



## Exploration of the Sufferings of Refugee Children: A Semiotic Study of Picture Books

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aims to highlight the sufferings of refugee children through the sign language used in two picture books and the main objective has been to explore the ways, the characters adopted to confront all the challenges of their lives. As for as the methodology of this study is concerned, it is based on the qualitative method. Kress and Leeuwen's (2006) modal of visual grammar is applied as a theoretical framework for this study. The findings revealed that although the characters of these picture books have gone through crucial circumstances in the course of the war they still practiced good values and didn't let their souls be corrupted in any way. In this way, they set a glorious example for all the children across the world. Moreover, through this study, the researcher is hopeful that it will help out the language classroom in several ways as to promote good values among the learners, to enable them to understand and analyze the texts through the pictures illustrated in their books and develop interesting non-verbal activities for them to enhance their social, intellectual and emotional development.

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## 1. Introduction

Throughout the world, children's books are considered the basic building blocks that help children how to read and learn. These books also contain pictures inside them which not only help children to get a better understanding of the story by relating the world presented in those pictures to the story which they are reading or hearing and this thing enhance their comprehension ability. It also leads them to trace different cultural values, beliefs, and norms through those pictures (Johnson, 2014). Their services are not limited to the single aspect which is mentioned above rather they perform other multiple functions also, as they play a crucial role to develop children's mental perception of the real world and the people around them (Short, 2013). They shape their attitude and behavior towards others. They provide a ground for them to observe and judge things based on their own experiences and perception. They enable them to understand the cultural differences which other people practice.

Moreover, the role of these images is also to convey certain ideologies and a particular social and moral message that invites the children to learn values, facts, and concepts that can be applied to real-life situations. Thus, they are supposed to decode and interpret those meanings and messages with the help of a particular linguistic device such as semiotics. According to (Aziz, Hassan, Dzakiria, & Mahmood, 2018), semiotics is a science that helps to study different signs within societal or cultural perspectives. Peirce (1931) said it helps to interpret the sign language and behavior of the people. It helps to analyze the non-verbal language of the text most often in terms of images. Kress and Leeuwen's 2006 semiotic model of visual grammar is a big name in the reading and interpreting of images. The model of visual grammar is convinced that the images also contribute to establishing a healthy interpersonal or interactive relationship between both parties, the participants of the images, and the people who are watching those participants. They also invite the viewers to explore the hidden meanings in them and to figure out what the

writer wants them to do. Images have the potential to influence children's views about their relationships with others and their expectations from others as well (Carter, 2013).

The books under this study are focused to highlight the challenges and hardships of the refugee children who lost their homes and country as a result of war and are forced to live in refugee camps in Afghanistan. Both authors addressed the issues of these children to highlight the drawbacks of war which ultimately become the cause of unlimited social problems and to spread the messages of peace, patriotism, sacrifice, friendship, and love for human beings. Hence, these books are to be analyzed through the lens of visual grammar theory which comes under the category of social semiotics. Through this study, the researcher has aimed to explore the hardships of refugee children and to investigate the social relationship between the characters of those pictures and their viewers. The researcher has explored the ways the characters adopted to confront the challenges of their lives. Moreover, the researcher has also been determined to highlight the messages conveyed by the author and illustrator through the sign language of the selected picture books.

### **1.1. Research problem**

Communication is not limited to the verbal aspect only, it equally becomes powerful when it is developed through sign language. The study is focused to investigate the level of interaction maintained through the pictures in the selected storybooks. It is also determined to highlight the sufferings of the refugee children and the way they encounter all those challenges.

### **1.2. Research Questions**

- How do the pictures illustrate in these storybooks reflect the sufferings of refugee children?
- What type of social relationships exist between the characters and their viewers?
- What sort of messages did the author convey through the sign language of the selected picture books?

### **1.3. Research Significance**

Through this particular study, the researcher is hopeful that it is to help out language classrooms in multiple ways. It will enable the students to understand some text through its non-verbal aspect and to analyze its language. In short, it will add to their comprehension skills. Moreover, from the teacher's perspective, it will help them to design different activities to encourage their students to become effective learners.

## **2. Literature Review**

Strouse, Nyhout, and Ganea (2018) did their study entitled "The Role of Book Features in Young Children's Transfer of Information from Picture Books to Real-world Context". The main objective of the study was to investigate the role of picture books in supporting children learning and transfer of information in terms of the real world. The population of the study was comprised of preschool children's books. The study was qualitative. However, the findings of the study revealed that a book containing unrealistic and imaginary content might be a great challenge for a little audience in terms of the distinction between the concepts which can be applied to the real world and the concepts which can only be enjoyed. So, picture books containing real content can be more supportive of the learning process than imaginary ones.

Moses, Rylak, Kachorsky, and Serafini (2020) researched to understand how young readers use visual, textual, and design resources in contemporary picture books. The paradigm was qualitative and social semiotics were applied as the framework to identify the ways in which children having a wide range of literacy proficiency extracted meanings from the selected picture books. While the findings showed that consumed a wide range of resources that have been often missing from early literacy assessment. Isnah, Subandiyah, and Pairin (2021) asserted that literature that is available in cyberspace like YouTube can be easily approached by anyone and it has become a cause of cultural exchange. They conducted qualitative research to examine the cross-cultural narratives in such type of literature and the results showed that cyber literature developed for children carries so many cross-cultural narratives about Chinese New Year celebrations, Korean style haircuts, night markets, and English Divaphali celebrations that not only affect the children's literary fiction but also leave an impact on actual reality.

Tufail, Khan, and Qureshi (2021) explored the visual representation of Covid 19 in children's literature through the lens of the semiotic approach devised by Kress and Leeuwen (2006). Meanwhile, the researcher applied the qualitative method, and the data was gathered by using the purposive sampling technique to make sure the holistic interpretation of selected covers. The findings showed that the actions done by the participants of the selected covers were really meaningful and aimed to motivate the young ones in a positive way. Moreover, they conveyed a message of hope and a strong desire to resist the virus.

Moya-Guijarro and Mateo (2022) held research intending to explore the verbal and visual strategies applied by the author and illustrator in five selected picture books that did not seem to confirm the traditional masculine gender stereotypes. The study was qualitative, and to carry out that particular research, the researchers applied systemic functional social semiotic, a multimodal framework. The findings revealed that the verbal and mental process remained dominant in all pictures and provided essential cues fostering progressive gender discourse.

Barekat and Shafiee (2019) argued that children are exposed unintentionally to different attitudes, values, and approaches embedded in some text and are beyond the level of particular pictures. So, they held their study to explore the role of women in those picture books through the lens of social semiotics along with the qualitative paradigm. The results of the study revealed that such types of picture books are aimed to introduce the social role of women and to discuss the implicit values periodically. These books show the world where one gender always remains dominant. The reviewed studies mentioned above suggested that although most of the researchers around the world have explored children's picture books from multiple angles and still nobody has gone for the exploration of refugee children through the images illustrated in such types of books and this is the research gap of this study also.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

Semiotics is the study of sign language in terms of its social or cultural perspective. Peirce (1965) defines semiotics as "A sign that stands for something else, it develops an equivalent sign or image in the minds of viewers and it would be called the interpreted version of that particular sign".

In this study, the researcher is going to apply the model of social semiotics or the grammar of visual communication (2006) proposed by Gunther Kress and Van Leeuwen in their book namely "Reading Images": The Grammar of visual design (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). They both proposed this model intending to provide a linguistic tool that can help analyze visual material such as pictures, maps, and diagrams. Therefore, their model provides a deep insight into decoding certain non-linguistic messages proposed in a particular visual image or any other kind of visual communication. However, they both were highly inspired by Halliday's theory of systematic functional grammar, so designed their theory under the influence of the same three meta-functions proposed by Halliday. In this way, their theory entitled grammar of visual communication also falls under the same three meta-functions, but here we will only discuss the interactive or interpersonal meta-function of visual communication which is also the main focus of this study.

#### **3.1. Interactive Meta-function**

This is inspired by Halliday's interpersonal meta-function. Thus, it is also focused on the relationship between the producer of the image and the viewing audience of that picture or image. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) believe that every image contains a certain social message and requires the viewers to decode it. So, this decoding process is done through four structures which are mentioned below.

##### **3.1.1. Gaze or Contact**

It can be understood as the social contact which is established between the producers or the participants of the image and the viewers. It means that the presented participants do not have the opportunity to speak to the viewers directly but still, they have the power to maintain an interaction with them and it is done through their gaze angle. So, if the viewers find the presented participants making direct eye contact with them, it means that the participants want their viewers to take a stand for them or to perform a certain action to solve their problem. On the other side, if the participants do maintain direct eye contact, it means that they do not want the viewers to interfere with them but rather just offer them an opportunity to observe them

silently. Thus, through their gaze angle, images can demand or offer something to their viewers. Moreover, this type of relationship usually depends on facial expressions and gestures i.e. Smile, defensive gesture, cold stare, finger pointing, and looking up. All these expressions help viewers, to understand what the represented participants want them to do.

### 3.1.2. Social Distance

It refers to the distance between the viewers and the participants of the image. This distance is measured through different angles that decide the relationship of both parties. Hence, these visions or angles are mentioned below:

- Only the face of the participants represented in an image indicates an intimate distance and involves both parties in an intimate relationship.
- The presence of the head and shoulders of the represented participants shows close personal distance and it is also an indication of an intimate relationship between the participants represented in an image and the viewers.
- Participants' looks from head to waist are the indicator of personal distance.
- The presence of the whole figure of the participant is an indication of social distance and leads both parties towards an impersonal relationship.

### 3.1.3. Attitude or Angle

The third type of structure which can produce a certain type of relation between the persons presented in an image and the persons having the look of that image is known to be a point of view or angle. However, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) have defined two types of angles here, which are horizontal and vertical. These angles help to know whether the producer of the image and viewers are in the same case of involvement with the presented participants or not. Hence, we can say a frontal angle shows the involvement of both parties but an oblique angle shows a detachment expression, in the same way, a vertical angle expresses a sense of power in terms of high, medium, and low angle or shot, like high shot suggests the participants' inferior position before the viewers and gives them the freedom to decide whether they should involve with participants or not, medium shot maintains an equal relation and low angle or shot shows the presented participant superior and requires the viewers to take a stand to solve their problems.

### 3.1.4. Modality

Modality structure refers to the perception of the viewers about the reality of the image. According to Kress and Leeuwen, modality is a phenomenon that depends on what is going to be considered real in the society for which this representation is intended. Therefore, it can be said that an image modality is interactive rather than representation and it decides the truthfulness and credibility of an image. Moreover, image modality involves the following markers.

**Table 1: Interactive Modality**

Markers	Maximum Scale	Minimum Scale
Color saturation	Fully colored	Combination of black and white
Presentation	It contains the maximum details of the participants	Contains minimum details
Contextualization	It contains the detailed background	The background is missing here

In this way, interactive modality includes the three different concepts or markers which are shown in the above table and also have been used in this particular study.

## 4. Methodology

The study is qualitative and why it is used in this study because the researcher thought that this paradigm will enable her to have a deep insight into the phenomenon presented in the selected pictures and to obtain rich non-numerical data. Qualitative research is embedded in the philosophy of empiricism and is determined to follow a flexible, open, and unstructured approach of inquiry that always goes for the exploration of diversity rather than quantifying things and puts an emphasis on the description and narration of perceptions, experiences, and feelings (Kumar, 2018). Picture books and the sufferings of refugee children are two main variables of this research. Meanwhile two picture books namely "My Name is Sangoel" and "Four Feet Two Sandals" have been the source of data while, a particular sample of ten pictures has been selected

from these two books through the use of purposive sampling. While the content analysis approach has been utilized to analyze the data.

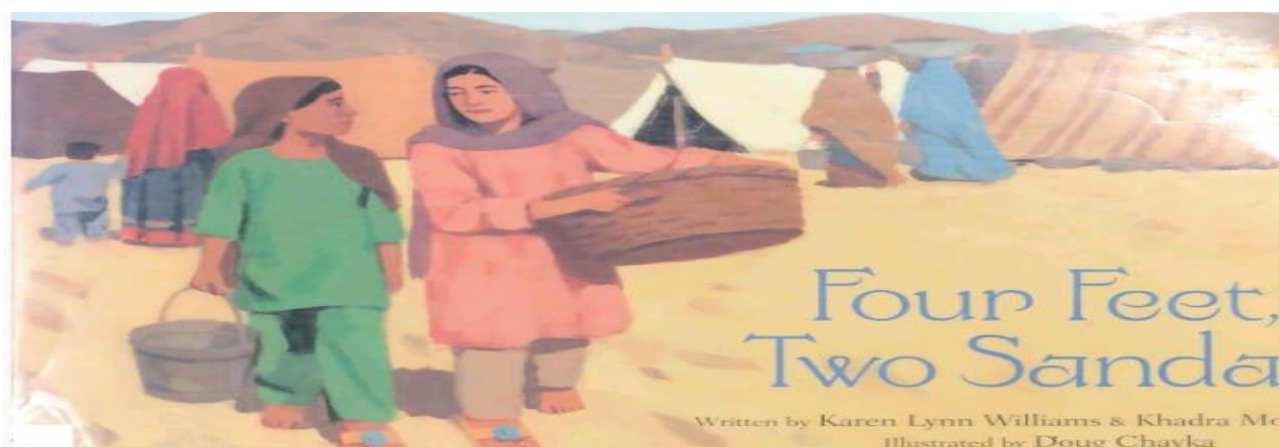
## **5. Analysis of Book 1: Four Feet, Two Sandals**

### **5.1. Figure 1**

#### **5.1.1. Gaze**

This is an "offer image" because the participants are not looking toward the viewers rather they stand as a source of information and observation. There are six participants in this image. The way they are presented, it becomes clear to the viewers, that they are refugee people because they seem without shoes, wearing old clothes, having huts to live in and most importantly, the buckets in their hands and on their heads, evidently show them the people who have lost their country and are forced to live a miserable life. However, the participants are Muslim by religion because they are wearing dupattas or gowns. Further, the author seems to convey the message of kindness and sharing because the main participants of this image, who are two little girls can be seen wearing the same pair of shoes on their feet as they want to tell the people, does not matter how much the circumstances are bitter, we can make them easy by adopting good values and doing good deeds.

#### **Figure 1**



*Note: From Four Feet Two Sandals*

#### **5.1.2. Distance**

All six participants in this image seem to suggest a long social distance as their entire bodies appear in the frame of the image and this thing establishes an impersonal relationship between them and the viewers.

#### **5.1.3. Attitude**

The main participants of this image indicate the use of oblique horizontal angle and require the viewers to stay away from their life and world, while the secondary participants are showing their back angles this is also an indication of detachment. However, the vertical angle is high expressing the viewer's superiority in terms of power.

#### **5.1.4. Modality**

The image can be perceived as the truthful one in terms of color saturation, contextualization, and presentation, as it shows different colors, and presents the maximum details of the participants.

### **5.2. Figure 2**

#### **5.2.1. Gaze**

The indirect gaze of the participants shows this image (figure 2) as an "offer" and reveals the author's intention again to convey how people's life gets destroyed when a war is being imposed on them and to give a message of peace to the world.

#### **5.2.2. Distance**

A public social distance is being suggested through this image because the participants have appeared from their entire figures.

### 5.2.3. Attitude

Its horizontal angle indicates the use of two sub angles namely back and oblique and both stand for a complete detachment from the participants' world. In terms of vertical dimension, a slightly high angle is employed to make viewers superior to the participants.

**Figure 2**



*Note: From Four Feet Two Sandals*

### 5.2.4. Modality

The viewers can observe a rich interactive modality in this image in all aspects of color saturation, contextualization, and presentation of the participants.

## 5.3. Figure 3

### 5.3.1. Gaze

The image presented above stands for an item of observation. It depicts two little girls on the bank of a lake. One participant is washing the clothes without having shoes on her feet when she gets interrupted by another girl, who gives her a yellow shoe of the same pair which one part can be seen being placed beside the washing girl. So, the image conveys a message of kindness to the viewers.

**Figure 3**



*Note: From Four Feet Two Sandals*

### 5.3.2. Distance

Both girls can be seen from their entire figures which reminds the viewers of a formal relationship not only between the both girls but with the viewers as well.

### 5.3.3. Attitude

Both girls are captured from an oblique angle, to remind the viewers of a complete detachment from the participant's world. As for as the vertical angle is concerned, a high angle is used to place the participant in a superior position in terms of power.

#### **5.3.4. Modality**

The image reveals multi-colors inside it and also provides the maximum details of the refugee girls. It contains a detailed background as well like a beautiful lake, a huge ground, and huge mountains.

#### **5.4. Figure 4**

##### **5.4.1. Gaze**

In terms of gaze, the image seems to be an "offer image" that intends to convey a message of friendship and mutual respect. Hence, it shows two little girls giving a hug to each other as they are going to get away from each other, the way they are meeting, suggests a strong bond between both of them. The viewers can also decode a message of sacrifice in the image because the girl wearing a pink dress is taking the same pair of shoes which they both discovered one by one, but when she is about to go, her friend gives her own to her to make her friend more comfortable. This thing tells that besides a good friendship a relationship of respect and sacrifice is also existed between them.

#### **Figure 4**



Note: From Four Feet Two Sandals

##### **5.4.2. Social Distance**

As the girls can be seen from head to shoulders down, so they stand for a close personal distance which is also a symbol of personal relation.

##### **5.4.3. Attitude**

The side angle of the girls requires the viewers to be detached from their world because they do not want interference from the viewer's side. The vertical side of the image shows an eye level to maintain an equal power relation between the participants of the image and the viewers.

##### **5.4.4. Modality**

In respect of color saturation, the image is colored. Similarly, the presentational dimension is giving a somewhat detailed description of the participants in respect of their bond and emotions for each other. However, the image shows a lack in terms of contextualization as it does not show a detailed background.

#### **5.5. Figure 5**

##### **5.5.1. Gaze**

The image shows four participants, two little girls and two children sitting in a refugee camp in a very dejected mood. Further, it reveals an indirect gaze of all the participants and seems to be a source of contemplation because it invites the watching people to figure out why the girl in a green dress is crying. It can be said, through this image, the author wants to arise sympathy for the participants.

### 5.5.2. Distance

The entire figure of the participants in this image lead the viewers toward a formal relationship.

**Figure 5**



*Note: From Four Feet Two Sandals*

### 5.5.3. Attitude

One participant is captured from a frontal to leave a ground of involvement for the viewers, while the left is shown from an oblique angle to remind the viewers to be detached from their world. On the other side, their vertical angle shows an eye level to maintain an equal power relation between the participants and the viewers.

### 5.5.4. Modality

The picture (figure 5) is colorful in terms of color saturation, while its presentational aspect also a detailed description of the participants. However, its contextualization does not bring a detailed background.

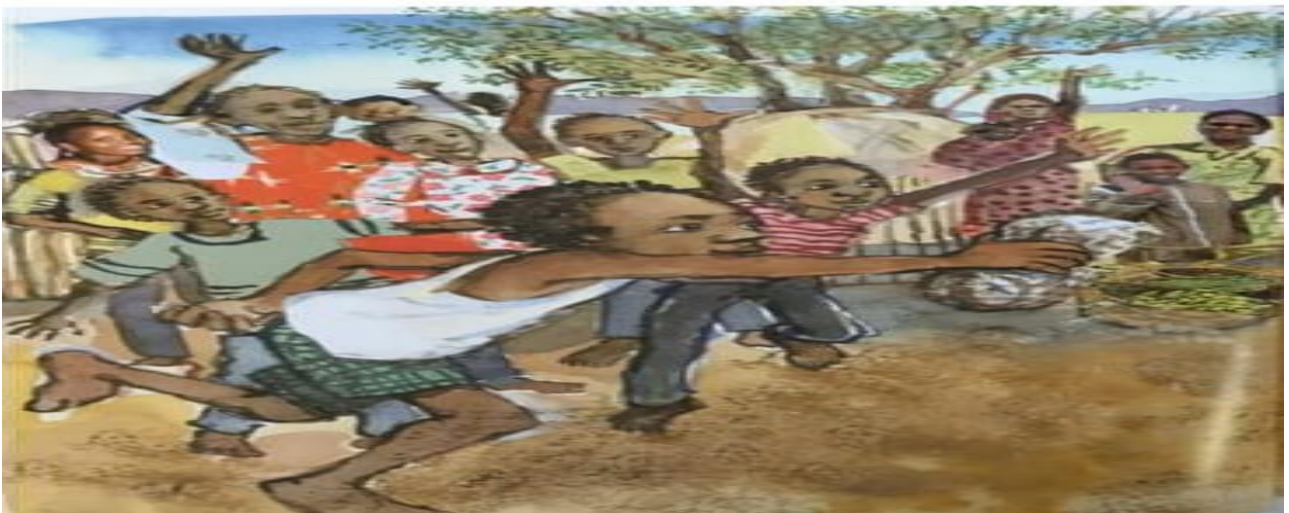
## 6. Analysis of Book 2: My Name is Sangoel

### 6.1. Figure 6

#### 6.1.1. Gaze

This is again an "offer image" as it does not show the direct gaze of any one of the participants and merely tries to be a source of information as it reveals a crowd of people gathered to say goodbye to someone who is far away from the sight of the viewers. However, the pathetic condition of the crowd reveals their financial crisis as they can be seen without shoes.

**Figure 6**



*Note: My name is Sangoel*



### **6.1.2. Distance**

Two types of angles are employed here namely high shot and medium shot as some of the participants can be seen from head to toe suggesting a far public distance and impersonal relation with the audience while some of them are being captured from head to knee down suggesting a close personal distance as they expect the viewers to show some sympathy for their sufferings.

### **6.1.3. Attitude**

All the participants are captured from an oblique horizontal angle indicating a sense of detachment from the viewers while in terms of the vertical side, a high shot can be observed which shows the inferiority of the people in the image.

### **6.1.4. Modality**

The image (figure 6) is rich in all aspects of interactive modality as it contains color saturation and a detailed presentation of the participants and their backgrounds.

## **6.2. Figure 7**

### **6.2.1. Gaze**

The image displayed above is again an "offer image" presenting a scene inside the plane. There are a total of three participants in this image, including a lady with her two children. It has been considered as an "offer image" since it does not show the direct gaze of the participants, so, it stands as a source of information and some extent an item of contemplation. It shows the sad facial expressions of the participant to reveal their hardships of life, further, their ill health and dressing style also informs the viewers about their being a part of some refugee nation. It is to say that the image leaves the ground for contemplation and insists the viewers make their contribution towards the betterment of such people.

### **Figure 7**



*Note: My name is Sangoel*

### **6.2.2. Distance**

All three participants can be seen from head to waist indicating a close personal distance. They expect the viewers to show sympathy for them to make their contributions to make life easy for them.

### **6.2.3. Attitude**

In terms of horizontal aspect, two angles are employed here namely frontal and oblique, as the lady and her daughter sitting in her lap can be seen from a frontal angle indicating a sense of involvement, while, the boy is captured from an oblique angle presenting a complete detachment from the viewers' side. As its vertical angle is concerned, a medium shot can be observed to be employed here to indicate an equal relationship in terms of power.

### **6.2.4. Modality**

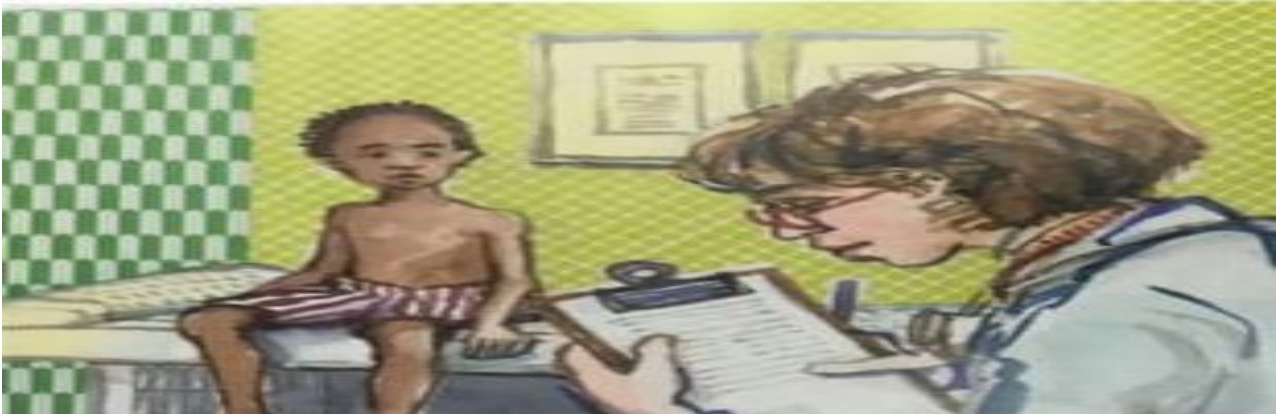
The image (figure 7) shows different colors inside it, so, it can be considered as color saturated. In terms of presentation, it shows three characters with their detailed expressions. However, the background of this image fails to show any kind of detailing.

### 6.3. Figure 8

#### 6.3.1. Gaze

The presented image is shown two participants inside a clinic, a black boy and a white doctor. Both participants are not having eye contact with the viewers, so, the image can be categorized as an "offer image" as it is intended to be the source of information and leaves the viewers in a state of contemplation. The boy is very weak and he is looking towards the doctor having a lot of questions in his eyes, as he wants her to make him understand the problem that he is going through. While the doctor is looking busy going through most probably the reports of the boy. Here, the doctor's body gestures get the viewers to be concerned about the health of the boy.

#### Figure 8



*Note: My name is Sangoel*

#### 6.3.2. Distance

Two types of shots are employed here in terms of distance, as the boy can be seen from head to knees down which is an indication of the high medium shot and suggests the formal social distance or relation, while the second participant who is a doctor, indicates a close personal distance leaving the ground for personal relationships not only with her patients but with the viewers also.

#### 6.3.3. Attitude

In terms of the horizontal perspective of the image, the participants are captured from an oblique angle suggesting a complete detachment from the viewers. On the other hand, the vertical side of the image presents an eye level having an equal power relationship between both parties and leaves the ground for contribution.

#### 6.3.4. Modality

The particular image (figure 8) is embellished with different colors. The participants are shown very clearly in terms of their social and national stability. The background also shows a fully colored wall of the clinic and the pictures being hanged on it.

### 6.4. Figure 9

#### 6.4.1. Gaze

The image (figure 9) presents a classroom where a lot of students are sitting in a proper arrangement. Further, the image does not show the participants having a direct gaze towards the viewers and this thing leads this image to be an "offer image" and a source of information. The majority of the learners are white except the black one who is looking misfit in this environment. If the viewers link this image to the previous ones, they will come to know that this is the same boy who has been seen earlier traveling in a bus and later in a plane.

#### 6.4.2. Distance

All the participants in this image present a long social distance and impersonal relationship with the viewing audience as they are captured from a long shot and can be seen from head to toe.

### 6.4.3. Attitude

The horizontal side of this image shows an oblique angle which stands for a complete detachment from the participants' life and world. While its vertical side reveals an eye level indicating an equal power relationship between the participants and the viewers.

**Figure 9**



*Note: My name is Sangoel*

### 6.4.4. Modality

The image (figure 9) presents a high modality in terms of contextualization, presentation, and background. The image shows different colors inside it. Further, it is contained a lot of participants with their facial expressions and other body gestures. The background of this image is also detailed having the classroom decorated with a lot of pictures and other things.

## 6.5. Figure 10

### 6.5.1. Gaze

The presented image suggests an "offer image" in terms of the indirect gaze of the participants. It shows three participants including a mother and her two children and stands as a source of information and a matter of contemplation as well as both children are looking very upset and their sad postures get their mother also to be sad. The image does not only reveal the sadness of the participants to the viewers but also forces them to think about the possible reason for the sadness of the innocent participants.

**Figure 10**



*Note: My name is Sangoel*

### 6.5.2. Distance

The image presents a close personal distance as it shows the participants from their heads to their shoulders down and indicates the personal relationship with the viewers requiring their sympathy and contributions towards the solution of their problems.

### **6.5.3. Attitude**

The horizontal perspective of this image indicates two angles frontal and oblique. The mother is captured from a frontal angle and requests the viewers to do something to reduce the sadness of their children. However, the vertical angle shows an eye level or medium shot to suggest symbolic equality.

### **6.5.4. Modality**

The image (figure 10) can be categorized and as far as its presentation is concerned, it presents three participants in a very detailed manner in terms of dressing, their taste of food, and most importantly their emotional state of mind which easily can be felt through their sad expressions. Its vertical side can be seen with a slightly high angle indicating its inferior position in terms of power relations with the viewing audience. However, its background reveals a lack of details except for the colorful wall behind the participants.

## **7. Findings**

### **7.1. Gaze**

Gaze can be defined as eye contact in the context of visual grammar and the function it performs, is to indicate whether the image is being portrayed as just a matter of observation of a certain phenomenon or it demands some action from the watching people. As for as the gaze of this study is concerned, the researcher has explored 99% of images being a matter of observation which in other words called "offer images". It is claimed because all the characters in these pictures are not found to have any sort of direct eye contact, it means that they just want their watching people to observe the circumstances they are going through and feel a deep sympathy for them but at the same time, the way they encounter the challenges of their lives seemed to inspire the viewers in a very positive way.

### **7.2. Distance**

Kress and Leeuwen's visual grammar (2006) defined the social relation between the parties through three shots respectively tracing the close, semi-formal, and informal relationship. Hence, 80% images of in this study, are captured from a long shot as the characters' entire bodies can be seen by the viewers. So, this long shot reminded an informal relationship between the characters and their viewers which never allows any sort of personal interference with each other.

### **7.3. Attitude**

Kress and Leeuwen defined attitude in two categories respectively horizontal and vertical. Horizontal attitude indicates the relationship between the presented characters and the viewers through three sun- angles namely front, back, and oblique. As for as the vertical angle is concerned, it also falls into three sub-types high, medium, and low shot. Whereas, the function it performs is to determine the power relation between both parties. Similarly, a high shot stands for the superior position of the viewing party and makes them independent in deciding their involvement with the presented people, medium shots are the indication of equal relation and a low shot shifts the power towards the presented peoples' side.

So, the horizontal side of this specific study showed a 10% back angle reminding the complete detachment of the people presented in the images from the people being watching those images and the remaining 90% showed an oblique angle that also indicates the partial detachment from the characters' side.

While the vertical angle showed an 80% high shot investing all the authority or power towards the viewers' side and letting them decide whether they want to be involved with the presented people or not. However, the remaining 20% traced the presence of medium shot and maintained the equal power relation between both parties.

### **7.4. Modality**

Interactive modality is comprised of three sub-types respectively color saturation, presentation, and contextualization. All the images under this study are marked with 90% of rich modality as all are fully colored, carrying the maximum details of presented people and also having the maximum background.

## 8. Conclusion

The present study was conducted to explore the sufferings of refugee children living in the camps of Afghanistan in the course of the war. They were devoid of necessities but remained positive in their attitude and practiced universal values like tolerance, friendship, peace, and sacrifice for other human beings.

The study can be claimed as an authentic one because it enabled the researcher to find answers to all the questions which the study was based upon. There were three research questions in this research study to be answered. First, How the images in picture books help to highlight the sufferings of the refugee children. In the book entitled "Four Feet Two Sandals" the images successfully portrayed the difficulties which the characters faced being the victim of war and were forced to live in refugee camps of Afghanistan with the shortage of necessities of life like enough food, water, clothes, shoes and proper medical treatment. Their pathetic condition melts the heart of their viewers and they feel deep sympathy for them.

In the second book under this study namely "My Name is Sangoel" the viewers can easily see how wars leave a negative impact on the lives of the people by making them devoid of their own country, their home, and their dear ones without whom they cannot even imagine to spend their lives. It also snatches the innocence of the innocent children and gets them elder before the time. The same thing happens with Sangoel, eight years old boy who lost his father in a bloody war and decides to take responsibility for his mother and younger sister to compensate for the absence of his father. He is forced to leave Somalia, his own country, and moved to America, where he has gone through an identity crisis that affected both his physical and mental health, but despite all these hurdles he adopted positive behavior and gradually succeeded to earn respect for him.

The second question of the study is "What do the characters of these storybooks want their viewers to do for them. As has been already mentioned above, in the context of visual grammar, it is always the gaze that reveals the expectations of the presented people from their viewers. So, all the images under the data showed an indirect gaze which reminds us that all these images stand for an observational phenomenon, and the presented characters just want their viewers to observe their circumstances without any interference with their lives.

The third question has been "What sort of messages the writer was intended to convey through the character of these two books. After the deep observation of both books, the researcher got convinced that through these characters, the author was optimized to spread different social and moral values like patriotism, friendship, sacrifice, tolerance, and mutual respect. It becomes evident, when the viewers see in a refugee camp in Afghanistan, two little girls namely Feroza and Leena sharing the same pair of shoes on alternative days. Although both girls have gone through very hard circumstances still they didn't lose their patience and believed in good values which ultimately got them able to set a glorious example of friendship and sacrifice for all the children of the world. In the same way, Sangoel, the protagonist of the second book, also became the inspiration for the children as despite facing all the racial injustices in America, he never stopped to exercise positive behavior toward others and finally succeeded to survive with his Somalian identity in the racial society of America.

### 8.1. Future Recommendations

- The researchers can explore the other aspects of children's literature to investigate its role to enhance the cognitive development of children.
- They can investigate the role of picture books in a language classroom to promote the critical ability of the students.

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