as a VP in total, at some instances the verbal phrase within the text

renders it as a VP. In these circumstances, the analysis of the verbal processes determines who gets a voice in the text even in flashbacks.

#### 6.2.2.6 Participants of Existential Processes: Existents

The number of Existents in all three novels denotes an insignificant involvement of this type of Participant in the textual representation of the novels. Nevertheless, in *JttCotE* and *TBVM* there are 9 Existents each of 1.38% and 1.16% respectively. *BB*, on the other hand, carries only 2 (0.33%) Existents. This is possibly because existential constructions are usually embedded with the word *there* and as such, having clauses with the word “*there was/is something*” in a graphic novel specifically that of an adapted classic is uncommon. In addition, existential clauses represent that something exists and in graphic novels, these elements could be easily represented by images.

As mentioned above, there are only 2 (0.33%) Existents in *BB*. This suggests that the obligatory Existent is the sole Participant. In Table 6.32, the Existent a loose nail sets the development for the following events that follow. Ignoring the existence of a loose nail contributes to the death of Smith and this episode brings a change in Black Beauty’s life. The ignorance of man to the needs of horses is depicted through the Existent here.

Corresponding with the total number of EPs, there are 9 (1.38%) Existents in *JttCotE* and they are mostly used to depict the settings of the narrative as depicted in Table 6.33. The Participant a tunnel represents an Existent which is an entity that reflects a phenomenon.

Similarly, *TBVM* also has 9 (1.16%) Existents mainly depicted in its flashbacks. Table 6.34 denotes an example of an Existent whereby the clause rumours that he gambled a lot illustrates an important fact about the nature of his character.

The data presented informs that the Existents in all three novels exist as depicted entities without predicting anything additional about it. As the obligatory Participant, there are no more extra elaborations to the narrative of the story with regards to these Existents and they remain solely individualistic without any connection. It must also be noted that as RPs hide human agency and suppress actions into nominalizations (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004), they tend to be more impersonal and objective. As shown in the examples and in the other instances of Existents in the novels, these Participants only serve as complements and furnish the readers with necessary information. In short, the Transitivity analysis reveals the roles of both animate and inanimate Participants that correspond with their ascribed Processes. What is interesting is that in most cases, these Participants remain active figures and support Hasan's (1989) notion of effectuality or dynamism. For Hasan (1989), "the quality of being able to affect the world around us, and bringing change into the surrounding environment, the semantic value of the various (...) roles must be seen as distinct" (p. 45). In addition, the depiction of these Participants also denotes a "major totalizing force in fiction" (Montgomery, 1993, p. 141) through careful linguistic choices of the authors of these graphic novels.

### 6.2.3 The Circumstances

Adverbial groups or prepositional phrases make up elements of Circumstances in the SoT. Thompson (2004) posits that “circumstances are often optional, reflecting their ‘background’ function in the clause” (p. 88). As such, at most times they are not directly involved in the Process. As their meanings are realised in either prepositional or adverbial phrases, they are subsidiary in status (refer to Section 3.4.1 1 (b) for further elaboration). The types of Circumstances are of Extent (hereafter CoE), Location (hereafter CoL), Cause (hereafter CoC), Accompaniment (hereafter CoA), Matter (hereafter CoMat), Role (hereafter CoR), Manner (hereafter CoMan), Contingency (hereafter CoCo) and Angle (hereafter CoAn). The findings reveal that though different numbers of Circumstances are used in all three novels as noted in Table 6.36, the three top Circumstances are all the same for all novels. The total number of Circumstances is 142 in *BB*, 195 in *JttCotE* and 136 in *TBVM*.

The type of Circumstance most used in all three novels is CoL followed by CoMan and CoE as the second and third highest respectively. This interesting data reveals that these three types of Circumstances seem to be a preference among the authors. It must be stressed that the other Circumstances are also significantly used in all three novels albeit at different degrees. Both CoE and CoA are also equally used in *JttCotE*. *JttCotE* and *TBVM* carry the CoC as the fourth highest while *BB* has the CoA as its fourth highest Circumstance. CoA is also another common Circumstance that is used in all three novels. CoR is also considerably used in *BB* and *JttCotE*. Also, while CoMat is not used in *BB* and *JttCotE*, they are deployed in *TBVM*. Nevertheless, CoAn is not used at all in the novels, and as such will not be discussed. The choices of these Circumstances reflect a careful consideration into the construction of the texts to enhance, elaborate or

even extend the experiential processes. Table 6.36 illustrates the allocation of Circumstances in the following page and a discussion ensues.

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**Table 6.36:** Types of Circumstances and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Circumstances									Total
	Location (CoL)	Extent (CoE)	Cause (CoC)	Accompaniment (CoA)	Matter (CoMat)	Role (CoR)	Manner (CoMan)	Contingency (CoCo)	Angle (CoAn)	
Black Beauty (BB)	57 40.14%	25 17.61%	8 5.63%	12 8.45%	0 -	11 7.75%	26 18.31%	3 2.11%	0 -	142
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	77 39.49%	30 15.38%	5 2.56%	30 15.38%	0 -	3 1.54%	47 24.10%	3 1.54%	0 -	195
The Boscombe Valley Mystery (TBVM)	64 47.06%	14 10.29%	17 12.5%	10 7.35%	8 5.88%	2 1.47%	21 15.44%	0 -	0 -	136

### 6.2.3.1 Circumstances of Location

It is interesting to note that the Circumstances of Location are dominant in all three novels suggesting the importance of spatiality and temporality. The deployment of a large number of CoLs shows the importance of picturing a setting through space and time linguistically to further enhance the narratives of these adapted classics. There are 57 (40.14%), 77 (39.49%) and 64 (47.06%) of these Circumstances in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM* respectively. The CoL of my mouth (Table 6.37), in an old bookshop (Table 6.38) and from Bristol (Table 6.39) denote spatial locations while on Monday morning (Table 6.41) shows a temporal location. These CoL give additional information of the places and settings that further describe the narrative.

**Table 6.37:** Circumstance of Location in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P11	Farmer Grey	began by putting	a bit into	my mouth.
	Par:Actor	Pr:Material	Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Location (place)</b>

**Table 6.38:** Circumstance of Location in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S3/P1	Look	what I found	in an old bookshop.
	Pr:Behavioural	Par:Range	<b>Cir: Location (place)</b>

**Table 6.39:** Circumstance of Location in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S1/P15	“James McCarthy	arrived	home	from Bristol	on Monday morning
	Par:Actor	Pr: Material	Par: Goal	<b>Cir: Location (place)</b>	<b>Cir: Location (time)</b>

### 6.2.3.2 Circumstances of Extent

Generally the CoE is employed generously in all three novels albeit at different frequencies but they are all the third in deployment. In *BB*, there are 25 (17.61%), 30

(15.38%) in *JttCotE* and 14 (10.29%) in *TBVM*, denoting the emphasis on the duration of happening. The examples of two weeks (Table 6.40), During those several days (Table 6.41) and about twenty years ago (Table 6.42) from *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM* reveal the need to stress on duration in these novels. In adapting the originals, CoE provides an avenue to condense the time frame. Interestingly, many of the CoE appear in captions rather than speech balloons and this indicates that CoE are important elements to specify duration relevant to the summarising of the narrative.

**Table 6.40:** Circumstance of Extent in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P15	As part of my training,	I	stayed	two weeks
	Cir: Role	Par:Actor	Pr:Material	<b>Cir:Extent (Duration)</b>
	at a neighbour's farm.			
	Par:Range			

**Table 6.41:** Circumstance of Extent in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P52	During those several days,	we	Still
	Cir:Extent	Par:Actor	<b>Cir:Extent (Duration)</b>
	did not find		Water
	Pr:Material		Par:Goal

**Table 6.42:** Circumstance of Extent in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/3/P8	He	came	to England	from Australia	about twenty years ago.
	Par: Actor	Pr: Material	Par:Goal	Cir:Location	<b>Cir:Extent (Duration)</b>

### 6.2.3.3 Circumstances of Cause

The CoC construe reasons why a process is actualised and again, they amount at different degrees in the novels. In both *JttCotE* and *TBVM*, it is the fourth highest with 5 (2.56%) and 17 (12.5%) frequencies. In *BB*, they total 8 (5.63%). The CoC because



she snaps (Table 6.43), When the ichthyosaurus did not reappear (Table 6.44) and to shoot rabbits (Table 6.45) represent reasons of the actualisation of the given processes, further enhancing the narrative of these stories.

**Table 6.43:** Circumstance of Cause in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P24	She	's (is) called	Ginger	because she snaps.
	Par:Token	Pr:Relational (Id)	Par:Value	<b>Cir:Cause (reason)</b>

**Table 6.44:** Circumstance of Cause in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S3/P163/164	When the ichthyosaurus did not reappear,		we	set sail and travelled
	<b>Cir:Cause (reason)</b>		Par:Actor	Pr:Material
	more than 800 miles	– putting us directly under England!		
	Cir:Extent	Par:Scope		

**Table 6.45:** Circumstance of Cause in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S5/P15	James	Took	his gun	And
	Par:Actor	Pr:Material	Par:Goal	-
	walked	to Boscombe Pool	to shoot rabbits.	
	Pr:Material	Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Cause (purpose)</b>	

#### 6.2.3.4 Circumstances of Accompaniment

The employment of CoA in these novels indicates a joint participation in the process and they are recognizable with the frequent use of words like ‘and’, ‘or’ and ‘not’. The most number of CoA is found in *JttCotE* with 30 (15.38%), followed by 12 (8.45%) in *BB* and finally, 10 (7.35%) in *TBVM*. As indicated in Tables 6.46, 6.47 and 6.48, the CoA of alongside my mother, As we stepped into a chamber of clear white mica and of a rich gentleman, Mr John Turner clearly indicate additional information of the Participants. In these instances, the CoA further enhances existing information, thus serving the purpose of extension. Interestingly, they are a common feature in captions.

**Table 6.46:** Circumstance of Accompaniment in *Black Beauty*

BB/S1/P19	One day,	Farmer Grey	drove	me	<b>alongside my mother.</b>
	Cir:Extent	Par:Actor	Pr:Mat	Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Accomp. (additive)</b>

**Table 6.47:** Circumstance of Accompaniment in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P65	<b>As we stepped into a chamber of clear white mica,</b>			the beams
	<b>Cir:Accompaniment (comitative)</b>			Par:Token
	from our lamps	we reflected	all around us.	
	Cir:Location	Pr:Relational	Cir:Location	

**Table 6.48:** Circumstance of Accompaniment in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/2/P7	The McCarthy family	lives	on the estate
	Par:Carrier	Pr:Relational (At)	Par:Attribute
	<b>of a rich gentleman, Mr John Turner</b>		in Boscombe Valley near Ross-on-Wye.
	<b>Cir:Accompaniment (Additive)</b>		Cir:Location

### 6.2.3.5 Circumstances of Matter

CoMat is related to what is described, narrated or even referred. The analysis indicates that there are no CoMat in both *BB* and *JttCotE*. Conversely, there are 8 (5.88%) in *TBVM*. The CoMat about the case (Table 6.49) shows the reference to the murder case. Interestingly, many of these begin with the preposition *about*, clearly revealing the dependence on the essence of projection as an essential element in the story of *TBVM*.

**Table 6.49:** Circumstance of Matter in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S1/P13	What do		the newspapers
	Par:Verbiage		Par:Sayer
	Say	<b>about the case,</b>	Holmes?
	Pr:Verbal	<b>Cir:Matter</b>	Vocative

### 6.3.2.6 Circumstances of Role

CoR which is usually related to the Participants is insignificant in both *JttCotE* and *TVBM*. In *BB* however, they total 11 (7.75%), while *JttCotE* has 3 (1.54%) and *TVBM* contains 2 (1.47%). In many instances, the CoR embraces the subcategory of Guise which corresponds to the interrogative *what as*. The CoR of in charge of the stables (Table 6.50), who was herding the mastodons (Table 6.51) and the gamekeeper's daughter, Patience Moran (Table 6.52) clearly expand the roles of Participants, thus making them more descriptive. These types of choices also help in their characterisation especially through stylistic analysis.

**Table 6.50:** Circumstance of Role in *Black Beauty*

BB/S2/P72	He		took	York	with him
	Par:Actor		Pr:Material	Par:Goal	Cir:Accompaniment
	and	Left		Reuben Smith	in charge of the stables.
	-	PR:Material		Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Role (Guise)</b>

**Table 6.51:** Circumstance of Role in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P187	There stood		a gigantic man,	at least 12 feet tall,	who was herding the mastodons.
	Pr:Existential		Par:Existent	Cir:Extent	<b>Cir:Role (Guise)</b>

**Table 6.52:** Circumstance of Role in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S1/P18	The second witness	is	a young girl of 14,
	Par:Token	Pr:Relational (Id)	Par:Value
	the gamekeeper's daughter, Patience Moran.		
	Cir:Role		

### 6.3.2.7 Circumstances of Manner

It must be noted that the CoMan is the next significant Circumstance after CoL in allocation of occurrences in all three novels. CoMan is crucial specifically the subcategories of quality, means and purpose as they add more information to a particular process. The employment of CoMan as the second highest Circumstance in all three novels gives objectivity to the writers' views. They are well represented in all three novels. 26 (18.31%), 47 (24.1%) and 21 (15.44%) of CoMan are deployed in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM* each. In the examples noted in Tables 6.53 and 6.54, the Circumstances like I was a steam engine and like we are inside a giant diamond indicate a comparison. At times, these Circumstances also act like similes especially in narratives. In Table 6.55, violently denotes quality and it "characterises the extent of the actualisation of the process" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 269).

**Table 6.53:** Circumstance of Manner in *Black Beauty*

BB/S2/P36	Mr. Blomefield's boys	rode	me	like I was a steam engine.
	Par:Actor	Pr:Material	Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Manner (Comparison)</b>

**Table 6.54:** Circumstance of Manner in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S1/P65	It	looks	like we are inside a giant diamond!
	Par:Phenemenon	Pr:Mental	<b>Cir:Manner (Comparison)</b>

**Table 6.55:** Circumstance of Manner in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

BVM/S4/P25	Yes.	The murderer	hit	him	violently	four or five times.
	-	Par:Actor	Pr:Material	Par:Goal	<b>Cir:Manner (Quality)</b>	Cir:Extent

### 6.3.2.8 Circumstances of Contingency

CoCo can be considered as an insignificant Circumstance as it is hardly used. They only exist in *BB* and *JttCotE* whereby 3 instances of CoCo in each novel are deployed with the percentages of 2.11% and 1.54% respectively. There are none in *TBVM*. The CoCo If not for the scars on his knees (Table 6.56) and despite the strong breeze (Table 6.57) are subcategorised into that of default and concession each. They serve to enhance the Processes by specifying elements on which the actualisation depends but their allocations suggest that the authors do not favour such enhancements.

**Table 6.56:** Circumstance of Contingency in *Black Beauty*

BB/S3/P92	If not for the scars on his knees,	he	'd be
	<b>Cir:Contingency (Default)</b>	Par:Token	Pr:Relational
	too good for a cab.		
	Par:Value		

**Table 6.57:** Circumstance of Contingency in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

JttCoE/S2/P128	Trees	shaped	like umbrellas	stood motionless
	Par:Carrier	Pr:Relational	Cir:Manner	Par:Attribute
	despite the strong breeze.			
	<b>Cir:Contingency (Concession)</b>			

### 6.2.4 A Summary of Textual Analysis

On the whole, the SoT effectively foregrounds the experiential meanings in the genre of adapted classics of the graphic novels medium through careful choices pertaining to Process Types, Participants and Circumstances. Importantly, though they are adapted classics, the data informs and supports the assertion that English clauses are dominated by the four main Process types namely MPs, RPs, VPs (only in *TBVM*) and MenPs as suggested by Cummings and Simmons (1983). In essence, this also supports Eisner's

(2008) notion that “as long as comics remains a medium which does not have motion, sound or three-dimensionality, the narrative process is the same” (p. 170). Clearly the linguistic structures of the writers articulate that their choices at the clause rank level are foregrounded to encapsulate the adaptations as close to the original as possible. These could be seen from the textual choices that favour MPs that accentuates actions and events, with Actors and Goals being preferred Participants. The obvious reliance on Circumstances of Location also reveals the importance of ascertaining settings which are crucial to the narratives of these novels. From a farm to London in *BB*; Germany to the bowels of the earth and then to Italy in *JttCotE* and from London to Ballarat in Australia through flashbacks in *TBVM*, locations are clearly important to scaffold the narratives of these graphic novels. In addition, these choices also construe to the social environment that sets the background of the novels. In Halliday and Matthiessen’s words, “Clauses of different process types thus make distinctive contributions to the construal of experience in text” (2004, p. 174).

The discussion also reveals that much of the choices of the processes are also genre related. Taking into consideration that these are graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics, and the interplay of text and images are important features; there is no predominance of text over images. As such, the construction of clauses is clearly concentrated around the main elements of their narrative structures (denouement, rising actions, climax, falling actions and resolution). This assertion is supported by one of the writers as shown in Extract 6.1 which is an excerpt from the email interview.

#### Extract 6.1

“The written text should be tight and should convey to some extent the images. The images should extend the written text.”

Importantly, the analysis supports Halliday's (1994) assertion that the combination of Processes, Participants and Circumstances are crucial elements "to build a mental picture of reality" (p. 107). It must be noted, however, that the linguistic choices for the text might not be a conscious grammatical effort by the writers. What is more important is that the authors are aware of the need to follow the original version of the novel without much changes and fitting this into the adapted form of graphic novel. This is evident from one writer's view as presented in Extract 6.2.

#### Extract 6.2

"Before we write anything, we study the novel, reread and reread the novel to outline key events and actions. We then included these events and actions as part of our simplified novel. We also researched historical aspects of the novel (e.g., dress, language use)."

MPs are clearly an important process and as stressed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), "the setting or orientation of a narrative is often dominated by 'existential' and 'relational' clauses but the main event line is construed predominantly by "material clauses" (p. 174) – show events that are happening in a sequence or "a flow of events construed as a series of episodes" (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, p. 363). The prevalence of MPs in the novels entails a recurrent pattern of actions supported by their Participants. In addition, Actors are the most preferred Participants only in *BB*. In *JttCote* and *TBVM*, Goals are more prominent, indicating a preference to show the cause and effect of MPs; suggesting an emphasis on the course or the impact of the actions. Nevertheless, there is only a negligible difference between the allocation of Actors and Goals in these novels.

These novels are also descriptive and RPs support this make up as the process is the second highest, focusing mainly on Attributes and Values (Identifiers) with thorough description of animate and inanimate Participants and settings. The distribution of RPs

in the novels also concurs with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) who assert RPs “serve to characterize and identify” (p. 210), indicating the importance of identifiers and descriptors. These adapted novels clearly rely on RPs to truncate the originals as close as possible as the process provides elements of attributes, identification and possession. In essence, this also supports Eisner’s (2008) notion that ‘As long as comics remains a medium which does not have motion, sound or three-dimensionality, the narrative process is the same’ (p. 170). The prevalence of RPs in all three novels denotes the focus on this process to fulfil the needs of an adapted text that is overshadowed by images. The deployment of RPs and their Participants further accentuate the need to identify and associate attributes.

The use of MenPs on the other hand, reveals that the authors have relied on internal conditions of insights and perceptions of the characters. This also helps readers to understand embedded experiential meanings better through vivid linguistics visualisation in identifying the mood and tone of the novels. MenPs are important to probe the author’s experience of the world through their own stream of consciousness. Most times, they represent the Participants directly. Many of these elements are realised through perception which focuses on sights and sounds. The verbs related to BPs concern emotional and physical actions which are related to the readers’ physiological and psychological aspects. This also helps readers with lower proficiency to understand this experiential meaning better; supporting the notion that graphic novels do help reluctant readers as these processes are also illustrated in many instances. VPs are sparsely used and most are found in retellings especially in *TBVM* which contains many instances of flashbacks. In contrast, the lack of EPs constructs a vague outline and much is left for the interpretation of the readers with the help of images.



Interestingly, all three novels adopt the same weightage of deployment of Circumstances for the top three Circumstances. CoLs are the most frequently deployed signifying the stress on spatial locations. This implies that locations and settings are more important than the time of the happening. These Circumstances also enable the readers to see events through a flow of time frame. They also assist in leading to different places, scenes and events from one page to another. This helps in organizing the adapted narrative into a plot with necessary literary elements. The CoMan, which forms the second highest of allocation extends how events occur and lend vividness through emphasis on details. In constructing additional information for the narratives, CoMan are relied upon. It must be noted here that *JttCotE* also relies on the CoA (they are same in weightage with CoMan) to project extensions to its Processes. This is crucial to the story as there are many elaborations of the different characteristics of this fantasy genre. Additionally, the usage of CoE signifies the importance of the duration of time. This feature helps in condensing the timeframe of the narratives and it cannot be denied that CoE scaffolds the essence of brevity and conciseness to work within the stipulated pages (by the publishers) is pertinent to encapsulate the original texts as close as possible.

Though other Circumstances are used sparsely, they have undoubtedly constructed the texts to be more exciting by adding intention, duration, purpose and accompanying process to the Process Types employed. To a certain extent, the setting of a narrative also further elaborates the characters as put forth by Wellek and Warren (1978) who assert “setting is environment...A man’s house is an extension of himself. Describe it and you have described him” (p. 221). And hereby lays the beauty and relevance of Circumstances which is only considered a “minor system” (Eggins, 2004, p. 214) as compared to both Processes and Participants. The findings support Eggins (2004) who

asserts that “in describing the grammar of the clause as representation we have not only to describe the difference between process types, but also associated differences in functional participant roles, and the possible selection of circumstances” (p. 214).

In addition, the findings reveals that the Process Types, Participants and Circumstances deployed have depicted experiential meanings and the construing of meanings through careful and informed verbal choices. Without doubt, these authors certainly adhere to Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks and Yallop’s (2000) postulation of “who does what to whom under what circumstances” (p. 47) to condense the narrative of the originals into graphic novels by considering what’s important and what’s not to be included in the text of the graphic novels. Importantly, the analysis also suggests that the semantico-grammatical choices of the authors may also be attributed to a ‘semantic pressure’ (Halliday, 1994, p. xxiv) as they had to work within predetermined guidelines specifically the number of pages and panels. This assertion is further supported by one of the writers as denoted in Extract 6.3.

#### Extract 6.3

“I studied the original work, made an outline of key plot points, and wrote the story to conform to the length and reading-level guidelines spelled out in my contract with the publisher.”

In addition, as Lefevre (2010) posits, “the comic’s formal options are constrained and constructed by design principles, practices of production and consumption, and other aspects of the social context” (p. 31).

The textual analysis conducted on the text of these graphic novels reveals that SFL is a potent tool for deciphering the strategems that these novel writers use in adapting the text as close to the original as possible. It also reveals that writers should be equipped with the SoT as a tool to create comprehensible and captivating narratives. The use of

carefully constructed verbal texts also supports a whole range of narrative devices like moments of illumination, soliloquy, ambiguity, interior monologues and private images and applying systems of categorization in vocabulary, syntax and semantics.

The textual analysis based on SFL shows the meaning making potential which acts as a mediator between language and reality. To a certain extent, considerations must be focused upon the author's linguistic choices to better understand their intentions through the texts. In a literary discourse, ideational structuring depends on regular and consistent linguistic choices which build up a continuous, pervasive, representation of the world. This turns to be the world view of the author, or a narrator, or a character, constituted by the ideational structure of the text. Clearly the linguistic structures of the writers articulate that their choices at the clause rank level are foregrounded to encapsulate the adaptations as close to the original as possible. In addition, these choices also construe to the social environment that constructs the background of the novels. In Halliday and Matthiessen's words, "clauses of different process types thus make distinctive contributions to the construal of experience in text" (2004, p. 174). All these elements thus provide insights into the meaning and effectiveness of a text.

The analysis of this kind can be a great help to language teaching. This echoes with Fairclough's (1992) assertion that an analysis of grammatical elements in texts "amount to choices about how to signify (and construct) social identities, social relationships and knowledge and belief" (p. 76). What is important is that these careful linguistic choices by the authors scaffold these adaptations as close as possible to the original works of Sewell, Verne and Doyle. Importantly, the verbal representations support the original works with emphasis on the pertinent features of narratives which encompass the orientation, setting, complication and resolution of a story.

The following discussion investigates how visual representations are construed in these graphic novels through the deployment of Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Visual Grammar.

### **6.3 The Visual Analysis**

The Visual Analysis of the three novels is based on Kress and van Leeuwen's (1996, 2006) Visual Grammar (hereafter VG). The VG provides a comprehensive framework in the analysis of the visual components. As discussed earlier (in Chapter 2), the VG is developed based on Halliday's SFL. The SFL metafunctions of ideational, interpersonal and textual are parallel to the VG's representational, interactive and compositional elements respectively. This study focuses on the Representational Process of Narrative and Conceptual Processes. These processes are parallel to the ideational metafunction which was used in the analysis of textual elements earlier. The total number of panels which sum up both these processes represents the total number of panels in each graphic novel. *BB* has 136 panels, *JttCotE* has 212 panels and *TBVM* carries 111 panels respectively.

The images within the panels of the graphic novels were analysed based on their Representational structures. The visual analysis is conducted by focusing on the images and isolating both Narrative and Conceptual Processes respectively. It must also be stressed here that as this study involves a detailed analysis of the conventions of comics, textual and visual analysis, and cohesion analysis, certain elements were singled out due to page limitations. For visual analysis, the focus of the following discussion will centre on the main image representation and will not look into other representations which are embedded within each panel. As mentioned in Section 3.5.1.1 of Chapter 3, the

elements of Participants and Circumstances were also not focused upon due to page limitations. In addition, Speech Processes and Mental Processes are not considered as part of the current analysis as the conventions of comics in these graphic novels carry both these processes as prerequisites through the deployment of speech and thought balloons which has been discussed in Chapter 5. Nevertheless, the interspersing of Mental Processes in these novels is discussed as they are relevant to the study. Speech Processes are evident in the speech balloons while Mental Processes are represented by thought balloons. Besides that, the element of Participants is discussed in tandem with its processes. Nevertheless, it must be noted that these restrictions have not affected the findings of the study. This offers an inclusive and informed discussion specifically in analysing images.

### **6.3.1 The Processes**

The theoretical framework of the Representational Process (hereafter RP) is further divided into two important processes namely the Narrative Process (hereafter NP) and the Conceptual Process (hereafter CP). These processes provide and enhance the understanding of how visual elements are construed in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. This study focuses on the RP as it is in parallel with Halliday's ideational metafunction. This move enables a richer and distinct outlook on how meanings are construed both textually and visually. For Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), "any semiotic mode has to be able to represent aspects of the world as it is experienced by humans. In other words, it has to be able to represent objects and their relations in a world outside the representational system" (p. 42). Nevertheless, the many interpretations of the images and its processes are also based on real world knowledge as concurred by Painter,

Martin and Unsworth (2013) where they “do interpret participants in a visual story as ‘doing something’ whether or not there are prominent vectors” (p. 68)

The RPs encompasses both NPs and CPs. A NP relates with unfolding events and actions and as such, functions as a narrative whereas a CP serves a didactic function having to explain what things are like. The NP is categorised into either an Action Process (hereafter AP), a Reactional Process (hereafter RP), a Speech Process (hereafter SP) or a Mental Process (hereafter MentP). Conversely, the CP is represented by either a Classification Process (hereafter ClaP), Symbolic Process (hereafter SymP) or an Analytical Process (hereafter AnaP). The Participants for an AP are Actors and Goals whereas RP is embodied by a Reactor and Phenomena.

Table 6.58 on the following page denotes the distribution of the different types of processes and their occurrences in all three graphic novels. In the novels, the narrative representations of the images outweigh conceptual representations representing. As indicated in the table, the type of process that is widely used in all three novels are NPs whereby there are 111 (81.62%) in *BB*, 159 (75%) in *JttCotE* and 97 (87.39%) in *TBVM*. In contrast, CPs are not favourably utilised with 25 (18.38%) in *BB*, 53 (25%) in *JttCotE* and 14 (12.61%) in *TBVM*. This indicates the dependence on “unfolding actions and events, processes of change, and transitory special arrangements” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). The deployment of a high percentage of NPs denotes the need to stress on actions rather than establishing CPs that focuses on what things are alike.

**Table 6.58:** Types and Occurrences of Representational Processes

Title	Narrative Representation			Total Narrative Panels	Conceptual Representation			Total Conceptual Panels	Total Number of Panels
	Action	Reaction	Mental		Classification	Symbolic	Analytical		
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	62 (5.59%)	49 (36.03%)	-	111 (81.62%)	4 (2.94%)	17 (12.5%)	4 (2.94%)	25 (18.38%)	136
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	137 (64.62%)	22 (10.38%)	1	159 (75%)	12 (5.66%)	25 (11.79%)	16 (7.55%)	53 (25%)	212
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	60 (54.05%)	37 (33.33%)	12	97 (87.39%)	4 (3.6%)	2 (1.8%)	8 (7.21%)	14 (12.61%)	111

As seen in Table 6.58, within the NPs, the sub-type of APs make up 62 (45.59%) in *BB*, 137 (64.62%) in *JttCote* and 60 (54.05%) in *TVBM*. The RPs are formed from 49 (36.03%) in *BB*, 22 (10.38%) in *JttCotE* and 37 (33.33%) in *TVBM*. It can be deduced that the description of what is happening and who or what is performing the action is pertinent to the narratives. The representation of Reactors and Phenomena is explicitly portrayed indicating that this is a common norm in graphic novels to scaffold a narrative.

Though small in numbers, the CPs of Classification, Symbolic and Analytical processes denote “stable or timeless essence” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59). The ClaPs represent 4 (2.94%) in *BB*, 12 (5.66%) in *JttCotE* and 4 (3.6%) in *TVBM*. On the other hand, the total of SymPs are 17 (12.5%) in *BB*, 25 (11.79%) in *JttCotE* and 2 (1.8%) in *TVBM*. Lastly, the number of AnaPs are 4 (2.94%), 16 (7.55%) and 8 (7.21%) in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TVBM* respectively.

A detailed analysis of the distribution based on the graphic novels of both NPs and CPs and their sub-categories of APs, RPs, ClaPs, SymPs and AnaPs in relation to their panels is presented in the following Tables 6.59 (for *BB*), 6.60 (for *JttCotE*) and 6.61 (for *TVBM*) on the following pages. The discussion that ensues begins with that of NPs and this is followed by CPs. Nevertheless, the discussion includes selected samples of various categories from the panels of the three graphic novels.



**Table 6.59:** Narrative and Conceptual Representations in *Black Beauty*

Chapter	Panels Depicting Narrative Processes									Panels Depicting Conceptual Processes					
	Action					Reaction				Mental	Classification	Symbolic		Analytical	
1	2	3	8	9	12	4	5	6	7	10	-	15 (farm animals)	18 (being calm)	1 (farm animals)	
2	20	26	27	28	29	21	22	23	24	25	-		34 (friendship)	38 (fire)	
	31	32	33	35	39	30	36	37	41	45					
	40	42	43	44	46	47	49								
	48	50	51	52											
3	57	58	61	63	64	53	54	55	56	68	-	87 (horse fair)	59 (pain) 60 (pain) 62 (class) 69 (perseverance) 71 (pain) 78 (death) 83 (sick horse) 92 (tranquillity)	73 (foreshadow)	
	65	66	67	74	75	70	72	79	88	89					
	76	77	80	81	82	91									
	84	85	86	90											
4	93	95	98	102	103	94	100	104	105		-	96 (cab stand) 97 (big city)	99 (happy) 101 (cold) 117 (death) 118 (nostalgic)		
	107	116				106	108	109	110						
						111	112	113	114						
						115									
5	119	121	122	124	125	120	123	128	129		-		131 132 136 (happiness)	127 (new home)	
	126	130	133	135		134									
TOTAL (Percentage)	62 (45.59%)					49 (36.03%)						4 (2.94%)	17 (12.5%)	4 (2.94%)	
Overall (Percentage)	111 (81.62%)										25 (18.38%)				

**Table 6.60:** Narrative and Conceptual Representations in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

Chapter	Panels Depicting Narrative Processes				Panels Depicting Conceptual Processes				
	Action		Reaction	Verbal	Mental	Classification	Symbolic	Analytical	
1	2 14	3 4 7 8 9 12	1 15 16 18			10 (message) 13 (decoded message)	5 6 11 (determination) 17 (bewildered)		
2	20	24 25 26 27 28 29 31 34	21			19 (storm) 22 23 (climbing gear) 32 (message)		30 33 (crater’s bottom)	
3	35 45 59 67	36 48 60 69	37 49 61 70	38 50 62 63	39 51 64 65	40 43 58 66	41 (power) 46 47 (confusion) 57 (darkness) 68 (despair)	55 56 (no water)	
4	71 79 90 102 112	72 80 92 104 113	73 81 93 106 114	74 82 94 107 115	75 83 95 108 109	76 86 99 110 111	77 87 100 110 111	78 89 101 111 112	
5	116 125 137 149 165	118 128 140 155 166	119 129 141 157 167	120 130 143 158 170	121 131 144 161 171	122 132 145 162 172	123 133 146 164 175	124 136 150 164 175	
6	177 195 203	185 196 205	186 197 206	187 198 207	188 199 211	192 200 202	180 190 201	182 191 204	184 194 208
TOTAL (Percentage)	137 (64.62%)		22 (10.38%)		Excluded	12 (5.66%)	25 (11.79%)	16 (7.55%)	
Overall (Percentage)	159 (75%)					53 (25%)			

**Table 6.61:** Narrative and Conceptual Representations in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

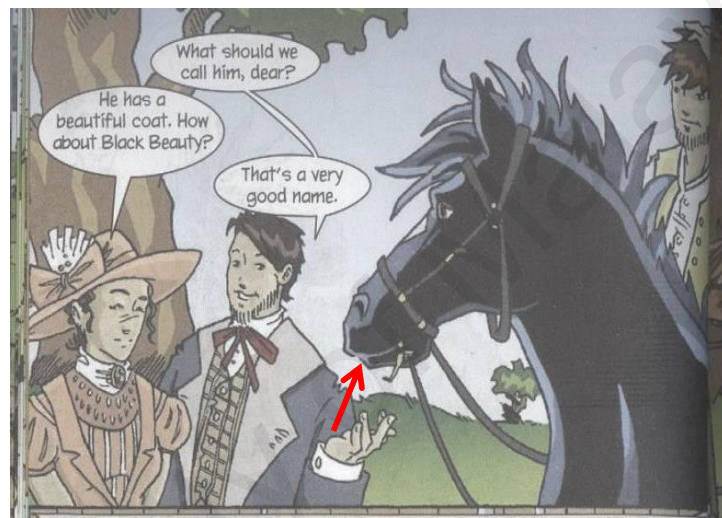
Chapter	Narrative (Panels)				Conceptual (Panels)		
	Action	Reaction	Verbal	Mental	Classification	Symbolic	Analytical
1	2 4 5 7 9	1 3 6			10 11 (photos)		8 (the estate) 1 (gambling)
2	13 14 17 19	<b>16 18</b>		<b>16 18</b>			15 (telegram)
3	22 <b>24 26</b>	20 23		<b>21 24 26</b>			25 (death)
4	27 29 31	32					28 (James' gun) 30 (Ross-on-Wye) 33 (address)
5	34 35 37 38 <b>39</b>			<b>39</b>	36 (court)		
6	40 42 43	41 44 45 46 47					
7	48 49 50 53 56	51 52 <b>54</b> 55		<b>54</b>			
8	58 62 63 64 65 66	57 59 60 61					
9	68 70 71 73 75 76	69 72 74			67 (marriage)		
10	77 81 82 85 86 87	<b>78</b> 79 80 84		<b>78</b>			83 (map)
11	88 95 96 97 98	89 <b>91</b> 92 93		<b>91 94</b>		90 (despair) <b>94</b> (remorse)	
12	100 <b>102</b> 104 105 106 107 108 109 110	99 101 <b>103</b> 111		<b>102 103</b>			
<b>TOTAL (Percentage)</b>	<b>60 (54.05%)</b>	<b>37 (33.33%)</b>		<b>Excluded</b>	<b>4 (3.6%)</b>	<b>2 (1.8%)</b>	<b>8 (7.21%)</b>
<b>Overall (Percentage)</b>	<b>97 (87.39%)</b>				<b>14 (12.61%)</b>		

Note: All mental images which are embedded within panels of other elements, are considered as a mental image as highlighted.

Nonetheless, these double entries are taken into considerations during discussion.

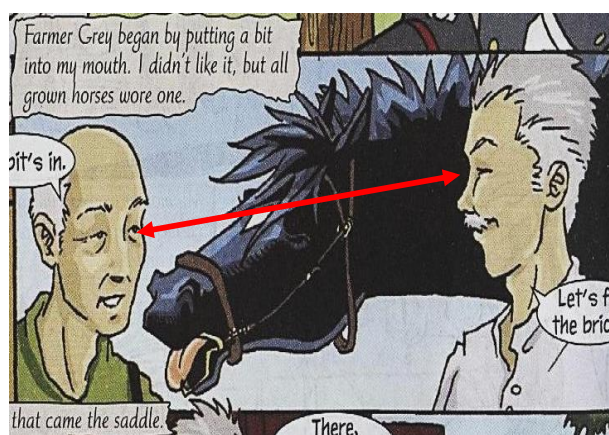
### 6.3.1.1 Narrative Processes

As denoted in Table 6.59, NPs are the most deployed process in *BB* which sums to 111 (81.62%) instances. Within this allocation, there are 62 (45.59%) APs and 49 (36.03%) RPs. In the APs, there is a combination of transactional and non-transactional interactions involving Actors and Goals as participants and in most instances, are transactional in nature as exemplified in Figure 6.3.



**Figure 6.3:** An Action Process in *Black Beauty* (p. 31, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 6.3 represents a narrative action where the new owner is talking about Black Beauty. In this example, the red arrow shows the main vector emanating from the hands of the master towards Black Beauty. The deployment of such processes in *BB* reveals that there is a concentration of action oriented processes that succinctly holds the original narrative structure of the novel through images that support the adaptation.



**Figure 6.4:** A Reaction Process in *Black Beauty* (p. 10, 2010).  
©Stone Arch Books.

In relation to RPs, Figure 6.4 represents one where there is an obvious indication of a Reactor and Phenomena as the vectors are solely formed through the gaze. Through this reciprocal RP, there is an indication of camaraderie and companionship between Farmer Grey and the stable keeper.

Conversely, there are a total of 159 (75%) NPs in *JttCotE*. The sub-processes of APs are 137 (64.62%) and RPs amount to 22 (10.38%). The obvious high percentage of APs reveals the focus on this type of process to scaffold the narrative of this action oriented genre which traces an extraordinary journey through the bowels of earth. Interestingly, this type of action processes are evident in most of Verne's other works like *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* and *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Figure 6.5 exemplifies an AP in the novel *JttCotE*.



**Figure 6.5:** An Action Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 45).  
©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 6.5, the three travellers are seen enjoying a meal after catching an extinct fish. Here, the process is transactional and there are multiple actors with a common goal.



**Figure 6.6:** A Reaction Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 36).  
© Stone Arch Books.

Figure 6.6 shows a RP and again, just like Figure 6.4, there is a clear indication of a vector based on the gaze between both characters. In this panel, there is a profound intimacy between Otto and his nephew, Axel, revealing the softer side of a man who is engulfed with a deep ambition to conquer the centre of the earth. This supports the assertion of Moya (2014) who postulates that “the directions marked by the characters’ gazes at one another act as vectors that contribute to the representations of reality as

they consolidate the kinship between father and son” (p. 154), in this case that between Axel and Otto.

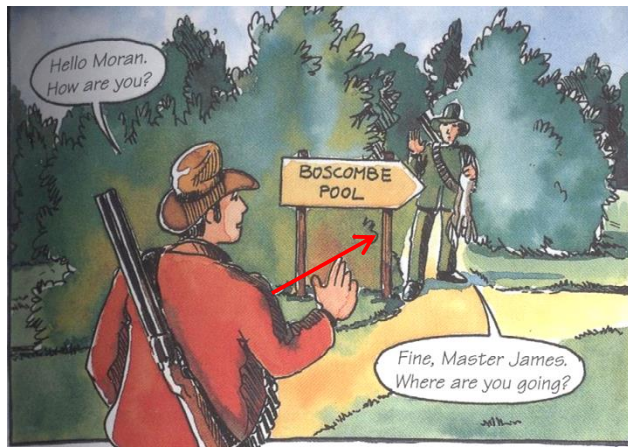
Notably, there is a Mental Process in *JttCotE* as shown in Figure 6.7 that indicates Axel’s promise and love to Gretchen. In addition, this panel also contains an AP as the Actor climbs up the cliff to achieve his Goal.



**Figure 6.7:** Action and Mental Processes in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 17). ©Stone Arch Books.

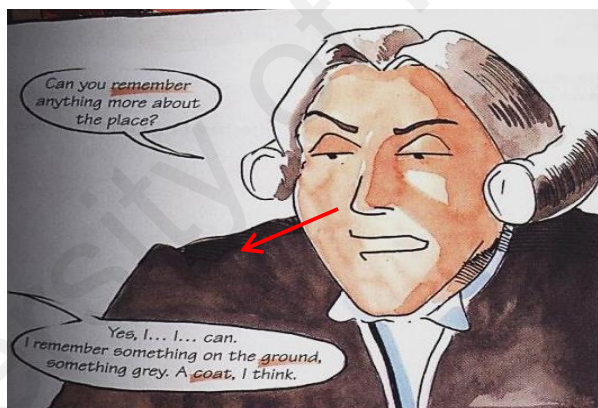
Conversely, there are a total of 97 (87.39%) NPs in *TBVM* whereby 60 (54.05%) are APs and 37 (33.33%) RPs. Again, just like the other two novels, the highest type of NPs are the APs, indicating a preference for actions. Figure 6.8 shows an example of a transactional AP in *TBVM* where the Actor is walking towards his Goal. In addition, the placement of the signboard ‘Boscombe Pool’ in this particular panel represents Circumstance of Setting.





**Figure 6.8:** An Action Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 33).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

It is noted that RPs are also significantly presented in *TBVM* and Figure 6.9 demonstrates an example.



**Figure 6.9:** A Reaction Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 39).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 6.9 shows the Reactor who gazes into space (the Phenomena) indicating a unidirectional relationship. This indicates an emphasis on the power attributed to the judge in determining the innocence of the accused. This claim confers with that of Moya (2014) who put forth that “the utilization of unidirectional versus bidirectional processes may also help to emphasise the solitude versus the rich social and personal contacts that can be established between the fictional characters of the characters” (p. 159). In this example, the judge could be seen as an epitome of justice and the keeper



of law. In addition, the prevalence of Mental Processes (12) in *TBVM* indicates a necessity as the narrative of the story involves many flashbacks. Additionally, as the genre is of a mystery thriller, Mental Processes are inherent as there are always internalised thoughts in solving a case and one example is shown in Figure 6.10.



**Figure 6.10:** A Mental Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 18).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In Figure 6.10 above, Holmes thinks of Patience Moran and how she is relevant in providing evidence for the case. This episode itself is pertinent in the narrative of *TBVM* because Moran's statement plays a role later in the solution of the case.



**Figure 6.11:** Reaction and Mental Processes in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 14).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In Figure 6.11, there is a combination of a RP and a Mental Process, indicating two ongoing processes that are crucial. Here, Holmes informs about the witness of the case, and as a Senser, he has a picture of him in his mind. As investigators, the act of putting pieces together (in this case a witness) is important as this is a part of his job. The depiction of this scene by the illustrator further emphasises this assertion. In relation to RP, there is a clear bidirectional relationship between Holmes and Watson and this is established through their gazes at each other.

### 6.3.1.2 Conceptual Processes

Though small in numbers, conceptual representations of Classification, Symbolic and Analytical processes denote what Kress and van Leeuwen define as a “stable or timeless essence” (2006, p. 59). The number of CPs are 25 (18.38%) in *BB*, 53 (25%) in *JttCotE* and 14 (12.61%) in *TBVM* respectively. Both *BB* and *JttCotE* have the highest SymPs of 17 (12.5%) and 25 (11.79%) each. In contrast, *JttCotE* has the highest occurrences of AnaPs of 16 (7.55%) while both *TBVM* and *BB* record the second highest of 8 (7.21%) and 4 (2.94%) processes respectively. In addition, *BB* also has the same number of ClaPs of 4 (2.94%). There are 12 (5.66%) and 4 (3.6%) of ClaPs in *JttCotE* and *TVBM* each. Finally, there are only 2 (1.8%) SymPs in *TBVM*.

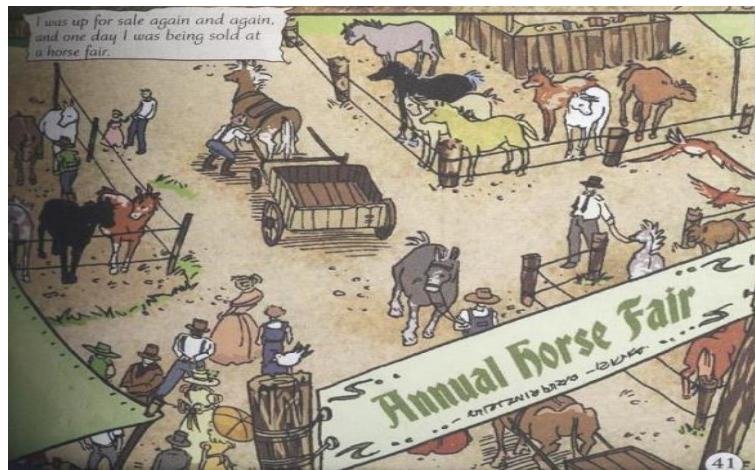
*BB* mostly deploys SymPs whereby 17 (12.5%) are utilised. This shows that the creation of a visual picture in the mind of the reader demonstrates that effective imagery can be used to invoke an emotional or sensational response. Figure 6.12 represents one example of such an instance in the novel.



**Figure 6.12:** A Symbolic Process in *Black Beauty* (p. 39, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

In the panel represented by Figure 6.12, it is ascertained that Black Beauty is in much pain and the attributes that are evident in this image support this assertion. Symbolically the bandages on his knees reflect this and shortly after this incident, he gets sold due to the scarring on his leg. In addition, the theme of cruelty towards animals is also evident in this panel as he is in such a predicament due to man's negligence. In Panel 34 (p. 19), the image depicts the deep friendship between Black Beauty, Ginger and Merrylegs. Here, their gaze towards each other, complemented against a serene backdrop indicates a sense of tranquillity in knowing that they have each other to rely on. This assertion concurs with Dibell's (1988) claim that "vivid, exaggerated happenings can hold the eye and the interest while the meaning penetrates more subtly" (p. 151).

In utilising ClaPs and AnaPs, *BB* carries the same number which is 4 (2.94%). Figure 6.13 represents a ClaP in *BB* which depicts a scene of a horse fair where horses are traded.



**Figure 6.13:** A Classification Process in *Black Beauty* (p. 41, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

In the panel above, the process of classification is clear as the many elements put together represent a horse fair. Firstly, the signboard and the placement of the horses in various stalls are salient features. The fair also represents men's control over these horses in such fairs where horses are paraded, deals are made and horses are ridden away with their new owners. On the other hand, Panel 97 (p. 46) denotes a typical Victorian setting. This is evident from the structures of the grey brick buildings with panelled windows, typical characteristics of Victorian architecture. The use of cab horses for transport shows the developments during the height of the Industrial Revolution. As such, the many features structured together in the image denote a typical city scene during the Victorian Age.

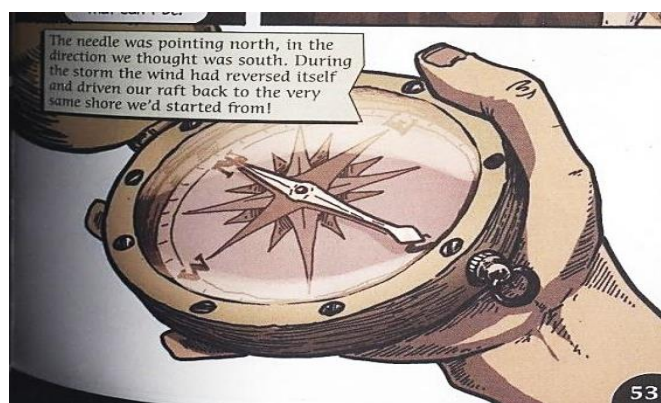
Figure 6.14 represents an AnaP in *BB* where the focus is on Black Beauty's hoof with the horseshoe off. Horseshoes are worn to protect a horse's hooves from wear.



**Figure 6.14:** An Analytical Process in *Black Beauty* (p. 36, 2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 6.14 above, the displacement of the horse shoe from Black Beauty's hoof subtly indicates danger ahead. In this image, an AnaP is evident due to the part-whole relationship of the image and it also foreshadows the danger ahead. Black Beauty as the Carrier possess the Attributes of a shoeless hoof which can be precarious. In another Panel 127 (p. 59), the whole-part structure is evident through the depiction of a house, surrounded with lush greenery. This image represents Black Beauty's new home and the following panels see the settling of Black Beauty in his new home happily.

In *JttCotE*, SymPs are heavily used where there are 25 (11.79%) of such processes. Figure 6.15 exemplifies one such image where the focus is on a non-framed panel showing a compass.

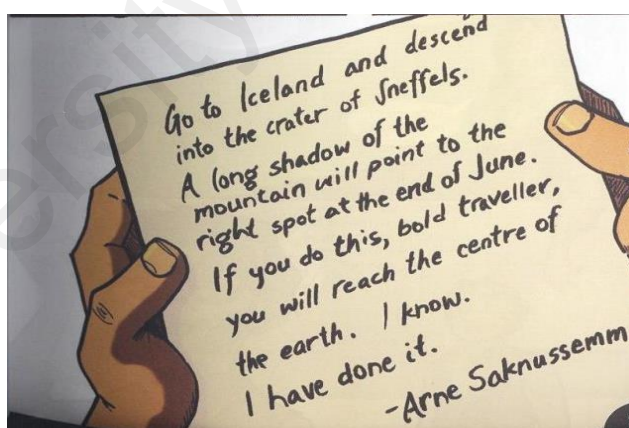


**Figure 6.15:** A Symbolic Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 53). ©Stone Arch Books.



The compass in the panel above represents the dashed hopes of these travellers when they realise they are back at the place they started at the shore. The focus on the compass and the size of the image itself denotes the importance of the act in determining the next cause of action taken by the travellers. Similarly, in Panel 163 (p. 54), the image of Otto represents a sense of power. His raised hand and a finger demonstrate control over the other travellers. Here, the concentration of only his silhouette in the panel and the salience of his face and raised hand represent authority. More importantly, it is through details and attributes like these that the symbolic representation of the image is inherent in construing symbolic meanings.

There are 12 (5.66%) ClaPS in *JttCotE* in total. The data reveals that this is the least preferred NP by the illustrator. Figure 6.16 demonstrates one example of a ClaP.

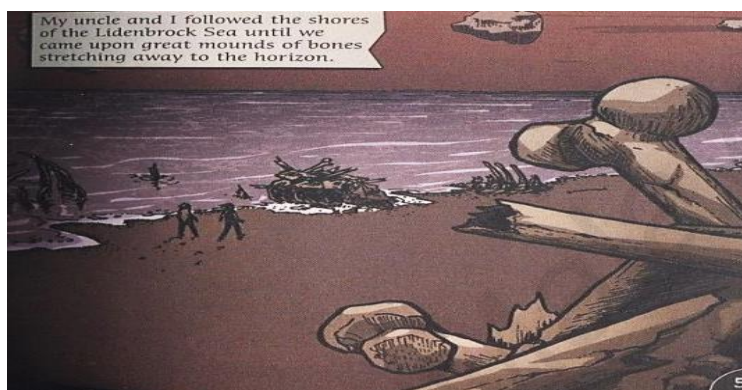


**Figure 6.16:** A Classification Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 9). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 6.16 shows that the Carrier is the letter (which is read by Otto) and it conveys the Possessive Attributes of a note, written properties, a signature and its ability to be read. These characteristics identify the panel as a ClaP. In Panels 22 and 23 (p. 13), the inherence of the different types of climbing gears and supplies are depicted against an

empty background. Some of the items illustrated are ropes, climbing hooks, thermometer, compass and electric lanterns.

Finally, there are 16 (7.55%) AnaPs in *JttCotE*, the second highest frequently occurring process in the novel. A depiction of an AnaP is shown in Figure 6.17.



**Figure 6.17:** An Analytical Process in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 55). ©Stone Arch Books.

The AnaP in figure 6.15 illustrates the shores of the Lidenbrock Sea. The great mounds of bones reveal the darkness and horrid history the dreary setting carries. In Panel 210 (p. 65), the image of the surface of earth depicts an AnaP due to its ‘whole-part’ relationship in creating a topographical process whereby the analytical structures represent “the physical spatial relations and the relative location of the Possessive Attributes” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 98). Here, part of the surface is shown a link is made from the location of one volcano (point of entrance for the travellers) to another volcano (point of exit for the travellers).

Conversely, the CPs representation in *TBVM* reveal the lowest among all three novels. There are only 2 (1.8%) SymPs utilised and this indicates the non-dependence on this type of imagery in evoking what a participant represents. Figure 6.18 represents one such example.

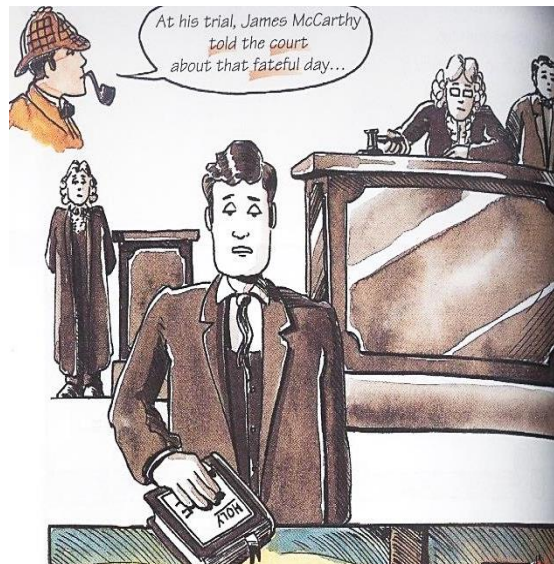


**Figure 6.18:** Reaction and Mental Processes in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 69).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In Figure 6.18, Mr Turner is illustrated with his hands on his temples. As the Carrier and the sole participant in the image, the whole process represents Symbolic Suggestive, denoting the sense of disparity he is facing. This assertion confirms Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) claim that "suggestive processes represent meaning and identity as coming from within, as deriving from qualities of the Carrier themselves" (p. 106). The only other SymP in *TBVM* is illustrated in Panel 94 (p. 70) showing a very remorse looking Mr Turner. Again, as a Carrier, this process is of Symbolic Suggestive, denoting the sense of remorse that dwells within Mr Turner. The image of Mr Turner is set against a soft backdrop to focus on the salience of Mr Turner's facial features, similar to that of Figure 6.16 where the letter is placed on an off-white background. Surprisingly, the only two SymPs in the novel represent Mr Turner, the key witness in the story.

Table 6.61 shows that there are 4 (3.6%) ClaPs in *TBVM*. The 4 images in the panels illustrate photographs, a court and a marriage. Figure 6.19 exemplifies a ClaP.

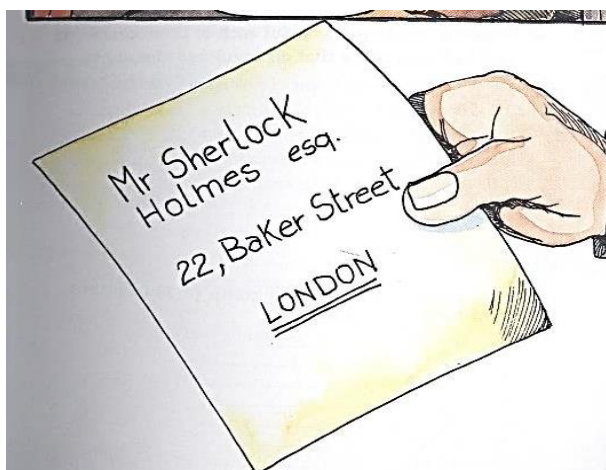




**Figure 6.19:** A Classification Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 32).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The image in the panel above as shown in Figure 6.19 shows a courtroom and the different elements that make up the courtroom is illustrated clearly. The accused, James McCarthy, the holy Bible, the judge and the bailiff are shown in this image. These different characteristics constitute a court. In this image, the Participants are the Subordinates who are distributed across the image. Another ClaP is evident in Panel 67 (p. 56) representing a marriage. In this panel, the relationship between the Participants is succinctly shown. The cross on the wall of the building symbolises the church. Both James and the barmaid are shown touching each other, indicating a relationship between them, noted from the type of touch.

Finally, there are 8 (7.21%) AnaPs in *TBVM*. Figure 6.19 exemplifies one instance of such a panel.



**Figure 6.20:** An Analytical Process in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 27).  
©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In the image above, a whole-part relationship is evident where the Carrier is the telegram with Possessive Attributes of the name of the receiver (Mr Sherlock Holmes) and the address. These attributes are essential in the deciphering of the image as they are prerequisites of a telegram. In addition, the focus on the telegram as a full panel itself indicates how an AnaP is used to concentrate on key elements of the narrative. The telegram to Mr Sherlock Holmes is an invitation from Miss Alice Turner to investigate the mystery surrounding Mr McCarthy's death. Panel 83 (p. 64) illustrates another whole-part relationship, depicting part of the Australian map. Here, the town of Ballarat, a town in the state of Victoria is shown. Again, the focus on this town by the illustrator denotes the importance of the setting for the narrative.

### 6.3.2 A Summary of Visual Analysis

In conclusion, the deployment of VG specifically the NPs denotes that illustrations are purposefully constructed to construe meanings in tandem with the script given to them. It must be stressed here that both writers and illustrators of these three novels worked

independently without consulting each other. This is supported by the responses from the illustrators as shown in Extracts 6.3 and 6.4.

#### Extract 6.3

Well, that's a hard question in the case of Verne's story, because as an illustrator I had no editorial input. The script and heavily abridged dialogue were written by someone else, and I was given somewhat specific instructions for the drawings.

#### Extract 6.4

In the case of the Robin Hood and Black Beauty titles, I had to closely follow the script.

As reflected in Table 6.58, there is a predominance of deploying NPs as compared to CPs within the RPs of the VG. Though most of these images are embedded with other processes, this study only limited itself in focusing on the main image as the study involves the analysis of the various multimodal modes present in these graphic novels. The utilisation of a large number of APs within these panels supports the focus on actions and movements which add to the dynamism of the characters. This in turn, helps in keeping the readers' attention alive as they are mainly young readers (12-13 years).

In addition, most of the APs are also transactional and involve at least two participants. The need for such visual arrangements also supports the narrative structure of the novels which consist of a myriad of characters. These arrangements also help in the characterization as a focus on the interactions of these characters determines their traits and values. In addition, the prominence of Actors at times offers what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) term as "psychological salience" (p. 63) through the illustration of human figures and faces for the viewers.

In contrast, the use of RPs reveals the need to accentuate relationships between characters through eye contacts. These images are mostly of bidirectional RPs and they

represent the establishment of relationships between various characters: between the horses in *BB*, the travellers in *JttCotE* and the detectives and the accused in *TBVM*. Conversely, the use of unidirectional RPs shows that there is also a need to focus on the solitary state of the characters specifically in *BB* where Black Beauty is often depicted alone gazing into emptiness. Pedagogically, these types of images help students in deciphering the characterisation of both protagonists and antagonists of the literary adapted classics.

The creation of a visual picture in the mind of the reader demonstrates that effective imagery can be used to invoke an emotional, sensational or even physical response. The deployment of CPs in these novels reveals the reliance on images that are static in nature. Most representations in the novels are clearly “entity-oriented, as they are seen as carriers that possess attributes” (Moya, 2014, p. 65). Participants are represented in a more generalised and timeless essence through the images that embrace CPs (Kress and van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 76). Though meant for the analysis of picture books, Painter, Martin and Unsworth’s (2013) assertion of the three main functions of CPs also resounds well in these graphic novels. The functions of CPs are to introduce characters, denote a reflective moment and help in deciphering symbolic meanings within the images (Painter et al., 2013, p. 56-57). Within the pages of these graphic novels, such instances are clearly exemplified. This include the AnaP in Panel 1 (p. 6) of *BB* which introduces Black Beauty’s first home and the other animals at Framer Grey’s home. In Panel 90 (p. 69) of *TBVM*, the symbolic representation of despair of Mr Turner is clearly depicted. In *JttCotE*, a sense of reflection is evidents in Panels 97 (p. 32) and 98 (p. 33) when Axel faces a death end and is engulfed in a sense of hopelessness. These selective examples support the postulation of Painter et al. (2013) on the functions of CPs. Again, it must be stressed here while their claim only reflects on

picture books, this study further reveals that these functions are also applicable for graphic novels of the adapted classics genre meant for young readers.

This deployment of SymPs is a pertinent process in an adapted classic as images that correspond with literary elements are important in the structuring of a graphic novel (i.e. pain, freedom, status consciousness, etc.). These representations conform to Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) belief of SymPs by having the characteristics of "being placed in the foreground, through exaggerated size, through being especially well lit, through being represented in especially fine detail or sharp focus, or through their conspicuous colour or tone" (p. 105). The SymPs constitute 12.5% in *BB*, 11.79% in *JttCotE* and only 1.8% in *TBVM*. The low usage of this process suggests that as a mystery genre, both the writer and illustrator of *TBVM* prefer action oriented processes rather than those which focus on 'timeless stance'. Nevertheless, the allocation of SymPs in the novels shows that these processes are "conventionally associated with symbolic values" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 105).

The deployment of AnaPs shows that the illustrators adhered to the notion of creating a part-whole relation. These processes are represented by 7.55% in *JttCotE*, 7.21% in *TBVM* and finally, 2.94% in *BB*. More importantly, these images show the purpose of the illustrator to make them fit together to create meanings. With the absence of vectors in these images, there is an interactional element evident as readers' are allowed to "identify a Carrier and to allow viewers to scrutinise this Carrier's Possessive Attributes" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 89). In graphic novels, such processes are important to add an element of variety to further enhance the storytelling element of the novel. Rather than being an explicit giveaway, these types of processes encourage the readers to make connections through images.

The CPs make up 5.66%, 3.6% and 2.4% in *JttCotE*, *TBVM* and *BB* respectively. The need to illustrate the attributes of focused participants like the rich and the oppressed (*BB*) and hiking contraptions and inhabitants of the centre of the earth (*JttCotE*) ascribes one class to another. The low deployment of ClaPs in *TBVM* denotes that the illustrator has adhered to simplicity rather than the intricacies of a proper graphic novel layout. Besides, these types of processes are more popular in organisational frameworks, charts and flowcharts where there is a stress on taxonomy. Most ClaPs in the novels are related to the categorisation of entities like farm animals, trade fair, the city in *BB*; monsters and climbing gears in *JttCotE* and finally, photographs in *TBVM*. This supports Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) affirmation that these "participants are put together in a syntagm which establishes the classification" (p. 79) through the ordering of images. The representation of the various conceptual elements support the need to deploy visual representations that "tend to present more generalised aspects of the participants, their intrinsic nature or permanent characteristics in terms of class, structure and meaning" (Nalon, 1997, p. 20). Being abridged versions, these images support the visual representation of information that are not linguistically inherent in these graphic adaptations (which otherwise is denoted in the actual linear versions).

The visual analysis of the images in all three graphic novels indicates that VG is an effective tool for understanding why illustrators have chosen to represent their images in such a way. More importantly, though the illustrators of these novels follow a ready text that were given to them, their own thought processes in construing the text as close as possible through images adhere to the details of the original texts. This can be clearly seen from the focus on the image of figure 6.13 which shows a SymP. In the original

text, this image is associated by the following lines from the Penguin edition (Sewell, 2010) of *JttCotE*:

Yes: our compass was no longer a guide; the needle flew from pole to pole with a kind of frenzied impulse: it ran round the dial, and spun hither and thither as if it were giddy or intoxicated” (p. 231)

As such, the image is clearly enhanced and is salient to show prominence on the importance of the event. Though a comparison is not a part of the objectives of the current study, this insight offers the importance of both illustrators and writers in understanding the narrative structure and storytelling of the original works to adapt the graphic version appropriately.

In addition, the structure of these images supports the notion of sensory diegetic images where the physical realities of the world are depicted. The strategic visual choices by the illustrators unpack information that supports the textual elements well. Importantly, the textual representations support the original works with emphasis on the pertinent features of narratives which encompass the orientation, setting, complication and resolution of a story.

In addition, there are also images which are *hermeneutic images* (Duncan, 2012, p. 45) and these images (inclusive of both textual and visual) are “often explicit attempts to influence the interpretation of the story” (Ibid). This concurs with the assertion that there is an informed effort specifically on the writer’s part to disseminate the values embedded within the novels. As the illustrators work on texts provided by the writers (through the publishing company), they too adhere to what has been set out. This could be seen from the visuals that support the theme of cruelty to animals as intended by Sewell and Verne’s foray into scientific explorations in *JttCotE* specifically through

SymPs. This assertion supports Duncan's (2012) postulation that the images "are meant for the author to directly address the reader and they are usually the most purposefully selected images of the page" (p. 46). As such, some of these images carry the underlying messages and meanings of the narrative.

It must be stressed here that an understanding of VG enables teachers to dissect graphic novels effectively in teaching various literary elements. Rajendra's (2015a) study further affirms this fact by analysing images that contribute to the layers of meanings specifically in *BB*. The visual analysis using VG also demonstrates its applicability in the classrooms particularly in promoting visual literacy.

#### **6.4 Summary**

The analysis and discussion of both textual and visual elements of graphic novels show that meanings are established through both modes and "their rich potential for interpretation" (Kaindl, 2004, p. 191). In addition, the textual and visual choices of both writers and illustrators also conform to restrictions set by the publication companies namely word and page limitations. Nevertheless, their choices in displaying both modes have successfully shown an adherence to the original narrative structures of the original classics as close as possible. Though abridged, the crux of the originals is intact through the careful interplay of both textual and visual elements.

The following Chapter 7 focuses on how cohesion is established in the graphic novels of the genre of adapted classics.



## CHAPTER 7: COHESION IN GRAPHIC NOVELS

In the world of comics, we must learn to see for ourselves  
since the whole truth is always a complex interrelation of words and images.”

Michael Chaney (2011)

### 7.0 Introduction

The analysis of cohesion in graphic novels involves the focus into both their textual and visual elements. Being sequential, the notion of how these images and words are ‘stuck together’ is pertinent as it underpins the basis of cohesion. More importantly, cohesion (external level of textual connectedness) gives readers the clues to construe coherence (semantic level of textual connectedness). Investigating how textual and visual elements realize cohesion would be able to provide insights on the importance of such features in the production of graphic novels. In addition, this is relevant and crucial in graphic novels as the phenomenon of closure as posited by McCloud (1994) is imperative in observing the different components and perceiving them as a whole. Like many other sequential art narratives, the graphic novel presents itself through the combined forces of image and word, thus making it a multimodal text. For Baldry and Thibault (2005), these multimodal texts are considered composite products as their meanings as texts are created through the combination of the effects of various resources (cited in Taib, 2010, p. 315). As a “unified whole” (Eggins, 2004), multimodal texts rely on various cohesion ties to bind the different components and resources to create meanings.

The following discussion starts with a brief overview of the element of cohesion in Section 7.1. The following Section 7.2 discusses how cohesion is achieved through the

macro structures (outside the panels) of graphic novels. The subsections look into two page spreads, splash panels and overlap panels. Section 7.3 on the other hand discusses the micro structures (within the panels) of graphic novel and how they contribute to the cohesion within the novels through the sub-sections. This includes Panel-to-Panel Transitions and Text Image Interactions. In addition, the emergence of other devices that construe cohesion is also discussed as they seem to be patterned in these novels. These considerations include colour, linguistic markers in speech balloons, placements of speech balloons and captions. Finally, a summary is presented in Section 7.4.

## **7.1 An Overview**

This chapter is dedicated to answer RQ3 through cohesion analysis which focuses on both textual and visual components of graphic novels of the adapted classics genre. The analysis attempts to answer the following question:

### ***3. How is cohesion established among the multimodal elements in the graphic novels?***

In order to answer this question, this study focuses on how cohesion in the novels is achieved through panel transitions and text image interactions. In addition, a few considerations emerging from cohesion analysis are also discussed. For Halliday and Hasan (1976):

“Cohesion occurs where the INTERPRETATION of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one PRESUPPOSES the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it” (p. 4).

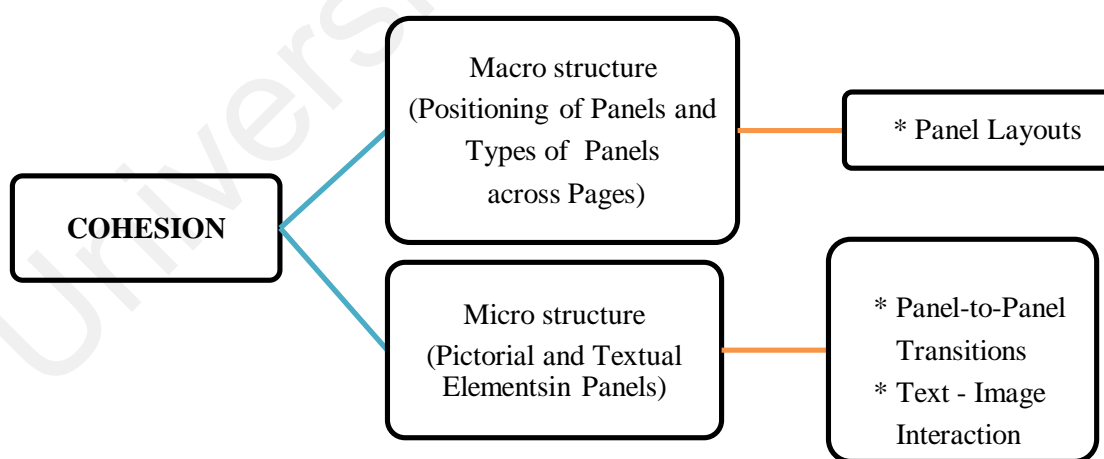
Though Halliday and Hasan (1976) posit on cohesion of text, this study takes their notion further by looking into both textual and visual components. For Taib (2010), “Relations need to be established between the different semiotic resources to create cohesion within the text” (p. 316). In graphic novels, these elements combine both textual and visual components which are the fundamentals of these texts, thus creating a multimodal text. Being static in nature, the transitions between images are pertinent to establish coherence between the panels. Moreover, transitions also help to focus on how plots, characters, themes, moods and other stylistic elements of the graphic novel develop and contribute to the narrative of the text. Halliday (1994) notes that:

“For a text to be coherent, it must be cohesive; but it must be more. It must deploy the resources of cohesion in ways that are motivated by the register of which it is an instance; it must be semantically appropriate, with lexicogrammatical realizations to match (i.e. it must make sense); and it must have structure.” (p. 339)

In addition, Gravett (2005) postulates that “Images and text arrive together, work together, and should be read together” (p. 11). The same point is made by both Baldry and Thibault (2006) concluding that visual and textual components are pertinent tools for society to interpret meaning. Likewise, Goldsmith (2010) adds that the “interplay between image and text, including the stylistic choices made to rely on one or the other to comport specific information and mood” (p. 26).

In this study, there are two focuses in establishing cohesion which are cohesion between panels and within panels. Kaindl’s (2004, p. 183) definition of macro and micro structures is adopted to simplify and categorise the elements involved in the analysis of panels and to provide a clearer parameter to investigate cohesion between and within the panels of the medium of graphic novels which is built upon sequential art.

At a macro-structure level which looks into the external characteristics of panels, the layouts of panels in eliciting cohesion is investigated. The micro-structure level focuses on the pictorial elements (both textual and visual) elements within the panels. Here, two major frameworks are adopted namely, McCloud's Panel-to-Panel Transitions (1994) and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) Text Image Interaction. McCloud's Panel-to-Panel Transitions (hereafter PtPT) offer an in-depth focus on transitions from one panel to another through six different transitions based on the images within the panels whereas Nikolajeva and Scott's Text Image Interaction (hereafter TII) focuses on the interaction between textual structures (speech balloons and captions) and their corresponding images within the panels of the novels. Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006, p. 140) affirmation of McCloud's (2006) PtPT as a useful tool in the analysis of picture books further support the deployment of their own framework in analysing TII in tandem with McCloud's PtPT in establishing cohesion. Figure 7.1 illustrates the elements pertinent to the construction of cohesion in this study.



**Figure 7.1:** Cohesion and Elements of Analysis

This study adopts an amalgamated framework which incorporates a focus on panel layouts, McCloud's (1994) PtPT and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) TII in establishing cohesion in graphic novels as described and discussed in Chapter 3. Also, the analysis

of cohesion ascertained through panel layouts is discussed based on selective sampling from all three novels. This is a practical necessity determined by the availability of time and the theoretical framework (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973). Besides, the analysis also fulfils the need to identify how textual and visual components cohere to elicit meanings. In addition, other cohesive markers that are unrevealed during the analysis are also discussed under the subsection of 'Other Considerations'. Thus, the analysis and discussion that follows provides a comprehensive insight into how cohesion is established across the panels as well as within the pages of the graphic novels of the adapted classics genre.

## **7.2 Cohesion within the Macro Structures**

The discussion that pertains to the macro-structures in establishing cohesion centres on panels and their layouts. The following discussion will look into how the panels and their layouts are important for cohesion in graphic novels.

### **7.2.1 Cohesion through Panels and Panel Layouts**

As an important iconography feature of comics, the role of panels and their layouts cannot be dismissed as crucial elements in constructing cohesion in these graphic novels. The layouts are important as they determine a smooth transition without confusing the readers. In *BB* and *TBVM* for instance, the common layout for panels are two to three panels in a page. In *JttCotE* on the other hand, most pages contain three to four panels. Nevertheless, there are also single panels that embrace whole pages also known as splash pages and these pages denote crucial episodes of the narrative of all three novels. In addition, the shapes of the panels also vary at times rather than

following the norm of rectangular layouts. It is important to note that the illustrators of *BB* and *TBVM* generally did not adhere to the common convention of layouts in grids which are typically six panels on a page. The deployment of larger panels indicates the need to emphasize points in the narratives as they are after all a condensed version of the original. Some notable distinctions of cohesion in these panel layouts are splash pages and overlaps. The following subsections focus on the different types of structural elements and their roles in establishing cohesion.

### 7.2.1.1 Splash Panel

Splash pages which show full paged illustrations on the entire pages are usually employed to establish characterization, setting or even to draw attention. What is important is that cohesion is realized through the focus on important events or episodes of the narrative. The connective principle that binds the splash page with the previous and subsequent panel is the focus on the important events in the narrative. In *BB*, 5 pages of splash panels are inherent notably on Pages 21, 3, 35, 54 and 63 respectively. Figure 7.2 exemplifies one example of a splash panel on Panel 71 (p. 35).



**Figure 7.2:** Cohesion through a Splash Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 35). ©Stone Arch Books.

This splash for instance focuses on the severity and cruelty of the whole act of using bearing reins. On the other hand, the splash of Panel 116 (p. 54) illustrates how these horses are subjected to the whims and fancies of men, another important element of the story. Again, panels like these focus on the main elements of the novel, leading to an understanding of the main theme of *BB*. This creates cohesion and unity among the panels in accordance with the narrative structure of the original *BB* by Anna Sewell whereby the theme of mistreatment of animals and upright behaviours are the crux of story.

Similarly in *JttCotE*, six splash pages are evident namely on Pages 38, 63, 40 and 41 and 50 and 51. In relation to cohesion, splash pages give an insight on important elements of the narrative.

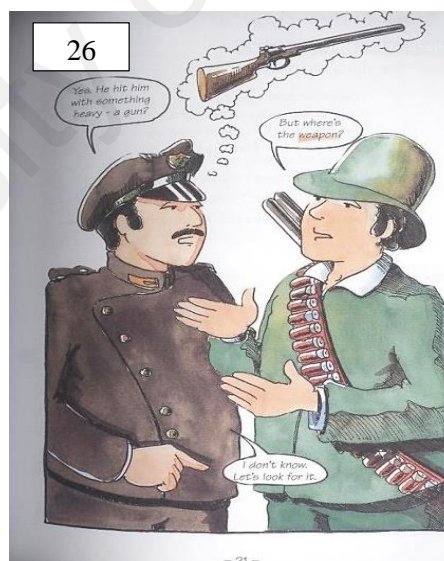


**Figure 7.3:** Cohesion through a Splash Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 63). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.3, the eruption of the volcanic mountain represents the significant episode of finally coming out to the surface from the centre of earth and landing in Sicily. Though

Panel 206 is embedded in this particular splash page, cohesion is realised through the repetition of images. For instance, in Panel 205, the red circle indicates the figures of Otto, Axel and Hans being shot out of the erupted volcano. In panel 206, the focus is on the salient figures of Otto and Axel. As such, there is a repetition of images within the splash page to project cohesion between the panels. This is also similar to the green circled element of the eruption of the volcano. The use of repetitive images embraces Saraceni's (2003a) postulation that "one fundamental way in which two or more panels are linked together is by having elements in common. These can be the same characters, objects, buildings, background, or even very small details" (p. 37).

On the contrary, *TBVM* only has one splash panel as shown in Figure 7.4 and this panel significantly illustrates the discussion about the murder weapon.



**Figure 7.4:** Cohesion through a Splash Panel in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 21). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

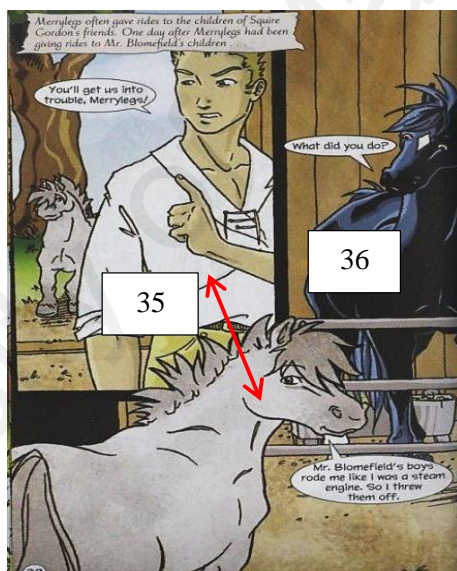
In relation to Figure 7.4, the previous Panel 25 (p. 20) illustrates McCarthy's body and the following Panel 27 (p. 24) shows the discovery of the murder weapon. As such, the use of a splash panel as a cohesive device suggests that the focus on important episodes



on a whole page draws attention and ties it with the previous and following panels. Importantly, this type of connective strategy needs the interpretation of the reader in determining the cohesiveness of the panel.

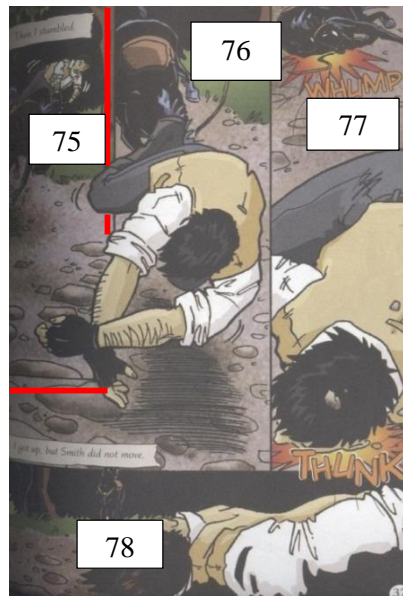
### 7.2.1.2 Overlap Panels

The deployment of panels which overlap also shows that a continuous scene has been subjected to a temporal move from one panel to another. Figure 7.5 based on Panels 35 and 36 represent one such example.



**Figure 7.5:** Cohesion through an Overlap Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 20). ©Stone Arch Books.

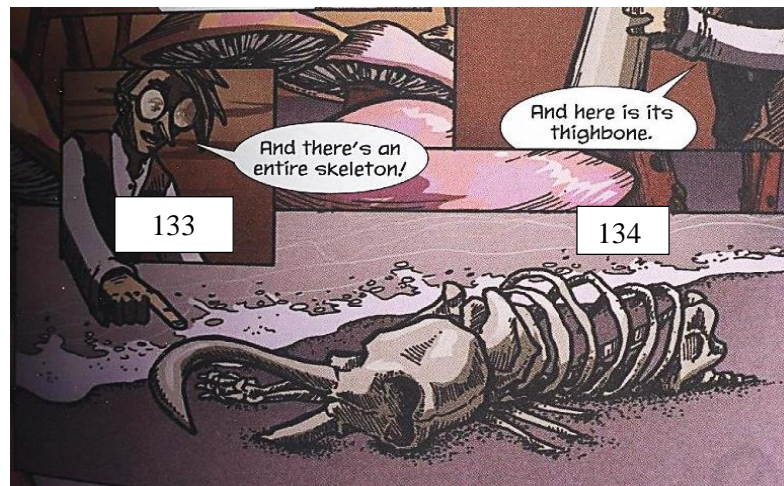
In Figure 7.5 for example, the figure of Merrylegs (part of its head) in the foreground is stretched upon two panels as shown by the arrow. Though this type of overlap deals with a figure stretching (breaking out) between two or more panels, it denotes a sense of connection between the panels thus helping in the cohesion of the text. Here, it shows that the continuity between these two panels does not need the interpretation of the readers.



**Figure 7.6:** Cohesion through an Overlap Panel in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 37). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 7.6 illustrates the different moments of Black Beauty's fall after being rode by Rueben Smith. The Panel 75 is embedded into Panel 76. The focus on Smith in the following two panels also shows the illustrator's attempt to accentuate this episode and dedicate a full 4 panels to this unfortunate event. Again, cohesion is achieved through a panel overlaps which also sees an embedment and the extension and repetition of both Smith and Black Beauty in all four panels. This also indicates that though a reader's interpretation is necessary to make meanings, images by themselves are also deployed to construct cohesion, as in the example. This example supports Saraceni's (2003) belief that "coherence is not only in the text but also in the reader's minds. In fact, reading is something that involves what is *not* in the text as well as what is present" (p. 51). Importantly, he affirms that the reader has the choice to "reconstruct the full story, to infer the missing pieces" (p. 51). This further proves the pertinent role of a reader to construct cohesion by filling up the missing information.

In *JttCotE*, the deployment of overlap panels to denote cohesion is also evident as shown in Figure 7.7.



**Figure 7.7:** Cohesion through an Overlap Panel in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 41). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.7, the overlap Panel 133 coheres with the following panel through a rather unique way of bleed. Here, Otto's pointed finger breaks through its own panel into the following panel which shows the skeleton of a mastodon. Another example as depicted in Panels 165 to Panels 169 (p. 50 and 51) shows how overlap panels on a double page splash coheres with each other through careful selections of layouts through the deployment of repeated images as discussed in relation to Figure 7.7 extracted from *JttCotE*. Nevertheless, a reader needs to cognitively make these connections as to create meanings and relationship between the spread page and the containment of panels within it.

Nevertheless, the illustrator of *TBVM* did not resort to the usage of overlap panels in the layout of the novel. *TBVM* is devoid of any such panels and it is evident that the illustrator prefers clear cut definitions rather than resorting to overlaps and splash pages (there is only 1 such page). Additionally, the structural layout of *TBVM* itself at times distorts cohesion as the activity sections seem to act as a stumbling block between the chapters.

The analysis suggests that the structure of panels and their layouts through spatial organization contribute to the connectedness of the graphic novel through their positions, shapes, frames and sizes. In addition, the role and interpretation of the readers are also imperative in establishing coherence through cognitive deduction. Groensteen (2007) notes that “to close the panel is to enclose a fragment of space-time belonging to the diegesis, to signify coherence” (p. 40) and this concurs with the deployment of overlap panels which paves way for a coherent flow of events. In splash pages for instance, common background is used in a double splash page and at times, there are also repeated images. Saraceni (2003a) labels repeated information in a subsequent panel as given information, while the added information is termed as new information (p. 38). The sequential nature of the layout of panels shows that overlaps are necessary at times to enhance the continuity of a story through a highlighted focus. Though panels assign segments of a scene, modifiers, or whole events, their function to focus attention in conveying information cannot be ignored (Cohn, 2007). This in turn also supports the assertion that language, frame and visual resources make their meaning through their mutual interdependence (Baldry and Thibault, 2005, p. 7)

### **7.3 Cohesion within the Micro Structures**

The discussion that pertains to the micro-structures in establishing cohesion focuses on images elements within the panels which are both textual and visual. The Panel to Panel Transition or PtPT concentrates on transition from one panel to another based on the images or visual in the panels. On the other hand, Text Image Interaction or TII focuses on how text and image interact accordingly in realising cohesion. The following discussion will look into how the panels and their positions are important for cohesion in graphic novels.

### 7.3.1 Cohesion through Panel-to-Panel Transitions (PtPT)

It must be noted that though McCloud's (1994) cohesive strategy through PtPT only deals with images in the panels, these transitions indicate the cohesiveness between the panels of the graphic novels. Static images from one panel to the next panel need to be cohesive for the readers to have a closure. As such, clarity on the part of the illustrator is pertinent for the reader to comprehend these images. McCloud's (1994) six means of transition are further attested by Strainbrook (2003) as an important framework to look into the cohesion between panels. These six type of transitions are moment-to-moment (hereafter M-t-M), action-to-action (hereafter A-t-A), subject-to-subject (hereafter Sub-t-Sub), scene-to-scene (hereafter Sce-t-Sce), aspect-to-aspect (hereafter As-t-As) and finally, non-sequitur (hereafter NS)

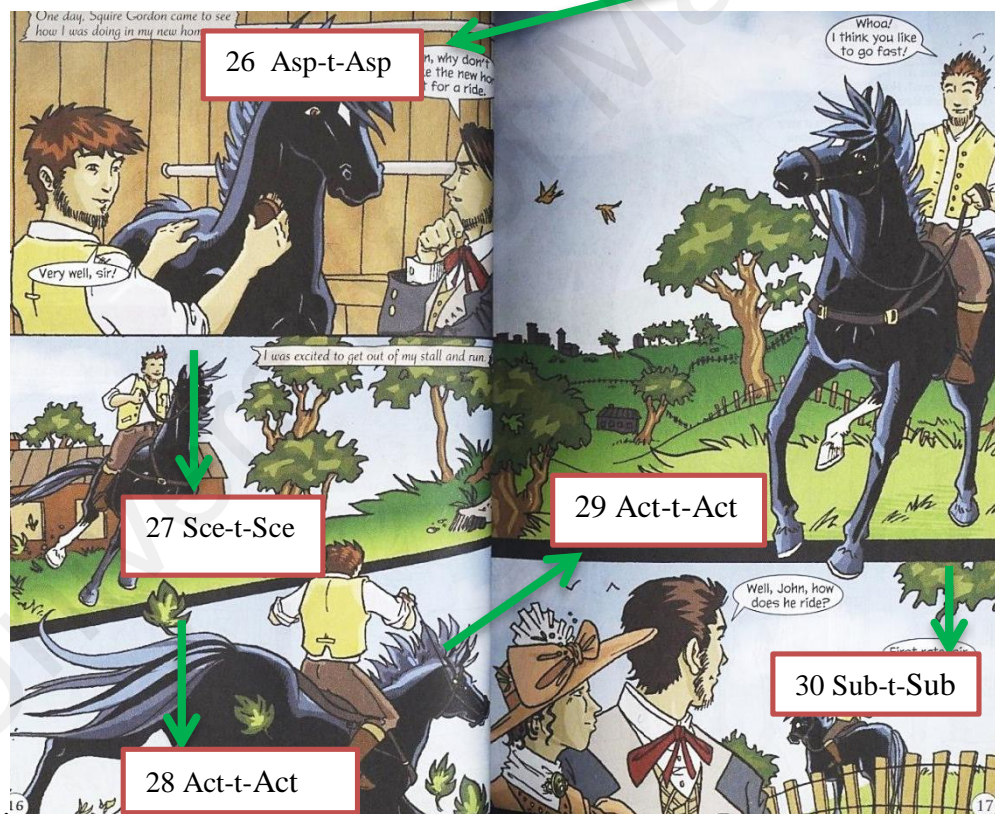
The different types of transitions are discussed thoroughly in Chapter 3. The following discussion focuses on the PtPT analysis in all three novels. Figure 7.9 represents four types of transitions depicted on pages 16 and 17 respectively in *BB*. In addition, it also shows how a transition occurs from the previous Panel 25 from the previous page (p. 15) and its connection to Panel 26 (p. 16) on the following page.





Page 15

Panel 25



Page 16

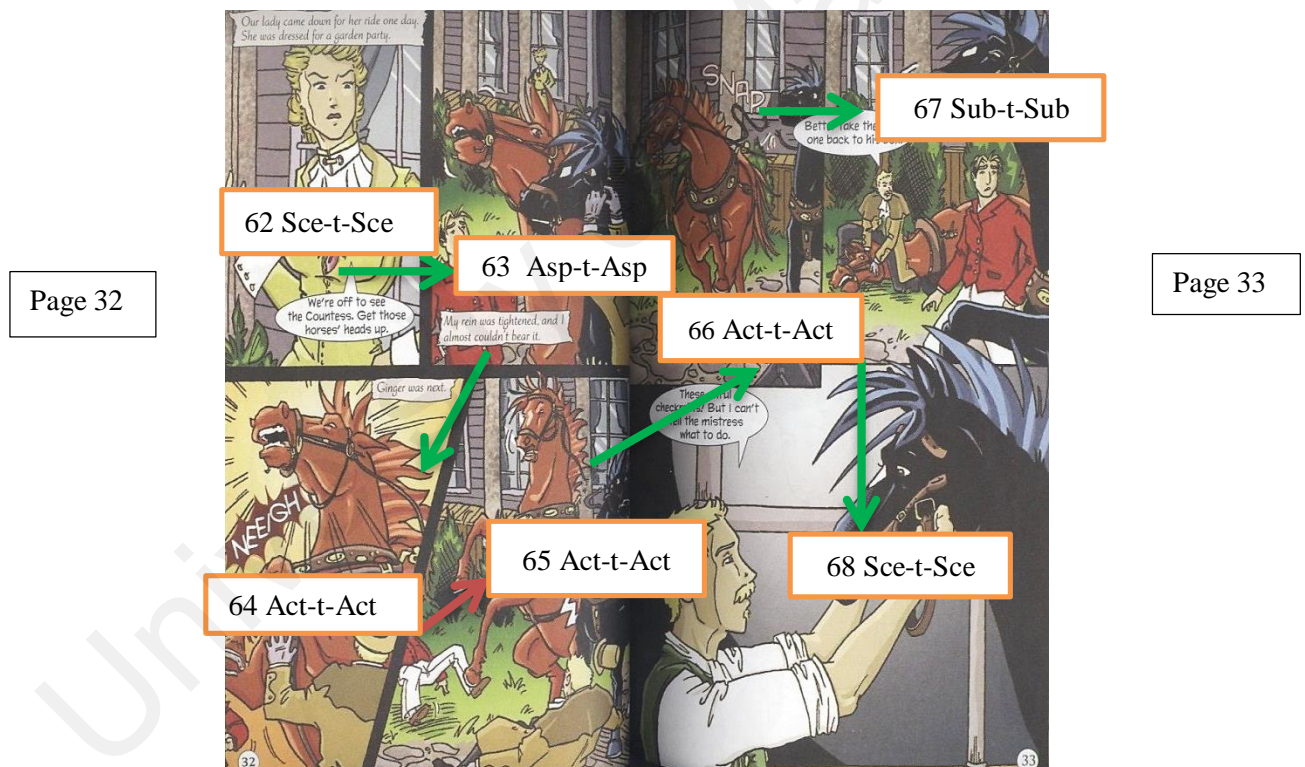
Page 17

**Figure 7.8:** Panel to Panel Transitions in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 15-17.) ©Stone Arch Books.

On page 15, Panel 25 represents an Action-to-Action transition from the previous Panel 24. The transition from Panel 25 to Panel 26 indicates an Aspect-to Aspect transition where the concentration is still on Black Beauty, albeit in two different situations.



Conversely, the transition from Panel 26 to Panel 27 shows a Scene-to-Scene transition as the setting moves from the stable of Birtwick Park to the meadow. The focus then shifts specifically to John, the stable boy as he tests Black Beauty and this is depicted in both Panels 28 and 29, indicating Action-to-Action transitions, as the focus is still on the same subject but in a series of actions. The following transition to Panel 30 represents a Subject-to-Subject transition because additional characters are introduced within the same setting, diverting the focus from John to Squire Gordon and the mistress of Birtwick Park. Figure 7.9 is an exemplification of another set of transitions between panels on pages 32 and 33.



**Figure 7.9:** Panel to Panel Transitions in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 32-33). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.9, Panel 62 illustrates a change of scene from the previous Panel 61 (p. 31, not shown in the example) which depicts the ride to Earls Hall Park through Scene-to-Scene transition. The ensuing transition to Panel 63 shows an Aspect-to-Aspect

transition where Black Beauty's and Ginger's reins get tightened indicating an aspect of the action on the order of the Mistress who is seen in the background (thus rendering it as Subject-to-subject). This exploitation subjects the horses to great pain and this transition is observed through Action-to-Action transition in Panel 64 where the image represents the horses in great pain, with a focus on Ginger. The following Panels 65 and 66 embrace Action-to-Action transitions too as the panels involve the same characters (both Black Beauty and Ginger) experiencing pain. They finally free themselves as the bridles that hold the bearing reins snap. Panel 67 denotes a Subject-to-Subject transition from the former as the panel still revolves around the same matter albeit the introduction of two new characters, namely coachman York and a footman. In addition, this panel sees Ginger collapsing while Black Beauty is taken back to her box. The following Panel 68 indicates a Scene-to-Scene transition as Black Beauty is comforted by Coachman York. These transitions indicate careful considerations into the depiction of images that support the condensation of the original narratives as close as possible for this whole episode is crucial to signify the importance of shortening reins to hold the horses' heads high; supporting the theme of mistreatment towards horses. Incidentally, this whole episode is featured in Chapter 23 (p. 90-93, 1994) of the original version aptly titled 'A Strike for Liberty'.

The following Table 7.1 represents the types of transitions and their frequencies in *BB*. It must be stressed here that the total number of panels taken into consideration for PtPT analysis is 135 and not the total 136 panels as the first panel in the first chapter is not transited from a previous panel as it is the start panel of the book.



**Table 7.1:** Type and Frequency of Transitions in *Black Beauty*

Chapter	Mom-t-Mom	Act-t-Act	Sub-t-Sub	Sce-t-Sce	Asp-t-Asp	Non-Sequitur	Total
1	6	0	8	4	0	0	18
2	0	12	5	13	3	0	33
3	3	15	6	14	2	0	40
4	2	10	5	8	1	0	26
5	0	8	4	4	2	0	18
Total/ Percentage	11 (8.15%)	45 (33.33%)	28 (20.74%)	43 (31.85%)	8 (5.93%)	0 (0%)	<b>135</b>

The table above indicates a rather surprising revelation as the highest number of transition and thus the commonest transitions in the novel *BB* are both Action-to-Action and Scene-to-Scene transitions which are 45 (33.33%) and 43 (31.85%) respectively in total. The negligible difference of only two transitions between Action-to-Action and Scene-to-Scene types reveals that both choices are used in tandem. The highest type of transition is Action-to-Action transitions with 45 (33.33%) instances. These types of transitions offer a quick succession of flow by the same characters. In addition, the concentration on the same subject or subjects in a series of actions provides an energetic flow between the panels. Transitions like those from Panels 75, 76, 77 and 78 (p. 37) show how Reuben Smith falls from a shoeless Black Beauty and dies. This is then followed with the action of the other workers of Earlshall Park discovering Smith dead and Black Beaut badly injured. The series of continuous actions keeps the flow smooth and brisk while accentuating the point of man's ignorance on the needs of horses.

The deployment of 43 (31.85%) Scene-to-Scene transitions is pertinent in compressing a story as it transports one "to significant distance of time and space" (McCloud, p. 71, 1994). This denotes that scene changes are prevalent in this particular novel. The story

is set in various farms in England (Farmer Grey's farm, Birtwick Park, Earls Hall Park, Farmer Thoroughgood's farm and Miss Bloomfield's and Miss Ellen's farm), horse fairs and the city of London. Examples of Scene-to-Scene transitions are prevalent in pages 18 and 19 where Panels 32, 33 and 34 depict four different locations and settings: Birtwick Park, Black Beauty and Ginger working together as carriage partners and finally, Black Beauty being together on the meadows with Merrylegs and Ginger. Interestingly, the original novel contains 49 Chapters (210 pages) and the condensation of that many pages needs careful identification of crucial elements such as scenes and events that construct the plot of the original narrative.

There are 28 (20.74%) Subject-to-Subject transitions which focus on a change of either objects or characters within the same scene. These types of transitions move the narrative of *BB* forward effectively as the story is set within a period of time (Black Beauty from his younger days right up to his adulthood). Transitions in Panels 112 and 113 (p. 52) illustrate Black Beauty and Ginger meeting each other after a lapse of time and acknowledging man's mistreatments towards horses. In *BB*, this is an important trait as the narrative tends to dwell on one character (specifically Black Beauty and his many adventures) as it is after all an autobiographical account.

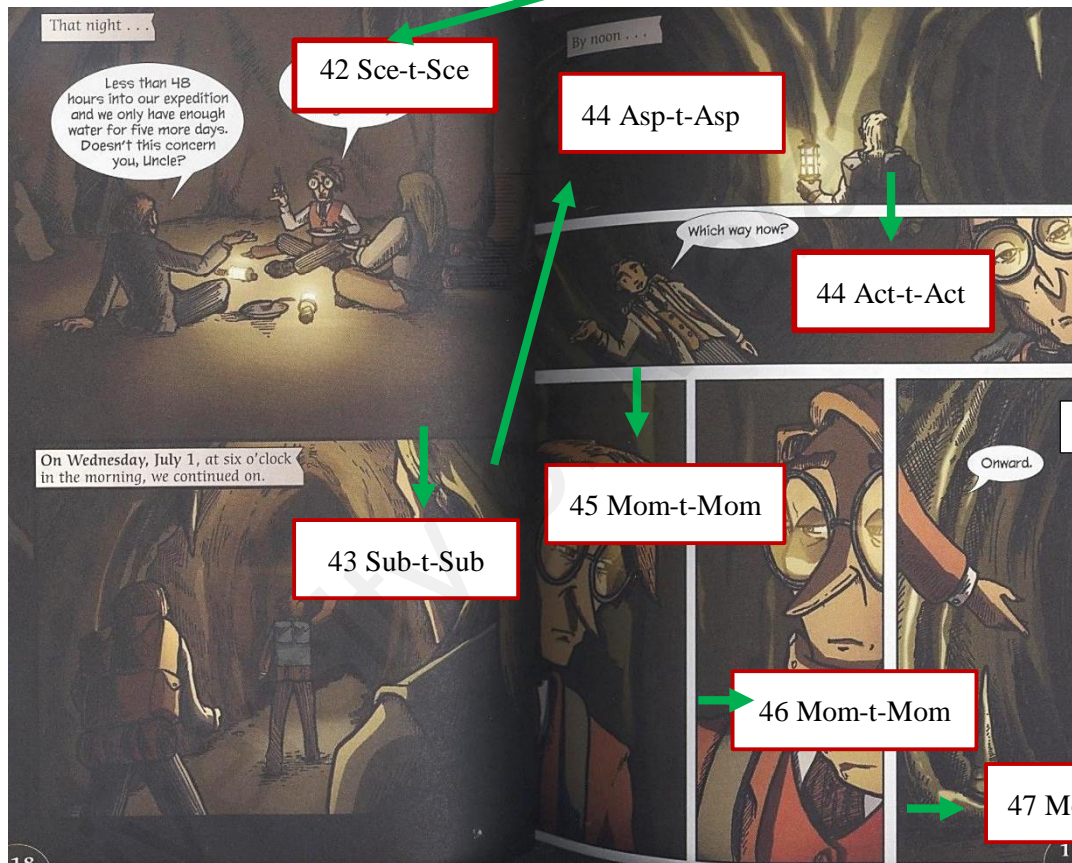
There are 11 (8.15%) Moment-to-Moment transitions that increase suspense through a slow emphasised movement between the panels. The slow cohesive transition from Panel 114 to Panel 115 (p. 53) illustrates both Black Beauty and Ginger captured in a timeless moment of reflection with minimal changes. Finally, there are only 8 (5.93%) Aspect-to-Aspect transitions in this novel, indicating such transitions are not popular. Used to evoke a strong sense of mood or place, one such example is shown on Page 34 where the transition from Panel 69 to Panel 70 of the Aspect-to-Aspect type illustrates a

focus on the horses in the foreground (Panel 69) and then background (Panel 70). Cohesion is established here with the placement of the horses appropriately. There are no Non-sequitur transitions evident in *BB* as visual representations follow the original text closely. Besides, non-sequitur transitions are predominantly popular with experimental comics, and *BB* being an adapted literary classic; clearly does not embrace any forms of experimentation in its layout, be it textually nor visually. In addition, as these novels are meant for young readers, panels which have no sense of relation would hinder these readers' comprehension and inhibits them from constructing closures.

As in all comic books and graphic novels, panel transitions are a prerequisite in creating meanings in the comprehension of such genres. Transitions between panels support cohesion which clearly relies on a reader's involvement in creating meanings (McCloud, 1994, p. 71). The following discussion looks into PtPTs in *JttCotE*. Figure 7.10 represents four types of transitions depicted on pages 17, 18 and 19 in the novel.



Page 17



Page 19

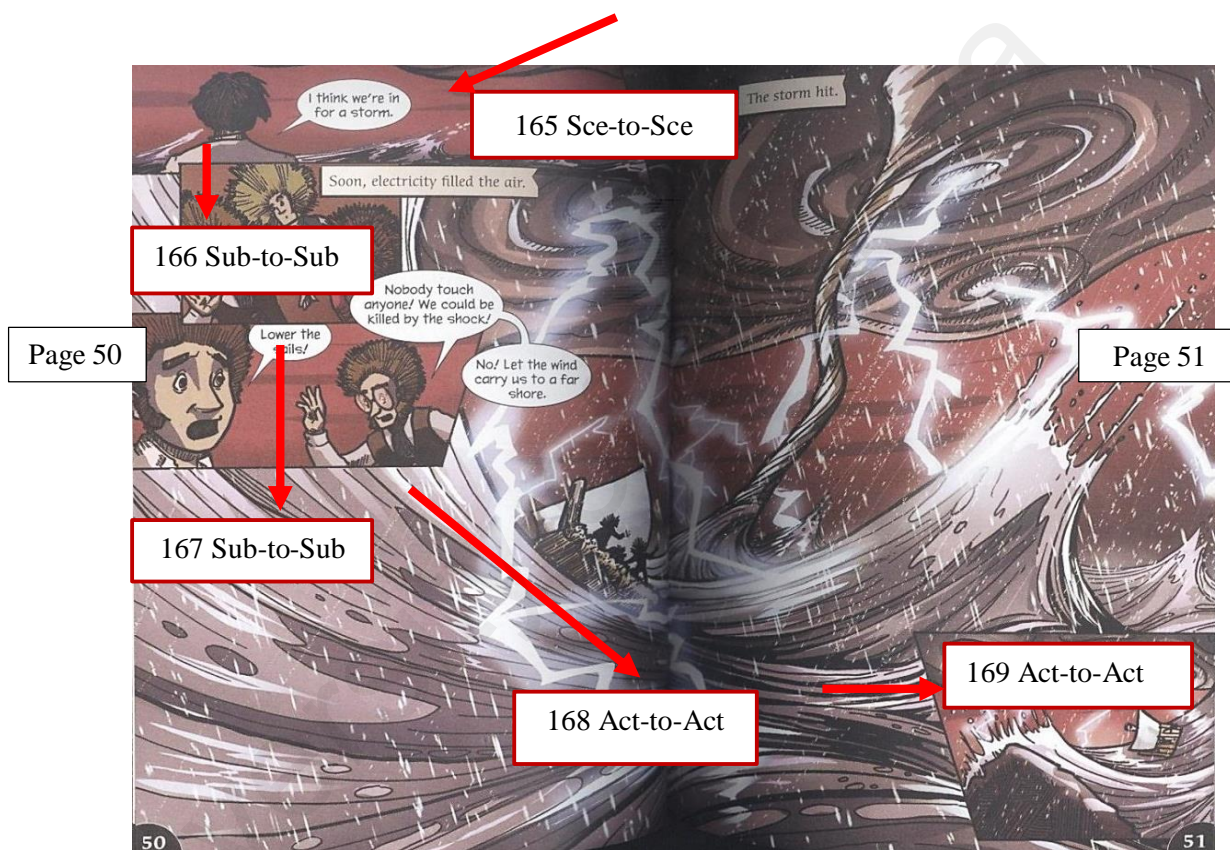
Page 18

**Figure 7.10:** Panel to Panel Transitions in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 17-19). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 7.10 represents a PtPT evident in *JttCotE*. The transition in Panel 42 represents that of a Scene-to-Scene transition from the previous Panel 41 (p. 17). The transition illustrates a change of setting as Panel 41 shows Otto instructing Axel and Hans to carry on with the journey. The subsequent Panel 42 denotes the travellers discussing in the bowels of the earth. The next Panel 43 sees a change to Subject-to-Subject transition as the travellers set their journey and continue their journey within the same setting. It



moves to Action-to-Action transitions in both Panels 44 and 45 as they move along the location of their expedition, indicating their determination to carry on. The following three Panels of 46, 47 and 48 show Moment-to-Moment transitions as the pace of the narrative slows down, focusing on Otto in greater detail. The panels represent images of Otto with minimal changes. In these three panels, Otto's role as the leader of the trip and his influence in the trip is well defined.



**Figure 7.11:** Panel to Panel Transitions in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 50-51). ©Stone Arch Books.

On the contrary, in another example as illustrated in Figure 7.11, the whole episode takes place on a double spread page of splash. Panel 165 denotes a Scene-to-Scene transition from the previous Panel 164 on Page 49 as the travellers battle a ferocious storm. There is also a lapse of time as indicated by the caption. Subject-to Subject transitions are seen in the following Panels 166 and 167 as there are changes in one single scene set on the raft where the subjects are shown suffering from electromagnet

shocks while caught in the storm. Panels 168 and 169 illustrate Action-to Action transitions as the raft is manoeuvred in the storm, clearly depicting the subjects of the panels going through a series of events, thus depicting various actions as the raft moves along the storm. By using a splash page, the illustrator chose to focus on the storm as a major event of the narrative and make it look bigger and salient. Each of the actions in the panel indicates a smooth transition from one panel to another, thus eliciting coherence. The absence of gutters in the illustration suggests minimal interpretation from readers to perform closures. The use of overlap panels in this page further enhances the cohesiveness of the images in these panels.

Table 7.2 displays the different types of transitions and their frequencies in *JttCotE*. Just like *BB*, it is stressed here that the total number of panels taken into consideration for PtPT analysis is 211 (the total number of panels is 212). Again, the start panel of the story does not involve any transitions.

**Table 7.2:** Type and Frequency of Transitions in *Journey to the Centre of the World*

Chapter	Mom-t-Mom	Act-t-Act	Sub-t-Sub	Sce-t-Sce	Asp-t-Asp	Non-Sequitor	Total
1	1	8	6	1	1	0	17
2	0	0	7	6	3	0	16
3	6	13	11	5	1	0	36
4	14	19	8	4	0	0	45
5	2	24	23	8	4	0	61
6	0	20	6	7	3	0	36
Total/ Percentage	23 (10.9%)	84 (39.8%)	61 (28.91%)	31 (14.69%)	12 (5.69%)	0	<b>211</b>

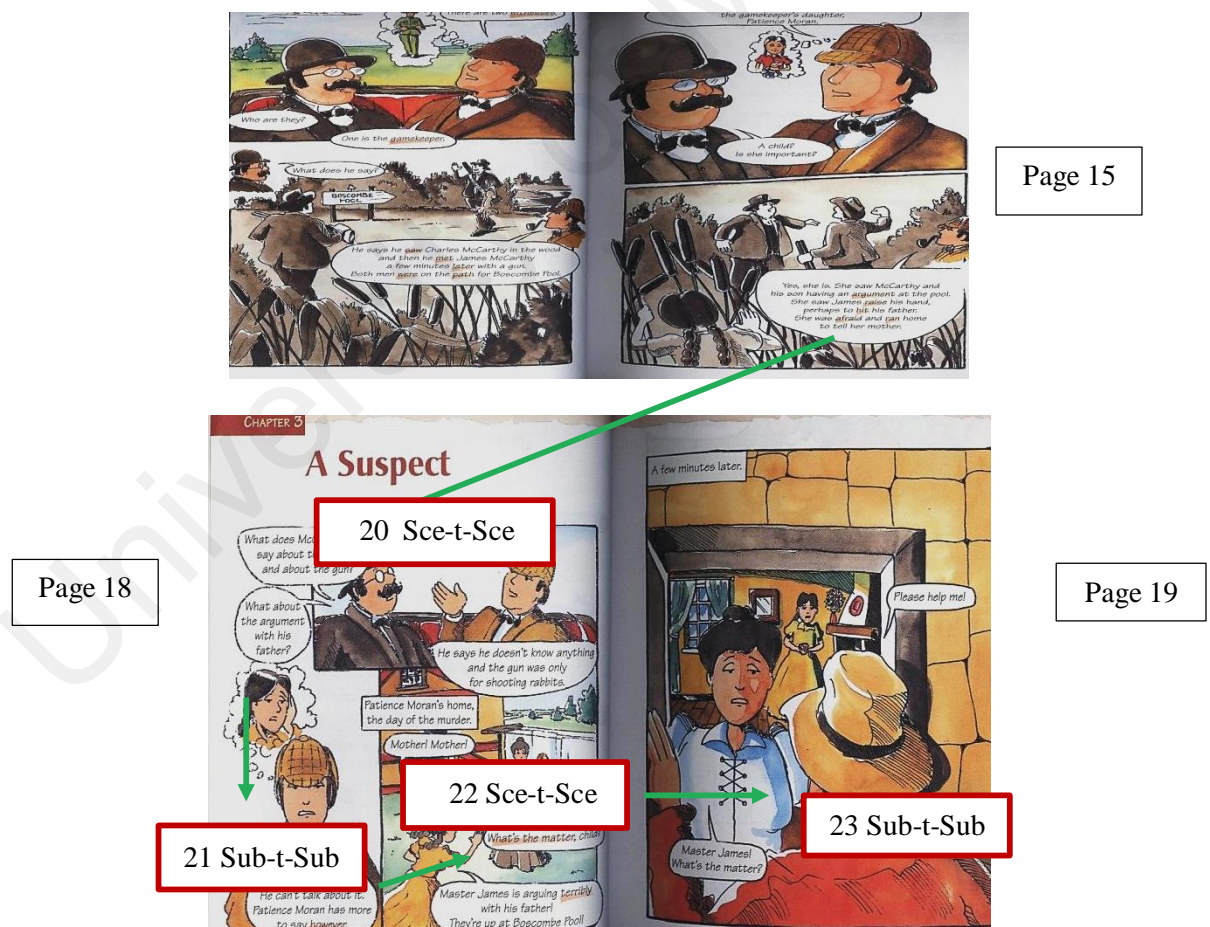
As shown in Table 7.2, the most common type of transition in *JttCotE* is that of Action-to-Action which is 84 (39.8%). Like *BB*, the dominance of Action-to-Action transitions in *JttCotE* supports McCloud's (1994) claim that Action-to-Action transitions are common in comic books. In Panels 161, 162 and 163 (p. 49), the fight between two monstrous sea-reptiles is depicted with great intensity through actions of battling with extreme power. This is followed by Subject-to-Subject which accounts for 61 (28.91%) transitions. The focus on the same subject in a consequent panel or panels is crucial as this type of transition directs the reader through a change of angles and views but with the same subject that promotes cohesion between panels.

The prevalence of Subject-to-Subject transitions on the other hand, suggests that there is much emphasis on particular episodes or events in *JttCotE*, thus the focus on the subjects (characters) within the same scene and episodes. In Panels 157, 158 and 159 (p. 48), there is an absolute focus on the subject of appearance of sea reptiles. While Panel 157 introduces the monsters through Otto's sightings with a telescope, the following two panels (158 and 159) depict an ichthyosaurus (a fish lizard) and a plesiosaurus (a serpent) respectively. Here, there is a distinct link between all three panels which starts from the sightings right to the depictions of these monsters. Scene-t-Scene transitions appear through 31 (14.69%) transitions and they are mostly used to show a change of settings in the story as the travellers traverse from the crater of Mount Sneffels in Iceland and end their journey in Stromboli, Sicily.

There are 23 (10.9%) Moment-to-Moment and these transitions are mostly used to depict a slow motion of minimal changes within panels as shown in Figure 7.13 (Panels 46, 47 and 48) where the focus is on Otto within a single scene. The deployment of Moment-to-Moment transitions reveals the need to accentuate minimal changes

between panels through the stress on the subjects or characters on each panel. Finally, there are only 12 (5.69%) Aspect-to-Aspect transitions and this supports the notion that the need to create a sense of place and mood is not popular within the adventure genre where action oriented images are much preferred to sustain dynamism. Just like *BB*, Non-Sequitur transitions are absent from this novel. This suggests this type of transition is not favoured for books meant for young readers.

Similarly, *TBVM* also adopts a range of transitions as both *BB* and *JttCotE*. The following discussion looks into PtPTs within *TBVM*. Figure 7.12 represents two types of transitions depicted on pages 15, 18 and 19 in the novel.

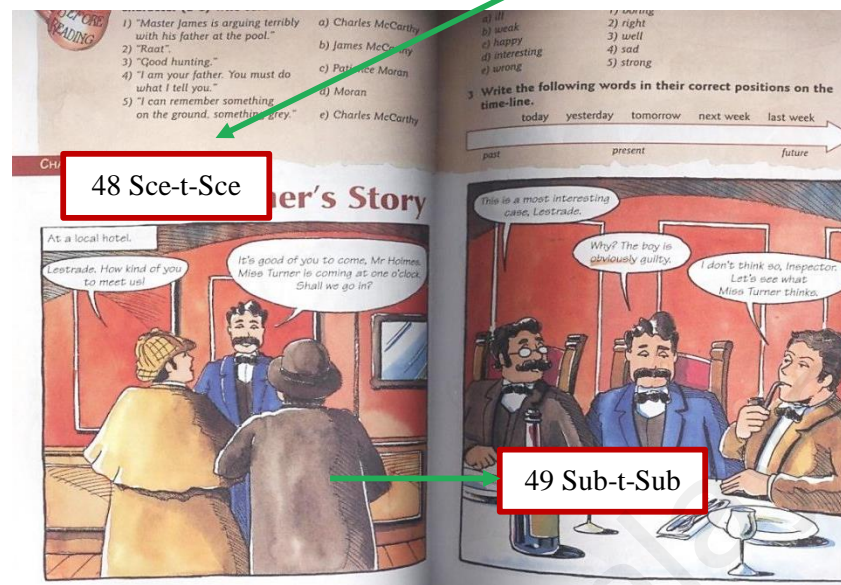


**Figure 7.12:** Panel to Panel Transitions in in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, ps. 15, 18 and 19). McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



Figure 7.12 illustrates two types of transitions in *TBVM*. Panel 20 shows a Scene-to-Scene transition from the previous Panel 19 on Page 15. Here, Panel 19 pictures a flashback by Holmes narrating the argument between Charles McCarthy and his son, James McCarthy as witnessed by Patience Moran, the gatekeeper's 14 year old daughter. The scene then transfers to Panel 20 where Holmes is still narrating the events to Watson. The transition to Panel 21 represents a Subject-to-Subject transition as the focus is on Holmes and his thoughts on the witness, Patience Moran. The setting then moves back to a flashback in Panel 22 through a Scene-to-Scene transition. Additionally, the thought of Patience can also be seen as a cohesive tie as the subsequent panel is a flashback that depicts Patience. It must be stressed here that the focus is clearly in dominant transitions and McCloud's PtPT only supports one type of transition for each panel. Finally, this panel moves to Panel 23 through a Subject-to-Subject transition which also is a flashback. The subject is evident with the introduction of James in the panel. The many panels which move from flashbacks to present time are aplenty in *TBVM*. Within these flashbacks themselves, the transitions of panels indicate a Subject-to-Subject transition suggesting the existence of a same subject but from different angles. The following Panel 24 (not featured) on Page 20 continues the flashback retelling of Panel 23.

In Figure 7.13, there are only two panels featuring one each on Pages 44 and 45 respectively, and this type of one panel in one page is a common feature in *TBVM*. As the novel is interspersed with language activities between pages, very few pages adhere to the usual convention of having six panels on a page.



**Figure 7.13:** Panel to Panel Transitions in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 44 and 45). McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Panel 48 which shows Holmes and Watson at a new venue illustrates a change of scene from the previous Panel 47 (p. 39) which features a judge in a courtroom through a Scene-to-Scene transition. The following Panel 49 indicates a Subject-to Subject change as the three men (Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard, Holmes and Watson) discuss about the case in a hotel.

From the earlier discussion (Chapter 5), it is evident through the many examples that the graphic novel, *TBVM* is different in its layout. As such, the novel's panels do not conform to a typical comics layout as the pages are regularly interspersed with language activities like vocabulary testing and cloze passages which readers, specifically students need to complete to denote an understanding of the preceding chapter. The number of panels is limited and there are many Scene-to-Scene transitions as much needs to be condensed and narrated in the limited quota of pages. These type of transitions helps compress the original story as brief as possible without affecting the narrative too much.

In addition, the many settings in *TVBM* like Paddington Station in London, Ross-on-Wye, Boscombe Valley (a fictitious place in Herefordshire), Ballarat in Victoria, Australia and others, in addition to temporal settings, render Scene-to-Scene transitions useful in creating successive changes of locations which lend connectedness and cohesion.

Table 7.3 represents the different types of transitions and their frequencies in *TBVM*. Once again, just like *BB* and *JttCotE*, the total number of panels for analysis is 110 though the actual number of panels in the graphic novel is 111 panels.

**Table 7.3:** Type and Frequency of Transitions in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

Chapter	Mom-t-Mom	Act-t-Act	Sub-t-Sub	Sce-t-Sce	Asp-t-Asp	Non-Sequitur	Total
1	0	1	4	4	2	0	11
2	0	1	1	4	1	0	7
3	0	1	3	3	0	0	7
4	0	2	0	3	2	0	7
5	0	3	0	3	0	0	6
6	0	4	3	1	0	0	8
7	0	6	2	1	0	0	9
8	0	4	3	3	0	0	10
9	0	3	2	5	0	0	10
10	0	5	3	2	1	0	11
11	0	4	4	2	1	0	11
12	0	7	4	2	0	0	13
Total/ Percentage	0	41 (37.27%)	29 (26.36%)	33 (30%)	7 (6.36%)	0	110

The data in Table 7.3 reveals that 41 (37.277%) Action-to-Action transitions are prevalent in *TBVM*. The many such transitions indicate the need to emphasise action oriented images within the panels to support the narrative of this particular mystery genre. In Panels 52, 53 (p. 46) and 54, 55 and 56 (p. 47), the continuous depiction of both Watson and Alice Turner, or Holmes and Alice Turner demonstrates a succession of storytelling actions (directed at either one by Alice Turner). In these panels, Alice tells them that she believes James is innocent. The utilisation of 7 panels of Action-to-Action transitions does indicate the importance of this event in the narrative of the story. Incidentally, this is also the climax of the story.

The second highest transition is that of Scene-to-Scene with 33 (30%) instances. This type of transition is common due to the nature of the settings in *TBVM* which ranges from London to Australia. Also, the constant use of flashbacks also warrant for such a choice by the illustrator. Panel 67 (p. 56) depicts the scene of a church which is mentioned in a flashback and the succeeding Panel 68 (same page) depicts a scene of a living room with Watson narrating to Holmes. Additionally, there are 29 (26.36%) Subject-to-Subject transitions which help in moving the story forward efficiently in terms of highlighting the characters involved in the solving of the mystery through the juxtaposition between flashbacks and the present time. One such example is inherent in Panels 108, 109, 110 and 111 where the series of panels revolve around John Turner's confession of murdering Charles McCarthy and the resolution of the mystery that surrounds McCarthy's death. More importantly, these transitions denote the aspect of coherence between the panels by addressing an important issue through a series of panels. Interestingly by concentrating on one issue, the story ends using the same Subject-to-Subject transition throughout the four panels. This suggests that the focus of

the novel as a mystery genre is clearly to solve the case in hand by concentrating on the various events including a series of flashbacks.

There are only 7 (6.36%) Aspect-to-Aspect transitions in the novel. This type of transition is used sparingly amidst other categories of transitions. The transition to Panel 28 (p. 25) indicates an Aspect-to-Aspect type whereby there is a distinct focus on discovering James McCarthy's gun. Incidentally, this also happens to be the climax of the story. Unlike *BB* and *JttCotE*, there is no Moment-to Moment transitions in *TBVM*, implying a non-preference for slow minimal changes that stresses on slow paced single transitions. This may also be due to the fact that as a mystery genre, such transitions are deemed unnecessary. In addition, *TBVM* is also devoid of Non-Sequitur transitions just like *BB* and *JttCotE* for similar reasons too; specifically with its target audience being young readers who might find non-sequitur transitions difficult to comprehend.

It must be stressed here that the pages in *TBVM* illustrate the extreme prevalence of Action-to-Action transitions suggesting the focus on a succession of actions to portray the original version of the classic as close as possible to the original version. This is supported by the response from the writer of the adapted version of *TBVM* as shown in Extract 7.1.

#### Extract 7.1

We decided which books we wanted to adapt, read and reread them, outlined the key events and actions, and then reworked these events and actions into more simple language.

Contrary to McCloud's (1994) assertion of Subject-to-Subject transition being the second highest in the common depiction of Western narration, the illustrator of *TBVM*

clearly adopts the deployment Scene-to-Scene transitions which is the second highest of transitions. This suggests the reliance of the illustrator on Scene-to-Scene transitions to denote the constant change of settings which supports the technique of flashbacks prevalent in the novel. Though the normal norm of narrative panel transitions as asserted by McCloud (1994) is not followed, the data suggests that there is a need to use Action-to-Action transitions to compress the original story within the pages of the adapted version. The reliance on Scene-to-Scene transitions further supports this notion as a quick change of scenes would be able to accommodate the many different settings of the original novel.

#### **7.3.1.1 Summary of Panel-to-Panel Transitions**

The data and analysis of PtPT have shown that the most prevalent transitions in all three novels are that of Action-to-Action. This is in line with most mainstream American comic books and graphic novels which largely adopt Action-to-Action transitions (McCloud, 1994, p. 74). Being graphic novels of the adapted classics genre, the data reveals that adapted versions too tend to deploy more Action-to-Action transitions. The deployment of Action-to-Action transitions in these adapted classics is pertinent in staying true to the original version. This concurs with McCloud's (2000) assertion that "the choice of actions has been traditionally based on *keeping the plot moving*" (p. 37, author's emphasis). The illustrators' choice of images in the panels which subsequently influences the type of transitions from one panel to another scaffolds McCloud's (2006) belief that this type of transition creates efficiency whereby "the cartoonist only picks one moment per action, so each panel helps further the plot and keep the pace brisk" (p. 16). This helps in binding the narrative into a cohered text through its images.

Interestingly, this result also is in tandem of the prevalence of Material Processes through textual analysis and Action Processes through visual analysis.

For McCloud (1994), the straightforward story telling sequence of most mainstream comics in America adhere to a 2-4 transitions whereby the number represents the following type of transition distributions: 2 (Action-to-Action), 3 (Subject-to-Subject) and 4 (Scene-to-Scene). Nevertheless, only *JttCotE* follows McCloud's typical transition of 2,3,4 types: Action-to-Action, Subject-to-Subject and Scene-to-Scene. McCloud's assertion is that Subject-to-Subject is typically the second highest transition in a narrative and he further opines that "If we choose to see stories as connected series of events, the predominance of types 2-4 are easily explained" (p. 76).

Both *BB* and *TBVM*, on the other hand, adhere to a 2,4,3 type of transition: Action-to-Action, Scene-to-Scene and Subject-to-Subject. A possible reason for the use of more Subject-to Subject transitions rather than Scene-to-Scene transition in *JttCotE* is due to the setting of the novel which only involves limited locations (Iceland, the bowel of the Earth and Italy). Both *BB* and *TBVM*, however, deploy more Scene-to-Scene transitions rather than Subject-to Subject due to the varied locations and settings depicted in these novels. The existence of different settings in *BB* and *TBVM* supports the need to deploy Scene-to-Scene transitions more than other transitions as it assists to "compress a story down to a manageable length, while still allowing for a range of time-spans and a breadth of locations" (McCloud, 2006, p. 17).

It must be noted that Moment-to-Moment transitions are only evident in *BB* and *JttCotE* and is devoid in *TBVM*. The analysis reveals that this type of transition is necessary to highlight details in various important episodes like enduring pain in *BB* and in making

wise decisions as depicted in *JttCotE*. Though Aspect-to-Aspect transitions are existent in all three novels, again the number is negligible, thus indicating a non-preference among all three illustrators to subject the panels to this type of transition to form an acute sense of mood and setting. The absence of Non-Sequitur transitions reveals that these illustrators are not ready to utilize the “occasional nonsense gag in otherwise rational stories” (McCloud, 2006, p. 17) which is a common feature in experimental comics, suggesting a strict adherence to writers’ texts, especially that of the adapted classics. In addition, a transition like Non-Sequitur would be difficult for the understanding of young readers as they need to make sense between panels which are completely unrelated.

In short, the choices of transitions are to a certain extent determined by the writers of the text who need to adapt the novels as closely as possible to the original versions. As such, a coherent text is predetermined by the writers and these illustrators have to follow the extent of description in each panel without much leeway. This suggests the need to strictly adhere to the writers’ texts which is further supported by one illustrator A in the following extract.

#### Extract 7.2

Then it's a matter of distilling the key plot elements and characters into a much more abridged form. Knowing what is important to keep and knowing what's extraneous can make or break the retelling.

The illustrator further adds that:

#### Extract 7.3

The script and heavily abridged dialogue were written by someone else, and I was given somewhat specific instructions for the drawings. I think this is the case in terms of most commercial comics and graphic novels UNLESS the illustrator is one of the creators/writers or somehow has a lot of clout in that industry.



This extract suggests that the illustrator has not much choice and flexibility in his presentation of visuals as he has to follow the given text closely.

It is important to note that the element of cohesion is also subjected through the act of closure which is important to allow readers to “construct a continuous unified reality” (p. 67) as proposed by McCloud (1994). The PtPT relies on the readers’ cognitive abilities in perceiving closure as this assists them to connect these moments and mentally construct a cohesive reality as proposed by McCloud. What is also pertinent here is the involvement of the readers as a fundamental element in sustaining the connectivity between these panels. Though it can be argued that McCloud’s assertion depends solely on images, the posited panel transitions are important to understand how cohesion is achieved in these from one panel to another through continuity to elicit meanings for readers through the artwork of the illustrators. Groensteen (2007) puts forward a similar perspective where “every panel exists, potentially if not actually, in relation with each of the others” (p. 146).

### **7.3.2 Cohesion through Text Image Interaction (TII)**

It is stressed here once again that the analysis of cohesion through the deployment of TII (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006) in either graphic or comic books has not been attempted before. The current analysis addresses this gap specifically within the realm of graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. On the contrary, the analysis of TII is specifically popular with picture books (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2000; Moya, 2010). The five types of categories in TII are Symmetry, Enhancement, Complementary, Counterpoint and Contradiction and these interactions are discussed in detail in Chapter

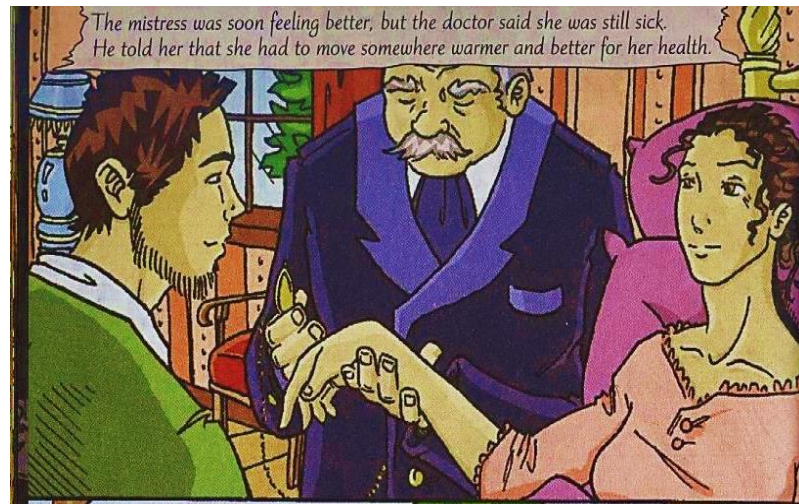
3. This framework is chosen to disclose the types of text image interactions within a panel by focusing on both textual and visual components which are speech balloons, captions and illustrations within the panels. In addition, the analysis also sheds light on how TII constructs coherence within the panels of these graphic novels by focusing on texts and images.

The following discussion focuses on TII analysis in all three novels based on random samplings. Figure 7.14 represents a Symmetrical type of TII in *BB*.



**Figure 7.14:** A Symmetrical Text Image Interaction in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 11).  
©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.14, a Symmetrical TII is evident as the caption “*Soon I wore horseshoes, blinkers, and all kinds of new things*” corresponds directly with the very salient Black Beauty in his riding paraphernalia that include blinkers, horseshoes, bearing reins and bridle against a very idyllic countryside. In this example, it is obvious that the picture represents everything the text presents. The following Figure 7.15 on the other hand, denotes a sample of a Complementary TII in the same graphic novel where such an interaction indicates image and text collaborating intensively.



**Figure 7.15:** A Complementary Text Image Interaction in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 26)  
©Stone Arch Books

Figure 7.15 clearly depicts a Complementary TII as the caption "*The mistress was soon feeling better, but the doctor said she was still sick. He told her that she had to move somewhere warmer and better for her health*". The image depicts a doctor examining the mistress but there is a complementary statement of the doctor advising her to move out from her current location, indicating additional information which complements the existing image. This depiction supports Moya's (2014) claim that "picture adds specificity to the verbal text as it provides an instantiation of the text and attaches additional meaning" (p. 71). The following Table 7.4 sums up the total occurrences of the various types of TII in the graphic novel, *BB*.

**Table 7.4:** Type and Frequency of Text Image Interactions in *Black Beauty*

Chapter	Symmetry	Enhancement	Complementary	Counterpoint	Contradiction	None	Total
1	5	9	3	2	0	0	19
2	3	6	6	12	4	2	33
3	8	6	11	7	3	5	40
4	2	5	7	7	5	0	26
5	0	3	11	2	2	0	18
Total/ Percentage	18 (13.24%)	29 (21.32%)	38 (27.94%)	30 (22.06%)	14 (10.29%)	7 (5.15%)	136

As the table indicates, the highest type of TII is the Complementary type as it is evident in 38 (27.94%) instances. The deployment reveals that Complementary TIIs are pertinent in the interplay of textual and visual components by collaborating together to maximise the effects of both modes. The example in Panel 117 (page 55) shows a dead Ginger in a cart with Black Beauty at the background with the caption “*A few days later, I saw a cart with a dead horse in it. I hoped it was Ginger. Then her troubles would be over*”. This panel reflects an obvious Complementary TII whereby the addition of the line “*Then her troubles would be over*” adds to the depiction of the visual, thus complementing the image as it exposes the inner thoughts of Black Beauty. Furthermore, in deciphering this meaning, the role of the reader is crucial to support the cohesiveness within the panel by relying on Complementary TII.

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The second highest type of TII is the Counterpoint type at 31 (22.79%) instances. The Counterpoint TII necessitates the reader to discern what the text and image are construing in realising meanings. Here, the reader fills up the gaps by what McCloud (1994) terms as ‘closure’ as the images and texts are not straightforward. In Panel 97 (p. 46) for instance, the image depicts the city of London with a few cabs around. The caption “*At first I was bothered by the hurry of such a big city*” does not reflect the image straightaway and meanings are elicited through the perspicacity of the reader. As such, the interaction supports cohesion through the understanding of the reader to construe meanings. In this context, image and text provide different types of information that readers need to discern as the image and text collaborate to produce meanings beyond the scope of either individual components.

There are 29 (21.32%) Enhancement TIIs evident in *BB* and they are mainly adopted to augment the meaning of either the textual or visual components. In Panel 34 (p. 19), the image of both Ginger and Black Beauty working together in pulling the carriage is further enhanced with the caption “*Ginger and I learnt to get along and made a good team as we worked*”, emphasising the collegiality between these two horses which are not evident through the image. Thus, most such representations are enhanced through

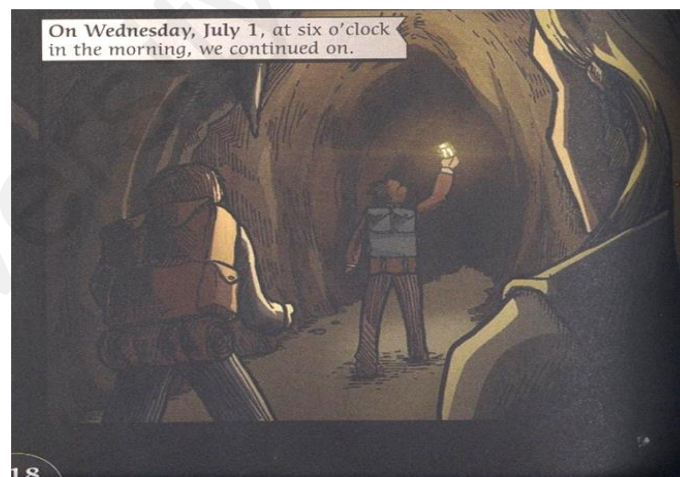
the existence of one of these components which significantly provide information. In concurring with Nikolajeva and Scott's (2001) postulation, the salience of the depiction of both Black Beauty and Ginger supports their notion that the "focus on two characters, most often showing them in close-ups (amplifying the direct speech of the verbal text) and thus contributing primarily to characterization" (p. 16). In constructing cohesion, the Enhancement TII further supports the importance of the reader to infer and find a connection, thus establishing cohesion within the panel.

Symmetrical TIIs make up 18 (13.24%) and they usually represent both text and image in tandem with very minimal alterations. In these instances, both text and image come as close as possible to convey the same information. This type of interaction is predominantly used for young readers as association between text and image or vice-versa could be done easily (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006). In Panel 46 (p. 25), the caption "*I raced back as fast as I could*" indicates a total mirroring of both text and image as the illustration shows Black Beauty being rode fast in the middle of the night. Such textual and visual interactions help in creating cohesion directly to assist easier understanding.

14 (10.29%) Contradiction TIIs are used and this deployment indicates that these types of interactions are unpopular with both the writer and illustrator. In such Contradiction TTs, text and image totally relay different meanings and the reader's active participation is obviously needed. This may be due to the fact of taking the age of the readers into consideration. As Contradiction TIIs involve a reliance on active reader participation, too many of such transitions are not suitable for early middle school readers (Form 1 in Malaysia) for it involves high cognitive skills and is suitable for upper secondary (high school) students. In Panel 118 (p. 55), an extreme close-up of Black Beauty is featured

uttering, “*If only men were more caring. They would shoot us instead of making us suffer so much*”. Without any indication of cruelty pictured in the image, it takes a deeper level of cognitive ability to comprehend Black Beauty’s lament and reflection. As such, the cohesion in making sense of the panel needs the discernment of the reader once again. This data also concurs with Nodelman (1998) who puts forth that “when words and pictures combine, irony emerges from the way in which the incompleteness of each is revealed by the differing incompleteness of the other” (p. 223). Nevertheless, it must also be mentioned that there are 7 (5.15%) panels without any textual elements and as such, TIIs does not exist in these panels.

The following discussion looks into TII in the novel *JttCotE*. And again, a few random samples are discussed to elicit an in-depth discussion for the final summary pertaining to TII. Figure 7.16 illustrates an Enhancement type of TII.

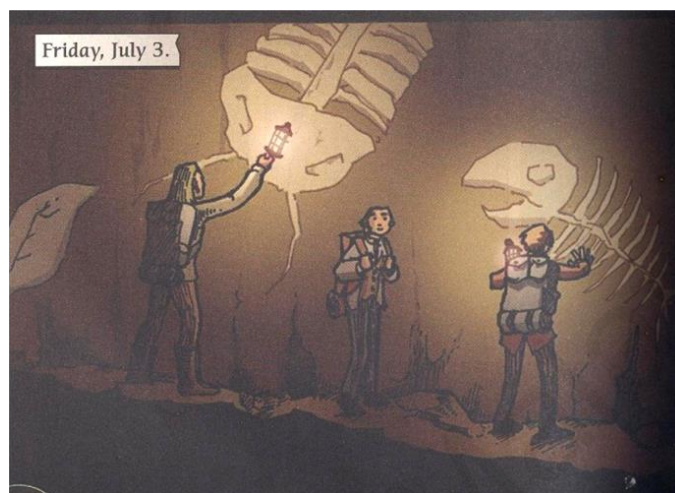


**Figure 7.16:** An Enhancement Text Image Interaction in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 18). ©Stone Arch Books.

Figure 7.16 illustrates an Enhancement TII whereby the caption “*On Wednesday, July 1, at six o'clock in the morning, we continued on*” indicates the day, date and time of the travellers’ continuation of their journey through the crater of the earth. In this panel,



the caption adds on to enhance the visual which only depicts Otto, Axel and Hans walking towards a tunnel. On the contrary, Figure 7.17 denotes a Contradiction TII evident on Page 20 of *JttCotE*.



**Figure 7.17:** A Contradiction Text Image Interaction in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 44). © Stone Arch Books.

Figure 7.17 indicates a Contradiction TII where the textual component is realised through the temporal evidence of 'Friday, July 3'. Conversely, the image of the panel shows all three travellers traversing through a cavern while analysing the inscriptions and images written on the walls. Here, the caption only denotes a time and it is totally up to the reader to discern that the image is a representation of what is happening on that stipulated day. This panel denotes that both textual and visual components relay totally different meanings and cohesion within the panel is achieved through active reader participation. Table 7.5 shown aptly summarises the type and frequency of TII evident in *JttCotE*.



**Table 7.5:** Type and Frequency of Text Image Interactions in  
*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*

Chapter	Symmetry	Enhancement	Complementary	Counterpoint	Contradiction	None	Total
1	5	0	7	6	0	0	18
2	4	4	6	1	1	0	16
3	6	5	15	1	6	3	36
4	3	5	18	6	11	2	45
5	21	6	19	5	7	3	61
6	3	8	14	4	5	2	36
Total/ Percentage	40 (18.87%)	30 (14.15%)	79 (37.26%)	23 (10.85%)	30 (14.15%)	10 (4.72%)	212

The data in the table reveals that the most used type of TII is Complementary type which amounts at 79 (37.26%), an outstanding figure as compared to the rest. The deployment of Complementary TII as the highest in this novel is also similar to *BB* where this type of interaction is also the highest. Again, as discussed earlier, Complementary TIIs add on to strengthen the representation within the panel as both components work together and it denotes a stronger form of enhancement. Nevertheless, careful discernment is needed to distinguish both Enhancement and Complementary types of TIIs. In this study, co-raters were used to verify the initial analysis. In Panel 71 (p. 26), Hans is featured at the entrance of the tunnel with the caption “*An hour passed, but then Hans returned*” denoting a complementary relationship as both components accentuate each other’s meaning significantly.

There are 40 (18.87%) Symmetry type of TII and this denotes a rather straight forward interaction that needs very little discernment. The relationship between text and image is obvious and direct. In Panel 156 (p. 44), both text and image are featured as close as possible to relay exactly the same meaning where the line “*Those teeth are as long as daggers*” illustrates a close-up shot of a sea lizard with its mouth open wide, exposing its razor sharp long teeth. This example supports Nikolajeva and Scott’s (2006) assertion that in some cases “the words could almost stand on their own, while the pictures have more of a decorative function” (p. 66). Nevertheless, though they do believe that at times, Symmetry TII promotes “mutual redundancy” (p. 15), as everything that happens in the visual is repeated in the text, such notion is inapplicable to graphic novels as the interplay between image and text is pertinent to the characteristics of graphic novels.

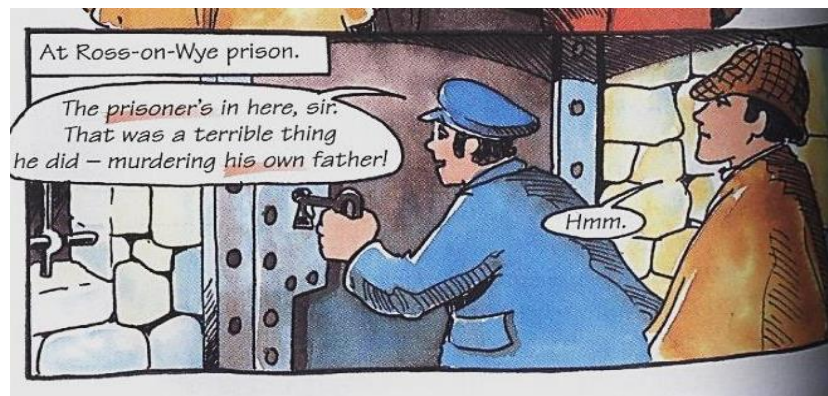
On the other hand, a total 30 (14.15%) of Enhancement and Contradiction types of TII are utilised in the novel. For Enhancement type, Panel 165 (p. 50) shows an image of Axel facing horrendous waves as he announces “*I think we’re in for a storm*”. The image is further enhanced with the date of the incident, “*Friday, August 21*” and the interaction augments the need of one component to support the other minimally. The 30 (14.15%) Contradiction type of TIIs reveal the deployment of intricate interactions that heavily relies on a reader’s deep involvement to construe meanings to the panel. The reader also plays a role in constructing cohesion within the panel as there is a need of cognitive ability to relate the two different elements. In Panel 91 (p. 30), an extreme close-up of Axel featuring only a bewildered looking eyes and nose is accompanied by the caption “*I was alone!*” Here, both the textual and visual components are at extreme ends whereby the reader has to connect a bewildered pair of eyes to that of a feeling of

fear when a person is alone. The facial expression of being terrified that is apparent on Axel is only viable through connecting both these components by the reader.

Counterpoint TIIs total at 23 (10.85%) denoting the least favoured type of TII administered in *JttCotE*. Again, the different types of information presented by the text and image needs the reader's discernment. It differs from Contradiction TII for in Counterpoint TII, some semblance between the two elements can still be ascertained. Neither relying on individual component, the Counterpoint TIIs designate the need to bring together the elements together to construe meaning as evident in Panel 135 (p. 41). In this panel, Axel expresses his concern through the line "*Uncle, these bones are not fossils!*" and the image only depicts a medium close-up of both Axel and Otto looking at each other. Here, there is a need to discern the cohesive element as it foreshadows an impending danger which is seen in the following two Panels of 136 and 137 (p. 41). The reader needs to construe the fact that the bones belong to some active colossal gigantic animals for they are not fossilised. This needs a high level of cognitive interpretation, thus indicating a Counterpoint TII. Finally, a total of 10 (4.72%) of images were individually pictured without any interference from a textual feature.

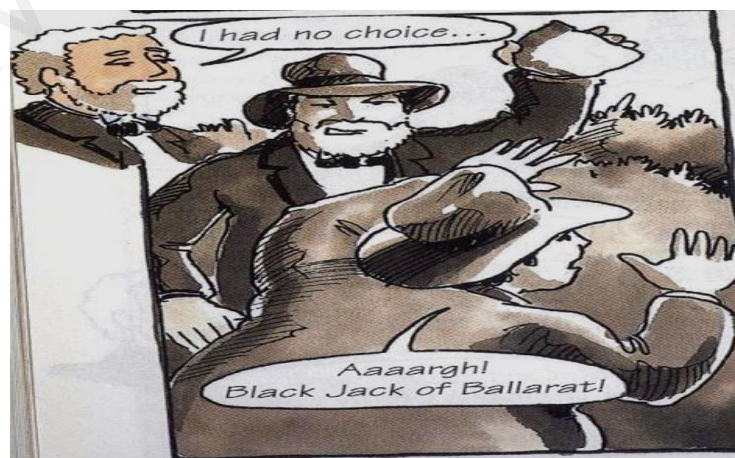
The inherence of TII in the novel *TBVM* is presented in the following discussion.

Figure 7.18 illustrates a Counterpoint TII in the novel.



**Figure 7.18:** A Counterpoint Text Image Interaction in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 50). McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 7.18 denotes a Counterpoint TII whereby both text and image convey different types of meanings. In this panel, Holmes is accompanied by the prison guard to James' cell. The textual component evident in the speech balloon denotes the lines, "The prisoner's in here, sir. That was a terrible thing he did-murdering his own father!" The caption on the other hand, reveals the location "At Ross-on-Wye prison". Here, the prisoner is missing from the image and the word prisoner indicates James existence beyond the prison bars. Again, Ross-on-Wye represents the location of the prison, with no direct correspondence with the image. Figure 7.19 represents a Complementary TII in the novel.



**Figure 7.19:** A Complementary Text Image Interaction in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 50). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia

Figure 7.20 represents a Complementary type of TII evident in *TBVM*. In this panel, the vignette of Charles McCarthy is shown relating the heinous crime that occurred at Boscombe Valley. McCarthy's vignette delivers "*I had no choice*" and the corresponding image carries the visual of him raising a stone to clobber John Turner. Turner in turn, cries "*Aaargh! Black Joe of Ballarat!*" Here, it is obvious that the vignette adds another layer of information pertinent to the narrative of the story. The TII interaction in this panel is clarified with the deployment of vignettes which are liberally used in *TBVM* for the specific purpose of retellings through flashbacks. It is illuminating to know that the use of vignettes and their textual content helps to create a sense of cohesion by providing clarity and interconnectivity to the images in the panels. Table 7.6 represents the type and frequency of occurrences of TIIs in *TBVM*.

**Table 7.6:** Type and Frequency of Text Image Interactions in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*

Chapter	Symmetrical	Enhancement	Complementary	Counterpoint	Contradiction	None	Total
1	0	0	3	7	2	0	12
2	0	0	5	0	2	0	7
3	0	0	5	2	0	0	7
4	1	1	2	1	2	0	7
5	1	0	2	1	2	0	6
6	1	0	6	0	1	0	8
7	0	0	4	0	5	0	9
8	0	0	0	4	6	0	10
9	0	0	4	0	6	0	10
10	0	1	6	0	4	0	11
11	0	1	5	2	3	0	11
12	0	0	10	1	2	0	13
Total/ Percentage	3 (2.7%)	3 (2.7%)	52 (46.85%)	18 (16.22%)	35 (31.53%)	0	111

Just like the other two novels, Complementary TII in *TBVM* is clearly prevalent with 52 (46.85%) occurrences, nearly half of the total TIIs in the novel. One such example is depicted in Panel 29 (p. 25) where a policeman arrests James McCarthy. The lines “*I arrest you for the murder of your father. Come with me*” (the policeman) and “*I’m not surprised. This is my punishment*” (James McCarthy) are the textual components carried through speech balloons in the panels. The image depicts the policeman placing a handcuff on James McCarthy. The complementary nature of the clauses “*for the*

*murder of your father*” and *“I’m not surprised”* enriches the image at a greater degree rather than just enhancing it, thus the need to term it as a Complementary TII rather than Enhancement TII.

The second highest deployment of TII type is the Contradiction type with 35 (31.53%) instances. The prevalence of this type of TII in *TBVM* shows that contradicting textual and visual components are preferred as in the example of Panel 49 (p. 45) where the image shows Holmes, Waston and Lestrade sitting at the dinner table. They are represented with the lines *“This is the most interesting case, Lestrade”*, *“Why? The boy is obviously guilty”* and finally, *“I don’t think so, Inspector. Let’s see what Miss Turner thinks”*, respectively. Though they are deep set in a conversation, the direct representation of the elements of their speech is not depicted in the image (in this case, James McCarthy and Alice Turner are just mere mentions in the conversation). Again, the reader needs to make connections of who both McCarthy and Turner are and how they are involved in the case. A representation of their images through thought balloons may have warranted this particular panel to be termed as a Complementary TII.

Counterpoint TII is the third highest type used with 18 (16.22%) interactions. In Panel 98 (p. 71), James McCarthy, depicted through a vignette confesses how he absconds to England after a major robbery, again, through a flashback with this accompanying line, *“After the robbery my troubles were over: I was rich! I left Australia as soon as possible and came to England to live. Here no-one knew my terrible secret”*. The sepia tinted image illustrates McCarthy riding away in a horse. The underlined clauses above shows that images related to them were not evident, thus using a Counterpoint TII that supports the collaboration of both texts and images.

There are 3 (2.7%) Symmetrical and Enhancement types TII used equally and this figure is very small compared to the other three mentioned earlier. In Panel 38 (p. 33) the text and image echo each other. The image shows James greeting Moran at the entrance of Boscombe Valley. The lines “*Hello, Moran. How are you*” and “*Fine, Master James. Where are you going?*” are clearly represented by the image. In Panel 27 (p. 24), an Enhancement TII is evident. Here the sergeant and Moran are seen discovering a weapon. Interestingly, the sergeant’s question of “*Whose gun is it?*” enhances the otherwise direct Symmetrical TII. As such, this panel denotes Enhancement TII and not Symmetrical TII. *TBVM* has no panels devoid of textual elements, unlike both *BB* and *JttCotE*.

#### 7.3.2.1 Summary of Text Image Interactions

The data analysis of TII reveals that the most common prevalent type of interaction in all three novels is that of the Complementary type. This proves that the act of heightening both textual and visual components has been intensified within the panels. In addition, the Complementary TII can also be considered as a common trait of interaction in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics as they seem prevalent with an outstanding number specifically in both *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. Nevertheless, the distribution of other types of TII differs from one novel to another. The second highest type of TII in *BB* is Counterpoint, Symmetry in *JttCotE* and Contradiction in *TBVM*. While both *BB* and *TBVM* prefer conflicting interaction types that heavily rely on readers’ discernments, *JttCotE* takes an easier approach through Symmetry TII which is direct and a reflection of both textual and visual components on each other. This study suggests that this is probably due to the simpler layout of *BB* and *TBVM* which is balanced with a more challenging interaction. *JttCotE* which adopts a



rather intricate layout adopts a simpler type of TII through the use of Symmetry type TII.

Enhancement, Contradiction and Counterpoint types of TII are the third highest type of interactions in *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM* respectively, again denoting a rather stark contrast. While *BB* relies on augmentation of both modalities of each other, the other two novels prefer a contrasting interaction (Contradiction and Counterpoint) that highlights different information and needs the interpretation of their readers. Clearly, such situations warrant the readers to unconsciously discover the cohesion between texts and images. In addition, both components communicate different information as they do not duplicate each other or neither work together.

Symmetrical TII is the fourth highest in *BB*, while *JttCotE* adopts the Enhancement type. Surprisingly, *TBVM* contains both Symmetrical and Enhancement types with equal weightage. The different distributions denote a sense of variety at different degrees that helps in providing diversity in the representation of texts and images. The analysis reveals that cohesion is clearly established in these novels from the involvement and discernment of the readers. This concurs with Moya (2014) who affirms that:

Juxtaposed images and words are related to each other during the process of reading and this relationship is established by the reader's intention and determination to find a connection between them. This process often requires inferences on the part of the reader, which will be more or less direct depending on the cognitive effort that is necessary to recognize an intermodal link between verbal and visual components (p. 69).

In contrast, although TII do not exist in panels without texts, it must be stressed that the utilisation of only images is prevalent in both *BB* and *JttCotE*. This reveals the need to focus on the surroundings oblivious to the characters in the story. These images create a sense of awareness. In many cases, they depict various conditions like pain (Panel 59, p. 30 of *BB*), danger (Panel 198, p. 60 of *JttCotE*) and even fear (Panel 148, p. 45 of *JttCotE*). Nevertheless, it must be noted here that these panels without text only work because they sequentially follow the previous image. On its own, as a component of sequential art, the single panel is unable to denote its own story but heavily relies on the level of interpretation totally subject to the viewers' imagination on what comes before and after would be, constructing cohesion along the way. Cohn (2013b) believes "A single image usually contains far more information than an individual word" (p. 65). For Groensteen (2007), "every panel exists, potentially if not actually, in relation with each of the others" (p. 146) and this scaffolds the foundation of cohesion within graphic novels.

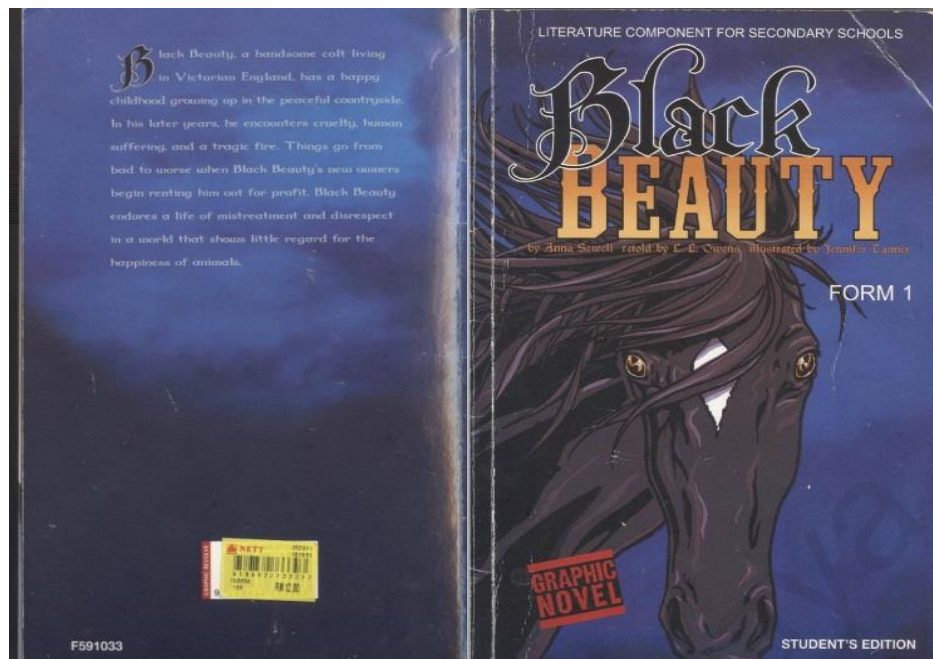
The TII analysis further indicates that cohesion within text and image collaboration is pertinent in constructing meanings through the various degrees of involvement and interpretations of the readers. More importantly, the results indicate that just like picture books, graphic novels too adopt a similar stance in their text image interaction which involves a varied degree of the readers' involvement. In addition, this study shows that graphic novels can successfully adopt TII in analysing text image interaction and cohesion that relies on readers' interpretation to discern implicit and explicit meanings. TII framework was not found to have been used in analysing text-image cohesion in graphic novels before.

### **7.3.3 Other Considerations**

It is interesting to note that in the course of this analysis, a few other elements of cohesion were discovered within the panels of the three graphic novels though these elements were not considered as part of the analysis. However, as the study itself is inductive in nature (Babbie, 2009), the emerging patterns and trends in multimodality as represented in the genre of adapted classics in the medium of graphic novels were looked into and these patterns were taken into consideration. These patterns are that of colour, linguistic markers like anaphoric substitutions, speech balloons' placements and captions.

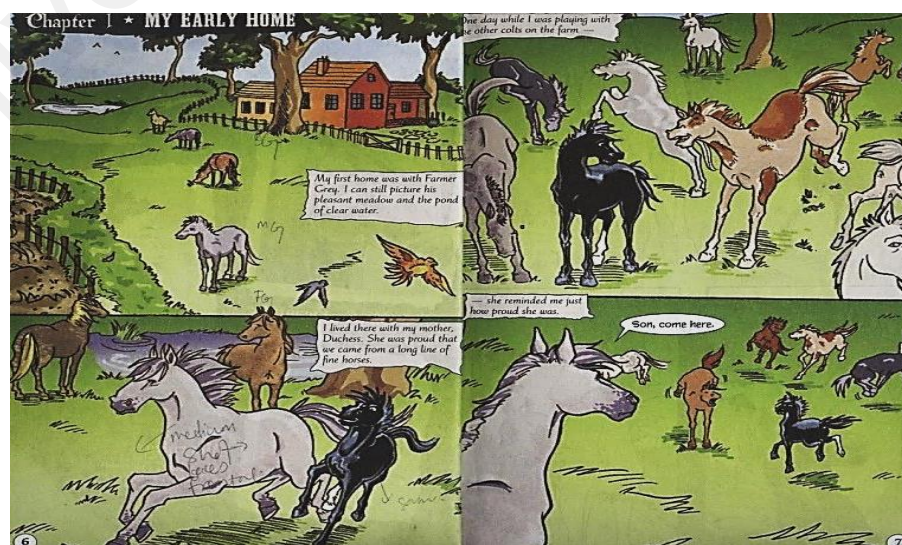
#### **7.3.3.1 Cohesion through Colours**

Though colour is not a part of the original framework to analyse cohesion, the use of colours is also one feature that is adopted effectively in promoting a sense of cohesion within the novels. Rose (2011) notes that "colour is a crucial component of an image's compositionality" (p. 39). Thus, the utilization of colours is also pertinent to signify how cohesion takes effect. This is especially evident in the pages of a graphic novel. In *BB*, the illustrator does note that colours are used as an important cohesive device as illustrated in Figures 7.20, 7.21 and 7.22.



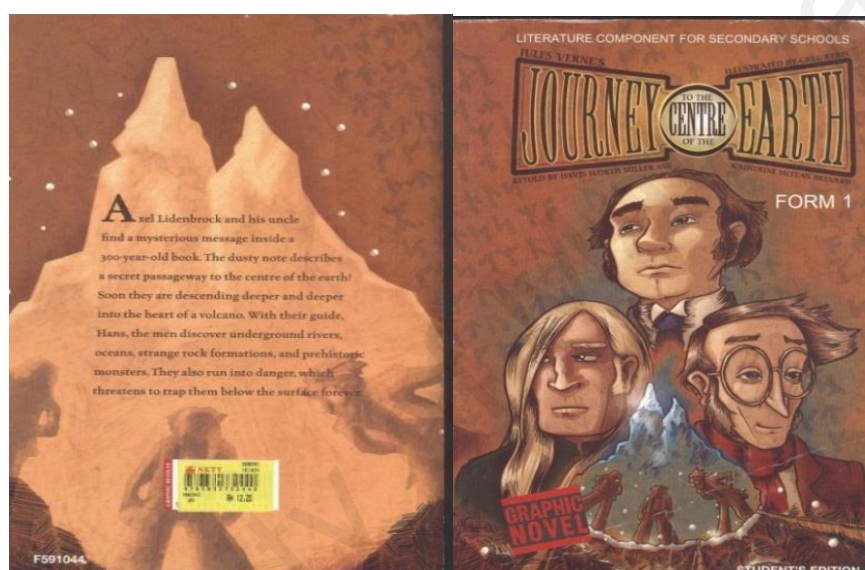
**Figure 7.20:** The Cover of *Black Beauty*. (2010) ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.20, the cover of *BB* is shown in a continuous hue of blue with a saturation of the colour at the bottom of the back cover. The continuous use of the same colour in both the front and back cover clearly indicates that cohesion is achieved through the intensity and richness of the colour blue. This also shows that both covers are not disjointed but are cohesive through the deployment of the common colour of blue.



**Figure 7.21:** The Colour Coordinated Panels (2010, p. 6-7). ©Stone Arch Books.

Similarly, Figure 7.21 illustrates another four panels where cohesion is achieved through the utilization of the colour green. The different tones of green in both pages evoke a sense of cohesiveness through the blending of the different hues of green. The colour coordination in these panels depicts a similar degree of brightness and/or saturation which is a pertinent element in establishing cohesion in multimodal texts (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006).



**Figure 7.22:** The Cover of *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010). ©Stone Arch Books.

The usage of colour to denote cohesion is also inherent in *JttCotE*. Figure 7.22 shows how the various hues of brown are used to illustrate the cover of the novel. To break the monotony of the colour, a tinge of blue is used to marvel at the wonder of the centre of earth and also as an attention grabber. To portray contrast, the text is printed in black and white colours and this technique also brings out the salience of the different hues of brown. Interestingly, these colours also assimilate into each other where there is an “additive combination of colours” (Arnheim, 1974, p. 363). In addition, the close-ups of all three explorers and their silhouettes juxtaposed against the centre of earth on the *JttCotE*’s cover can be considered as key images which contribute to the cohesion of the



graphic novel: from cover-to-page thus creating a bridge that links the cover to the page.

A similar hue is also used throughout most pages of the novel.



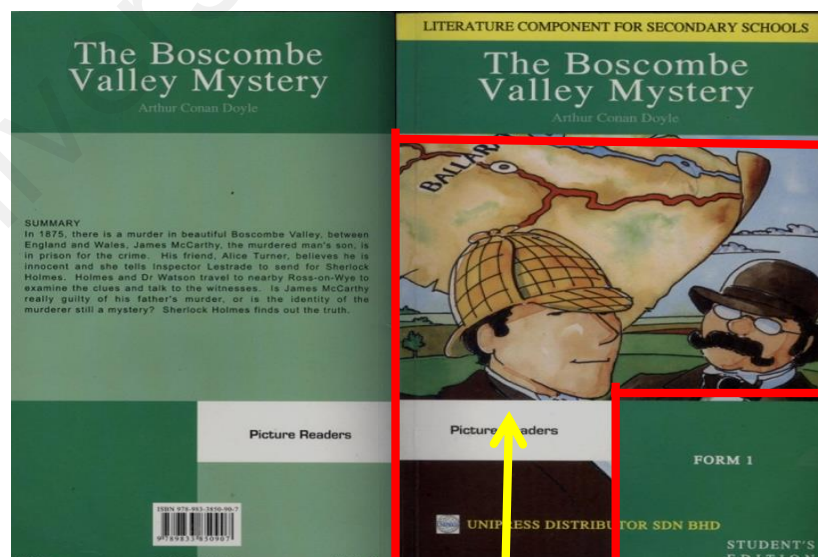
**Figure 7.23:** The Colour Coordinated Panels in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 18-19). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Figure 7.23 on the other hand, pages 18 and 19 shows how the light of the lanterns lit up the 7 panels with strokes of brightness. The repetition of light elements like glow, reflections and rays as indicated by the blue arrows elicit uniformity in depicting the different elements of light. This again illustrates how colour is successfully utilised to show cohesion by adopting uniformity in the 7 panels through different hues of brightness.



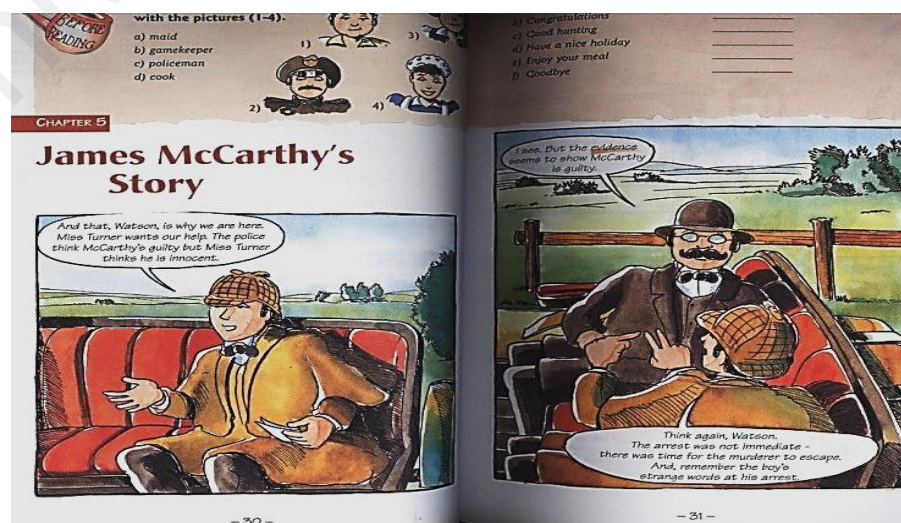
**Figure 7.24:** The Colour Coordinated Panels in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 40-41). ©Stone Arch Books.

Similarly, Figure 7.24 also shows how a splash page in a predominant purple background serves as a canvas to several different panels. This highlights the significance of colours in illustrating cohesion through different hues and tones again. The use of darker shades in this background once again breaks down the monotony of the image and also adds up to the salience and focus of the images in the panels.



**Figure 7.25:** The Cover of *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

In *TBVM*, though there is a coordinated colour background of shades of green, the nature of it is rather different from the earlier two novels as depicted in Figure 7.25. Here, the different shades of green are represented by blocks of different shapes and sizes. In addition, the figures of Watson and Holmes are represented through a L-shaped block (highlighted in red) which also contains a background of a meadow and the map of Ballarat. Although colours like brown, blue, black and red are used, the meadows which are in green links the image with the rest of the background as it is in a shade of green. This juxtaposition leads a breakaway from the monotony of the blocks but lends “an articulate statement in colour” (Arnheim, 1974, p. 355). This clearly shows that the illustrator has adhered in using hues and tones of colours in this cover to promote cohesion. This type of illustration also supports Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2003) assertion that “textual cohesion can be promoted by ‘colour coordination’, rather than a repetition of a single colour (p. 349). In addition, just like *BB* and *JttCotE*, *TBVM*’s key image on the cover which encompasses close-ups of Holmes and Watson and the map of Ballarat does correspond directly to the title of the book, *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*. The images of Watson and Holmes and the map of Australia on the cover lead in to a cover-to-page cohesion.



**Figure 7.26:** The Colour Coordinated Panels in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2009, p. 30 and 31). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.



In Figure 7.26, the cohesion is established between the two panels through the illustration of a background which uses similar colours. The subdued tones of light blue and green seem to flow swiftly from one panel to another. The utilisation of the colour red as the carriage's seat cover and hues of brown and black as both Watson's and Holmes' coats creates a colour contrast against the rather subdued background. Again, the continuity from one panel to another is not abrupt but suggests a smooth transition through a careful use of colours that complement each other over the same background.

In addition, it must also be noted that all flashbacks in *TBVM* are sepia toned, thus highlighting the fact that the events happened a long time ago. The archival qualities of these images evident from their brownish red hues denote past events. In the novel, the use of such a colour and tone clearly distinguish the past and the present, thus creating a sense of cohesion while retelling through flashbacks. In addition, these images also evoke nostalgic feelings and appreciation towards long gone settings.

Clearly, cohesion through colours is pertinent as it creates a sense of continuity between the panels. Though both *BB* and *JttCotE* are similar in the techniques of using similar hues and tones to denote cohesion, *TBVM* adopts a slightly different take by adopting white as a background in many of its panels. The power of discriminating these colours to deduce cohesion lies within the readers as how the illustrators intended them to be. Furthermore, the conceptualization of colours in these panels elicits harmony. The representation of harmony supports Arnheim's (1974) assertion that, "all colours of a composition must fit together in a unified whole if they are to be relatable to one another" (p. 348) and hereby lies the relationship between colours and the construction of cohesion within the images and between the panels. In a broader context, the successiveness of these illustrators in utilising colour as a marker of cohesion suggests

the adherence to common conventions that bind painters, advertisers and other visual arts proponents together. The complex use of colour to establish cohesion also supports Drucker's (2008) belief that "links and associations among characters, scenes, and events are made by commonality of colour, tone, shape, or value" (p. 50) is clearly evident in the pages of these three novels. Taib's (2010) assertion that "colour rhyme and colour coordination provide the realization for promoting cohesion in texts that use colour as a resource" (p. 325) clearly supports the deployment of colours as a cohesive marker in these three novels.

### **7.3.3.2 Cohesion through Speech Balloons**

Speech or dialogue balloons are an important requisite of the comics lexicon. Halliday and Hassan (1976) clearly expound how textual cohesion occurs when the elements of text attach themselves to one another in a meaningful and consistent fashion through reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. It must be noted though that this study involves selective sampling from all three novels and as such, only a few samples will be discussed as the focus is to establish how cohesion is constructed in these adapted classics. Figure 7.27 for instance, demonstrates one example in *BB*. In the featured examples, cohesion within the speech balloons is achieved through the use of linguistic markers of anaphoric substitutions which include nouns, pronouns and phrases.



**Figure 7.27:** Cohesive Tie Markers in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 30). ©Stone Arch Books.

In Panel 57 (p. 30) which is featured through Figure 7.28, the use of the pronoun *they* in all three speech balloons are linguistic cohesive tie markers. The repetition of *they* indicates a cohesive stance in the balloons as they refer to the same subjects. In the following Panel 58, the words *those horses* and *their* are references which are syntactic cohesive elements. In addition, cohesion is also realised as the reference is constructed to the existing image in the panels.

In *JttCotE* as shown in Figure 7.28, the deployment of cohesive tie markers are also evident to establish cohesion.

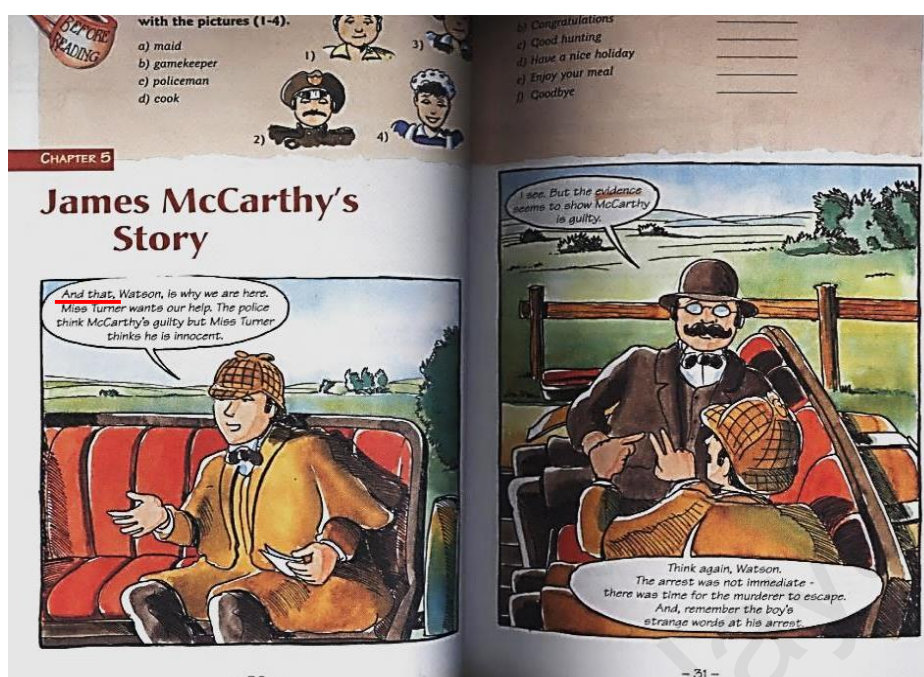


**Figure 7.28:** Cohesive Tie Markers in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 22-23).  
©Stone Arch Books.

The link between Panels 55 and 56 (p. 22) is denoted by the word *water* which is repeated. This shows coherence between the two panels and the common link that ties the narrative here is the issue of a shortage of water. In Panels 60 and 61 (p. 23), the pronoun *you* ties both the panel through the cohesive marker of a pronoun. The sentences “*And neither will you!*” (Panel 60) and “*While you were unconscious, ...*” (Panel 61) establishes the link with use of *you*. Similarly in Panels 62 and 63, the phrase “*one more day*”, links both panels together.

In *TBVM*, the use of linguistic cohesive markers are also evident as shown in Figure 7.29.





**Figure 7.29:** Cohesive Tie Markers in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 50). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

Figure 7.29 illustrates Panel 34 (p. 30) where the phrase *And that* refers to the case of proving James McCarthy's innocence in the previous page (p. 27). Here, *And that* is seen as an element of substitution (Halliday and Hassan, 1976) whereby it associates itself to the previous panel which refers to the case. Stainbrook (2003) believes that as a concept, these cohesive principles are no different in their applications for both comics (in this case, a graphic novel) and a standard written text. Nevertheless, he also expounds the need to look into word-image cohesion for the reader to also find cohesion. Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out that, "where the interpretation of any item in the discourse requires making reference to some other item in the discourse, there is cohesion" (p. 11).

The placement of speech balloons also denotes a sense of continuity in following the conversation structure in a panel. In the earlier featured Figure 7.27, the illustrator has placed the speech balloons in a descending order (from top to bottom) to show the flow

of the conversation. This placing is important because readers will be able to make the connections easily thus ensuring there is a cohesion even within the placement of the speech balloons. The positions of the speech balloons that contain a flow of transitions of the conversation in Panel 57 are depicted below:

High Position:     *They are not a match in colour, but they will do well for the carriage.*

Middle Position:   *They have not won a checkrein, sir.*

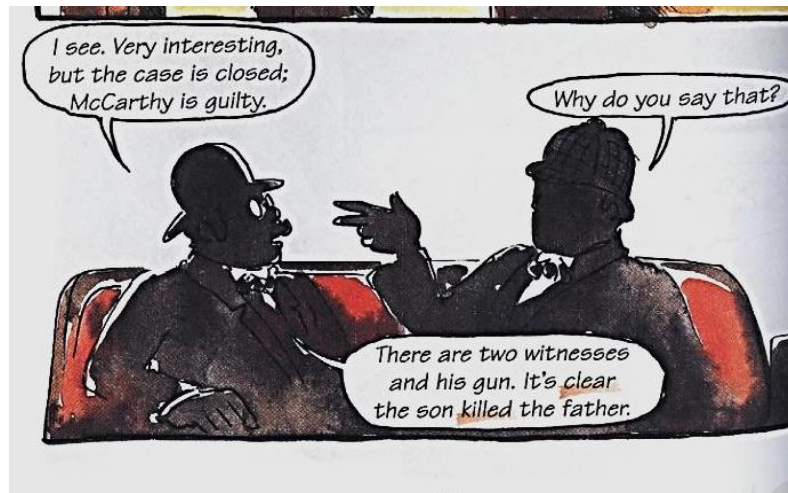
Low Position:       *Start slowly, then, until they get used to it.*

In *JttCotE*, this type of coherence is also established through the conversation structure as shown in Figure 7.28 earlier which establishes a sense of continuity. The descending order of the speech balloons confirms that this technique is favoured among many illustrators to determine the flow of the conversation which is a prerequisite in establishing coherence. The positions of the speech balloons that contain a flow of transitions of the conversation in Panel 60 (p. 23) are depicted below.

High Position:       *Give up? Professor Otto Lidenbrock will never quit!*

Middle Position:     *And neither will you!*

*TBVM* also adopts a similar stance in establishing coherence through the placement of its speech balloons as seen in Figure 7.30.



**Figure 7.30:** Placement Cohesive Tie in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 50). ©McGraw-Hill Education Asia.

The positions of the speech balloons in Panel 31 (p. 26) are depicted below denote a clear distinction which supports cohesion through placements that also aids the reader following the Western convention of reading from left to right and from top to bottom.

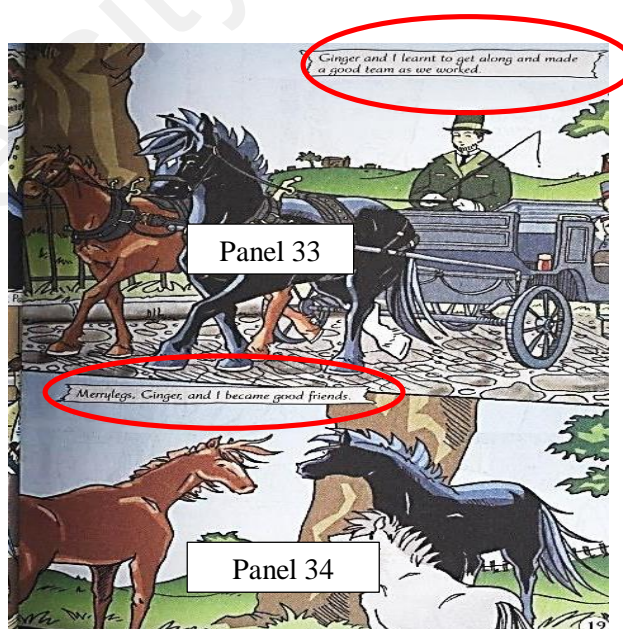
High Position:	<i>I see. Very interesting, but the case is closed; McCarthy is guilty!</i>
Middle Position:	<i>Why do you say that?</i>
Low Position:	<i>There are two witnesses and his gun. It's clear the son killed the father.</i>

The data reveals that the usage of references in speech balloons and their placements construct a sense of cohesion within the graphic novels.

### 7.3.3.3 Cohesion through Captions

It is important to note that captions interact with the visuals in a panel differently than that of speech balloons as they present additional content or information which is usually external to the illustration. This means that captions are independent of the visuals and the interiors of the panels. Nevertheless, this again is a typical convention and illustrators and writers might deviate from the norm for other reasons like aesthetic purposes.

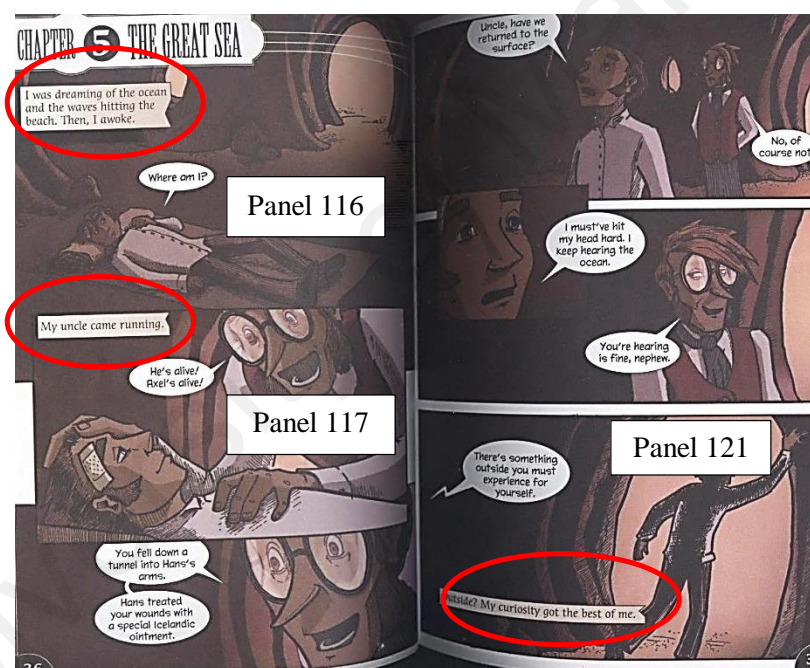
In *BB*, the technique of using captions to create continuity is liberally used by the writer based on the amount of captions deployed. The captions provide an element of conjunctive ties in additive or causal manners. It must be noted that the captions in *BB* are narrator centred as the story is told from Black Beauty's perspective; a first person point of view. Figure 7.31 represents two examples of captions.



**Figure 7.31:** Cohesive Tie Markers in *Black Beauty* (2010, p. 19). ©Stone Arch Books.



As depicted in Figure 7.31, the first caption in Panel 33, “*Ginger and I learnt to get along and made a good team as we worked.*” shows that Black Beauty and Ginger have a special bond and it also foreshadows their special camaraderie in subsequent pages. Conversely, the second caption in Panel 34, “*Merrylegs, Ginger, and I became good friends.*” reveals an extension of the previous panel where friendship is also the main element but with the inclusion of an additional member, Merrylegs. These two captions enclosed within two panels in one page embrace Strainbrook’s (2003) assertion that “a caption can connect conceptually to the combined whole of word-and-image in a panel or to a combined sequence of such panels” (p. 114).



**Figure 7.32:** Captions as Cohesive Markers in *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (2010, p. 36-37) ©Stone Arch Books

In *JttCotE*, the deployment of caption as a cohesive device is mainly to convey additional narrative information. At times, it is also used to denote time and place. In Figure 7.32, the three captions narrate Axel’s voice and add on to the elicitation of his inner thoughts. In Panel 116, the caption “*I was dreaming of the ocean and the waves hitting the beach. Then, I awoke.*” leads to the image of Axel waking up without

knowing where he is and the following caption “*My uncle came running.*” further reinforces the link between each panels as now, there is a figure of Otto in the following panel. This helps the panel to cohere visually. The last caption “*Outside? My curiosity got the best of me.*” Panel 121 exposes the inner feelings of Axel to the readers without the use of speech balloons. This also leads on to the following panel (p. 38) where Axel walks away to face the Lidenbrock Sea.

In *TBVM*, captions are also used but are rather limited. In addition, the captions mostly denote settings and at times, act as lead-ins to the narration in the panel to create cohesion and one example is represented in Figure 7.33.



**Figure 7.33:** Captions as Cohesive Markers in *The Boscombe Valley Mystery* (2010, p. 50) © McGraw Hill

In Figure 7.33, the caption “*Moran, the gamekeeper, and a policeman find Charles McCarthy's body.*” clearly shows an asymmetrical relationship with the image in the panel which is also parallel to a Symmetrical TII. In addition, this finding also reveals that Strainbrook's (2003) assertion that the deployment of captions is “further removed from the content of the comics artwork both visually and conceptually” (p. 113) is not

applicable to all captions. Other captions like “*At a local hotel*” (p. 44) and “*At Ross-on-Wye prison*” (p. 50) show the setting of the scene of the illustration. This in turn also helps to extend the background of the setting without relying too much on speech balloons.

The utilization of captions also suggests that with the changes of some scenes, captions are provided to guide the readers to the right direction. This involves making sense of a coherent text cognitively and here again lies the importance of captions as a cohesive marker. This supports Saraceni’s (2003a) view that captions also provide information for “the reader to reconstruct the flow between panels, filling the gap represented by the gutter” (p. 10) and this is revealed from the findings of the study. Fundamentally, besides assisting readers to have a sense of coherence, they create cohesion between the panels by eliciting information and narrative knowledge.

#### **7.3.3.4 Summary of the Cohesive Ties and their Considerations**

Through the deployment of colour, linguistic markers in speech balloons and the placements of these balloons and captions, the element of cohesion is established in these novels. Colour creates a sense of unity that extends into the construction of cohesion. The analysis reveals that carefully thought choices reflect the need to create cohesion through different hues and blends of colours. In addition, cohesive tie markers like anaphoric references and substitution are also used to establish cohesion. The placement of speech balloons in top-bottom linear order at different heights in a panel also helps in guiding readers to make sense of a text.

The data also reveals that captions tend to provide additional descriptions to the visuals when speech balloons tend to refer to some parts of the visuals. This helps to create a sense of cohesion through word-image interactions which are complimentary in nature in all three novels. Speech balloons represent an *emergent* relationship where the relationship between text and image are directly interfaced since parts of visuals are referred to thus establishing relationship while captions denote an *adjoined* relationship where both text and image are integrated though not inter faced directly (Cohn, 2003). And within this realm, rests their functions as cohesion markers to construe meanings for readers.

#### 7.4 Summary

It must be noted that the illustrators of the novels have created the pages according to the texts of the writers who have adapted from the original classics. Though there is no interaction and discussion between both illustrators and writers (as indicated through the interview transcripts), it is surprising the end product succeeds in capturing the actual narrative closely. This assertion is based on the evidence of the many important events that construe the plot of each novel which has been adapted closely by the writers first, then drawn faithfully by the illustrators. The internal coherence and cohesion created textually and visually is entwined to the logic of these adapted narratives.

In addition, consistent with Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) findings, the analysis shows that the various cohesive markers which constitute the two main modalities of textual and visual components are used effectively in constructing coherence throughout the novels. The data of the analysis also shows how important the interplay of textual and visual components are, and also the individuality of each component by its own

specifically in realising the cohesion through inter and intra panels. This assertion concurs with Kaindl (2004) who acknowledges that “non-verbal elements in multimodal texts not only perform the function of illustrating the linguistic part of the text, but also play an integral role in the constitution of meaning, whether through interaction with the linguistics elements or as an independent semiotic system.” (p. 176).

It is evident that the connectedness of the text is based on the various semiotic resources to establish meanings through the use of splash pages, overlap panels, panel transitions, text image interactions, colour, linguistic markers like anaphoric references and substitutions like a noun, pronoun, or a clause and other cohesive markers like placements of speech balloons and captions. Here, it is important to note and acknowledge that both textual and visual components form an integrative relationship that succeeds in establishing connectedness in these three adapted graphic novels. Moreover, the discernment of readers is also an important criterion in establishing cohesion.

The following Chapter 8 discusses the pedagogical implications of using graphic novels in the classroom.

## CHAPTER 8: PEDAGOGIC IMPLICATIONS

Comics, manga and graphic novels can create a bridge  
that is wide, stable, heavily trafficked,  
and easy to cross.  
(Williams, 2008, p. 18)

### 8.1 Introduction

It is a fact that many educators have depended on various innovations to engage with students these days. With the advent of technology, more and more educators are stepping up to include various platforms in their classrooms to enhance teaching and learning processes. One such innovation in the classroom is the utilisation of graphic novels which is a type of multimodal text. Studies which have been earlier discussed in Chapter 2 clearly affirm the benefits of embracing multimodal texts specifically the medium of graphic novels. By making informed choices, progressive educators are able to execute pedagogical practices that meet the demands of the current generation of students who are widely exposed to popular culture.

The current chapter is solely dedicated to the pedagogical implications of adopting graphic novels in the Malaysian classrooms as findings on the visual and textual elements in graphic novels highlight the huge potential of using graphic novels as effective pedagogical tools. The following Section 8.2 revisits the background of the educative implications of deploying graphic novels in schools. Section 8.3 on the other hand, focuses on the benefits of graphic novels while the subsections discuss these benefits in detail. This is followed by Section 8.4 which puts forward considerations

that need to be looked into when choosing graphic novels. Finally, a short summary is presented in Section 8.5.

## **8.2 Revisiting the Background**

The graphic novel is one example of an emerging multimodal medium as it embodies print and image working together in eliciting meanings. Kress (2003) for one, clearly asserts that old media which includes linear texts needs to be restructured to face the challenges of new media. Hence, it is pertinent to provide a fresh landscape to face the challenges of new media through adopting means that stimulate teaching and learning sessions. It must be stressed here that in a visually oriented world, students are exposed to different types of texts on a multimodal platform. This evolution echoes with Unsworth's (2015) sentiments whereby because of "the increasingly multimodal nature of literature and other texts forms in paper and digital media, explicit pedagogic attention is being directed to the role of images in creating evaluative stance" (p. 73). This study further posits that the multi-semiotic characteristics of mediums like graphic novels and comic books provide opportunities to achieve literary and linguistic literacy goals.

Today, graphic novels exemplify one of the most vibrant and dynamic types of literature for students of all ages. Embracing rich illustrations and texts, these novels provide an enriching learning experience. Being multimodal in nature, graphic novels are constructed through an amalgamation of texts and images. Though there are criticisms that this medium is simplistic, a substantial body of studies argue for the literary and pedagogic merits of graphics novels with different purposes (King, Perkins, & Fuke, 2011; Connors, 2010; Griffith, 2010; Serafini, 2010; Gillenwater, 2009). Similar to

traditional forms of literature, graphic novels can be useful tools in assisting students to critically evaluate and examine fields like history, literature, science, social studies and art. It must be noted that the *Eye Generation* (those born and raised on visual media) relies on the delivery of information in a multitude of modes (Laycock, 2004). In concurring with that, there is a dire need to acknowledge the benefits of deploying these novels in the classrooms as they clearly provide excellent pedagogical advantages specifically here in Malaysia.

As educators, it is crucial to challenge ourselves to look beyond traditional notions of literacy. With a myriad of multimodal platforms, the current *Generation Visual* as labelled by Lyga and Lyga (2004), are actively engaged with various types of traditional and digital texts that include comics, videos, advertisements, short messaging service texts (SMS), Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Skype, YouTube, Pinterest and others. Lyga and Lyga (2004) further add that the “static text on an immobile page isn’t just boring and laborious; it’s practically alien” (p. 8) especially to this generation. For Heckman (2004), “the digitalization of the young adult mind is happening at a faster pace than traditional ways of education” (p. 3). These assertions by various scholars support the need for educators to heed the clarion call to engage with various mediums to ensure that students do not disengage themselves in the classrooms. In today’s age of sophisticated digital communication, multimodal texts like graphic novels offer a highly conducive and motivating environment for students.

As reported by Duncum (2004), the exposure to “multimodal nature of dominant and emerging cultural sites” (p.259) cannot be avoided. Following Williams (2008), it is also observed that “teachers who skilfully use comics and graphic novels in their curriculum present numerous opportunities for students to deconstruct these texts at



multiple levels” (p. 13). In relation to this, it is pertinent to employ methodologies that encourage students to become critical, creative and innovative learners as these practices are related to students’ diversified social engagements. The availability of multimodal texts, for example, gives educators a chance to condition students to become such learners. The interplay of images and words for instance assists students to develop multi-literacies. This notion is supported by Leber-Cook and Cook (2013) who affirm that “comics, with their unique and powerful combination of picture and word, are multimodal text *par excellence*” (p. 28, authors’ emphasis).

As one of the fast growing types of literature for students, graphic novels represent one of the most dynamic medium that is easily available in various genres. Through the availability of graphic novels and comic books catering for different ages, the medium has been successful in many different settings and the success rate has been documented by various studies focusing on children and young adults which were mentioned earlier. Remarkably, many librarians in the USA who once shunned graphic novels and comic books are championing the medium’s rights as a tool to motivate children to read these days (Bucher and Manning, 2004). No longer stigmatized in the USA and Europe, graphic novels have been embraced and accepted as mainstream literature by librarians and educators.

On the contrary, the Malaysian scenario spells the opposite. At the MELTA-TEFL Conference in Kuching on the 28<sup>th</sup> August 2014, a large number of Asian educators especially Malaysians confessed that they are still hesitant in using graphic novels and comic books as pedagogical tools mainly due to preconceived notion of their unsuitability and the lack of knowledge in deconstructing the novels as teaching materials. Many educators indicated they needed more exposure on dissecting the

graphic novels effectively to be used in classrooms. This need certainly echoes with Fassbender, Dulaney and Pope (2013) who posit that “students must have the guidance in order to enjoy and benefit from the kind of reading and analysis that expands both literature and the range of their experience” (p. 24). This postulation supports the need for educators to equip themselves with the necessary and prerequisite knowledge to utilise graphic novels effectively. Certainly with more training sessions and workshops, these problems can be easily mitigated. What is more important is the commitment from various stakeholders and parties in acknowledging the benefits that could be reaped if efforts are made to use graphic novels extensively for various subjects.

In his insightful book entitled *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research* Krashen (2004) notes that people who are well read rarely have major problems with spelling, grammar and writing. As appealing reading materials, graphic novels entice students through their vivid, rich and vibrant illustrations and texts. The lure of these novels certainly encourages readers to appreciate the books and to a certain extent, fulfil Krashen’s assertion of being better readers. He adds on that comic books readers take in 500,000 words a year and that is a staggering number. The value of illustrations is clearly reflected in the colloquial notion that a ‘picture is worth a thousand words’. Though many Malaysian educators have successfully utilised multimodal texts like magazines, newspapers, picture books, video, hypertext, blogs and others in their classrooms, graphic novels seem to elude many as they are considered as purely fluff. On the contrary, educators in the West are way ahead in using graphic novels in their classrooms and the benefits have been well documented.

It is an understatement to say that graphic novels, sequential art, paperback comics novels and others of this medium have become “a major part of popular culture in the

first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (p. 5), according to Weiner (2010). The American Library Association for instance, has developed an annual list of Great Graphic Novels for Children and Teens each year. However, it is pertinent to remember that proper selection of graphic narratives should appeal to young adults and exemplify literary quality (Bucher and Manning, 2004). In Malaysia, it is important to select novels that fulfil the National Educational Philosophy to produce well rounded students. The following section discusses the benefits of graphic novels.

### **8.3 The Benefits of Graphic Novels**

As studies indicate, the educational benefits of graphic novels are well documented and their use as a valuable pedagogical tool cannot be denied. For Hasset and Schieble (2007), the inclusion of visuals supports pedagogic benefits as there are “ways to find space for the visual within existing methods of literacy instructions so that new texts can be used in the classroom without sacrificing curricular goals” (p. 62). In relation to this, graphic novels need not replace current reading materials but rather supplement them to create a more relevant and interesting teaching and learning sessions. More importantly, by keeping abreast with popular culture in particular (in this case, graphic novels), educators would be able to elicit interest and fun in the whole teaching and learning process. By using graphic novels, classes become livelier and the element of visualization is greatly adopted. An emphasis on content over form suggests that authentic materials as a whole are meaningful and more likely to engage students. Being multimodal in nature, the inherence of literary elements like theme, satire, parody, irony and others are both explicitly and implicitly abound through both textual and visual elements. In addition, Serafini (2010) asserts that recent years have seen literacy educators realizing the importance of providing students with various

multimodal texts which are rich with a wide range of semiotic resources that develops critical thinking. Dallacqua (2012) further adds that “comics provides complex literature that mirrors a reader’s world” (p. 366).

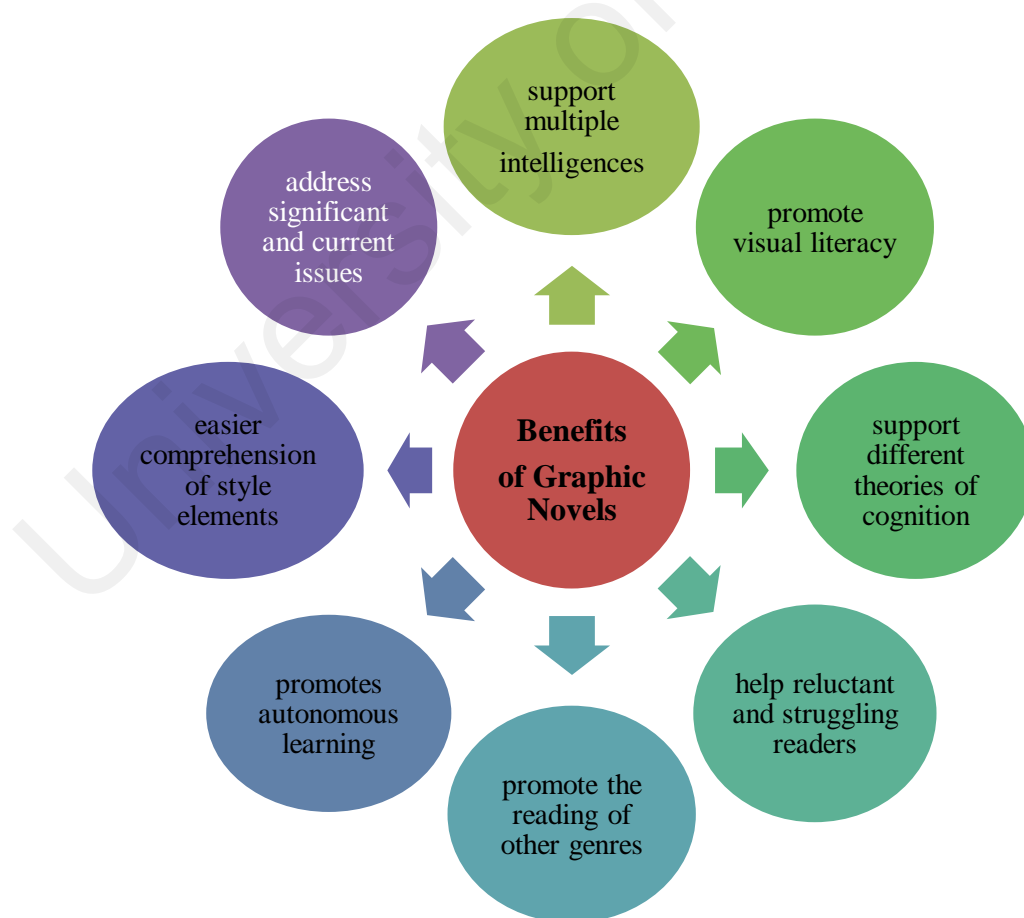
The format of the graphic novel presents a hybrid text of words and images. Thus, a reader needs to exercise both textual and visual interpretive skills. Elements of art like perspective, symmetry, colour choices and of literature like syntax, semantic and grammar are superimposed upon each other. More importantly, this unique marriage of words and images elicits aesthetic perception and intellectual pursuit for the reader. As Lefebvre (2013) succinctly puts forth:

“These postmodern twists on canonical nineteenth- and early twentieth-century texts not only demonstrate a certain amount of playfulness toward the notion of a sacrosanct “original” text, but they also lead to new and complex conversations about authorship, adaptation, and fidelity in the age of YouTube” (p. 1).

It must be noted that graphic novels are currently only used in selected English Language classrooms in Malaysia specifically for the English Literature Component. Nevertheless, there must be more concerted efforts from various parties to advocate the benefits of the exceptional medium of graphic novels and even comic books. The benefits of incorporating graphic novels extensively in the Malaysian school curriculum and school libraries are discussed hereafter. Though specifically meant for the use of the comics version of Shakespeare, Maynard’s (2012) argument about embracing comics in the classroom resounds well:

“In the advent of postmodernism, and, with interest in Shakespeare waning in children and teenagers, who see his works as stiff, intimidating and dull, there needed to be a way to make Shakespeare more palatable to more people, and it came in the form of blending Shakespeare, considered to be high culture, with popular culture, which appeals to different groups in society because it is ever changing” (p. 107)

Figure 8.1 illustrates the many benefits in adopting graphic novels as part of the curriculum and also to be used effectively as a pedagogical tool. Figure 8.1 is derived from the results of a few studies (Hammond and Danaher, 2012; Dallaqua, 2012; Templer, 2009; Jacob, 2007b; Schwartz, 2006; Marion, 2004; Laycock, 2004; Norton 2003, among others).



**Figure 8.1:** Benefits of Graphic Novels

As noted in Figure 8.1, graphic novels support multiple intelligences (Laycock, 2004), promote visual literacy (Jacob, 2007b), embrace different theories of cognition (Templer, 2009), help struggling and reluctant readers (Norton, 2003), promote the reading of other genres (Marion, 2004), promotes autonomous learning (Hammond and Danaher, 2012), facilitates easier comprehension of style elements (Dallaqua, 2012) and address significant and current issues (Schwarz, 2006). The following discussion looks into each benefit in detail.

### 8.3.1 Graphic Novels Support Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (1983) supports the usage of graphic novels as they are able to favour students with different strengths of intelligences. For Laycock (2004), the novels' rich and vibrant textual components are an advantage for students with *linguistic intelligence*. These textual components include speech balloons, captions and onomatopoetic sound effect words as evident from the graphic novels analysed in this study. The different types of styles in featuring textual components like a thought balloon or a yelling styled balloon and direct or associative onomatopoetic sound effect words in graphic novels also appeal to those of *linguistic intelligence*. Visual learners who are categorised under those with *visual spatial intelligence* benefit from the images in these books as the visuals evoke vibrancy and intensity. Here, elements like splash pages, bleeds, panel types, shots, backgrounds and emanatas provide avenues for those with the mind's eye. On the other hand, those who possess *interpersonal intelligence* will be able to relate to the many non-textual gestures which are abundant in graphic novels as they are able to identify and empathise easily with elements like facial expressions, body languages and colour choices. This also echoes with Jewitt and Oyama's (2001) postulation that descriptive details such as body

language and facial expressions or typography construes meanings which can be attributed into words. Those with inherent *intrapersonal intelligence* also benefit through the awareness of their own feelings and motivations as they read these books and are able to relate the graphic narratives. In this study, the comics conventions analysis of non-textual elements like panel layouts and the analysis of visual images based on Visual Grammar succinctly denotes how visual representations construe meanings in the three novels analysed namely *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*.

### **8.3.2 Graphic Novels Promote Visual Literacy**

Tyner (1998) describes visual literacy as “the ability to comprehend and create images in a variety of media in order to communicate effectively” (p.95). Dibell’s (1988) claim that “vivid, exaggerated happenings can hold the eye and the interest while the meaning penetrates more subtly” (p. 151) clearly scaffolds the benefits of visual literacy. The use of visual clues also supports Cary’s (2004) assertion that English Language learners benefit further from the visuals as they “may find clues in the pictures that help demystify the text and increase comprehension” (p. 3). The interplay of texts and images provides readers with “more power over their readings” (Schwarz, 2004, p. 22).

As graphic novels are multimodal in nature through the deployment of textual and visual modes, the prominence of visuals in these texts supports the development of visual literacy. As an educator for the last twenty years, it’s interesting to note that the Generation Y (those born between 1982 and 2003) respond well to stimulation in the classrooms and as a salient medium, the visuals in graphic novels meet the needs of these students. The conventions of comics analysis framework of this study for one, will be able to help this type of students in dissecting graphic novels more exhaustively.

In short, it can be a ‘toolkit’ advocated by teachers in the classroom. Arnheim (2004) believes that graphic novels:

“effectively utilises the complementary relationship between print and visual literacy. Because it encompasses both print and non-print modes of expression, the graphic novel requires sophisticated level of literacy” (as cited in Gillenwater, 2009, p. 37).

This kind of complementary relationship is evident in the data of this study where the analysis of comics conventions reveals the deployment of various textual and visual elements in the graphic novels of the adapted classics genre. Here, an understanding of the conventions and the reasons on why they are represented in such ways provide students avenues to dissect the novels effectively. This assertion also concurs with Williams (2008) that pairing images and words offers students the opportunities to develop stronger visual literacy. In addition, graphic novels are able to help teachers in assisting students to understand how images produce meanings through engagements and discussions (Versaci, 2007).

The preceding discussion shows how the usage of graphic novels is able to assist in the development of visual literacy thus contributing to a wider spectrum of multi-literacies.

### **8.3.3 Graphic Novels Support Different Theories of Cognition**

Notably, the adoption of graphic novels also scaffolds developments of various cognitive theories such as the dual coding, schema and transactional theories. Lavin (1998) posits that graphic novel readers demonstrate the use of more cognitive thinking skills as compared to those who read traditional linear texts. The following sub-sections describe each theory of cognition in detail.



### **8.3.3.1 Dual Coding Theory (Allan Paivio, 1986)**

The Dual Coding Theory (hereafter DCT) advocated by Allan Paivio (1986) is seen as one of the important theories of cognition. The DCT establishes the notion that the formation of mental images assists the learning process through dual channels: the verbal (textual) channel and the visual channel. The theory also promulgates that the verbal channel processes verbal representations while the visual channel processes visual and pictorial representations. This cognitive action enriches recognition and comprehension (Templer, 2009). For Sipe (1998), the interrelationship between text and pictures in graphic novels mirrors the cognitive functions as propounded by Paivio's DCT.

More importantly, graphic novels as pedagogical tools support Paivio's assertion through the interplay of words and images as the comprehension of the novels involves DCT. For Paivio (1986), "human cognition is unique in that it has become specialized for dealing simultaneously with language and with nonverbal objects and events" (p. 53). In this study, one of the ways of how the element of cohesion is achieved is through how readers are able to fill up the gutters between the panels cognitively and hereby, the DCT plays a role in structuring proper links between both textual and visual elements.

### **8.3.3.2 Schema Theory (Frederic Bartlett, 1932 and David Everett Rumelhart, 1982)**

The Schema Theory (hereafter ST) first posited by Bartlett (1932) was later refined by contemporary schema-theorist Rumelhart (1980). This theory propounds that understanding something only happens when a person can relate it to an existing

knowledge structure. In understanding narratives, the theory explains that a person relies on his own knowledge and experience to make sense while reading. As schemata facilitate both encoding and retrieval, it is pertinent when a student decodes and makes meanings from a graphic novel. For example, in using *TBVM*, teachers could prompt students to think about why the book might interest male readers. Students can also be asked to predict if the style of Doyle's writing is similar with his other books like *The Hound of Baskervilles* or *The Sign of Four*. Importantly, reading graphic novels involves the recalling of prior knowledge for meaningful encoding is expedited. This involves the reliance on schemata as proposed by Rumelhart.

A study by Marcus, Cooper and Sweller (1996) on cognitive load theory concludes that cognitive load is reduced and lightened when schema is available through instructions in the form of diagrams. In the context of graphic novels, it is clear that the images here reduces cognitive load. As compared to a whole linear text, the multimodality of graphic novels enables the making of connections to construe meanings through reliance on schemata.

#### **8.3.3.4 Transactional Theory (Louise Rosenblatt, 1978)**

Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory (1978) (hereafter TT) proposes reading as a transactional process between the writer and the reader. For Rosenblatt (1978), the theory encourages the reader "to reflect on what he/she brings to any reading and to acknowledge and examine the images, feelings, attitudes that these responses evoke" (p. 10). The role of the reader is important as he continuously construct meanings as he reads and draws on his personal experiences. As a stimulus, reading helps readers to respond to the text, thus eliciting a subjective interpretation whereby readers actively construe meaning as they read. Here, the role of the reader is crucial in the

comprehension of a text. For example, in dissecting the many literary elements in these novels, readers depend on their own personal histories. As Rosenblatt argues, “responses into contexts not all directly indicated by the text” (p. 97) encourage readers to construct their contexts through interpretations.

For readers, their experiences which encapsulate memories, feelings, beliefs and other associations influence how they perceive and understand the text, in this case a graphic novel. As such, a novel like *BB* might reveal a few different themes as it is interpreted differently by different readers. Here, students are able to construct meanings based on their own personal feelings and links beyond what is explicitly featured through the visual and textual components in graphic novels. Interestingly, this also supports McCloud’s (1993) belief that “when entering the world of comics, the reader is able to relate to universally identifiable objects and settings, its simplicity, features and personality traits of many of the characters in a comic book and/or graphic novel” (p. 36). For one, the adoption of McCloud’s PtPT and Nikolajeva and Scott’s TII in high schools for instance would be able to promote high order thinking skills (HOTS), an essential element for 21<sup>st</sup> century student learning skills. Through these frameworks, the participation of readers and their interpretations of the images in the panels would be able to contribute to effective discussions. As Silva (2009, p. 630) postulates, “an emphasis on what students can do with knowledge, rather than what units of knowledge they have” (as cited in Evans-Boniecki, 2013, p. 65) is pertinent for 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As the preceding discussion shows, the deployment of graphic novels in the classroom supports various cognitive theories, indicating the notion that the influence of graphic novels as interdisciplinary multimodal medium cannot be disparaged.

### 8.3.4 Graphic Novels Help Reluctant and Struggling Readers

Graphic novels also help to increase literacy among reluctant and struggling readers as the novels are usually appealing and this characteristic entices their interest in reading. Norton (2003) believes graphic novels motivate readers while Heckman (2004) notes that they have a gift to attract reluctant readers. Heckman adds that “for readers who possess hindered linguistic literacy skills, the images in graphic novels can help with the comprehension of the texts” (p. 3). This echoes Jennings, Rule and Zanden’s (2014) view that “graphic novels include the fast paced visual media to which students are growing accustomed” (p. 260). This certainly can be a motivating factor for this category of students to improve their linguistic abilities in a non-threatening way. In their assertion, Lyga and Lyga (2004) state that “even students whose reading abilities deter them from enjoying reading for the inherent satisfaction are drawn to graphic novels” (p. 56), thus paving way for increased confidence. According to Heckman (2004):

“The new popularity of Graphic Novels lends itself perfectly to becoming the new frontrunner for reading motivation. [...] Their eye-catching illustrations give contextual connections to the written text, making them perfect for remedial readers. They give confidence to frustrated readers with non-threatening, much needed practice and experience. This also leads to the reader’s progress to more challenging texts” (p. 3-4).

Accordingly, it can be surmised that graphic novels sustain readers’ interest due to their distinct visual appeal that motivates students. Additionally, the visuals in the novels also help reluctant and struggling readers as the containment of texts and images does not subject readers to rely solely on texts. The current study has also shown how the

conceptual representation of VG specifically Symbolic Processes would be able to identify themes which may be helpful for reluctant readers.

### **8.3.5 Graphic Novels Promote the Reading of Other Genres**

Many canonical literature works have been adapted into graphic novels *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Marvel, 2009) these days, further proving that many writers and illustrators have reworked and adapted the works of classic literature into a medium which embraces the increasingly visual student population. This evolvement offers an opportunity for educators to actually introduce canonical literary classics before deploying the actual texts. As supplementary materials, these novels can be introduced to students first before they read the originals which at times can be rather intimidating. According to Weiner (2004), “These books might be used as introductions to the literary works in their original form as well as providing worthwhile reading experiences in their own right” (p. 116). Adaptation of classics like Nancy Butler’s *Pride and Prejudice* (New York: Marvel, 2009) originally written by Jane Austen and Peter’s Kuper’s interpretation of Kafka’s *Metamorphosis* (New York: Crown, 2003) are able to introduce the simpler form of these classic to pique the reader who might find the original versions difficult. The graphic novels of this study are that of the adapted classics used in Malaysian classrooms mainly to promote a love for reading among students.

For Derrick (2008), the appeal of graphic novels also encourages them to read other genres like newspapers, memoirs, magazines and other reading materials. For one, non-fictional graphic novels can also be utilized to introduce various topics. Bucher and Manning (2004) add, “Graphic novels can contribute to interdisciplinary thematic units or can serve as an introduction to specific content area” (p. 71). Novels like *Clan Apis*

(Columbus: Active Synapse, 2000) by neurobiologist Jay Hosler focuses on the biology of honey bees while Jim Ottaviani's *Dignifying Science: Stories about Women Scientists* (Ann Arbor: G.T. Labs, 2003) concentrates on prolific women in the world of science like Marie Curie and Rosalind Franklin. The reading of these novels enables the exposure to excellent accounts of scientific facts before students read other related texts. In short, the reading of graphic novels also promotes the appreciation of other genres like history, autobiographical memoirs and others.

### **8.3.6 Graphic Novels Promote Autonomous Learning**

Hammond and Danaher's (2012) study reports that many students enjoy reading comic books and graphic novels through autonomous learning. In Malaysia, programmes like 'Drop Everything and Read' (DEAR) is slowly gaining momentum in some schools. As such, the diversity of reading materials which include graphic novels or even comics can be an impetus to embrace lifelong reading habits. In addition, graphic novels offer an alternative to traditional linear texts which might put off some readers as these books are deemed to be wordy. By arousing readers' interest, graphic novels encourage students to become what Krashen (2004) terms as 'autonomous acquirers'.

Studies have indicated that the combination of texts and visuals in graphic novels motivate readers to fulfil reading success and enjoyment (Hammond, 2009; Monnin, 2008; Carter, 2007a). Krashen's (2004) study demonstrates that when students choose reading materials based on their interest, they become passionate readers and this in turn encourages autonomous learning.

In addition, Krashen further posits:

“Perhaps the most powerful way of encouraging children to read is by exposing them to light reading, a kind of reading that schools pretend does not exist and a kind of reading that many children, for economic or ideological reasons are deprived of” (p. 47-48).

Nevertheless though graphic novels can be considered light reading, many naysayers consider them as sub-literature which “undermines literacy rather than enhances it” (Gavigan, 2012, p. 20). However, as more and more studies are advocating the many benefits of adopting graphic novels and comic books in the classrooms, the value of these novels as an effective educational tool simply cannot be disdained.

In encouraging autonomous learning, the role of graphic novels in propagating this trait must be considered in its total efficacy. To sum up, the deployment of graphic novels encourages autonomous learning that instils a sense of independence and encouragement in enjoying these novels.

### **8.3.7 Graphic Novels Allow an Easier Comprehension of Style and Literary Elements**

The complexity and interplay of words and images in graphic novels provide opportunities for readers to construe meanings as opposed to a more traditional text. As a result, the many style elements themes, metaphors, onomatopoeia and others evident in the novels are easily recognisable. Textual elements like special effect words like ‘POW’ and “WHAM’ and visual elements like speech balloons, bleeds and splash pages add on to the layers of aestheticism and promote easy recognition and comprehension. For instance, the salience, typography and positioning of special effect

words allows focus to be directed towards the distinct arrangement of textual and visual elements in its pages. This concurs with Schwarz's (2006) assertion that:

“ To read and interpret graphic novels, students have to pay attention to the usual literary elements of character, plot and dialogue, and they also have to consider visual elements such as colour, shading, panel layout, perspective and even lettering style” (p. 59).

Furthermore, the interplay of text and image encourages a deeper and better understanding of literary elements like symbolism, foreshadowing, pun, theme, metaphor, paradox and others. In one study, Rajendra and Taib (2014a) investigated how the theme of anthropocentrism is inherent in the novel *BB* through textual analysis. For Dallaqua (2012), graphic novels could be easily dissected to teach pertinent literary elements like mood, tone, setting and style. In addition, the conventions of comics evident in graphic novels like panel positions, backgrounds and speech balloons could be used to identify the tone and mood of the characters depicted. The variety of these elements is liberally interspersed in graphic novels to add realism and aestheticism.

Another plus point is that the sequential art type in the novels can effortlessly be divided into easily understood parts that encourage understanding. The interplay of both images and texts can easily be examined as an individual entity or studied together. On the other hand, an examination of images like that of VG, can also produce interesting outcomes. E.H. Gombrich (1996), the prolific art historian puts that, “What I find very interesting is that so many half literate or illiterate can read the comics because they are combined with images (p. 69, as cited in Carrier, 2000).

As an extension of this study, the researcher has come up with the BASS Model (Background, Shot and Salience) to be used by teachers during their literature lessons.



The implementation of the model in the classroom has shown positive results where students were able to dissect literary themes easily through focused analysis. Rajendra and Taib's (2014a) research also supports the effectiveness of using a Transitivity analysis in deciphering themes specifically in the novel *BB*. The discussion above denotes the efficacy of graphic novels in providing opportunities for students to deconstruct these texts at multiple levels. At the many levels, with good instructional strategies, students would be able to dissect the novels effectively in revealing the many embedded meanings.

### **8.3.8 Graphic Novels Address Significant and Current Issues**

It is interesting to note that graphic novels present an engaging way for young readers to learn about significant and current issues. Graphic novels like *Still I Rise: A Cartoon History of African Americans* by Laird and Laird (New York: Norton, 1997), celebrates the accomplishments of African Americans like Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King who were subjected to racism while Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003) dwells on change and justice. In the Malaysian context, Lat's *Mat Som* (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd., 2011) traces the struggles of a young journalist in Kuala Lumpur circa 1970s. Relatively, many graphic novels are rich with themes related to economic, social and political issues. McCloud (1993) posits, "Today, comics is one of the very few forms of mass communication in which individual voices still have a chance to be heard" (p. 197). Thus, graphic novels too have the ability to draw out critical views and perspectives from their readers as they offer "more diverse voices than traditional textbooks and can open up discussion about issues such as social justice" (Schwarz, 2006, p. 62).

Chang (2011) adds that students also become critical thinkers and are socially more conscious thus embracing 21<sup>st</sup> century literate practices. In addition, common themes like bullying, sense of belonging, prejudice, teamwork and others are also prevalent in graphic novels. Interestingly, Pagliaro (2014) feels that graphic novels promote global culture through their multicultural texts and “a visual focus that reflects the image-saturated Internet, the transmitter for global culture” (p. 35). Novels like Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003) focuses on her life in Iran while Gene Yang’s *American Born Chinese* (New York: First Second Books, 2006) concentrates on ethnic identity and the acceptance of immigrants in the United States of America. These examples demonstrate that various current and relevant issues which are suitable for students of different ages are abundant in the many graphic novels available in the market. Nevertheless, the selection of appropriate graphic novels must be skirted by considerations like sensitivity and relevance.

The engagement with such novels promotes fruitful and profound discussions in addressing crucial and difficult topics like oppression, bullying, identity crisis and sexual discrimination, among others. The graphic novel *Tyranny* (Toronto: Tundra Books, 2011) by Lesley Fairfield is one example of such a novel. The novel’s theme dwells on self-esteem and personal image by focusing on the delicate issue of anorexia, a common eating disorder among many teenagers today through the novel’s protagonist Anna’s journey. Within the Malaysian context, Lat’s work for one will definitely expose the nuances of multiculturalism to students through the lives of ordinary people of different ethnicities. Lat’s focus on a myriad of characters from different ethnicities offers insights on their cultures and traditions. Williams (2008) asserts that the innovative medium of graphic novels and comic books “can spark a wide range of

interdisciplinary discussions and focus students on a variety of topics, ranging from war to fantasy to memory and childhood” (p. 18).

From the discussion above, it is obvious that the use of graphic novels encourages the dissection of various significant and current issues that underpins these novels.

#### **8.4 Other Considerations**

It is important to note that the selection of books these days are skirted by predetermined criteria. In many countries these selections are in line with their education philosophies and curriculum standards. Though it cannot be denied that there are many graphic novels which contain elements of violence and sexual connotations, a stringent selection of novels based on content and age appropriateness are all that is needed to mitigate this issue. In addition, the equality of race, gender and social class should be positively portrayed as there are graphic novels which deal with controversial and sensational themes. For Gorman (2003), some of the issues that need to be considered are culture, religion and readers’ sensitivities. Specifically in Malaysia, cultural sensitivity and conflict minimisation are two issues that need to be considered in selecting appropriate graphic novels or comic books.

Once placed at the bottom of literary heap, graphic novels are certainly here to stay. Exposing students to contemporary literature and the ever changing literacy landscapes, it is pertinent to acknowledge that the world seen is as important as the world told as advocated by Kress (2003). The sooner we acknowledge the fact and move on in embracing it, certainly a plethora of enriching experiences in dissecting these novels would provide purposeful and meaningful teaching and learning sessions.

For literary purists, graphic novels may remain a fluff but what is important is that these novels do deserve the recognition they deserve. In the end, it is that desire to see these novels co-exist with other texts and as supplementary reading materials especially here in Malaysia.

As the discussion above as shown, the benefits of incorporating graphic novels in the classroom need to overcome the negative perceptions tied up with the medium. While there are many teachers who have embraced the educational values of graphic novels, there are just as many naysayers. With careful planning, the acquisition of vocabulary grammatical and communicative competences can be increased through the mobilisation of graphic novels in the classroom. However, it must be stressed here that this study concurs with McTaggart (2005) who feels that “it is important to understand that comics should be supplementing a balanced literacy programme, not replace it” (p. 46).

Nevertheless, the easy availability and variety of graphic novels available locally show that there is a huge demand for the medium among Malaysians. The adaptations of graphic novels into popular movies like *The Dark Knight*, *Road to Perdition* and *Ghost World* for example, have boosted the popularity of these books among many. Local publications like Datuk Lat’s graphic novels *The Kampong Boy* (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd., 1979) and *Town Boy* (Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing Sdn. Bhd., 1981) are also well read among many and remains classic favourites based on the reprints of the issues. As Schwarz (2002) posits, “Graphic novels can bring new life beyond bland textbooks” (p. 2). More importantly, as educators we should be aware of the fact that the one size fits all approach is clearly inapplicable to the current generation of students.

For Fassbender, Dulaney and Pope (2013):

“Good teachers will find new and innovative ways to teach the classic stories in the canon, but *great* teachers will also find ways to incorporate new and quality texts that provide exciting opportunities to reach students” (p. 24, emphasis added).

As such, the time is now especially in Malaysia for more people and institutions like schools and libraries to welcome graphic novels as part of their esteemed collection and to acknowledge their educational values. In the end, this study concurs with Schwarz (2010a) who surmises the fact that these novels “introduce literacies, new ideas, and new ways of learning” (p. 55).

## **8.5 Summary**

This chapter starts with revisiting the background of using graphic novels in the classroom and continues with the discussion of their many benefits and educational values. The chapter also includes important consideration that need to be heeded while choosing graphic novels for the classrooms.

The following Chapter 9 revisits the three research questions that frames the study and synthesises and discusses the major findings that emerged in response to each of them. The chapter also looks into the implications of the study and suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

There are still some people out there who believe comic books are nothing more than, well, comic books. But the true cognoscenti know graphic novels are – at their best - an amazing blend of art literature and the theater of the mind.  
(John Ridley, brainyquotes.com)

### 9.0 Introduction

Graphic novels are multimodal in nature as the combination of both textual and visual components or modalities convey meanings to their readers. The acknowledgement of graphic novels as effective pedagogical tools is gaining momentum specifically in Malaysia with the introduction of the novels in the English Language syllabus. For Campbell (2007), graphic novels are “an emerging new literature of our times” (p. 130) and the MOE’s move to introduce this medium through the literature component is certainly an acknowledgement to the importance multimodality in the classrooms. The growing attention being paid for graphic novels specifically in the West certainly augurs well for their deployment extensively in Malaysia in the near future; with studies on their effectiveness abound.

This multimodal analysis investigated how the various textual and visual components that make up comics conventions construe meanings in graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. In addition, the study also enlightens on the pedagogical implications of deploying graphic novels as supplemental or augmentative materials (Carter, 2007a) in the classroom. Importantly, an analysis into how images and texts are represented in graphic novels will assist in a thorough dissection of the novel especially when used as a semiotic pedagogical tool.

This chapter presents the conclusion of the findings from the previous chapters. Though the answers are perhaps not definitive, the study hopes to provide an insight on how various modes contribute in the meaning making process of graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. It begins with a review in Section 9.1 and revisits the three research questions and this is followed by a synthesised discussion of the specific and overall findings that answered the RQs in Section 9.2. The exploration of the limitations of the study is presented in Section 9.3. Section 9.4 recommends suggestions for future research. Finally, the chapter ends with Section 9.5 which offers a reflective insight and concludes the thesis.

## **9.1 A Review of the Thesis**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how different modes construe meaning making in graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics. It aims to contribute to a growing but already substantial body of research on multimodality and graphic novels as the area is still very much an open field.

The RQs which have been delineated in Chapter 1 scaffolds the explanation, analysis and interpretation of data presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. It must be stressed that a multimodal analysis aims to identify and discuss multimodal elements that are prevalent in texts and how these create meanings. This study started with the main objective of focusing into how comics conventions, textual and visual components are represented in graphic novels. In addition, it also looked into how cohesion is realised in these novels. As detailed in the previous chapters, this study was qualitative in nature but employed quantitative means for numerical tabulations and percentages. Interestingly, the emergent nature of the study also paved way to look into other considerations as

ascertained by Section 7.3.3 of Chapter 7 entitled ‘Other Considerations’ for cohesion analysis and the inclusion of the additional Chapter 8 dedicated to discuss the pedagogical implications of using graphic novels in the classrooms. In ensuring validity and reliability; and to ensure accuracy in interpretation of data to derive valid conclusions, two co-raters were utilised. The co-raters helped in establishing how the data should be analysed and to draw parameters as the study involves an exhaustive analysis of the conventions of comics, textual and visual components besides investigating how cohesion is realised within and outside the panels of the graphic novels. In addition, triangulation consisted of email interviews with several writers and illustrators of the novels and an official from the MOE.

The graphic novels used in the study were *BB*, *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. Data was derived from the analysis of texts and images from the graphic novels and email interviews with the writers, illustrators and an official from the MOE. Again, it must be stressed that little work has actually concentrated on textual and visual (elements of multimodality) of this medium, focusing on adapted classics and this research intends to address this gap.

## **9.2 Summary of Research Findings**

This section provides the findings of the three RQs.

### **9.2.1 Research Question 1**

**What are the components of comics that constitute the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?**



In answering RQ1, the conceptual framework was deduced from the works of Eisner (1985, 2008), McCloud (2004), Okum (2005) and McKenzie (2005) based on comics conventions.

#### **9.2.1.1 Finding 1: The Representation of Components of Comics**

The study establishes the importance of splash pages to convey the original narratives as close as possible by “opening up” (Versaci, 2007) the story. This type of pictorial structure also elucidates a sense of absolute order and fosters an aesthetic mystical quality. In addition, double splash pages are used at times to set the scene of events. These pages also transport readers closer to the events and influence their positions as readers. The use of splash pages indicates that the illustrators have adopted different techniques in presenting pertinent events in all three stories. Visual symbolism which relays messages and is a representation of direct reality is also evident in these splash panels. The inherence of visual symbolism in splash pages provides an element of literariness through the study of visuals, an important technique that could be exhausted in the classrooms.

The deployment of bleeds shows that the illustrators have used this technique to enhance their images by focusing on important events, characteristics and other crucial elements of the narratives of the novels in addition to supporting aestheticism. The analysis also reveals the deployment of vignettes, as an interesting technique specifically in *TBVM* as both the voices of Holmes and Watson are interweaved in the panels of flashbacks, thus giving two voices to the panels of flashbacks. This feature of vignettes is usually uncommon in comics and graphic novels and this is prevalent in *TBVM*. This reveals the importance of flashbacks in the narrative of *TBVM*.

The novels' illustrators obviously prefer round shaped speech balloons and that of its variation. There were no other shapes of speech balloons. The utilisation of textualised and non-textualised thought balloons constitute an important characteristic of a graphic novel. The discussion of the data reveals that at times (specifically in *TBVM* and *JttCotE*), there are instances of pictorial representations through non-textualised thought balloons appearing parallel to speech balloons. This shows that mental images are important and it gives definition to the physical characteristics and supports narrative information. Bearing in mind these are adapted works, visual representations are crucial to narrative information.

The analysis on textual components indicates that the narration of stories do rely on captions to simplify the adaptation of the original work as writers themselves have to work within a framework of limited pages. The clever usage of captions shows the writers' efforts in alternating dialogues and captions. With the constraints of pagination, the choice of using captions provides a great alternative to condense the main elements of the original classics.

The deployment of sound effect words in *BB* and *JttCotE* clearly adds realism in the presentation of the narrative adopting vividness and dynamism. Nevertheless, *TBVM* is devoid of any sound effect words and adheres to a narration of simplicity rather than embracing sound elements to accentuate its narrative.

The systematic arrangements and choices of textual components specifically balloons, captions and sound effect words indicate meticulous planning visible in all three novels. The arrangements and choices also denote a limitation of texts over images in the panel.

This is very important as a precedence of text over images will only render these texts to be considered as illustrated classics rather than adapted graphic novels.

The visual components of the conventions of comics concentrate on shapes, positions, shots, backgrounds and emanata. The analysis of panel shapes indicates that the illustrators conform to the conventional form of rectangle panels either horizontally or vertically. In addition, geometrical shaped panels are also utilised. This study reveals another type of panel termed as the 'silhouette' type. This type of panel takes the shape of either the character, setting or items. Interestingly, silhouette type panels are prominent specifically in *JttCotE* and *TBVM*. In lieu of graphic adaptations from literary works, the usage of more panels helps in the retelling of the story that offers more information while sustaining the flow of the story. The careful choice of panel types and their placements on a page influences reading as it draws the readers' eyes from left to right.

Regular panel positioning is clearly favoured and it supports conformity to regular conventions of comics. The utilisation of overlap panels emphasises different elements of the story including themes, characterisation and climax, thus inviting readers' involvement. In addition, the positioning and sizes of panels also create suspense and drama in these novels. Various types of shots are used at different degrees to bring the narratives alive. Nevertheless, the most popular type of shots are long shots, medium close-ups and close-ups.

Different types of backgrounds indicate a variety in the settings and sustain a general ambiance to the story. Though all three backgrounds are used with different degrees of consistence, the focus on the main subject of each panel is never neglected. While

*JttCotE* and *TBVM* prefer minimalist types, *BB* relies on detailed backgrounds. The introduction of a new background type, an addition to McKenzie's (2005) background is 'non-background' or 'sans background' which is popular in *TBVM*. This type of background is typically used for extreme focus as in case of *TBVM* which carries flashbacks interweaved within the main narrative. Finally, it is evident that emanata is not popular though it is a common feature in most mainstream comic books and graphic novels. They are sparingly utilised in all three novels.

As the aforementioned findings indicate, different writers and illustrators adhere to different styles textually and visually to narrate the stories through conventions of comics. The analysis indicates that critical decisions and considerations are made specifically on compression and extensions in recreating the original through sequential art with the interplay of texts and images. The simplification of the texts did not compromise on the content of the novels but further enhanced the narratives through visual representations. This is evident from the assembly of the elements of comics through their many features which have succeeded in capturing the main narratives of the original texts. More importantly, literary features like theme, setting, characterization and tone were considered in the construction of these adapted novels.

### **9.2.2 Research Question 2**

- a. How are textual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?**
- b. How are visual elements represented in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?**

The textual analysis concentrating on clausal choices was conducted using Halliday's SFL framework specifically in terms of transitivity whereas the visual analysis described how images are portrayed in terms of representation analysis of VG propounded by Kress and van Leeuwen.

#### **9.2.2.1 Finding 2a: The Representation of Textual Components**

The linguistic analysis of transitivity reveals the dominance of three Processes: namely Material, Relational and Mental Processes. The high distribution of Material Processes in both *BB* and *JttCotE* and Relational Processes in *TBVM* supports Gerot and Wignell's (2004) affirmation of the importance of these two types of processes in a narrative. Notably, the data suggests that both Material and Relational Processes is a prominent fixture of clauses in these adapted classics. The non-dynamic type Relational Processes are used to counter the more dominant Material Processes in the text. In addition, Behavioural Processes are also used as elements of personification, indicating literary considerations of stylistics elements through informed linguistic choices.

The transitivity analysis reveals the roles of both animate and inanimate Participants that correspond with their ascribed Processes. As such, the most active Participants are Actors, Goals, Sensors, Phenomenon, Tokens, Values, Carriers and Attributes. The data also reveals that these Participants remain active figures and support Hasan's (1989) notion of effectuality or dynamism. The type of Circumstance most used in all three novels is Circumstances of Location. Other types of Circumstances are used at varied degrees in the novels. The other prevalent Circumstances are that of Manner and Extent. This study reveals that in adapting the originals, Circumstances of Events provide an avenue to condense the time frame. Interestingly, many of the Circumstances of Events

appear in captions rather than speech balloons, specifying the duration relevant to the summarising of the narrative. These choices reflect a careful consideration into the construction of the texts to enhance, elaborate or even extend the experiential processes. The adoption of Halliday's SFL as an analytical tool clearly helps in unveiling the stratagems of the writers in their choice of linguistic structures to adapt the originals as close as possible.

#### **9.2.2.3 Finding 2b: The Representation of Visual Components**

The analysis reveals that there is a predominance of deploying Narrative Processes as compared to Conceptual Processes within the Representational Processes of the VG. The prevalence of a higher number of Action Processes denotes the focus on actions and movements which add to the dynamism of the characters. Most of the Action Processes are also transactional and involves at least two participants. The use of Reaction Processes reveals the need to accentuate relationships between characters through eye contacts and they are mostly of bidirectional. Conversely, unidirectional Reaction Processes bring to light of the need to focus on the solitary state of the characters specifically in *BB*. Pedagogically, these types of images help students in deciphering the characterisation of both protagonists and antagonists of the literary adapted classics. The creation of a visual picture in the mind of the reader demonstrates that effective imagery can be used to invoke an emotional, sensational or even physical response.

The deployment of Conceptual Processes demonstrates the reliance on images that are static in nature. Most representations in the novels are clearly "entity-oriented, as they are seen as carriers that possess attributes" (Moya, 2014, p. 65). Here, Participants are represented in a more generalised and timeless essence. In addition, though Painter,

Martin and Unsworth (2013) assert that Conceptual Processes are used to introduce characters, denote a reflective moment and help in deciphering symbolic meanings within images of children's picturebooks, this study shows that they also resound well within the images of graphic novels (Painter, *et al.*, 2006, p. 56-57).

The representation of various conceptual elements support the need to deploy visual representations that “tend to present more generalised aspects of the participants, their intrinsic nature or permanent characteristics in terms of class, structure and meaning” (Nalon, 1997, p. 20). Being abridged versions, these images support the visual representation of information that are not linguistically inherent in these graphic adaptations (which otherwise is denoted in the actual linear versions). More importantly, the analysis also affirms that the Material Processes of SFL (representing linguistic functions) corresponds with the Narrative Processes of VG as both represent ‘outer experiences’ in a material world. In addition, the Existential Processes and Relational Processes realise meanings similarly to the Conceptual Processes of VG as they represent the state of ‘being and having’.

### **9.2.3 Research Question 3**

**How is cohesion established among the multimodal components in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics?**

At the macro-structure level, the external characteristics of panel layouts in eliciting cohesion was investigated specifically splash pages and overlap panels. The micro-structure level focused on pictorial elements (both textual and visual) elements inside the panels. The two major frameworks adopted were McCloud's PtPT (1994) and

Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) TII. Additionally emerging cohesive markers which were unrevealed during the analysis also contributed to the discussion.

### **9.2.3.1 Finding 3: The Establishment of Cohesion**

The findings at the macro structure level indicate that the configuration of panels and their layouts contribute to the cohesion of panels through their positions, shapes, frames and sizes. In splash pages, the element of a continuous background establishes cohesion. In addition, embedded panels within splash pages establish cohesion through the repetition of similar figures or objects from the main splash panel to an embedded panel. Cohesion is also established through the use of overlap panels. At times, an image is also stretched between the two overlap panels to denote connection. Notably, the role of readers as interpreters is pertinent in establishing coherence through cognitive deduction.

The data and analysis of PtPT have shown that the most prevalent transitions in all three novels are that of Action-to-Action transitions which are parallel with most mainstream American comic books and graphic novels (McCloud, 1994, p. 74). This denotes that though the genre is different, the analysis reveals that mainstream transitions patterns are adhered to. In addition, the deployment of Action-to-Action transitions also supports McCloud's assertion that the choice of actions keeps the plot moving, in this case supporting the abridgement of the originals. In addition, the absence of Non-Sequitur transitions reveal great thought as been given to choose appropriate illustrations as the deciphering of such images involves high cognitive skills and these novels are meant for young readers. Interestingly, this result is also in tandem with the prevalence of



Material Processes through textual analysis and Action Processes through visual analysis.

The TII analysis reveals that cohesion within text and image collaboration is pertinent in constructing meanings through the various degrees of involvement and interpretations of the readers. The data analysis shows that the most prevalent type of interaction in all three novels is that of the Complementary type, clearly denoting the need of reinforcing text and images within the panels. This data also suggests that Complementary TII can be considered as a common trait of interaction in the graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics as they seem dominant in occurrences. More importantly, the results indicate that just like picture books, graphic novels too adopt a similar stance in their text image interaction which involves a varied degree of the readers' involvement. In addition, this study shows that graphic novels can successfully adopt the TII framework in analysing text image interaction and cohesion that relies on readers' interpretation to discern implicit and explicit meanings. The TII framework was not found to have been used in analysing text-image cohesion in graphic novels before.

Other considerations in the establishment of cohesion were also taken into deliberation as these cohesive markers were an emerging trend, and as such, couldn't be ignored. For one, links through colours created a sense of unity between the panels. It must be stressed that the power of discerning the colours to deduce cohesion lies with the readers. The positions of speech balloons also denote a clear distinctive cohesion marker through placements that support the reader to follow the Western convention of reading from left to right and from top to bottom. In addition, cohesion within the speech balloons is realised by the utilisation of linguistic markers of anaphoric

substitutions which include nouns, pronouns and phrases. Captions are also utilised to create cohesion between the panels by eliciting information and narrative knowledge.

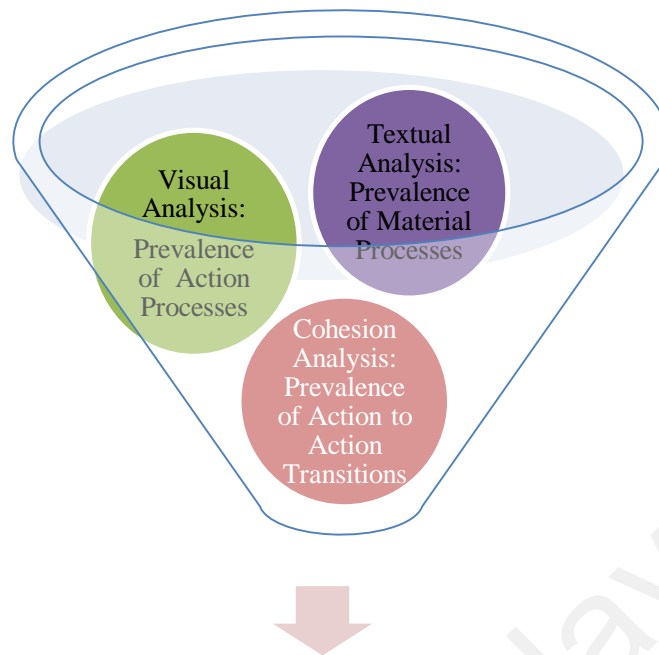
In short, it is important to acknowledge that both textual and visual components embrace an assimilative relationship that establishes connectedness in these three adapted graphic novels through splash page, overlap panels, panel transitions, text image interaction, colour speech balloon placements, captions and linguistic markers. Nevertheless, at times, visual elements like colour and panel transitions work independently in constructing cohesion. In addition, linguistic markers of anaphoric substitutions and captions also work independently without reliance on visual components. More importantly, the discernment of readers is a crucial element in establishing cohesion, supporting Duncan and Smith's (2009) postulation that the medium is considered an *additive medium* (where readers or receivers interpret based on their own experience and knowledge).

#### **9.2.4 Conclusion of Findings**

It must be noted that the different components that construct comics conventions are well presented in all three graphic novels. The necessitation of this objective is pertinent as the study needed to establish the various components and how they are represented in the novels. This is deemed necessary as only through a deeper understanding of the mechanic of these comics conventions can the novels be effectively deciphered to construe meanings. In a literature classroom, this is pertinent as various embedded literary elements can be revealed through a 'semiotic toolkit' (Siegel, 2006) and educators need to unpack these components effectively for their students to increase comprehension and promote various multi-literacies.

Contrary to assumptions, however, the study discovered that the authors and illustrators of all three novels did not work together. The writers adapted the original text original texts and the illustrators worked on the given text. The publishing houses acted as the go between both writers and illustrators. It can also be summed here that while the writers worked in determining the text stays as close as possible to the original text by selecting pertinent events that define the plots of the original works, the illustrators too made informed choices in highlighting these events as close as possible. At times, there was also clear indication of extra panels without text that further enhanced the narrative of the classics visually.

Another contributive finding reveals an interesting outcome. Based on RQ2 and RQ3, it is noted that action oriented elements are prevalent in all three graphic novels of the adapted classics genre. Importantly, this study establishes that both writers and illustrators of this genre relied on actions, both linguistically and visually represented to support the abridgement of the originals as denoted in Figure 9.1.



**Figure 9.1:** Action Oriented Elements in Graphic Novels  
from the Genre of Adapted Classics

Figure 9.1 shows a clear prevalence of the sub-processes of Action Processes through visual analysis, Material Processes through textual analysis and Action-to-Action transitions through cohesion analysis. This notably indicates a parallel relationship in establishing the need to depict actions as a representation of various important events that scaffolds the narratives. Though not conclusive to all graphic novels, the analysis indicates that the writers and illustrators of these novels prefer action oriented elements to bring forth the adaptation of the story as close as possible to the original narrative structuring which scaffolds the plot by concentrating on action events or episodes. This shows that though both illustrators and writers did not collaborate, there seem to be an unwritten mutual agreement that the illustrator exactly knows how to depict the images based on the text. The inference of Action-to-Action transitions also indicates that informed choices scaffolds panel transitions, from one to another. The illustrators' choice of images in the panels which subsequently influences the type of transitions from one panel to another underpins McCloud's (2006) assertion that this type of transition creates efficiency whereby "the cartoonist only picks one moment per action,

so each panel helps further the plot and keep the pace brisk” (p. 16). This helps in binding the narrative into a cohered text through its images.

It must be noted that the specific dedication of one whole chapter (Chapter 8) to discuss the merits of deploying graphic novels in the classroom denotes the importance of their contribution. From a pedagogical perspective, there is an obvious need that educators are aware of the conventions of comics to exhaust the novels effectively. In addition, the integration of visual analysis through the comprehension of the conventions of comics and VG will enable students to become aware of the textual-visual synergy within any graphic novels or comic books specifically in the ESL and literature classrooms. This highlights the need of RQ 1 and RQ2 in addressing how the various elements within comics, textual and visual components play a role in construing meanings in graphic novels. In utilising these multimodal texts effectively, the need to embrace non-traditional literacy boundaries are pertinent and this is clearly propounded by Serafini (2011) who asserts that “incorporating arts, media, and semiotic theories and interpretative strategies into the classroom requires teachers to read outside the traditional boundaries of educational work and curricula” (p. 349). Nevertheless, to put the adapted versions on the same pedestal as the originals will be a rather premature attempt as this study once again stresses that the graphic novels used in this study acts only as supplementary materials; and not a replacement to the originals.

The deployment of the conventions of comics shows that the adapted graphic versions of *BB* and *JttCotE* conform to a typical comic layout popular with mainstream comic books and graphic novels. In the case of *TBVM*, this study establishes the fact that it should be considered a graphic reader rather than a graphic novel mainly due to its structural composition. In addition, the disruptions in between the flow of stories with

exercises clearly support the assertion that this novel is suitable to be termed as a reader rather than a graphic novel. It must be noted that though non-conformity is accepted in the production of graphic novels, the layout of *TBVM* does not warrant it to be considered a graphic novel due to the superficial layout discussed earlier which supports it to that of a picture reader.

The new way of retelling these classics through the interplay of text and image in the medium of graphic novels offer great introduction to the world of great literature. The comprehension of the varied components of the conventions of comics in these novels accentuates a deeper understanding and appreciation of the novels. This study has shown that though the novels are from the genre of adapted classics, they do carry the various elements of comics which are prerequisites. Rather than being simple and monotonous, the varied textual and visual choices show that much thought and effort have been put inside the publication of these novels. For one, though the novels are abridged from the originals, they do scaffold the original narrative as close as possible without any alterations, thanks to the writers of the adapted versions. This could be seen from the summary of the plot presented in Chapter 4. More importantly, the original visions of Sewell, Verne and Doyle in various issues like mistreatment to animals (*BB*), a love for knowledge (*JttCotE*) and justice and judgement (*TBVM*) is succinctly depicted in the adapted versions either textually or visually.

Although the writers and illustrators of the novels were constrained by limitation of words and pages for their adapted versions, they were able to make sense of the adapted versions true to the original classics, adhering to a structure that scaffolds the original classics. This is in line with Marshall and Kovacs (2011) who posit that “if any reading is an interpretation (and therefore a reinterpretation), our understanding of an ancient

source will be enriched by looking at how that moment has been understood and read by others” (p. ix).

Notably, graphic novels and their digital sisters offer a myriad of opportunities to inculcate various literacies in the classroom. This supports Unsworth’s (2008) assertion that “developing an understanding of the social and pedagogic impact and potential of this kind of textual habitat necessitates a framework that encompasses its multiple dimensions as a unified resource” (p. 9) and hereby lays the need to have frameworks that could support the deciphering and interpretation of multimodal materials easily. More importantly, as Frey and Fisher (2008) concur, students must be given opportunities to not only “read or consume images, but also to write or produce them in ways that let the students’ values, feelings, and achievements take centre stage” (p. 23). In a multimodal reading, the combination of textual and visual elements create what Motta-Roth and Nascimento (2009) define as a “scaffolding resource for the reader” (2009, p. 343) as they “activate the readers’ background knowledge before the actual reading of the verbal text” (p. 344).

### **9.3 Limitations of the Study**

As other studies, there are several limitations which are listed below:

- 1) The study only covered the three graphic novels from the genre of adapted classics which are used as texts of the literature component which is a part of the Form 1 English Language syllabus. Thus, it is not representative and definitive of other graphic novels.
- 2) The study only investigated the ideational metafunction in terms of transitivity, thus excluding both interpersonal and textual analyses.

- 3) In terms of visual analysis, the study employed Kress and van Leeuwen's representation analysis, thus excluding interaction and composition analyses. The representation analysis complements the transitivity analysis of the textual element of the graphic novels.
- 4) As this study involves a detailed analysis of the conventions of comics, textual and visual analysis, and cohesion analysis, certain elements were singled out due to time limitation and word restrictions. The element of Participants is discussed in relation with their Processes for VG.
- 5) All visual analysis centres only on the main image representation which carries dominant constructed meanings to provide a parameter of confinement as the study includes different types of visual analysis (Visual Components of the Conventions of Comics, VG, PtPT, TII and Colour analysis). Co-raters were also involved in the initial stages of coding the images to verify the labellings of various elements.
- 6) Email interviews were not administered on three writers as two were unreachable and one had passed away.
- 7) Although this study adopts selected theories and specific texts, the findings are not representative for other texts based on the premise that other theories or a combination of them could be matched with other graphic novels for multiple interpretations. Nevertheless, the systematic approaches through frameworks and triangulations have guided the analysis of the various multimodal components. As O'Toole (1994) puts "Sciences recognize that even with the most empirical measurement of data, there is a stage where intuitive interpretation takes over and that is central to scientific enterprise; there is no 'final' answer" (p 177). And clearly, the findings of this study are not reflective to graphic novels of other genres.



#### 9.4 Suggestions for Future Research

There are a few suggestions on how future research can improve this study. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the area of graphic novels and comic books is still very much an open field and there are many aspects that could be considered and these include:

- 1) The use of other genres of graphic novels: This study concentrated on the genre of adapted classics and has revealed some interesting insights specifically on how meanings are construed. With an abundance of other genres like biographies, science fiction, politics, horror, war and others, there is much more to be discovered in realising how meanings are constructed in the various genres of graphic novels
- 2) Pedagogic implications in Malaysia: The chapter on pedagogic implications list various benefits of using graphic novels in the classrooms. Within the Malaysian context, there is yet to be any studies on ascertaining the effects of using graphic novels in increasing the language skills of Malaysian students, specifically reading and writing skills. A study on how teachers use graphic novels in the classroom could offer an interesting insight. Such studies would be able support the need to consider the medium of graphic novels as supplementary materials in the classrooms.
- 3) Research on other similar texts: With the introduction of the graphic novel *Jungle Book* for primary levels (Standard 4) by the MOE beginning January 2015, it would be interesting to note how a similar study could provide a comparison between the linguistics and visual choices of writers and illustrators of graphic novels specifically meant for children. In addition, the framework could be adapted to analyse other genres of books like picturebooks, illustrated readers and manga.

- 4) The use of other linguistics structures: Linguistics devices like interpersonal metafunction from SFL and composition element from VG can further enhance the depth of a multimodal analysis of graphic novels.
- 5) The use of colour as a modality would be able to provide an enriching insight on the compositional structure of graphic novels as this study only touched on colour and its role in enhancing cohesion.

## **9.5 Reflections**

This study has answered the calls made by various scholars like Wigand (1986), Stainbrook (2003) and Veloso and Bateman (2013) to further explore the area of comic books and graphic novels as the subject still remains very much untapped. The study clearly establishes that within the bigger picture, the full integration of the various modes; from the elements of the conventions of comics to the different textual and visual components specifically in the genre of adapted classics, meanings are construed through their presentations and representations. Pedagogically, this is pertinent to enable educators to realise the great potential that graphic novels has to offer in promoting multi-literacies to face the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century education styles. Though the finer nuances of reading a full-fledged literary classic might be missing specifically for aficionados, what is inherent is that the interplay of text and images offers a whole new world of visual experience that can be missing from linear texts; one that is rich in aestheticism and symbolism.

More importantly, within the Malaysian context, it is time that graphic novels are given the due recognition they so truly deserve specifically in the classrooms. Certainly to be multi-literate in this day and time, the inclusion of graphic novels can be considered as a

mean to broaden pedagogical literacy practices. While many students may be reluctant to pick up a classic to read, a highly stimulating graphic novel which embraces multimodality may encourage them to graduate to other genres of books. And this, is a truly remarkable achievement seen through the lens of an educator, for Mark Twain once declared, “The man who doesn’t read is no better off than the man who can’t read”.

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## **PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Journals**

- 1) Journal of Modern Languages (Issue 2014)  
Title: Anthropocentrism in the Graphic Novel *Black Beauty*
- 2) Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences (MOJES)  
(Volume 03, Issue 02, April 2015)  
Title: Multimodality in Malaysian Schools: The Case for the Graphic Novel
- 3) Semarak Bahasa (Issue 2015)  
Title: It's All About the BASS: Literary Elements in Graphic Novels

### **B. Proceedings**

- 1) Conference: 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference: The Graphic Novel  
(University of Oxford, United Kingdom)  
Title: From Village Boy to Town Boy: Multiculturalism in Lat's Selected  
Graphic Novels (2013)  
[http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/RajendraTaib\\_gn2\\_dpaper.pdf](http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/RajendraTaib_gn2_dpaper.pdf)
- 2) Conference: National Educational Research Conference  
(Specialist Teacher Training Institute, Kuala Lumpur)  
Title: Multimodality in the Malaysian English Language Classrooms:  
Dissecting the Yin and Yang in Graphic Novels (2015)

### **C. Conference Presentations**

- 1) PMIOL 2012 - International Seminar of Pedagogy of Malay, Indonesian and Other  
Languages (Bandung, Indonesia)  
- 14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2012  
Title: Multimodality in the Literature Classroom: Using Graphic Novels as a Tool

- 2) MICOLLAC 2012 (University Putra Malaysia, Putrajaya Lakeside)  
9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> July 2012  
Title: Multimodality in the literature classroom: An analysis of Visual Representations in a Selected Graphic Novel
- 3) 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Conference: The Graphic Novel (University of Oxford, United Kingdom)  
22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013  
Title: From Village Boy to Town Boy: Multiculturalism in Lat's Selected Graphic Novels
- 4) MELTA International Conference on Graduate Research in English Language Education (University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur)  
16<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
Title: Multimodality in the Literature Classroom: An Analysis of Visual and Textual Representation of Meanings in Graphic Novels
- 5) University of Malaya Researchers' Conference (UMRC) – IGS UM  
20<sup>th</sup> November 2013  
Title: The Marriage of Yin and Yang in Graphic Novels
- 6) ASIA TEFL-MELTA Conference (Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching)  
28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Title: Multimodality in the Malaysian Literature Classrooms: The Yin and Yang of Graphic Novels
- 7) National Educational Research Conference (Specialist Teacher Training Institute, Kuala Lumpur)  
5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> August, 2015  
Title: Multimodality in the Malaysian English Language Classrooms: Dissecting the Yin and Yang in Graphic Novels (2015)

- 8) Innovation in Education Seminar (Malay Language Teacher Training Institute, Kuala Lumpur)  
10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2015  
Title: It's All About the BASS: Multimodality in the Preschool Classroom
- 9) International Conference on English Language Teaching International Conference (ICELT) (Equatorial Hotel, Malacca)  
19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2015  
Title: It's All About the BASS: The Art of Dissecting Picture Books
- 10) MELTA Conference (Royal Casuarina, Ipoh)  
30<sup>th</sup> May- 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016  
Title: A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Adopting the BASS Model in a Preschool Classroom
- 11) International Conference of Teacher Learning & Development (ICTLD) (ICTLD) (Cititel Hotel, Penang)  
28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016  
Title: A World Seen is a World Told Using the BASS Model in Dissecting Picture Books for Preschoolers

#### **D. Awards**

- 1) 3 Minute Thesis Presentation Competition UM, 2013 - 2<sup>nd</sup>. Prize
- 2) MELTA International Conference of Graduate Research in English Language Education, 2013 - Silver Medal
- 3) Innovation in Education Seminar, 2015 (Malay Language Teacher Training Institute, Kuala Lumpur) - Silver Medal
- 4) ICELT International Conference, 2015 (Equatorial Hotel, Malacca) - Silver Medal



## APPENDIX A

### Interview Script (Writer)

**Title: A Multimodal Analysis of Graphic Novels Used in the Malaysian English Language Classroom**

#### Aims of Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to elicit information to substantiate and justify the choice of graphic novels as part of the revamped Literature Component of the English Language syllabus. The novels were first introduced in January 2010 to students of Form 1. The three graphic novels are based on the classics *Black Beauty*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*.

The information that you provide will be used to triangulate my study. Your willingness to answer the questions honestly is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

#### Abstract of Research

The traditional mono-modality of presenting information in the literature classroom which stresses on text often raises problems for students in understanding texts and to inculcate a love for reading literature texts. In order to overcome this problem, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia introduced graphic novels to promote a love for reading in January 2010. Through this research, I intend to explore the multimodal elements in these graphic novels from both visual and verbal representations, as research has indicated graphic novels pave way for enhanced visual literacy. It is hoped that the results yield will shed light on the multimodal elements in the three graphic novels used in the literature classrooms and help teachers in using these novels effectively in the classroom.

## WRITTEN RESPONSE

Name		Place of Work	
Nationality		Occupation	

Question Guide	Responses
<p>1 Please tell me more about yourself.</p> <p>1.1 General</p> <p>1.2 Hobbies</p> <p>Any other information the interviewee wishes to share.</p>	
<p>2 Please tell me about your writing career.</p> <p>2.1 Training</p> <p>2.2 Writing experience</p> <p>Reasons to choose writing as a career.</p>	
<p>3 Do you like reading graphic novels? If YES, Proceed to Question 4.</p>	<p>Highlight Your Response:</p> <p>YES</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>4 What influences your reading of graphic novels?</p> <p>4.1 General elements</p> <p>4.2 Most important elements</p>	

<p>5 How do you adhere to the following elements from the original book?</p> <p>5.1 Plot</p> <p>5.2 Theme</p> <p>5.3 Characteristics</p> <p>5.4 Setting</p> <p>5.5 Mood</p>	
<p>6 Does your own interpretation of the original work influence the way you write?</p> <p>If YES, how?</p>	<p>Highlight Your Response:</p> <p>YES</p> <p>NO</p>

**Directions: Answer each of the following questions using complete sentences.**

(adapted from Stafford 2011)

- 1) How did you develop your distinct writing style?
- 2) How do you research and compile your reference materials for writing?
- 3) How do you go about transforming a classic work of literature into comics form?
- 4) Did you read the original version of *Black Beauty/ Journey to the Centre of the Earth/ The Boscombe Valley Mystery* before embarking on the project of writing the book?
- 5) Did you work with the illustrator of *Black Beauty/ Journey to the Centre of the Earth/ The Boscombe Valley Mystery*?  
If Yes, how? If No, why?
- 6) What are the differences between adapting novels constructing your own piece of work?

- 7) Are there limits in terms of what type of content your style can appropriately handle?
- 8) How do you decide what goes into the caption box and speech balloons?
- 9) What were some of your obstacles in adapting *Black Beauty/ Journey to the Centre of the Earth/ The Boscombe Valley Mystery* into a graphic novel?
- 10) How much of the original storyline did you 'let go' while you were writing *Black Beauty/ Journey to the Centre of the Earth/ The Boscombe Valley Mystery*?
- 11) What role did comics play in your development?
- 12) What is your most challenging aspect of your job?
- 13) Are there dictates that constrain your work in any way?
- 14) What are some of the taboos that even you won't address?
- 15) How does your creative process operate when you are low on ideas?
- 16) What motivates you to write?
- 17) Tell me about your other books.
- 18) How are you currently utilizing computers in your work/ have you found ways to "humanize" the technology?
- 19) What do graphic novels allow you to say that no other text or visual medium affords?
- 20) What makes a good graphic novel? Conversely, what makes a graphic novel bad?

21) Do you consider yourself a draftsman or storyteller? And can you be one without the other in comics business?

22) Can you tell me the process of a graphic novel creation?

23) Which writers have inspired you?

24) Finally, why do you think there are many adaptations of books into graphic novels?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.**

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Script (Illustrator)

**Title: A Multimodal Analysis of Graphic Novels Used in the Malaysian English Language Classroom**

#### Aims of Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to elicit information to substantiate and justify the choice of graphic novels as part of the revamped Literature Component of the English Language syllabus. The novels were first introduced in January 2010 to students of Form 1. The three graphic novels are based on the classics *Black Beauty*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*.

The information that you provide will be used to triangulate my study. Your willingness to answer the questions honestly is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

#### Abstract of Research

The traditional mono-modality of presenting information in the literature classroom which stresses on text often raises problems for students in understanding texts and to inculcate a love for reading literature texts. In order to overcome this problem, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia introduced graphic novels to promote a love for reading in January 2010. Through this research, I intend to explore the multimodal elements in these graphic novels from both visual and verbal representations, as research has indicated graphic novels pave way for enhanced visual literacy. It is hoped that the results yield will shed light on the multimodal elements in the three graphic novels used in the literature classrooms and help teachers in using these novels effectively in the classroom.

## WRITTEN RESPONSE

Name		Place of Work	
Nationality		Occupation	

Question Guide	Responses
<p>2 Please tell me more about yourself.</p> <p>2.1 General</p> <p>2.2 Hobbies</p> <p>2.3 Any other information the interviewee wishes to share</p>	
<p>3 Please tell me about your illustrating career.</p> <p>4.1 Training</p> <p>4.2 Illustrating experience</p> <p>4.3 Reasons to choose illustrating as a career</p>	
<p>5 Do you like reading comics/graphic novels?</p> <p>If YES, Proceed to Question 4.</p>	<p>Highlight Your Response:</p> <p>YES</p> <p>NO</p>
<p>6 What influences your reading of comics/graphic novels?</p>	

<p>a. General elements</p> <p>b. Most important elements</p>	
<p>7 How do you adhere to these elements from the original text?</p> <p>a. Plot</p> <p>b. Theme</p> <p>c. Characteristics</p> <p>d. Setting</p> <p>e. Mood</p>	
<p>8 How do you consider the following elements in the illustration of comics/graphic novels?</p> <p><b><u>Visual Component</u></b></p> <p><b>Panel/Frame</b> Shapes and Positions</p> <p><b>Shots</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extreme long shot</li> <li>• Long shot</li> <li>• Knee shot</li> <li>• Medium shot</li> <li>• Medium close-up</li> <li>• Close up</li> <li>• Extreme close up</li> </ul> <p><b>Background</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> <li>• Minimalist</li> <li>• Detailed</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Textual Component</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech / Word balloon</li> <li>• Caption</li> <li>• Sound effects words</li> </ul>	



**Directions: Answer each of the following questions using complete sentences.**  
(adapted from Stafford 2011)

- 1) How did you develop your distinct illustration style?
- 2) How do you research and compile visual reference materials?
- 3) How do you explain your preference for captions, which you use extensively, often to the exclusion of word balloon?
- 4) How do you go about transforming a classic work of literature into comics form?
- 5) Did you work with the writer of *Black Beauty/Journey to the Centre of the Earth/The Boscombe Valley Mystery*? If Yes, how? If No, why?
- 6) What are the differences between adapting novels constructing your own piece of work?
- 7) Are there limits in terms of what type of content your style can appropriately handle?
- 8) What role did comics play in your development?
- 9) What is your most challenging aspect of your job?
- 10) Are there dictates that constrain your work in any way?
- 11) What are some of the taboos that even you won't address?
- 12) How does your creative process operate when you are low on ideas?
- 13) What motivates you to draw/illustrate/write?
- 14) How are you currently utilizing computers in your work/ have you found ways to "humanize" the technology?
- 15) What kind of visual techniques do you use, ie: lavish textured paintings to economical line drawings?
- 16) What do graphic novels allow you to say that no other text or visual medium affords?

- 17) What makes a good graphic novel? Conversely, what makes a graphic novel bad?
- 18) Do you consider yourself a draftsman or storyteller? And can you be one without the other in comics business?
- 19) What do you look at for inspiration?
- 20) Can you tell me the process of a graphic novel creation/ At what point do you as the artist come in?
- 21) Which artists and illustrators inspired you?
- 22) Finally, did you read the original version of *Black Beauty/Journey to the Centre of the Earth/ The Boscombe Valley Mystery* before embarking on the project of illustrating the book?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.**

## APPENDIX C

**Interview Script (Official from the Curriculum Development Department,  
Ministry of Education of Malaysia)**

**Title: A Multimodal Analysis of Graphic Novels Used in the Malaysian English  
Language Classroom**

### Aims of Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to elicit information to substantiate and justify the choice of graphic novels as part of the revamped Literature Component of the English Language syllabus. The novels were first introduced in January 2010 to students of Form 1. The three graphic novels are based on the classics *Black Beauty*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and *The Boscombe Valley Mystery*.

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### Abstract of Research

The traditional mono-modality of presenting information in the literature classroom which stresses on text often raises problems for students in understanding texts and to inculcate a love for reading literature texts. In order to overcome this problem, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of Malaysia introduced graphic novels to promote a love for reading in January 2010. Through this research, I intend to explore the multimodal elements in these graphic novels from both visual and verbal representations, as research has indicated graphic novels pave way for enhanced visual literacy. It is hoped that the results yield will shed light on the multimodal elements in the three graphic novels used in the literature classrooms and help teachers in using these novels effectively in the classroom.

**Interviewee's Particulars**

Name of Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions: Answer each of the following questions using complete sentences.**

- 1: What made the MOE to determine graphic novels as part of the curriculum?
- 2: Who were involved in the selection of these novels?
- 3: How was the selection committee determined?
- 4: What were the criteria used to choose these three novels/books?
- 5: Were these novels/books adapted for Malaysian schools?
- 6: How different are these graphic novels from the original texts?
- 7: Were these novels/books commissioned by the MOE?
- 8: Why were novels/books of Asian authors not considered?
- 9: Why were novels depicting Asian stories not considered?
- 10: Why were the selected books based on a selected genre? (eg: post-modernism etc.)
- 11: How were the publishers and printers selected for the novels/books?
- 12: In your opinion, can these novels be categorized as graphic novels or readers?
- 13: Do you think that graphic novels constitute a form of literature? Why, or why not?
- 14: Any other relevant comments that you would like to share.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.**

## APPENDIX D

a)

**Table A:** Number of Splash Pages and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Number of Splash Pages and Percentage	Related Pages
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )		
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )		
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )		

b)

**Table B:** Number of Bleeds and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Number of Bleeds and Percentage	Related Panels
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )		
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )		
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )		

c)

**Table C:** Types of Balloons and Percentage of Occurrences

Title / Number	Total Balloons	Type of Balloons						
		Round	Rectangular	Thought	Expressive	Yelling	Mechanical	Others
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )								
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )								
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )								

d)

**Table D:** Types of Captions and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Number of Captions	Types of Captions	
		Bordered	Borderless
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )			
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )			
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )			

e)

**Table E:** Number and Types of Sound Effect Words

Title	Number of Sound Effect Words	Types
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )		
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCoE</i> )		
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )		

f)

**Table F:** Types of Panels and Percentage of Occurrences

Title/ Number	Total Panels	Type of Shapes								
		Rectangular	Jagged	Cloud Like	Geometric	Circular	Wavy	Scroll Shaped	Index Card Shaped	Others
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )										
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )										
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )										

g)

**Table G:** Types of Panel Positions and Percentage of Occurrences

Title/Number	Total Panels	Type of Positions		
		Regular	Overlap	Split
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )				
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )				
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )				

h)

**Table H:** Types of Shots and their Frequencies of Occurrences

Title/Number	Total Panels	Type of Shots						
		Extra long shot	Long shot	Knee shot	Medium shot	Medium close-up	Close-up	Extreme close-up
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )								
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )								
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )								

i)

**Table I:** Types of Backgrounds and Frequency of Occurrences

Title/Number	Total Panels	Type of Background		
		None/Sans	Minimalist	Detailed
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )				
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )				
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )				

j)

**Table J:** Number of Emanata

Title/Number	Number of Emanata
Black Beauty ( <i>BB</i> )	
Journey to the Centre of the Earth ( <i>JttCotE</i> )	
The Boscombe Valley Mystery ( <i>TBVM</i> )	

k)

Table K denotes the distribution statistics of Process types and their occurrences in the analysis.

The tabulation for percentage is shown below.

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of Process Types in each text}}{\text{Total Number of Process Types in each text}} \times 100$$

**Table K:** Types of Processes and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Processes						Total	
	Material	Mental	Relational		Behavioural	Verbal		Existential
			Identifying	Attributing				
Black Beauty (BB)								
			Total (Percentage)					
Journey to the Centre of the Earth (JttCotE)								
			Total (Percentage)					
The Boscombe Valley Mystery (TBVM)								
			Total (Percentage)					



1)

Table L denotes how the distribution statistics of Participant types in the analysis.

The tabulation for percentage is shown below.

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of Participant Types in each text}}{\text{Total Number of Participant Types in each text}} \times 100$$

**Table L:** Types of Participants and the Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Participants																Total	
	Actor	Goal	Scene	Beneficiary	Attribute	Senser	Phenomenon	Token	Value	Carrier	Attribute	Behavior	Behaviour	Sayer	Verbiage	Receiver		Target
BB																		
JttCotE																		
TBVM																		

m)

Table 4.26 denotes how the distribution statistics of Circumstance types.

The tabulation for percentage is shown below.

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of Circumstances Types in each text}}{\text{Total Number of Circumstances Types in each text}} \times 100$$

**Table M:** Types of Circumstances and Percentage of Occurrences

Title	Types of Circumstances									Total
	Location	Extent	Cause	Accompaniment	Matter	Role	Manner	Contiguity	Angle	
<i>BB</i>										
<i>JttCotE</i>										
<i>TBVM</i>										

n)

**Table N:** Narrative and Conceptual Representations in *BB/JttCotE/TBVM*

Chapter	Panels Depicting Narrative Processes			Panels Depicting Conceptual Processes		
	Action	Reaction	Mental	Classification	Symbolic	Analytical
1						
2						
<b>TOTAL (Percentage)</b>						
<b>Overall Total (Percentage)</b>						

o)

**Table O:** Type and Frequency of Transitions in *BB/JttCotE/TBVM*

Chapter	Mom-t-Mom	Act-t-Act	Sub-t-Sub	Sce-t-Sce	Asp-t-Asp	Non-Sequitur	Total
<b>Total/ Percentage</b>							

p)

**Table P:** Type and Frequency of Text Image Interactions in *BB/JttCotE/TBVM*

Chapter	Symmetry	Enhancement	Complementary	Counterpoint	Contradiction	None	Total
<b>Total/ Percentage</b>							

## APPENDIX E

**Name of Researcher: Thusha Rani Rajendra**

**Place of Study: Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya**

### **Participant Consent Agreement**

1. I agree to participate in a research study on Text Analysis entitled **A Multimodal Analysis of Graphic Novels Used in the Malaysian English Language Classroom**
2. I understand that the study will involve written responses and text analysis.
3. I grant permission for the data related to me to be utilized in the process of completing a doctorate, and understand that this will include a thesis and probable future publications.
4. I understand that my name, and any other information will not be utilized in any way which might identify me, nor those whom I discuss.
5. I give permission of the inclusion of direct quotations from the interview and/or documents produced by me to be utilized within the thesis and future publications.
6. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research if I experience any difficulties as a result of my continued participation.

Name: .....(Research Participant)

Designation: Writer

Signature:

Date:

Name: Thusha Rani Rajendra (Researcher)

Signature:.....

Date:

## **APPENDIX F**

### **SOFT COPY OF GRAPHIC NOVELS AND ANALYSIS**

(Please refer to the attachment on the inside cover of the thesis)

University of Malaya