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An Investigation of the Integration of Inter-semiotic Complementarity in Iraqi EFL Textbook

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Abstract

Nowadays, multimodal texts are widely used in the media, schools, and daily life. There have been several studies on nonverbal semiotics in multi-semiotic texts. This study examines the complementarity of verbal and visual semiotic modes in an Iraqi EFL textbook. Royce's (2007) inter-semiotic complementarity and Kress Van Leeuwen's (1996) structure of information value were used to analyse an Iraqi EFL textbook titled English for Iraq (Garnet, 2017). According to the analysis, the entire textbook is not built on a page-by-page path that allows linear and nonlinear reading. Although the information layout varies from page to page, the overall structure of the textbook image allows for a linear reading path from start to finish. Texts in multimodal EFL are required. This study investigated the relationship between verbal text and image in terms of address, social distance, and participation because multimodality conveys teachers' perspectives on language learning (the extent to which the reader engages with what is represented). This study's sample includes analytical units. Each verbal and visual sample text-image relationship was determined, and the participation and address levels were comparable. We discovered that social distance favors divergence over convergence in English education and learning. Young students select, design, and employ multimodal textbook materials.

Keywords: multimodality, inter-semiotic complementarity, semiotics' mode, EFL, school textbooks

INTRODUCTION

The classical intellectuals of the fourth-century B.C.C. emphasized the possible influences of voice, gesture, and expression on the art of the speech-making, which is when the multimedia concept was proposed. Humans have employed visual, aural, kinaesthetic, and other senses to create and receive literature. People have made meaning from ancient narratives to modern web browsers through visuals, sounds, gestures, and touch (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020). Because demands and aspirations are given to resources, technology, and internet access, cultural ideas and values influence textual production and consumption. Multimedia discourse has earned great interest since O'Toole and Michael (1994), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), and others began using the term. Research topics include academic discourse, such as mathematical discourse (Nhat, 2017; O'Halloran, 2004) or textbooks (Unsworth, Cope, & Nicholls, 2019), as well as speech for entertainment, such as music videos and graphic novels, or advertisements, to name a few (Rajendra, 2015). Students with varying levels of education will benefit most from this type of research using illustrated books. English textbooks in educational institutions include text and visual images. Both of them have been used to construct meaning. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006, p. 2) explain, "visual structures realize meanings as linguistic structures do also, and thereby point to different interpretations of experience and different forms of social interaction." This means that applying visual images to language teaching material has a different experience for students because they may connect it with their experiences (Nurul Hidayati et al., 2020). Some inter-semiotic studies have focused on textbooks for students' universities. Wignell (2011) revealed that science authors use evaluative language in textbooks for university writing. Liu and Qu (2014) state that the EFL textbook series for Chinese College students are similar because their representative multimodal texts are visually coherent for inter-semiotic semantic relations. These previous studies are insightful, but they focus on EFL textbooks. Recent research aims to fill this gap by investigating how inter-semiotic contributes to meaning-making in ELT textbooks used by foreign language learners. Each of these resources intersemiotically contributes to the construction of meaning through the meaning potentials of

that resource (Nurul Hidayati et al., 2020; O'Halloran, 2011). For this purpose, visual images offer text to show how visual images and languages may contribute to the processing of meaning-making. Multimodal literacy has gained more attention among literacy educators, researchers, and curriculum authorities (Damayanti, 2014; Hermawan & Sukyadi, 2017; Unsworth et al., 2019). As students' interactions with multimodal texts in recent years are increasingly pervasive, the focus of literacy in school can no longer be limited to the reading and writing of printed texts such as school textbooks. The current study is an attempt to justify and answer the question; what kinds of reading path patterns are used to track the flow of knowledge deriving from the language and image resources in Iraqi EFL textbooks and their potential for practical use in EFL classrooms?

As an alternative, students need support in making meanings from multimodal texts that integrate images and language (e.g., picture books) and from online and virtual settings (e.g., social media, websites, and wikis). In teaching English as a foreign language, picture books have been widely used to assist with children's language learning. Images, typically rich in picture books, are usually used to help students identify new lexical items as they provide context to create meaning (Lee, 2015; Mourão, 2016; Sun, 2015). While images tend to be treated as an 'addition' to words, meaning-making in picture books depends on pictures and words (Unsworth ,2006). Using picture books in EFL classrooms, thus, entails the necessity for EFL teachers to be concerned with developing their own and their students' multimodal literacy. Multimodal textbooks require skills in interpreting visual and verbal meanings. Using multimodal textbooks in EFL classrooms requires teachers and students to develop multimodal literacy. In response to the need for developing multimodal literacy, the study investigates reading path patterns to track the flow of knowledge deriving from the language and image resources in Iraqi EFL textbooks, as well as their potential for practical use in EFL classrooms (Grunbaum, 2021; Reynolds, 2015).

The current study is based on two SFL concepts: inter-semiotic complementarity by Royce (2007b) and compositional meanings in visual design by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). These conceptual theories relate to the study's primary objective, mapping a children's book's reading path. The

reading path is the order and direction in which the reader approaches the text or images on the page (O'Halloran, Marissa, Podlasov, & Tan, 2013). The reading path is then divided into linear and non-linear paths. A linear reading path involves sequentially reading the text. In western societies, linear texts are usually read from left to right and top-to-bottom. Unidirectional or closed text is linear. The author of the page determines the reading path. A typical example of a linear text is a newspaper article without pictures. In non-linear reading, the reader engages with the text non-linearly and non-sequentially. Multidirectional or open text is non-linear text in which the reader chooses a reading path. Websites are examples of non-linear texts. Pictures in the textbooks sit between linear and non-linear texts because texts and images co-create meaning. Most authors decide how to read a story's words, but their readers can interact with the pictures.

Inter-semiotic Complementarity

Multimodal textbooks use language and images to communicate. It is essential to understand both sources by comparing them. The study uses inter-semiotic complementarity (Royce, 2007b) to understand language-image relationships. Royce (2007b) offers Inter-semiotic Complementarity as a multimodal analysis framework to help EFL teachers develop their students' multimodal literacies and design a pedagogical metalanguage to aid learning. This framework extends Halliday's SFL theory, which emphasizes the role of social contexts in constructing and interpreting meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Meaning resources in SFL theory are ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational metafunction represents our world experience (doing, thinking, relating, etc.) involving processes, participants, and circumstances. Interpersonal meaning expresses our attitudes and opinions. Textual meaning creates a coherent, cohesive text in context.

Royce (2007b, p. 66) refers to visual metafunctions as ideational-representational, interpersonal, and textual-compositional. Royce (2007b) suggests that focusing on ideational inter-semiotic complementarity may help EFL learners extract informational content from English language learning materials. This paper examines the idea of inter-semiotic complementarity in a multimodal textbook using Royce's (2007b)

framework. Ideational inter-semiotic analysis begins with identifying verbal meanings; each clause is analyzed in terms of its transitivity features, which include processes, participants, and circumstances (additional information related to where, when, and how). The next step is to identify the represented participants' visual message elements (VMEs), activities, circumstances, and attributes. VMEs are then grouped into lexical inventories and compared to verbal items for similar or differentiated meanings. Understanding frameworks is also needed to evaluate a textbook using multimodal text analysis. This area has influential figures. Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006, 2021) grammar of visual design and Royce's inter-semiotic complementarity were used in this study (1998, 2002, and 2007). These two frameworks cover ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions under Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Matthienssen, 2004, 2014). In this regard, the ideational metafunction concerns "reality, events, and experiences," the interpersonal metafunction concerns entrenching and keeping social rapports, and the textual metafunction concerns the organization of discourse through which "information flow" is managed and kept. Visual meanings and their relationships to verbal meanings are also elaborated under the notion of inter-semiotic complementarity, which in this regard is focused on the ideational metafunction. Royce (2007) posits that visual message elements (henceforth VMEs) capture the visual components that "carry semantic qualities, and these semantic properties or meanings may be realized in a number of visual ways." Once VMEs have been derived, they can be compared to the meanings expressed by textual semiotics. Identity, activity, context, and attributes can be used to code both the VMEs and the textual meanings:

> Identification: represented participants, such as who or what is in the visual frame.
> Activity: actions that were taking place.
> Circumstances: The context of a situation, such as where, who, and how.
> Attributes: The qualities and characteristics of the participants (Royce, 2015).

Royce (2007b) recommends using Halliday and Hasan's analysis of cohesion in a text, such as repetition (R), synonymy (S), antonymy (A),

hyponymy (H), meronymy (M), and collocation (C). Visual ideational meanings are also analyzed using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) narrative representation. It is used to examine how images represent our experiences of the world by identifying lines or "vectors" that emanate from participants or other elements in the image.

COMPOSITIONAL MEANING

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) developed the fundamental concept of conceptualizing compositions in a static or page-based multimodal image. As a page-based multimodal text's overall composition, the representational and interactive elements relate to each other and integrate into a meaningful whole through compositional patterns (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Three interrelated systems connect these functions: information value, salience, and framing. The information value of a page focuses on the value of the various sections of the page. Image salience refers to an image's ability to stand out visually. For example, a frame's presence or absence could disconnect or connect an image to its surroundings.

Table 1.

The inter-semiotic analysis framework by Royce, 2006.

Verbal meanings	Semantic relationships	Visual Message Elements (VMEs)
Lexical elements which relate	Various lexico-semantic ways of relating the	Variations occur according to the coding orientation.
to the visual meanings. These lexical items arise according to:	experiential and logical content or subject matter represented or projected in both visual and verbal modes through the intersemiotic sense relation of:	*Activity (Process):* what action
Process: what action is taking place, events, states, types of behaviours	*Repetition*: identical experiential meaning	*Circumstances:* where, who with, by what means
		Identification (Participant): who or what
Participant: who or what is involved in any activity or process	*Synonymy:* the same or similar experiential meaning	*Attributes:* the qualities and characteristics
Circumstances: where, who with, and by what means are the activities being carried out	*Antonymy:* opposite experiential meaning	
	Meronymy: the relation between the part and whole of something	
Attributes: what are the qualities and characteristics of the participants	*Hyponymy:* the relation between a general class of something and its sub-classes	
	Collocation: an expectancy or high probability to co-occur in a field or subject area	

RESEARCH METHOD

The selection of Images from the Iraqi EFL textbook

The primary data for this study are a sample of pages from Iraqi EFL textbooks published by Garnet Education in 2017. The Garnet Education is a UK-based independent ELT publisher with decades of experience. Garnet Education, which focuses on English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes, works extensively with the Iraqi Ministry of Education to design EFL textbooks for the Iraqi schooling system. The story's central plot revolves around a variety of everyday concerns. As life skills topics, "cultural" practices vary from place to place. The attire and demeanor of the people in the various locations, topics, and his home country illustrate this contrast. For example the Japanese do not practice customs such as greeting visitors with politeness, marching, singing or eating with finesse, while the Iraqi culture shows the opposite as a part of their heredity customs.

They are transforming from inappropriate figures into a moral message emphasizing the importance of inner qualities over outer ones, time, and technology. One of the figures can acquire a deeper understanding of the moral message conveyed by the images by examining the images and the accompanying text (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Painter, Unsworth, 2006). Students can learn to comprehend multimodal texts by recognizing characters and plot structures in written texts. Additionally, they can do so by analyzing visual representations and presentation order. Even though the written texts describe a photograph of an outsider, the visual details make the photograph appear even more out of place.

Data Collection

A qualitative, descriptive SF-MDA study was conducted. It was deemed a suitable approach because, according to O'Halloran and Fei (2014), it can be adopted to analyze multimodal texts ranging from two dimensions, such as printed or digital text, to three dimensions, such as arts, texts or gestures, and time-based texts, including music, film, television, etc. (Knox, 2013). The Systemic functional-multimodal discourse analysis (SF-MDA) henceforth SF-MDA can also be used to understand the meaning systems of image and verbal texts and a text's social functions (Jewitt, Bezemer, & O'Halloran, 2016). In

this study, the two modes' interpersonal meanings were compared. Also, several frameworks were used to interpret the interpersonal meanings of visual and verbal texts and their interrelationships. In this case, they were Halliday (1994) and Halliday & Matthiessen's (2004, 2014) interpersonal metafunction of systemic functional linguistics, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006, 2021) interactive meanings of visual design grammar, and Royce's (1998, 2007) intersemiotic complementarity.

The examined artefact is a multimodal text in the form of a discussion accompanied by an image from an Iraqi EFL textbook titled *English for Iraq: Student's Book for six preparatory school students* (Garnet, 2014). The textbook was chosen because it is used in preparatory schools in northern Iraq (except in the Kurdistan Region). It was also designed and introduced by a reputable publisher with credible and reliable authors; one of them even had global teaching experience and it included artefacts in the form of discussion, covering not only verbal texts but also images, which is another reason why textbook selection should be scrutinized.

The identification of the design of each image was required to select the analyzed pages even though the study did not focus on genre analysis, and the data sets comprise two spreads (a double-page) and a page representing the Orientation and Complication stages of the story. These stages were selected as they provide rich analysis and valuable development for investigating the reading path patterns. Due to the copyright issue, this paper does not supplement the corresponding multimodal textbook pages. Instead, graphs and black and white sketches of the pages or spreads are supplied to visualize the mapping and visual analysis.

The three data sets are displayed in Figures 1–3. Figure 1 illustrates a spread that introduces the story's characters. Figure 3 displays a page that focuses on the characters' activity. Figure 3 illustrates another extent that presents an attempted solution made by the story's main characters.

In different shots there is plenty of information that needs to be clarified by both the teacher and the students. Clearly, this depends on how much knowledge there is and how each part of the educational situation is cultivated about English language.
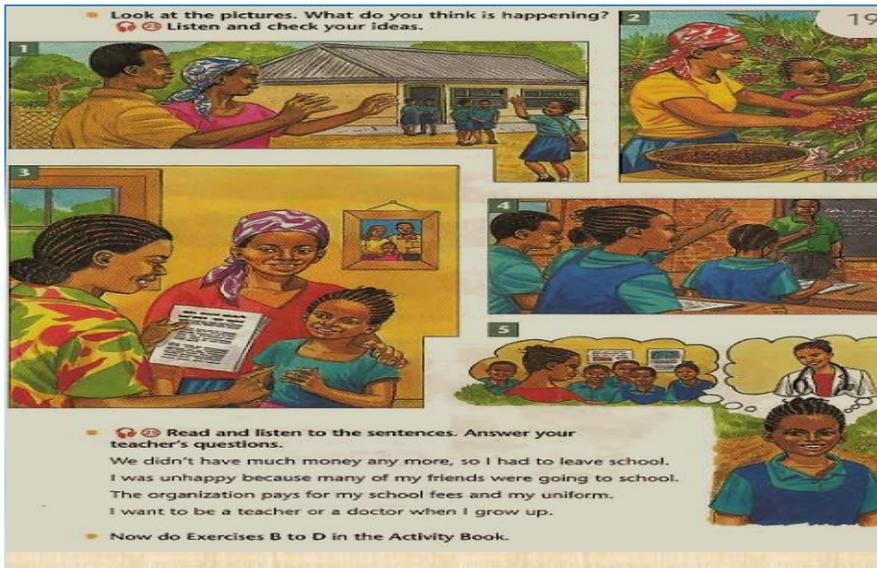
Figure 1. An image presenting the different stages of the main characters of reading part of unit 2. Adopted from Iraqi EFL textbook for preparatory school.
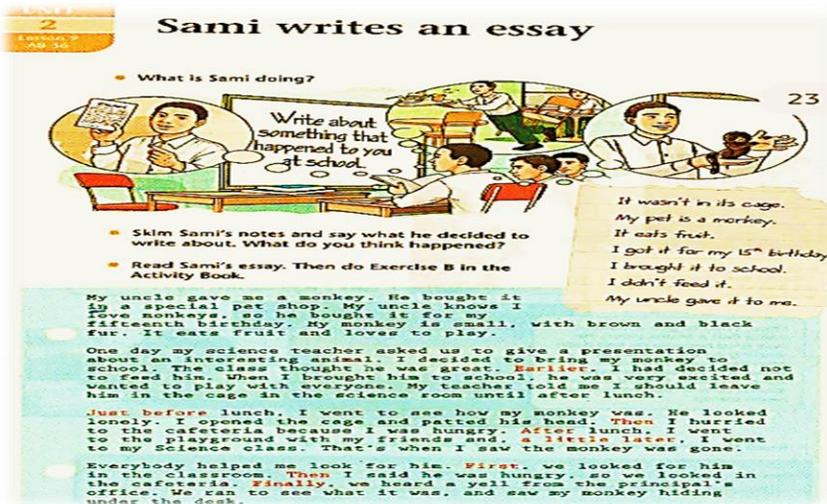

Figure 2. Here is the image and the text are complete each other as the text describing what happening with the above shots for a student called Sami who is describing his school work.
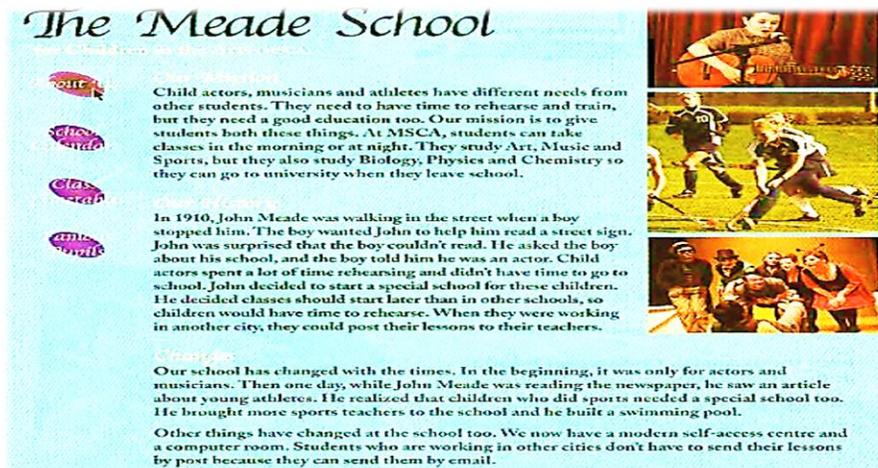
Figure 3. An image of three shots about special school types which is unfamiliar in the Iraqi context.

PROCEDURES AND DATA ANALYSIS

The understanding process of the contents of images of study is constructed by two factors—the layout of the language and image content and the interrelationship between the meanings of language and image on specific pages or spreads. Both accounts contribute to the overall construction of the narrative's reading path. Before a detailed analysis of how the information value is organized and how each page's language and image elements work together, a general observation was made about how the school topic was chosen on the spot. The study combines two fundamental methodologies: the structure of information value proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) and the inter-semiotic complementarity proposed by Royce (2007a, 2007b). To unpack the information value and complementarity relations between inter-semiotics, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) explain how the placements of elements (participants and syntagms that relate them to each other and the viewer) provide them with the specific informational values associated with the various 'zones' of the image: left and right sides, top and bottom margins, and center and margin.

Second, the relationship between the language and images in the multimodal textbook is examined. Royce's (2007b) research identifies these

connections as cohesive mechanisms realized through repetition (R), synonymy (S), antonymy (A), hyponymy (H), meronymy (M), and metonymy (M). There is a collocation (C) between language and image resources on the same page. After the analysis, the image in the textbook's overall reading path map will be created. In addition, classroom applications of this reading map's pedagogical implications are formulated.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The inter-semiotic complementarity analysis in this paper focuses on the stages in which the contrast between the characters in Denise's family and friends is established to build and release the tension encountered by the main characters. Denise's story introduces the characters regarding their identities, locations, and activities. In Figure 2, the identity of the characters is introduced on a double-page spread that depicts a single visual element spanning the two pages and one separated textual element on each page. The texts are annotated in the figure as Text A and B. The verbal texts identify the single girl as' Denise 'and the other five as' her companions. ' On the left page, the five girls are shown looking away from Denise. On the right page, they are shown looking at her.

In terms of verbal elements, each clause in the textbooks (Texts A, B1, and B2) was analyzed to identify the represented meanings. Figure 5 presents the analysis of the first data set as follows.

Table 2.

An introductory analysis of verbal element in the first page

Text 1		
Her companions	were unnamed	Goodly, Lovely, Angel, Neatly, and Perfect
Denise	Process: identifying anonymously	Value
Text B1		
Her name	Was	Denise
Denise	Process: identifying but unknown to the student	Value
Text B2		
Unknown	Was	an odd person (at the image) might be identified later
Carrier	Process: attributive	Attribute

The analysis shows that each clause in the text blocks construes the identification of the represented participants. Interestingly, the identifying clauses in texts A and B1 name the characters with referents that reflect their qualities. For example, each of the five shots is unnamed with proper nouns with excellent features such as 'lovely' and 'perfect.' On the other hand, the 'different' quality of the girl in the shots from other people is not only identified by her appearance but also by the classifying attribute of being 'unknown.'

Turning to visual elements, this spread of meaning includes two main participants, a group of three shots, and the image itself.

Table 3.

Summarises the analysis of visual meanings that focuses on the introduction to characters

Elements	Visual Realisations	Visual Transitivity Roles	Visual Message Elements (VMEs)
Identification	A schoolgirl	Reactor	girl's friends and family
Attribute	Solid-colored bow ties, false collar, curly hair		family values
Identification	A family	Phenomenon Actor	The Mom
Attribute	Plaid bow tie, yellow flowery shirt, colored T-shirt, dark skin and wide eyes		An outsider, happy
Identification	A classroom, and a teacher	Goal	Classroom context
Activity	Learning in a group	Non-transactional action process	Majority
Activity	Be a teacher, dreaming	Transactional-action process	Comfort
Circumstance	Working in the farm, learning, and dreaming to be a successful teacher	Manner	Superior

A group of people to schoolgirls' vector reveals transactional reaction processes. However, even though all the girls' bodies are pointing in the same general direction as the teacher and most of their eyes are closed and chins raised, a transactional reaction process can be seen proceeding from one particular girl's gaze and the beaks of two people in the group's

center. People in the picture (reactors) who see the phenomenon (Denise) as the undesirable other are having an exchange in this shot. While the little girl is assigned as a phenomenon, she is also an actor in an active process; that is, she works and studies. The main characters, the girl and her mother, are also contrasted by their attributes. Her uniformed, solid-colored bow ties and false collars make it easy for her co-workers to blend in with the background. All of them appear refined and conservative in this context. On the other hand, the girl with curly hair and a flowery Hawaiian shirt represents formality and simplicity, which are at odds with the landscape's dominant environment of everyday life procedures.

Bringing the verbal and visual elements together, the analysis of ideational-inter-semiotic complementarity indicates that the introduction page in this story provides more information than merely naming the characters. Table 4 displays the inter-semiotic complementarity of the introduction to characters.

Table 4.

Inter-semiotic complementarity of introduction to characters

Text sources	Message elements					
VMEs	A group of people	Conservative values	Superior, majority	A girl	Outsider	Comfort, happiness
Text A	Denise's family and colleagues	Goodly, Lovely, Angel, Neatly, and Perfect				
Text B1				Her name Denise	The girl	
Text B2				The girl	Odd	
Complementarity notes:	Synonymy	collocation		synonymy	synonymy	

Bringing the verbal and visual elements together, the analysis of ideational-inter-semiotic complementarity indicates that the introduction page in this story provides more information than merely naming the characters. Table 5 displays the inter-semiotic complementarity of the introduction to characters.

Table 5.

Representational meaning of characters' activity

Elements	Visual Realisations	Visual Transitivity Roles	Visual Message Elements
Identification	A school girl wearing a blue shirt with curly hair	Participant: Actor	School girl
Identification	A school countryside girl who dresses in a uniform way with other people. She is being acted upon by a girl with blue shirt and almost fall into the sea.	Participant: Goal	One of another group a friend
Identification	Four students sitting in a row; three on the left-hand side and no one on the right.	Participant: Reacter	Tacky's four other friends
	In between, there is a messenger slapping on another person back.	Phenomenon	The girl and her friend
Activity	telling a the girl's back	Actional process	Slapping on one's back
Activity	Wide-open mouth	Verbal process	Saying loudly
Activity	Group of students with rolling eyes watching a the guru, slapping on another person's back	Reactional process	Demeaning reactions from the girls colleagues
Circumstance	On farm and school background, positioned in the center of the image	Circumstance: locative	in school context

The image depicting the characters' activities has Denise and one of her friends in the center, as in Table 5. An almost-bending girl is caused by the girl's lashing out at one of its backs. The girl creates a transactional action process by drawing a line from his limb to the back of the girl—a phenomenon based on how the other girls were observing this event. The rolled eyes of the girls can also be interpreted as a disapproving look. Although there is no speech bubble, the girl's mouth is wide open, indicating a verbal process (Painter et al., 2013). Complementary processes in the image and the verbal texts have a direct correlation. Based on those mentioned above, visual and verbal meanings, a degree of interaction between the modes was discovered. First, the visual image is thought to interact cohesively with the verbal text regarding mood. In this

case, the producers or authors indirectly show the visual image created by the represented people, implying that they are viewed as a unit of thought. This conforms to the verbal text in passages where the viewers/readers are not directly addressed, as indicated by using the second personal pronoun, you. There were a few you-s in the passages. They are talking about the people in the scene, like Denise or Sami, or the person telling the story in the Meade School picture.

Furthermore, the instruction outside the image box states, "read and listen" to the audio to test your ideas, emphasizing the importance of using the visual image as an object to consider. The function of the visual image as an informational object to be evaluated by readers/viewers interacts cohesively with the presence of inter-semiotic complementarity tools such as a synonym for repetition and an antonym expressing the opposite idea. As a result, different modality indicators must be considered, as each has unique values and functions. Furthermore, when the modality markers *would*, *'ll*," *could*, *couldn't*, and *can't* are combined, the marker should indicate obligation. The modality marker will indicate the inclination.

The passages' evaluative words, such as surprised (affect, passion: security), excited, wanted to play (judgment: capacity), and good idea (appreciation: +reaction), also indicate whether the visual image functions as an object or piece of information (Jauhara et al., 2021). Furthermore, these evaluative words interact coherently with the individuals depicted in the image's facial expressions. For example, they are indicated in this case by the emoter—a term coined by Martin and White (2005). Sami's facial expression differs from Denis'; he is depicted with his mouth open, indicating a smile and enthusiasm (Chen, 2009), and in the verbal text, he is the one who initiates and speaks, whereas Denis is delighted to join the other girls at school. Denis is not participating in school groups because she is experiencing the emotions mentioned above and has sad facial expressions. Also, the use of declarative mood and modal operators ranging from moderate to vigorous is consistent with the mode and validity shown by the visual image, with full-color saturations showing a realistic portrayal (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, 2021).

CONCLUSION

The post-2003 environment in Iraq has promoted sustainable development, including education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles: human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity, and the contribution of culture to sustainable development. Teachers and students concur that the EFL textbooks *English for Iraq* are excellent in various respects, including layout and design, social and cultural context, subject and content, language type, skills, objectives, and illustrations.

The language and image interplay and the flow of information value in multimodal textbook influenced the reading path. As a result, multimodal textbook readers can read the texts in a linear or non-linear fashion. Non-linear and linear reading paths can be found in the observed textbook's images. If this combination is used, readers can access the multimodal textbooks' semiotic resources via linear and non-linear reading paths. These textbooks may be designed by their authors with a linear reading path in mind, but the reader's choice of how to approach them is entirely up for grabs.

It is a preliminary investigation into the theoretical foundations of reading maps. The study's primary data source was a single textbook, which has its limitations. Data can be gathered from the available English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks. In order to do this, it examines the textbook's content and how words and images are connected. Students and teachers in the classroom as readers could benefit from more research. It is also possible to expand the study by understanding composition and inter-semiotic complementarity in Iraqi EFL school textbooks.

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