Grit Alter / Thorsten Merse (Eds.)

Re-thinking Picturebooks for Intermediate and Advanced Learners: Perspectives for Secondary English Language Education

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Foreword: Why picturebooks matter in secondary education

Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer

We live in a visually dominated world where pictures, icons, and pictorial symbols surround us everywhere, whether in our homes, on the street, while checking the news on the internet, watching a movie, paging through a graphic novel, taking pictures with our smartphones, or perusing charts and maps to get accurate information about traffic, geopolitical regions, or just to find the shortest route between two places. It cannot be taken for granted that such visual information is intuitively and easily understandable. Quite the contrary, pictures include visual codes, whether basic, complex or culture-specific, which need to be acquired over a long period, thus contributing to the acquisition of visual literacy – as the capacity to competently handle and understand any visual information whatsoever. Such a process never stops and is by no means limited to childhood but stretches to adolescence and adulthood. This insight comes to light when people are confronted with hitherto unknown visual or multimodal forms, for instance the page format and onomatopoetic expressions of a Japanese manga or the multiple levels of a sophisticated computer game which might overwhelm users with its exuberant graphic design, rapid cutting sequences, and permanent changes of perspectives.

Against this backdrop, it is even more surprising that the acquisition of visual competence is accorded only a second-class treatment in the classroom. Although school curricula generally emphasize the significance of this competence, it is often neglected in teacher education to the extent of maintaining that visuals can be intuitively understood in contrast to the comprehension of textual information. Despite these assumptions, picturebooks have gradually entered the classroom, at least in preschools and primary schools. In this school context, picturebooks take on the task of fostering young children's language acquisition, textual understanding, and comprehension of the interaction of text and images in order to fully grasp the meaning of the underlying story. Moreover, picturebooks are employed to promote foreign language education but also to encourage students' active engagement with subjects such as identity, gender issues, climate change, and social justice to the extent of fostering transcultural learning and critical thinking. These very competencies have the highest priority in modern school education, and it seems to be a commonly held assumption that one never could start early enough to develop these skills. Despite these insights, the prevailing opinion still appears to be that these capacities should be trained by focusing on texts only, thus disregarding the multimodal quality of almost all contemporary media. But even if educationalists concede the overarching impact of visuals on young people's access to information, they would certainly never take picturebooks into consideration as potential triggers.

The real reason for this blind spot is that many people still believe that picturebooks are suitable for smaller children but not a serious art form for teens, let alone young adults. In spite of the surge of crossover picturebooks that address a dual audience of children and adults, not to mention the picturebooks for adults which have entered the book market since the turn of the new millennium, it seems that the idea of using picturebooks in secondary education has not yet appeared on the agenda of higher education. In this respect, it is rather the film or, if it comes up, the graphic novel that are the favored multimodal media. The special suitability of these two media formats notwithstanding, the thematic, formal, and aesthetic complexities of modern picturebooks reveal a huge potential whose spectrum has not yet been fully captured. Since the rise of postmodern picturebooks in the early 1990s, more and more picturebooks show a high level of sophistication, to the extent of addressing taboo topics such as death, war, sexual abuse, and social inequality, and employing complicated narrative devices such as metafiction, intertextuality, multiperspectivity, and irony which challenge the reader in many ways. Apart from potentially attracting reluctant readers, picturebooks offer a cornucopia of possible applications within higher education and may serve as a springboard for transcultural learning and critical thinking, to name just two competencies which are key in secondary education today. Apart from that, the picturebook often draws on related art forms such as illustrated books, comics/graphic novels, and artists' books, which results in the emergence of hybrid picturebook formats where the boundaries between the picturebook and these other art forms are blurred to a greater or lesser extent. Another attractive feature of many picturebooks is the proximity to film, since these picturebooks use aesthetic strategies prevalent in movies such as zoom, split screen, and other forms of mise-en-scène and camera work. Given the huge interest of young people in streaming and watching films, these very picturebooks can serve as a hook to immerse them in classroom communication, while relying on their contextual knowledge.

As this short overview has shown, albeit in a rudimentary fashion, picturebooks, particularly those which have been called crossover picturebooks or challenging picturebooks – a term which prevailed in academia about eight years ago – can by all means open new vistas in higher education. That picturebooks be included in secondary education was occasionally proposed by scholars working in the fields of education, pedagogy, and literacy studies, but it has gained momentum in the last few years. At the present time, publications on this topic are scarce. Therefore, a book dedicated to the usage of picturebooks in higher education is needed more than ever and could serve as a trailblazer for future educational undertakings and research projects. One prime task in this respect is the application of picturebooks in foreign language teaching, since the synthesis of text and visuals in picturebooks obviously fosters an understanding of a text written in a foreign language, which is very often English as the standard second language taught at secondary schools in many parts of Europe and elsewhere.

The present collection aims to achieve precisely this goal by bringing together contributions by scholars who are experts in English language teaching. They explore

how picturebooks can be successfully used in the classroom to promote the acquisition of a foreign language, together with a better understanding of how text and pictures work in tandem to create a verifiable narrative. Besides theoretical reflections on current trends in secondary English language education and picturebook studies, this volume stands out due to its focus on topical issues such as mental health, sex education, human-rights education, political awareness, and environmental protection and how these can be successfully conveyed by using picturebooks in secondary English language teaching. Moreover, the individual chapters also address the significance of conceptual metaphors, emotions, and genres that can lay the basis for the comprehension of the represented complex relationships in the picturebooks in focus. Such an undertaking is highly relevant in our current era and demonstrates that picturebooks offer an astonishing variety of potential applications within a secondary school context.

Introduction: Positioning picturebooks in secondary English language teaching

Grit Alter and Thorsten Merse

"Who are these picturebooks for?" is the title of Ommundsen's (2015) critical reflection on the audience of picturebooks. For the volume and introduction at hand, we would even delete the 'these' and in principle ask who picturebooks are for in general. That this is indeed a question that cannot be answered with a straightforward "Well, for children!" is evident when picking up some picturebook publications. The design and layout, the humor and intertextual references, as well as the content and thematic focus of texts such as *The Girl in Red* (Frisch/Innocenti 2012), *Cry, Heart, but Never Break* (Ringtved/Pardi 2001), or the enchanting illustrations by Gabriella Barouch in picturebooks such as *Maybe* (Yamada/Barouch 2019) address child, teenage and adult readers alike. Within the notion of assuming a dual audience of picturebooks (see below), with this book we would like to emphasize the audience beyond child readers.

In the field of English language teaching (ELT), which is the educational endeavor we seek to investigate vis-á-vis picturebooks, the use of this specific literary format has so far – and this may not come as much of a surprise – mainly and predominantly been discussed in the context of primary education. Therefore, the answer to the question raised above – "Who are picturebooks for?" – will quite certainly be "For children!". Indeed, in introductory books to ELT, it appears that picturebooks are almost exclusively reserved for younger learners at primary level (e.g., Surkamp/Viebrock 2018; Schmid-Schönbein 2008). There is now a productive stream of research publications exploring the nexus between primary ELT and picturebook usage, often coming along with rich suggestions of very promising recommendations for concrete picturebooks, or for engaging classroom methodologies and storytelling techniques (e.g., Ellis/Brewster 2014, Mourão 2015, and many publications in the e-journal *Children's Literature in English Language Education*). Of course, this is clearly not to be understood as a critique against the use of picturebooks in primary settings where their value must count as undisputed. In particular, this is due to their thematic and visual accessibility for children, or their use of formulaic chunks and repetitive language that are considered conducive for early language learning. At the same time, however, this almost exclusive focus on primary ELT, we argue, might have caused somewhat of a gap, or an uninterrogated field of engagement and research, in which picturebooks are hardly ever considered in view of their potential for ELT in *secondary* education.

Against the backdrop of these initial reflections, this introduction is the prelude to deconstructing such discursive boundaries that position picturebooks as an exclusive medium for primary ELT, and thus to re-thinking picturebooks as potential teaching material for intermediate and advanced learners in secondary ELT. With these learners, we have students in mind who are 13 to 18 years of age or older. In most of the

cultural contexts from which the contributors to this volume write, this means that these learners outgrew primary school and entered secondary education.[1] Together with the authors of the single chapters, we construct the complexity of picturebooks for teenagers and adults in secondary educational contexts along the following lines, which will also be further developed throughout this introduction and indeed the whole edited volume:

- the thematic complexity by exploring in what ways picturebooks address challenging and controversial themes that move picturebooks toward more advanced audiences while retaining the format of the picturebook (Ommundsen et al. 2022),
- the notion of dual address (Ommundsen 2018) that makes picturebooks for children also interesting for teenage and adult readers (e.g., through intertextual references or irony), and
- the complex interplay of visual and verbal text, drawing on the concept of interanimation to tease out the diverse possibilities of such interplay (Nikolajeva/Scott 2000), e.g, symmetrical, complementary, or counterpoint interplay (see below), and how the development of visual literacy is beneficial to unpack these mechanisms of meaning-making.

In this introduction, we would like to unfold the idea of re-thinking picturebooks for intermediate and advanced learners. First, we address which kinds of picturebooks can be considered for this audience. Here, we refer to different categorizations of picturebooks while keeping our target group in mind. We then continue with introducing methods of picturebook analysis in which reader-response criticism takes center stage, and discuss the dual audience of cross-over literature and fusion texts. Further notes on the conceptualization of picturebooks will then be infused with an outlook on the individual chapters included in this volume.

But to begin with, an explanation of what we mean by picturebooks is necessary. Picturebook research has seen a huge expansion over the last few decades. While one may be quick to say that a picturebook is simply a book with pictures, the intricate combination of different semiotic styles makes this text type much more complex; it is more than the sum of its parts (cf. Nodelman 1988). Accordingly, a picturebook "emphasize[s] the inextricable connection of words and pictures and the unique qualities of the form: a picturebook is not simply a book that happens to have pictures" (Sipe 2008a). Arizpe and Styles agree to this understanding and elaborate that a picturebook is a "book in which the story depends on the interaction between written text and image and where both have been created with a conscious aesthetic

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1   Each chapter defines the learner group they have in mind. When we refer to very young readers and learners in this introduction, we mean pre-primary school children up to six years of age, with young readers and learners we mean primary school children between the ages of 7 and 12, with intermediate learners we mean readers and learners between 13 and 16, and with advanced readers and learners we mean readers and learners between the ages of 17 and 19. Certainly, English language education can also take place with learners beyond the latter age span and beyond secondary school contexts, in which case such learners would qualify as adult learners and readers.

intention" (Arizpe/Styles 2003). This introduction and particularly the chapters in this volume underline the visual and verbal complexity of picturebooks indicated in these references.

Next to a general understanding of what picturebooks are, the academic discourse critically reflects on the spelling of the very formate itself (Kümmerling-Meibauer 2015). While dictionaries such as Merrian-Webster, the Oxford English Dictionary, or the Cambridge Dictionary write it with two words as "picture book," the research community more or less agrees that the term shall be written as one word, as is also the case in this volume. This underlines how closely the verbal and visual modes are connected, mostly even dependent on one another to create meaning (Kümmerling-Meibauer 2015). Hence, the compound noun "picturebook" is indicative of the compound character of this literary and textual format (cf. Bland 2013; Lewis 2001; Mourão 2015).

When written as 'picture book,' the term refers to books that in general include pictures to any extent, i.e., books that have illustrations and images that accompany the verbal text, but do not necessarily carry explicit meaning as in picturebooks. The category 'picture book' would thus also include graphic novels, sequential comics in book length, or fusion texts (Evans 2015). However, with the volume at hand, we explicitly address the use of picturebooks in intermediate and advanced ELT classrooms because this idea seems to have novelty in view of existing picturebook research. The application of graphic novels or comics with the respective age group seems uncontested whereas scholars, teachers, and students may find that the implementation of a form of literature that is generally considered to have a child-audience does indeed initially surprise.

The relationship between the verbal and visual texts that has been mentioned here deserves more attention as both can interact in various ways. While a few picturebook scholars have reflected on this (e.g., Kümmerling-Meibauer 1999; Martinez/Harmon 2012; Nikolajeva/Scott 2000; Nodelman 1988; Schwarcz 1982; Thiele 2003), we consider Nikolajeva and Scott's (2000) approach most suitable for investigating picturebooks with intermediate and advanced learners in ELT classrooms. They distinguish between a symmetrical relationship of verbal and visual text, an enhancing relationship, a complementary, counterpointing and contradictory interaction. In symmetrical inter-actions, the verbal and visual text tell the same story and provide essentially similar information. An enhancing interaction is characterized by the verbal and visual text mutually amplifying their content. Complementary interaction describes verbal and visual text relationships that are enhancing in essence but the interaction of both modes is more significant. Both "words and pictures support […] one another by providing additional information that the other lacks, the additional material may be minor, or quite dramatically different" (Nikolajeva/Scott 2000: 229). Counterpointing interaction refers to instances in which verbal and visual text "collaborate to communicate meanings beyond the scope of either one alone" (Nikolajeva/Scott 2000: 226). Finally, in contradictory interaction verbal and visual text offer different kinds of informa-

tion and seem to oppose one another. As Ommundsen, Kümmerling-Meibauer and Haaland state, "[m]ost contemporary picturebooks combine several of these different relationships" (Ommundsen et al. 2022: 3). Nevertheless, the following overview offers example texts for each category and the reader is invited to open these picturebooks to experience the interpretative richness the different types of interplay create.

> **Symmetrical interaction**: concept picturebooks such as ABC-picturebooks, and in particular picturebooks by Eric Carle, such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (1969) or *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* (1967)
> **Enhancing and complementary interaction**: *Susan Laughs* (Willis 1999), *No!* (Altés 2012), *The Cloud* (Cumming 2010), or *Oi Frog!* (Gray/Field 2014)
> **Counterpoint interaction**: *Rosie's Walk* (Hutchins 1968), *Handa's Surprise* (Browne 1995), *Princess Smartypants* (Cole 1986)
> **Contradictory interaction**: *The Girl in Red* (Frisch/Innocenti 2012), *Bamboozled* (Legge 1994)

As to fully explore picturebooks in detail and to provide a further model for analyzing picturebooks, Staiger (2014) suggests a model of picturebook analysis consisting of the following five dimensions:

- Narrative dimension: a) What is the book about? (e.g., the topic, theme, motifs, development of the narrative, characters and their constellation, space, structure, function of the setting, time and time span); b) How is the story being told? (e.g., point of view and focalization, representation of thoughts and emotions, the pace with which a story is told or a story moves forward, reliability of the narrator, metafictional elements);
- Verbal dimension: What kind of language is used? (e.g., key terms and words, type of words, sentence structure, coherence, style of writing in terms of figures of speech, rhyme, rhythm, tense to express time);
- Visual dimension: How is the book visually designed? (e.g., lines, colors, space, style and technique of illustrations, texture, composition, layout, typography);
- Intermodal dimension: What is the relationship of verbal and visual text? (cf. Nikolajeva/Scott 2000);
- Paratextual and material dimension: What does the peritext of the picturebook reveal? (e.g., format and size of the book, size of the pages, cover, endpaper, title page, type of paper, binding).

As he explains, these dimensions are inseparably linked with one another and can indeed offer detailed and revealing insights into the design of the picturebook, as well as offer a structured path to interpret possible meanings of a given text. When looking at picturebooks from an analytical perspective, the focus of the analysis is certainly on the information the reader is interested in. Hence, a step-by-step analysis that follows

such a model may only occur in selected contexts. Indeed, the chapters in this volume do not explicitly aim at such a model-based engagement with picturebooks. Rather, the readers' individual responses to the books will take center stage (Iser 1970, 1972, 1976). In this approach, readers respond to the texts using their initial impressions as starting points to then ask more detailed questions about the means which caused these impressions. They gradually approach the text by analysing specific devices and, thus, develop an individual understanding of the text. This can, in turn, be amplified by adding further critical reflections on the content, linguistic, stylistic and cultural significance of the picturebook.

A   Picturebooks for intermediate and advanced learners

In the context of this book's goal, that is to open up the engagement with picturebooks for intermediate and advanced learners in English as a foreign language (EFL) education and ELT, let us now intensify the deconstruction of the notions of age, audience, or readership by looking at Bader's definition of picturebooks that is circulating widely in research:

> A picture book is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and foremost, an experience for a child. As an art form, it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of turning the page. On its own terms its possibilities are limitless. (Bader 1976: 1)

This often-quoted position on picturebooks not only indicates the complexity of this genre and the different perspectives from which to engage with them, but also offers points of entry for our conceptual re-thinking of picturebooks. Surely, in 1976 the notion of an "experience for a child" was accountable as "picturebooks for adults were scarcely known at that time" (Ommundsen 2014: 31). Recent changes and developments on the picturebook market which now does offer picturebooks explicitly written and published for adults (Ommundsen 2018) allow for an even stronger emphasis on the endless possibilities picturebooks offer. Hence, for us, the endless possibilities that picturebooks have and offer for reading and engaging with the text also mean that the text is not only an experience for the child. It is, foremost, an experience for any reader who finds pleasure in aesthetic and literary encounters. Finding this pleasure cannot be limited to any age group, particularly since individual readers will encounter a plethora of various picturebooks.

Broadly speaking, picturebooks can be fictional or informational. On their website PEPELT, Ellis, Gruenbaum, Mourão and Sadowska (n.y.) suggest that fictional picture-books include fairy tales, fables, and their modern re-tellings, as well as picturebooks about monsters and dragons and with a focus on fantasy. In their style, they can be created through songs, poems and/or rhymes, or could also be works without verbal text at all. These books can cover a wide range of topics and themes, starting from

stories about friendship, family, adventures, or stories about different places in the world, their people, and cultures. Informational picturebooks are texts that offer an aesthetic experience while simultaneously imparting knowledge (Ellis et al. n.y.; cf. also Goga/Iversen/Teigland 2021; von Merveldt 2018). These include concept, number and ABC-books as well as activity books, pop-up and wimmelbooks, but also books about nature, history, or biographies. Due to the often-limited ability of particularly younger children to read verbal text, these picturebooks rely on a multimodal design in that they not only display illustrations but various visuals such as maps, diagrams, photography, and/or cut-away pages and flaps. Similar to fictional picturebooks, also informational picturebooks can be presented in verses, narratives, or in a more descriptive and explanatory style of writing.

Sipe's (2008b) categorization of picturebooks mixes elements of design and content as he suggests a) (nearly) wordless picturebooks, b) playful postmodern picturebooks, and c) picturebooks on serious social issues. Bland (2013) uses a similar set, but divides Sipe's third category into picturebooks with an implicit sociocultural agenda, and picturebooks with an environmental perspective (see Summer's contribution to this volume for further branches). When it comes to thematic criteria, all kinds of further sub-categories are possible: picturebooks about friendship, about love, about diversity, about festivities, and so forth.

Ommundsen (2006) distinguishes between naïve, complex, and existential picture-books, but underlines that picturebooks can often belong to more than one category. Naïve picturebooks are texts in which "the author or illustrator writes or draws in a childlike fashion, as a child would do. The naive can be understood as a way to create art according to children's premises, or a way to implant child perspectives into art" (Goga 2011 in Ommundsen 2017: 73). The second category includes picturebooks that have become more complex "with polyphonic multilayered narrative structures and advanced literary devices traditionally thought of as adult." To continue Ommunden's distinctions, complex picturebooks create higher reading demands and develop cognitive skills, which in turn indicates that they "can be read on different levels, depending on the reader's frame of reference" (Ommundsen 2015: 73). In her third category, Ommundsen opens up a thematic and content-driven trajectory. For her,

> [e]xistential picturebooks may be challenging for both children and adults alike, as they tackle crucial questions in human life: life and death, love, friendship and loneliness, identity and belonging. They might also treat subjects traditionally thought of as tabooed in children's literature: war, domestic violence, child abuse, broken relationships and divorce. (Ommundsen 2017: 73)

What follows from this distinction is that readers of all ages may engage with such picturebooks to enjoy or develop individual readings and interpretations of themes and questions they consider relevant and central in their lives. Interestingly, Ommundsen points out that her systematic distinctions are not necessarily and always clear-cut. Therefore, she introduces the powerful concept of "crossover picturebooks [that]

simultaneously include traits from all three" (Ommundsen 2017: 74), which might result in even more complex and multilayered readings the more these categories interact and overlap.

The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks (Kümmerling-Meibauer 2021) distinguishes between early-concept books and concept books, wimmelbooks, ABC-books, pop-up and movable books, wordless, postmodern, and crossover picturebooks, picturebooks for adults, informational picturebooks, poetry in picturebooks, multilingual picturebooks and digital picturebooks, which resembles the categories suggested by others above. And, similar to the categories above, there are plenty of picturebooks that fit into more than one category.

All of these categorizations can certainly be justified as it is possible to match almost every picturebook into one of the boxes suggested here. Even so, when it comes to thinking about the potential of picturebooks for intermediate and advanced learners, we believe it is necessary to take further criteria than the style and themes these refer to into account. The main aspect would be that such picturebooks would have to include an element that makes the text interesting for an audience that authors and illustrators originally may not have had in mind when creating the book. Simultaneously, whether a picturebook has potential for intermediate and advanced learners or not depends on how the book is implemented in teaching scenarios and what the learners do with the text. When re-thinking picturebooks for intermediate and advanced learners, we consider the following categories to be relevant points of orientation.

There are picturebooks for children with which intermediate and advanced learners can **critically consider the norms and values a society holds dear** so that these are worthy of being implemented in the youngest generation through picturebooks, e.g., the value of friendship, and respect for animals and the natural world. Using picturebooks, intermediate and advanced learners can deconstruct ideological assumptions authors inscribe into their texts, even if co-consciously. Ideologies here refers to a "cognitive framework that shapes […] knowledge, opinions and attitudes, and social representations" (van Dijk 2008: 34 in Stephens 2018: 137). These are shared by members of a community or society and influence their social practice. An analytical perspective on ideology is concerned with uncovering "assumptions which determine a society's sense of meaning and value" (Stephens 2018: 137). In this sense, a moral contained in a text is never without ideology. Authors and texts always transport assumptions about how the world is and should be, how human existence in and with the world ought to be. Current critical investigations have revealed that a lot of picturebooks follow an ideology that constructs white, bodily standardized, and heterosexual people as the norm. For example, girls immigrating to the United States are only acknowledged if they write their name in English or are asked to change it to match their new classmates' pronunciation abilities (Alter 2016), illustrators hide children's legs that are said to be 'dysfunctional' behind clouds, blankets and dogs (Alter/Aho 2018; disability in general cf. Blaska 2003; Ali 2022), and LGBTIQ+ people

and issues have largely been silenced in picturebooks or not represented, which is only gradually beginning to change (Merse 2017, 2018; Hedberg/Venzo/Young 2022).

In educational settings, these picturebooks can mainly be used to foster students' critical thinking skills. They read the picturebooks and challenge who the protagonists are regarding the construction of their identity, i.e., whether they can be read as someone with a diversity background who has formerly been underrepresented in literary texts. Students can challenge the way in which these minoritized protagonists are represented, i.e., do they merely happen to be part of the cast, or do they have voice and agency? Are they represented in a holistic and balanced manner, or are they solely victimized and pitied? A critical investigation of these aspects also enhances students' sensitivity to the way in which identities are constructed and depicted in further socio-cultural contexts and pop-cultural media, and thus allows them to be(come) critical members of society, to productively take part and engage in shaping and contributing to the society they live in.

There are picturebooks that have rather **explicit verbal and visual content** and are thus not particularly well-suited to be read by and with a child audience. These, for example, relate to dystopian fiction in that these present society as a no-good place. As argued elsewhere (Alter 2019), these picturebooks can be re-tellings of traditional tales that are accompanied by bleak illustrations, for example, Brown's illustration of The Grimm Brother's *Hansel and Gretel* (1981) or Frisch and Innocenti's re-telling of "Red Riding Hood" in *The Girl in Red* (2012), or these can be picturebooks in which the verbal text sounds playful but is very serious, with similarly serious, almost disturbing images (see Mourão's reading of *The House that Crack Built* in this volume).

A further category addresses the way in which picturebooks are used to **develop competences and literacies** that are part of the teaching objectives set by curricula guidelines, for example, as they are issued through Ministries of Education or in educational policy frameworks. Certainly, communicative competences are also fostered with the two foci introduced above, in particular because such books have the potential to engender in-depth readings, critical reflections, or communicative tasks. Additionally, picturebooks can be used to develop students' multimodal literacy (see Herlyn's intriguing teaching scenario in this volume), their creative writing competences, for instance, when working with (nearly) wordless picturebooks, or their understanding of the cultural basis of metaphors which requires intercultural competences as well (see Oppolzer's contribution to this volume). This focus on teaching objectives also includes content-driven choices that guide teachers toward selecting a picturebook as a foundation for further explorations, for example, reflecting on the residential school system based on texts such as Campbell and LaFave's *Shin-chi's Canoe* (2008) (Alter 2017).

B   Who are picturebooks for?

With considering picturebooks as teaching material for intermediate and advanced learners, we inscribe our perspective on these texts into the discourse of scholars who argue that picturebooks have a "dual audience" (Nikolajeva 2010; Ommundsen 2014, 2015, 2018), or a "double address" (Wall 1991). We see picturebooks as cross-over fiction in the sense that they are challenging and complex readings for children, teenagers, or adults alike, among other reasons because of the diverse interactions between the verbal and visual text, intertextual references, allegedly difficult or controversial themes, and stunningly sophisticated designs these offer (e.g., Beckett 1999, 2009, 2011, 2012; Falconer 2009). Already in 1974, Iser considered that the "implied reader" is "the reader that can be extracted and constructed from the text as such" (Iser 1974 in Nikolajeva 2010: 28). Hence, who the implied reader is can never be fixed or fully determined, opening up the notion of the implied reader as a moving entity, with picturebooks having the capacity to address "both the implied child reader and an implied adult reader at the same time, and not the one at the expense of the other" (Ommundsen 2006 in Ommundsen 2017: 72). Ultimately, this indeterminacy – or rather, openness – of who the implied readers are has been condensed by Wall (1991) into the term "dual address".

Wall's (1991) notion of the dual address indicates that while authors have the child reader in mind when creating their picturebooks, they also consider the adult reader, either to please them, too, as primary readers of their texts, or because they are usually the ones who buy the books for children, classrooms or libraries. As Ommundsen observes, "more than *what* is being said, it is *how* it is said, and to *whom*, that distinguishes children's literature from literature for adults" (Ommundsen 2017: 90, italics in original). This could then be a point of departure for reading picturebooks with intermediate and/or advanced learners when tasks focus on deconstructing norms, values, and ideologies as a teaching objective.

The picturebook *Mr. Tiger Goes Wild* by Peter Brown (2013) is a suitable example to illustrate this notion of the dual address. In this book, the readers get to know the main protagonist Mr. Tiger, who is painted in bright orange color as vivid and full of zest for life. Mr. Tiger lives in what comes across as a rather gloomy and monotonous city, and a rather boring and uptight society of other animals. Tellingly, all animals are properly dressed in suits and gowns; objects, houses, or speech bubbles are illustrated in tones of gray and black, whereas everything that relates to Mr. Tiger keeps a bright orange. While the society Mr. Tiger is immersed in seems to follow strict rules of proper behavior (as becomes apparent, e.g., in a highly conventionalized tea ceremony), Mr. Tiger himself wants to have fun, loosen up, break free from the normative chains of society – and go wild! Ultimately, Mr. Tiger – being the outcast in his social context – leaves the city for the vibrant jungle where he goes completely wild. After a while, however, Mr.

> Tiger begins to miss his former home and decides to go back – only to encounter a changed environment that is now much more welcoming towards his difference. This change is iconically illustrated through Mr. Tiger now wearing a colorful shirt – rather than a proper grey suit.
>
> In terms of conceiving this literary work with a view to 'dual address,' children and adults might experience this book differently. Children might find this an enjoyable and funny read because the animals they encounter lead human lives and engage in human activities, with Mr. Tiger being particularly outstanding, doing extremely funny things. Adults might perceive the story of this picture-book more on a sociocultural meta level, with Mr. Tiger being the epitome of Otherness, struggling to develop his identity against the odds of a normative society in which he is not welcome. His breaking free, and his as well as society's embracing of his difference, can be read as a positive development towards diversity, inclusion, and feeling a sense of belonging.

Nikolajeva approaches the question of the audience of picturebooks from a perspective that differentiates "competent/incompetent and sophisticated/unsophisticated readers, without putting any evaluative or pejorative significance to these terms" (Nikolajeva 2010: 28). In her reflection on how child and adult readers may understand picturebooks, verbal and visual texts as well as their interplay and notions of fiction and narrative texts, she turns to Barthes' interpretative codes and explains that both audiences may read and understand such texts differently, depending on their experience of engaging with such texts. Hence, it would be important to rather differentiate between "competent versus incompetent readers irrespective of age" (Nikolajeva 2010: 39). Ommundsen agrees by arguing that the "dividing line between competent and non-competent readers does not necessarily relate to age, but rather to literacy, experiences with different texts and means of communication, knowledge and education" (Ommundsen 2017: 19).

The link between the picturebooks' audience and style shall shortly be illustrated with reference to Nikolajeva's exploration of symbolic codes which are entailed in the illustrations (2010). In many cultures, for example, dark forests are associated with danger and sailboats with freedom, images of storms with a turbulent state of mind, and an image of a rainbow as hope. Even so, such metaphors mainly carry meaning for competent and sophisticated readers who are aware of these codes; children may not always associate these contents to respective images. Hence, knowing and unknowing readers (in/competent, un/sophisticated) then appreciate the texts on different levels, but both still find elements in the text they can enjoy. Unsophisticated readers may read texts on the literal level, for example, a picturebook featuring a journey as an adventure story while sophisticated readers may read the same story on a metaphorical level as dealing with fear, anxiety, and conflict which may not be indicated through the verbal text but the visuals accompanying the verbal text (Nikolajeva 2010: 36–37).