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Same text, different format: A Qualitative Study of Children's Readerly Responses to *Coraline*

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Abstract

This qualitative study aims to investigate whether there is a difference in the child reader's readerly response to a novella vs. a graphic novel and what these differences could imply for the EFL classroom. Further, this thesis seeks to explore how and if a child reader is experiencing a text differently based on the format of the text. The research is done in a Norwegian English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom at a primary school level. In the curriculum for the English subject, reading encompasses one of the four basic skills for English language teaching in Norwegian classrooms, in addition to, oral skills, writing-, and digital skills (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019). For English language teaching, reading different types of texts and being exposed to various types of language input is considered to be an important and crucial aspect of foreign language acquisition. This aligns with Krashen's (1992) Reading Hypothesis. As the curricula suggests, the students in an English classroom should be exposed to different types of texts, including multimodal literature. Therefore, the chosen literature for this research consists of both a novella and a graphic novel. The theoretical framework I have used to scaffold my research is Reader Response Theory, drawing specifically on the work of Iser and Rosenblatt. My methodology consists of a questionnaire with seventeen seventh-grade students from a school in rural Trøndelag exploring the readerly responses of extracts from two different versions of Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*. In addition, I have also analyzed the two extracts given to the students to examine how different elements of the extracts may contribute to the readers' experience and response to the texts. To develop an understanding of what are the differences in the child reader's readerly response to the novella vs. the graphic novel and what this could imply for the EFL classroom, I will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1) What are the differences between the traditional novella and the graphic novel?
2) Based on Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theories, how does the child reader perceive and experience the content of the *Coraline* extract given to them?

Sammendrag

Denne kvalitative studien tar sikte på å undersøke om det er en forskjell i barneleserens leserrespons på en roman kontra en grafisk roman og hva disse forskjellene eventuelt kan innebære for engelsk som fremmedspråk (EFL) klasserommet. Videre søker denne oppgaven å utforske hvordan og om en barneleser opplever en tekst annerledes basert på tekstens format. Studien er gjennomført i et norsk EFL klasserom på barneskole nivå. I læreplanen for engelskfaget omfatter lesing en av de fire grunnleggende ferdighetene for engelskundervisning i norske klasserom, i tillegg til muntlige-, skriftlige- og digitale ferdigheter (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2019). For engelskundervisning anses det å lese ulike typer tekster og å bli utsatt for ulike typer språkinput som et viktig og avgjørende aspekt ved tilegnelse av fremmedspråk. Dette samsvarer med hva Krashen (1992) beskriver som The Reading Hypothesis. Som læreplanen tilsier, bør elevene i et engelskklasserom bli eksponert for ulike typer tekster, inkludert multimodal litteratur. Derfor består litteraturen i denne studien av både en roman og en grafisk roman. Det teoretiske rammeverket jeg har basert min forskning på er leserresponsteorier av Iser og Rosenblatt. Metodikken min består av et spørreskjema gjennomført med sytten elever i syvende klasse ved en skole i Trøndelag. Denne spørreundersøkelsen utforsker elevenes leseropplevelser til utdrag fra to forskjellige versjoner av Neil Gaimans *Coraline.* I tillegg har jeg også analysert disse utdragene som er gitt til elevene i denne studien for å undersøke hvordan ulike elementer i utdragene kan bidra til lesernes opplevelse og respons til tekstene. For å utvikle en forståelse av hva som er forskjellene i barneleserens leserespons til romanen kontra den grafiske romanen, og hva dette kan innebære for EFL klasserommet, vil jeg forsøke å svare på følgende forskningsspørsmål:

1) Hva er forskjellen mellom den originale romanen og den grafiske romanen?
2) Basert på Iser og Rosenblatts leserresponsteorier, hvordan oppfatter og opplever barneleseren innholdet i tekstutdraget av *Coraline* som er gitt dem?

Preface and Acknowledgements

This emotional rollercoaster of a project has been challenging, but I am very proud of myself for being able to see it through, even though I have doubted myself so many times. I would not have made it without the support from my family, friends, and lovely supervisor, and I wish to give them all my thanks.

To my dearest husband, Michael, thank you for supporting me through my journey of becoming a teacher. It has been five long years of ups and downs where you have always stood by my side cheering for me. This last year, you have been extra helpful, and given me strength to finish this master's thesis. You have listened to me talking about my thesis, complaining about the writing, and given me time to rest when needed. Even though you have worked full time, you have taken care of the household, the children and me, and for this I am beyond grateful.

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As five years at NTNU now has come to an end, I cannot help but feeling proud, happy, and excited about what is to come next in life. I look forward to taking on the next chapter in life, and I will look back on these five years feeling grateful for everything I have accomplished and experienced.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of my dear farfar, Asbjørn. Your love for literature has inspired me to write this thesis. Like the words of a good book, the memories of you will live on into the eternity.

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List of abbreviations

EFL	English as a foreign language
ELT	English language teaching
FVR	Free voluntary reading

1 Introduction

In the curriculum for the English subject, reading encompasses one of the four basic skills for English language teaching (ELT) in Norwegian classrooms, in addition to, oral skills, writing-, and digital skills (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019). This means that reading is an important component when it comes to learning English as it functions as a form of input of language. This is supported by Krashen's (1992) Reading Hypothesis, which claims that "comprehensible input in the form of reading also stimulates language acquisition" (p. 409). In previous research, Richardson (2017) tried to compare the reading comprehension of students who read a regular novel to the reading comprehension of students reading the same text in a graphic novel format. However, the results indicated that there was little difference in the student's achievement of the texts (Richardson, 2017, p. 28). This previous research was done in a classroom in an English-speaking country, which could potentially be one of the factors for why there were little difference in the student's achievement. The research conducted by Richardson presented me with the idea of conducting similar research through my master's thesis. However, I wanted to focus on some different aspects than Richardson. Rather than trying to discover the participants' comprehension of a text, I want to focus on their experience with the text through reader response theories. First, I wanted to try to discover how and if graphic novels could be beneficial for the EFL classroom as I believe that multimodal texts in a language classroom could help support the reader's experience and comprehension of a text. However, after reading about reader response theories, I discovered that it would be more interesting to investigate whether there is a difference in how a young reader experiences a text based on what is the format of the text. I wished to present my participants with the same text, written in different formats, and landed on Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* and the adapted, graphic novel version of *Coraline* written by P. Craig Russell.

I will conduct a close reading analysis of extracts from two different versions of *Coraline* to act as a case study example for this research. The first version is the novella by Neil Gaiman, and the second version is a graphic novel of *Coraline*, adapted by P. Craig Russell. While I will analyze both texts individually, I will also conduct a comparative analysis of them. I want to compare how the two extracts convey the same story by focusing on both their differences and similarities through their different modalities. Through the analysis, I will examine the multimodal aspects of both books, focusing on the visual literacy and verbal structures. This thesis will also explore students' perceptions and their literary experience with the text by conducting qualitative data collection in one EFL classroom in rural Trøndelag. Based on Iser's (1980) theory on interaction between text and reader, discussing the gaps in texts, and through investigating which of Rosenblatt's (1982) two reading stances the reader utilized, I want to examine how and if the child reader creates and fill the gaps differently in the two texts, and I will further examine whether their perception of the text is different due to the different presentations of the texts. Further, I want to investigate whether the child's reading habits and previous knowledge with the texts may have affected the gap filling and their experiences with the two texts. As I consider both the text and the reader to be equally important, I want to study both my participant's answers and the two texts presented to them. Overall, this thesis also seeks to investigate whether there is a difference in the child reader's readerly response to a novella vs. a graphic novel and what these differences could imply for the EFL classroom. Further, this thesis seeks to

explore how and if a child reader is experiencing a text differently based on the format of the text. I want to investigate this through the following research questions:

1) What are the differences between the traditional novella and the graphic novel?
2) Based on Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theories, how does the child reader perceive and experience the content of the *Coraline* extract given to them?

In the following chapters, I will present my theoretical background in chapter two, focusing on reader response theories by Iser and Rosenblatt. Further, chapter two will also present theory about reading and graphic novels in general. In chapter three, my methods and methodology will be presented. Through chapter four, I will present my analysis of the two books, utilizing theory from chapter two and three. In chapter five, I will present and discuss the findings from the questionnaire and try to make a connection between the findings from both the questionnaire and the different analyses I have conducted. In chapter six I will present a summary and a conclusion of my findings. Lastly, I will also discuss the limitations of this research and suggest potential implications for further research in this field of study.

2 Theoretical background

In this chapter, I present theory about how the interaction between a text and a reader could develop through Iser's (1980) and Rosenblatt's (1982) reader-response theories. Iser and Rosenblatt are two essential researchers in the reader-response field. I also want to shed light on Krashen's (2011) Free Voluntary Reading, presented in this text as FVR. Moreover, this chapter will present theory about graphic novels and multimodal literacy in the EFL classroom.

2.1 Reader-response theory

2.1.1 Wolfgang Iser – interaction between text and reader: filling the gaps

Central to reading is the interaction between the text and the reader. Iser (1980) states that a literary work has two poles: the artistic and the aesthetic where the artistic pole refers to the authors' text and the aesthetic pole refers to the realization accomplished by the reader of the text (Iser, 1980, p. 106). By this, reading a text could be considered as a sort of dialogue between the text and the reader. Iser (1980) further describes reading as a dynamic process where the reader creates an interpretation by interacting with the text. He suggests that the gaps in the text communicate information to the reader about moments which are not necessarily explicitly written:

> What is missing from the apparently trivial scenes, the gaps arising out of the dialogue – this is what stimulates the reader into filling the blanks with projections. He is drawn into the events and made to supply what is meant from what is not said. What is said only appears to take on significance as a reference to what is not said; it is the implications and not the statements that give shape and weight to the meaning. (Iser, 1980, pp. 110-111)

The gaps in texts are created by the author to invite the reader to actively engage with the narrative, and to fill the missing pieces of the text by their own interpretation and imagination. This allows the reader to become an active participant of the construction of meaning of the literary work. A literary work is more than just a text. Iser implies that in order for a literary work to come to life, it must be interpreted and realized by the reader, who must bring their own individual disposition and perspective to the reading experience. Furthermore, the patterns and the themes present in the text itself could also influence the reader's understanding of the text (Iser, 1972, p. 279). That is to say, the reader and the text interact in a dynamic way, where each are affecting and influencing the other.

2.1.2 Louise M. Rosenblatt – aesthetic and efferent reading

Similar to Iser, Rosenblatt implies that both the text and the readers are equally important throughout the reading process. She argues that every reading act works as a transaction, a two-way process, involving "a reader and a text at a particular time under particular circumstances" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 268). This could indicate that the text, the reader, and the reading-situation matter. The reading-situation is often different from time to time. Sometimes readers read for pleasure, other times readers read to seek information. At the same time, the location for the reading will also influence the reading-situation. An example could be that at home, the reader is able to choose for themselves if and what they want to read, while in school they might not have the option to choose either. This could potentially impact how a reader reads and experiences a text as their mental set might be different depending on the reading-situation and the text.

While Iser mainly focuses on the reading process regarding novels, Rosenblatt wants to emphasize how the reading process depends on what type of text one reads, and the reader's expectations and stances. The 'stance' of the reader could also be referred to as the reader's 'mental set' (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 268). Furthermore, a text may be read efferently or aesthetically depending on the purpose of the text. An efferent reader seeks to investigate and look for information, a logical conclusion, and in such reading the attention of the reader will be narrowed down to building up meanings and ideas, and it focuses on what is accumulating to be carried away after the reading (Rosenblatt, 1982, pp. 268-269). Becker (1999) claims that efferent readers aim to focus on the qualitative aspects of a text (p. 105). An aesthetic reader will focus on what is being created during the actual reading, the reader will not only focus on the information presented but also what images, sensations, feelings, and what ideas the words may refer to (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 269). Rosenblatt (1982) further describes the responses from aesthetic reading as:

> In aesthetic reading, we respond to the very story or poem that we are evoking during the transaction with the text. In order to shape the work, we draw on our reservoir of past experience with people and the world, our past inner linkage of words and things, and our past encounters with spoken or written texts. We listen to the sound of the words in the inner ear; we lend our sensations, our emotions, our sense of being alive, to the new experience which, we feel, corresponds to the text. We participate in the story, we identify with the characters, we share their conflicts and their feelings. (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 270)

Often, the aesthetic stance will be emphasized as the primary stance of the reader response approaches, although most reading is a continuity between both stances (Spiegel, 1998, p. 42). It is also essential to the reading that a reader consciously or unconsciously adopts one of the stances, as a stance reflects upon the reader's purpose of the reading (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7). Nevertheless, it is common that readers often fall in the center of the continuum – in between the aesthetic reading and the efferent reading (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 7). Since the type of stance you adopt also depends on the reading circumstance, the same text may be read both efferently and aesthetically. Rosenblatt (1988) suggests that if a student were presented with a text, and that the student knew they were supposed to take a test on the information provided from the text after reading, the student may adopt the efferent stance (p. 8). Sometimes, readers do not interpret and experience a text the same. Students could be given a shared criteria of validity of interpretation, which means that there is an agreement on what is the right interpretation of a text (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 8). However, the concept of shared criteria of validity of interpretation recognizes that different interpretations of the same text could be acceptable as some of the texts presented opens for a broader or a different interpretation than other texts (Rosenblatt, 1988. p. 9).

2.1.3 Stephen Krashen – Free Voluntary Reading
Stephen Krashen came up with the terminology 'free voluntary reading' (FVR), also called recreational reading. FVR is according to Krashen (2011) a powerful tool to be used in language education to enhance learners' attitudes towards reading (Krashen, 2011, p. vii). FVR in schools could also be understood as sustained silent reading which builds on the belief that students freely can choose what to read (within reason), and that the students are not tested on what they read (Krashen, 2011, p. 1). Sustained silent reading is the most common approach when it comes to the response-based reading approaches (Spiegel, 1998, p. 43). Spiegel (1998) stresses that it is important that the

students are self-paced. This is crucial as students read at different paces, and it takes time to interpret meaning from a text (p. 43). For instance, if a teacher expects all students to read and finish the same text within the same time span, some students might rush through the reading, so they do not get recognized as the slow readers. This may affect their reading experience and their reading may be incomplete (Spiegel, 1998, p. 43).

2.2 Graphic novels and multimodal literacy in the EFL classroom

In the curriculum for the English subject, reading encompasses one of the four basic skills for English language teaching (ELT) in Norwegian classrooms, in addition to, oral skills, writing-, and digital skills (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019). Further, the curricula (2019) states that:

> Reading in English means understanding and reflecting on the content of various types of texts on paper and on screen, and contributing to reading pleasure and language acquisition. It means reading and finding information in multimedia texts with competing messages and using reading strategies to understand explicit and implicit information. (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019)

For ELT, reading different types of texts and being exposed to various types of language input is considered to be an important and crucial aspect of foreign language acquisition. As the curricula suggests, the students in an English classroom should be exposed to different types of texts, including multimodal literature. According to Eisenmann & Summer (2020), "a multimodal text incorporates a large variety of audio, visual, and other symbolic representations" (p. 57). A multimodal text can be defined as a text which require the reader to process more than one mode, for instance images and text combined – and that the reader must recognize the interconnections between these modes to read a multimodal text (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020, p. 57). However, including multimodal texts in the classroom, like graphic novels, does not imply that teachers should neglect the value of reading extended written texts, such as regular novels. Rather, it is suggested that including several types of multimodal texts may enhance and improve the student's willingness to engage in FVR (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020, p. 56).

2.2.1 Multimodal literacy

The word 'literacy' itself has traditionally been described as the ability to read and write. However, today literacy has a much broader and more complex definition. Today, literacy is referred to as a continuous learning process that empowers learners and other individuals to expand their knowledge and achieve their ambitions so that they can participate in their community. Further, literacy means to have the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, and communicate through using diverse printed and written materials associated with different contexts (UNESCO, 2004, p. 13). In regards of multimodal literacy, it is important to mention visual literacy. Visual literacy refers to the ability to read, interpret and understand information portrayed in illustrations or pictures (Stokes, 2002, p. 12). On the other hand, Arneson & Offerdahl (2018) defines visual literacy as being able to "decode and interpret visual representations, encode and create visual representations and generate mental models" (p. 1). Nevertheless, multimodal literacy is a little more complex than visual literacy. According to Walsh (2010)

"multimodal literacy refers to meaning-making that occurs through the reading, viewing, understanding, responding to and producing and interacting with multimedia and digital texts" (p.213). Further, multimodal literacy may also include other aspects such as oral and gestural modes of talking, listening, and dramatizing, and producing and designing multimodal texts.

2.2.2 Graphic novels – how they function

Graphic novels are one type of multimodal literature which is common for children to have experienced before. The terms *graphic novel* and *comics* are often used interchangeably as both graphic novels and comics share their features (Rimmereide, 2013, p. 133). However, graphic novels often provide the reader with longer stories than comics – whereas comics often portray stories up to thirty pages of length, the graphic novels may be as long as over several hundred pages (Brenner, 2006, p.123). A common shared feature of graphic novels and comics are panels. According to Rimmereide (2013) a panel is "the frame in which each image appears" (p. 136). Panels often have clear borders, however sometimes the panels have blurred frames and scenes may transition seamlessly from one scene to another, making connections (Rimmereide, 2013, p. 135). Reading a graphic novel requires the reader to create a relation between the panels and the whole page through making connections between the visual and the verbal text. Brenner (2006) refers to this as "reading between the panels" (p. 125). The space in between panels is called gutter, and according to Monnin (2010), in this space "the reader moves from one panel to the next and comes to a conclusion about what is happening" (p. 4). The gutter could constitute what Iser (1980) calls a *gap* in the text. However, Rimmereide (2013) claims that in graphic novels, the gaps are visualized (p. 135). The verbal text in graphic novels is presented in different forms such as: speech bubbles, thought bubbles, text boxes and onomatopoetic representations of words (Mikkonen, 2017, p. 226). Onomatopoetic representations are the verbal form of sound words or sound effects in graphic novels (Mikkonen, 2017, p. 226). It is the interaction and relation between the panels, the gutters and the verbal text that narrates and conveys the story in a graphic novel. How these elements are arranged together forms the narrative of the story (Rimmereide, 2021, p. 205). Another part of the narrative of a story is the characters.

2.2.3 Characters: narrative and focalization points

Another important aspect of what part takes the role of the narrative of a graphic novel is the characters and the focalization of the story. The characters of a story are often the main focus in a text as they are the ones the reader is following through the storyline. The perspective of a story is a key aspect in the narratives, regardless of media used to convey a story (Mikkonen, 2017, p. 150). Mikkonen (2017) further describes perspective as: "the choice of the kind of narrator or narrative voice, for instance, brings with it a narrative perspective from which the events, the characters, and their world are presented" (p. 150). Another word for perspective is focalization. An important aspect of how a reader understands and experiences a text is in regards of how the text is focalized. There are three ways of focalization points based on the degrees of access to the characters' minds in a given narrative: internal-, external-, and zero-level focalization (Genette, 1980, p. 187-189). Internal focalization involves a perspective where the story is presented through the character's thoughts, emotions, and perceptions. The reader is able to gain insight into the character's mind. External focalization, however, is a type of narrative where the story is presented from an objective viewpoint. The reader is not

able to gain insight into any of the character's thoughts or feelings. The zero-level focalization is a type of narrative perspective whereas the story is told without any specific point of view (Mikkonen, 2017, p. 151). In visual storytelling, such as in graphic novels, the focalization points may vary and it uses a complex scale of intermediate positions between subjective or internal focalization at one end, and clearly non-character bound perspective or external focalization at the other. Mikkonen (2017) says that this scale is not strictly organized, it is rather varying between "a character's point of view and the reference of world of the narrative, as well as the fact that comics can use internal and external viewpoints at the same time" (p. 165). This means that the focalization point of graphic novels is distinctly more complex and rather less straight forward than in example regular novels. Iser (1972) suggests that the reader's understanding of a text is influenced by the pattern of a text, such shifts of focalization or double focalization in graphic novels may be an example of patterns which could contribute to how the reader experience and understand the text.

2.2.4 Adaptations

As I intend to include both the original text of *Coraline* and an adapted version of the same work, discussing adaptations and how they work is important. The primary intention of adaptations is to convey the same narrative as the original work, however through an alternative medium or approach (Rimmereide, 2021, p. 212). An example of this is Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* being adapted into a graphic novel by P. Craig Russell. Linda Hutcheon (2012) says that "the act of adaption always involves both (re-)interpretation and then (re-)creation" (p. 8). Thus, adaptations include several layers of interpretation of the original work, they are still their own work of art. To adapt means to adjust, to alter, to make suitable (Hutcheon, 2012, p. 7). Adaption could be seen from three different but interrelated perspectives. When viewed as a formal entity or product, adaptation refers to a significant and announced transposition of the original work. (Hutcheon, 2012, pp. 7-8) This could include a change of medium, such as a regular novel adapted into a graphic novel, where the purpose of the adapted version is to tell the same story from a different point of view. Such transposition of a work may change how a reader experiences and interprets the story (Hutcheon, 2012, p. 8). The second perspective is the process of creation. As I have already mentioned, adaptations include the re-interpretation and re-creation of an original work. Here adaptations are viewed as a "creative and an interpretive act of appropriation/salvaging" (Hutcheon, 2012, p. 8). Third, when adaptations are seen from a perspective of its process of reception, adaptations are "an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (Hutcheon, 2012, p. 8). Previous experiences of texts may influence how a reader experience an adaptation. This means that the reader may experience adaptations as adaptations, thus with the memory of the original work(s) in mind. *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman (2003) is a good example of a text where adaptation works well. In the adapted version, Russell (2008) interprets the original work by retelling the story through the panels in the graphic novel. By using different colors, he recreates and interprets the different moods and story plots from the original story. However, I will discuss this further in the analysis part of this thesis, in chapter 4. As I am somehow comparing the original text to an adapted version through this thesis, it is useful to investigate both the differences and the similarities between these two media in order to understand the transposability and originality of each of these literary works. One of the main differences between these two works is the narrative form, which is also something I will analyze and discuss further in chapter 4 of this thesis.

3 Methodology

In this chapter, I will present the different methodologies I have chosen for my research. First, I will try to explain why a qualitative research method is more appropriate for this research than a quantitative one. Then, I will describe how my data materials function as a case study for my research and the methods I want to use to analyze them. Furthermore, I will discuss how I will collect data through a questionnaire and why I think this is the most effective way of collecting data for my research. In the end of this chapter, I will include some ethical considerations regarding my research validity and reliability.

3.1 Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research methodology is an approach that invites the researcher to explore and understand an individual's or a group's experience or meaning to a social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). To make the environment for the participants as natural as possible, a qualitative researcher tends to collect data in the participants' natural environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 181). To apply the qualitative approach for my research, I will collect data at the participants' school as a part of trying to discover whether there is a difference in the child reader's readerly response to a novella vs. a graphic novel and what these differences could imply. A qualitative researcher aims to develop an extensive picture of the problem or issue they are studying, and a way of doing this is by including multiple sources of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, pp. 181-182). My research will be relying on multiple sources of data. This includes a questionnaire with open-ended questions, and an analysis of two books: one regular novel and one graphic novel. By combining and comparing results from both the questionnaire and the analysis, I hope to discover how and if a child reader is experiencing a text differently based on the format of the text, and what the implications of this could be. As qualitative research is interpretative, the researcher could face a range of ethical, strategic, or personal issues through the research process (Locke, et al., 2013, in Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 183). Further, Creswell & Creswell (2018) state that researchers should "identify reflexively their biases, values and personal background (...) that shape their interpretations formed during a study" (p. 183). For my research, reflexivity will be utilized as a tool for critically evaluate my position as a researcher in this project, especially when analyzing the two books. My research will function as a case study as it aims to explore how and if a child reader is experiencing a text differently based on the format of the text. Will investigate this through both my analysis of the two texts and my participants' experiences of the two texts. As Crowe et al. (2011) states: "a case study is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context" (p. 1). However, there are some challenges to conducting a case study such as generalization, the quality of the data and ethical considerations. This will be further examined in the section Ethical Considerations: Research Reliability and Validity.

3.2 Close reading analysis and critical visual methodologies

As I want to explore and potentially discover how young readers experience the two texts I present to them through my research, I think it is important to critically analyze this type of literature myself. For my research, I will take a closer look at the original text of *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman, and an adapted graphic novel version of *Coraline* by P. Craig

Russell. In this section, I will elaborate on the methods I am using for analyzing both the regular novel and the graphic novel used in this research. I will also explain why I think I should do a comparative analysis of the two books and why analyzing the texts is beneficial for my research.

3.2.1 Close reading analysis

For my research, I will conduct a close reading analysis focusing mainly on the verbal aspects, more specifically the language of the original text. However, since the novella includes some pictures, it is natural to also include some of the visual aspects in the analysis. A close reading analysis could be conducted in various ways. Close reading or reading critically involves investigating what texts try to convey and how the texts work (Hintz & Tribunella, 2019, p. 29). Further, Hintz and Tribunella (2019) describe that the practice of close reading involves being aware of and paying attention to the language of the text, and to explore how the use of words could contribute to convey different meanings throughout the text (p. 29). It is common to methodologically distinguish between the text internal and the text external approaches when close reading a text. This distinction could be seen as an autonomous and a heteronomous approach (Andersen, et al., 2012, p. 19). The text internal approach, which often is connected to new criticism theory, involves considering the text as a unified object that is detached from both the author's intentions, contextual ties, and the readers reactions (Andersen, et al., 2012, p. 19). New criticism was an important movement from the twentieth century which stressed that researchers and teachers should solely focus on the text, its linguistic structures and the meaning resulting from them (Pokrivčák, 2017, p. 34). When it comes to the text external approach, this builds on exploring the external textual aspects of the text as integrated parts of the text, such as the culture the literature is a part of (Andersen, et al., 2019, p. 19). When close reading and analyzing the literature, I will do this through the text internal approach.

3.2.2 Critical visual methodologies

When analyzing a graphic novel, it is essential to look at both the visual and the verbal aspects of the text and how these complement each other to convey meaning. To contextualize the visual reading of the chosen graphic novel, my research calls upon the work of Gillian Rose. Rose (2001) introduces in *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* a
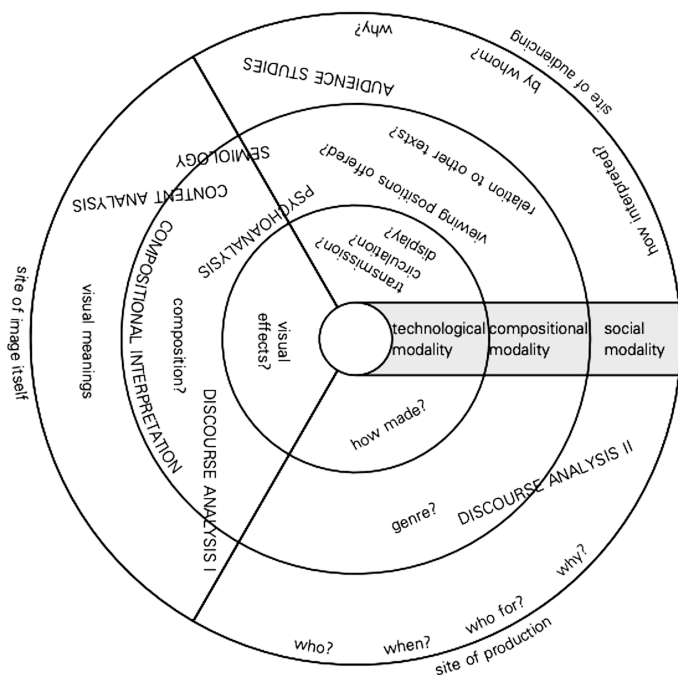

Figure 1 - Gillian Rose, Visual methodologies

framework that can be used for interpreting the
different visual materials critically. The framework builds on thinking about visual
materials in terms of three sites: the site of *production* of an image*,* the site of the *image*
itself, and the site of the *audience* (p. 16). Each of these sites includes three modalities
that contribute to a critical understanding of the visuals; *technological modality*,
compositional modality, and *social modality* (Rose, 2001, p. 16). As I am aiming to
explore how visual modalities could be interpreted and experienced by EFL students, a
critical approach is important and needed to expand my understanding of the text and
the narratives the text uses. For me to get a better understanding of how a student may
experience the literature presented to them in my research, I will focus my analysis on a
combination of all the different modes, however with a main focus on the compositional-
and the social mode. According to Rose (2001) the compositional mode refers to the
production of an image and looks at the content of the image, the colors, and the spatial
organization of the visuals (p. 18). Further, the social mode involves exploring how an
image is perceived and experienced by its viewers (Rose, 2001, p. 18). As graphic novels
could be complex text including a lot of different modalities, I think it is important that I
try to analyze the literature using a combination of all the modalities that Rose (2001)
suggests, to develop a deep understanding of how the elements works together. Figure
3.1 displays a model with the sites and modalities for interpreting visual materials, which
I will use to analyze the visual elements in the graphic novel.

3.2.3 Comparative analysis
When comparing two or several literary works, the aim is to identify their similarities or
and their differences, and to justify these findings (Nikolajeva, 2008, p. 30). When trying
to discover the how the young readers may respond differently to the graphic novel over
the original novella, I want to compare the two chosen literary works to each other and
explore how they both convey the story focusing on both their similarities and differences
through their different modalities. The purpose of conducting a comparison between the
literary works is to develop a deeper understanding of them, and this could be conducted
through a literary context or through intertextuality (Nikolajeva, 2008, p. 30). Through
an intertextual analysis, the researcher should try to avoid stating that some patterns in
two texts are similar, and rather focus on discovering in what ways the later author has
made patterns from the previous text and how these patterns have transformed
(Nikolajeva, 2008, p. 32). Even though I want to emphasize on the similarities and
differences between the two texts, which deviates from an intertextual analysis – I think
approaching the literary work through an intertextual lens could be both applicable and
interesting for this research.

3.3 Data Collection: Questionnaires

3.3.1 Questionnaires as a data collection method and participants
A questionnaire is an effective method of data collection which includes written answers
from the participants (Marshall, 2005, p. 131). The aim for my questionnaire is to
retrieve information about my participants' reading experience with the texts I present to
them. When I designed my questionnaire (see appendix 1), I had to decide on what
information I wanted to retrieve from my participants. As my main focus is to understand
more about my participants' reading experience with the text, I mainly focused my
questions on specific happenings in the text and how the participants would describe
what happened in those particular moments. Before answering the questionnaire, the

participants will read an extract from either the regular novel or the graphic novel of *Coraline*. Then, I will hand out a paper questionnaire for them to answer based on what they read. With careful planning, questionnaires can generate high quality data and provide honest answers. However, there are some disadvantages and considerations to reflect on when using a questionnaire in research. If any confusions caused by the questions occur, the researcher cannot clarify these; there is also little flexibility for respondents to present their own perspective unless there are several open-ended questions in the questionnaire (Marshall, 2005, p. 132). Another disadvantage is that there will be no chances of asking follow-up questions or having participants elaborate their answers. I still think that a questionnaire is an efficient way for me to collect data from my participants. A questionnaire could be a cost-effective way of collecting data, and they are a flexible way of collecting data as they could be combined with other forms of qualitative research methods to form a more in-depth perspectives of what is being researched (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016, n.p.). As my participants are students between the ages of 12 and 13 years, I think a questionnaire is a more appropriate method to collect honest and sound responses about the experience they have with the texts they will be reading. As shown in appendix 1, I will be including a combination of both multiple-choice questions and open questions where the students will have the opportunity write answers themselves to collect data. By including open-ended questions, it is possible for the respondents to share their experiences of the social processes they are exposed to (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016, n.p.). In my research, the social process my participants are experiencing, is reading the extracts of one of the books. One could argue that a questionnaire implies that my research is quantitative research, however when analyzing the data collected from the questionnaire, this will be done through looking at the respondents' answers through a qualitative lens and the data will not be collected and analyzed as numerical data. Even though I am not focusing on the numerical data, one graph will be presented in the discussion chapter of this thesis. These data are not going to be explicitly explored, they rather will support the readerly response to the text themselves. This is done to contextualize some of the data I have collected. Through my questionnaire, I will collect data about my participants' reading habits in general, their perception and experience of the texts researched. When analyzing and discussing these data, it will be done through dialogical analysis.

3.3.2 Dialogical analysis of intersubjectivity

In the attempt of understanding how the participants have experienced and perceived the two texts, I will take inspiration from Alex Gillespie and Flora Cornish's (2010) example of how one could conduct a dialogical analysis of intersubjectivity. They advocate that "using the analytic concepts of voice and addressivity enables us to get a both explicit and implicit perspectives, thus transcending the opposition between the self-report and observational methodologies" (Gillespie & Cornish, 2010, p. 35). Even though their research both emphasizes interviews and observations, I still find their approach interesting and applicable for my research. When analyzing my data, I will analyze both what is said explicitly, but also with is said implicitly. When using the dialogical approach, the researcher enables the analysis to go beyond what is obvious, revealing implicit orientations (Gillespie & Cornish, 2010, p. 37). In the attempt to understand how my participants have experienced the texts presented to them, I think that trying to interpret what is implicitly said is both important and interesting as it gives the research more depth. However, there are some strengths and weaknesses in regards of analyzing explicit and implicit meanings. By analyzing and coding the data explicitly, a strength is

that the task is done through a descriptive lens, without any interpretations which makes the analysis clear and consistent (Gillespie & Cornish, 2010, p. 38). This strength is revealed in the contrast to the coding an analysis of the implicit data. Gillespie & Cornish (2010) argues that "the range of possible implied meanings can be very broad, and sometimes even contradictory implications are possible" (p. 38). This does not mean that analyzing implicit data is inferior to analyzing explicit data, it rather suggests that one should be careful when doing so. Having this in mind, I will be careful when analyzing the participant's responses.

3.4 Chosen texts

For my research, I have chosen to analyze Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* and a graphic novel version of *Coraline* adapted by P. Craig Russell. These are two books who allegedly have similar content but written in different formats. In this section, I will briefly justify why I chose these two literary works.

3.4.1 Selection of the texts

When considering what to research for my master's thesis, I was never in doubt that I wanted to include Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* in my research in one way or another. Ever since I read the novel for the first time, it has been one of my favorites. I loved the novel for its brilliant language and its engaging and exciting story. I think that everyone should at least be presented with an opportunity to read it. When exploring topics for my research regarding *Coraline,* I discovered that a graphic novel version of it existed. As Rimmereide (2013) stresses that the books are similar, at least regarding their content, I think that including them in my research could present me with some good data regarding my research questions. In the chapter "Graphic Novels in EFL Learning", Rimmereide (2013) noted the following about *Coralin*e: "even though the actual verbal text in the graphic novel version is virtually identical to that of the original, and only some of the text is deleted and replaced by images only, the whole reading experience is completely different" (p. 146). Comparing the two works both by analysis and in a classroom felt like a natural step to take. First and foremost, I want to explore how the participants respond to the two texts presented to them and whether there is a difference in these responses, and what the implication of this could be. I think that by exploring my participants' experience of the two texts could give me an idea from a student's point of view on which text would be preferable to include in the EFL classroom.

3.5 Ethical considerations: Research Validity and Reliability

For this research to have a certain quality, there are considerations that need to be made as a researcher. Firstly, I want to address my position as an author and a researcher for this project. When defining what validity means for a qualitative research, one can argue that the validity of a research will determine whether the findings of the research are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 125). My data analysis and findings will be a combination of both findings from the analysis of the books, and findings from my questionnaire. When analyzing the books, I will take into consideration my own experiences and my own comprehension of the two texts through the different methods discussed earlier in this chapter. An issue to discuss is the fact that I am bringing one of my favorite literary works into my project, which could lead to me not being able to discover the negative aspects of the literature. In this case, I need to be self-aware as a researcher and try to

distinguish between previously reading the literature for pleasure, and to now reading and researching the literature through a critical lens. Berger (2015) states that researchers need to be more self-aware of their own role in their research and monitor how their own beliefs and personal experiences impact their research to ensure the quality of their research (p. 220). This could be done through reflexivity. Berger (2015) describes reflexivity like this:

> It means turning of the researchers lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one's own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation. (Berger, 2015, p. 220)

For research to be reliable, it is important that the researcher is consistent with their approach of research methods, and that these research methods could reproduce similar data later if applied on another occasion by other researchers (Gibbs, 2007, in Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 199). This means that other researchers should be able to later utilize a similar research method and a similar analytical technique to evaluate the data, and that they would still be able to reproduce the same findings.

Another possible issue to take into consideration is regarding the questionnaire and the participants. My participants are young students, who participate on a voluntary basis in my research. Their responses may be deficient and only partly submitted. This could make some of the answers rather useless and not reliable and some of the responses may have to be excluded. As my questionnaire is in paper format, the participants could potentially write answers on the questionnaire which could make the participants recognizable, and as this interferes with the participants right to be anonymous their answers might have to be excluded from the research.

The last ethical issue I want to examine is generalization. According to Polit & Beck (2010), generalization is acknowledged as a standard in quantitative studies, and it is more controversial in qualitative studies (p. 1451). Generalization builds on being an act of reasoning that should involve drawing broad conclusions from instances, such as inference between the unobserved and the observed (Polit & Beck, 2010, p. 1451). However, in qualitative the issue of generalization is more complicated, as the aim for most qualitative studies is to obtain a rich and contextualized comprehension of human experiences through the study of for instance different cases (Polit & Beck, 2010, p. 1452). With my research, I am not aiming to prove that novellas or graphic novels are the best choice of literature in the Norwegian EFL classroom. Neither am I researching something that is measurable in variables. I want to investigate whether there is a difference in the child reader's readerly response to a novella vs. a graphic novel and what these differences could imply for the EFL classroom. Further, I wish to explore how and if a child reader is experiencing a text differently based on the format of the text. I am exploring students' reactions and experiences of a literary work, which would include their personal thoughts and meanings – and these are data that it is hard to generalize.

4 Analysis

4.1 Analysis of *Coraline*

In this section, I will conduct an analysis of the textual extracts given to the research participants. While I will analyze both texts individually, I will also conduct a comparative analysis of the two extracts. In the attempt of trying to better understand the young reader's readerly responses to the two texts, I want to conduct analyses where I compare how the two extracts convey the same story by focusing on both their differences and similarities through their different modalities. In the process of choosing what extract to give the participants, I had to look for two similar chapters from the two books. The two chosen extracts did not only have similar content, but they simultaneously serve a major role in the overall story as these extracts depict Coraline's first journey into the other world and her first meeting with her other parents. These are moments from both books that I found interesting to conduct an analysis of, and for my participants to experience. When searching for appropriate extracts for my research, I utilized Rosenblatt's (1982) efferent reading style which suggests that the reader could be searching for information in a text. Further, I also utilized Rosenblatt's (1982) aesthetic reading style which suggests that the reader not only focuses on the information presented in the text but also what images, feelings, and ideas the text may present. Both extracts share the same plot, where Coraline is home alone and is feeling bored. She decides to explore what is behind the locked door in the drawing room, even though she knows this might not be a good idea. During her exploration she discovers that what is hidden behind the door is a similar apartment to what they already live in. In this other apartment, she discovers that she has other parents who are very similar but different from her own parents. Through my analysis of the texts, I will consider three questions I wanted my research participants to answer from the questionnaire:

Question 8:　　　　*How would you describe the place Coraline entered when she went through the door?*
Question 10:　　　*How would you describe the person Coraline met when she entered the door?*
Question 11:　　　*How would you describe Coraline, based on what you read/saw?*

(See appendix 1)

Further, I also want to examine how some of the literary devices are used in the text to convey the story.

4.1.1 Analysis of Neil Gaiman's *Coraline* (2003) extract

The extract from Neil Gaiman's novella, *Coraline*, is found in chapter three. The story in the novella is told from a third person perspective, through internal focalization. However, the focalization of this story is limited only to Coraline's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. The combination of this type of focalization and the descriptive language gives the novella an unpleasant ambience. When thinking back to reading the novella for the first time, experiencing the work aesthetically, I remember feeling unsettled. I have always enjoyed reading scary stories, and this text is no exception. What is particularly interesting is how Gaiman is able to make a book written for children feel unsettling for me as an adult reader. Nevertheless, back in May 2002 Gaiman claimed in an interview

with booksense.com[1] that the novella is to have a double audience (as sited in Gooding, 2008). He claimed that adults found the novella to be too scary and disturbing and not suitable for children. Further, he claimed that his younger audience read the novella like an adventure and that they did not find it scary (Gooding, 2008, pp. 390-391). Gaiman then claims that there is a cognitive gap between adult and young readers: "I think ... that kids don't realize how much trouble Coraline is in—she is in *big* trouble—and adults read it and think, 'I know how much trouble you're in.'" (As sited in Gooding, 2008, p. 391).

While her mother is not at home, Coraline decides to explore what is behind the locked door in the drawing room. Gaiman uses very visual and descriptive language to tell what is happening throughout the scenes. As the key falls from the kitchen cupboard, it lands on the floor with what is described in the text as a "chink" (Gaiman, 2003, p. 36). This is an example of how Gaiman colors the language in the text using onomatopoeic representations as a literary device. As a reader, one could then imagine what the sound of the key landing on the kitchen floor would sound like. Further this use of onomatopoeia could indicate that the key potentially plays an important role in the scene. It is likely that the author wants the reader to pay closer attention to the key, and therefore he includes sound effects to help the reader focus on the object. Later in the same page, the key is mentioned again: "the old black key felt colder than any of the others" (p. 36). Here, the reader gets a visual description of the old key. Through the combination of the onomatopoetic description and the visual description of the key Gaiman creates an eerie atmosphere over a harmless object such as a key. Further, by creating and maintaining unsettling moments and an unpleasant atmosphere throughout the storyline, Gaiman's text communicates with the reader in a way that encourages their aesthetic reading. The text could potentially awaken and affect the reader's emotions, which is a part of Rosenblatt's (1982) aesthetic reading.

After Coraline successfully retrieves the key, she is described smiling triumphantly (p. 36). She overcame the obstacle of retrieving the key, which was located very high up, making her feel powerful. However, it is important to mention that a smile of triumph also could also indicate a sense of arrogance, and maybe she was smiling arrogantly as she is aware of doing something she is not supposed to do. Drawing on previous experiences with these types of smiles, the reader must then make up their mind about what smiling triumphantly means in this setting. This is an example of how Gaiman creates what Iser (1980) refers to as gaps in the text for the reader to fill with their own interpretations and thoughts. After retrieving the key and entering the drawing room and putting the key into the keyhole, it is confirmed that Coraline is well aware of doing something she is not supposed to do; "Coraline stopped and listened. She knew she was doing something wrong, and she was trying to listen for her mother to come back, but she heard nothing" (p. 37). Coraline seems to want to push boundaries and break some rules to try to make her boring life more exciting. This could potentially affect how a reader may feel about Coraline, as she could seem to be a little rebellious.

The story continues with Coraline entering the other world. The first meeting of this other place is described through visual language, again leaving gaps for the readers to fill.

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[1] This interview was conducted in May 2002 with Gaiman. The interview was hosted on booksense.com but this is no longer available online. However, I have accessed and cited the interview through an academic article written by Gooding.

"There was a cold, musty smell coming through the open doorway: it smelled like something very old and something very slow" (p. 37). First, Gaiman tries to give the reader a sense of how it feels and smells inside the room by describing it with a cold and musty smell. Nevertheless, this is a great example of how Gaiman wants the readers to bring in their own experiences into his work. Relating back to reader response theory, the cold and musty smell could potentially remind the reader of an old basement and could be a familiar scent for the reader. Then the text appeals to the reader in an aesthetic way. Iser (1980) refers to the aesthetic pole as the realization of a literary work accomplished by the reader. Basements are not necessarily recognized as a cozy place to spend time and by reminding the reader that the room smells like an old basement could contribute to creating and maintaining the unpleasant atmosphere of the story. This harmonizes well with what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading. Gaiman lets the reader use their previous knowledge and experiences to color and experience the text. He creates descriptions that potentially could provoke and awaken the feelings of the reader while reading, which is a part of aesthetic reading. Gooding (2008) argues that Gaiman creates uncanny effects aided by his technical innovations through a familiar narrative pattern which features a boundary between reality and fantasy (p. 393). The uncanny is a psychological term which was first introduced by Sigmund Freud (1919) in his essay "The Uncanny".

As Coraline enters the other world she senses that this world is quite similar to her own apartment. The bigger things, like the carpet and the wallpaper in the hallway are the same as in her apartment. At first, she claims that even the picture hanging on the wall is the same, however when staring at it she discovers it is not quite the same at all. By emphasizing the subtle similarities and differences between the two apartments, Gaiman creates an uneasy undertone to his text. Here the boundary between what is familiar and unfamiliar is not that clear which again contributes to what Gooding (2008) referred to as uncanny. This uneasy undertone grows as Coraline continues to explore. The first meeting between Coraline and her other mother takes place in the other kitchen. Yet again, Gaiman takes the familiar and makes it a little different continuing the unpleasant atmosphere through the description of the other mother. The other mother was described to look a little like Coraline's real mother, only that she was taller, thinner and had skin white as paper. Her fingers were also described as constantly moving with sharp and curved fingernails (p. 38). The appearance of the other mother's hands could remind the reader of a long-legged spider. A lot of people are afraid of spiders, and it is likely to think that these descriptions could contribute to the uneasy atmosphere of the story. Making connections like this to things from real life when reading, is a part of what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading. The biggest difference from Coraline's real mother to her other mother was the eyes. They were made out of big black buttons. The paper-white skin and the button eyes could make Coraline's other mother resemble a living doll. The resemblance of a doll might make some readers feel uneasy, as dolls often have a very human-like appearance. Further, a mother is normally recognized as a safe person for a child. By creating a grim description of the other mother, Gaiman takes away the security a mother figure usually provides. This may also contribute to the eerie and uncanny atmosphere in the novella.

Even though everything seems to be a little off in this other apartment, it simultaneously seems to make Coraline feel comfortable and at home. This leaves me as an adult reader to think that Coraline is not thinking of the possible risks of talking to strangers. Revisiting Gaiman's claims about the text providing a double audience experience, the

aforementioned is an example of how the text could define the cognitive gap between adult- and young readers. I as an adult reader sense a potential danger in this parallel world, which a young reader would not necessarily detect. As the story is portrayed through Coraline's eyes, it is possible that the young reader will only focus on what Coraline is experiencing and observing and that they will not reflect on such matters. It is possible that Coraline does not think about the other parents as strangers as they have a resemblance quite similar to her real parents. The border between what is familiar and what is fantasy then becomes small.

4.1.2 Analysis of P. Craig Russell's graphic novel *Coraline* (2008) extract

Through his adapted and illustrated version, P. Craig Russell gives a new life to Neil Gaiman's novella *Coraline*. Throughout the chosen extract, Russell has with his own interpretations of the original work tried to keep the key elements from the story. By retelling the story of Coraline through panels, using colors and text in various ways, Russell recreates and interprets the different moods and story plots from the original story. Furthermore, it seems like Russell also has tried to keep the same pattern when it comes to the narrator of the story where the story is told from third person perspective and, through internal focalization, is limited to Coraline's thoughts and feelings. However, since the story of the graphic novel is told through panels including images, the images could reveal facial expressions of the other characters which could implicitly reveal the other character's thoughts. This corresponds with Mikkonen's (2017) claims about the focalization of graphic novels not being strictly organized. He suggests it is rather varying between "a character's point of view and the reference of world of the narrative, as well as the fact that comics can use internal and external viewpoints at the same time" (Mikkonen, 2017, p. 165).

Figure 2 - Russell, 2008, p. 28

Reading a multimodal text such as a graphic novel requires the reader to consider several modes simultaneously while reading. Throughout the analysis of the graphic novel, I will take into consideration Rose's (2001) framework that builds on how to interpret different visual materials critically. This framework is described in chapter 3.2.2 of this thesis.

Throughout the first panels Coraline retrieves the key from the kitchen to

unlock the locked door in the drawing room. In these first scenes, the author mainly uses panels without text to depict the narrative trajectory. The first section of the page consists of three tiny panels on top of a larger panel. According to Rose (2001) "all images have their space organized in some way" (p. 40) Furhter, she describes that the experience a spectator may have of an image depends on how the space of an image is organized (Rose, 2001, p. 40). It is likely to think that Russell has organized the panels in a way to provide the reader with as much information as possible without using any text. When the artist arranges the images in a certain way, he takes into consideration what Rose (2001) refers to as the spatial organization. This takes into consideration how the different aspects of one or several images are structured in relation to each other (Rose, 2001, p. 40). In one of the tiny panels, we see Coraline smiling with a lifted eyebrow, and it looks like she is smiling slyly while checking if someone is coming (see figure 2). It looks like Russell is trying to build up the tension in the story by gradually enlarging the panels. In the next panel you see her hand reaching for the black key. This is portrayed through one of the largest panels on the page, which could indicate that the author wants to emphasize on the importance of reaching the key. The scenes shift rapidly from retrieving the key to Coraline walking towards the door and then unlocking the door. When Coraline reaches for the doorknob, this is also shown in a larger panel, which again could indicate that this is an important moment of the story. In the panel, Coraline barely touches the doorknob with three fingers when opening the door. This could indicate that she feels hesitant to open the door. In the last panel of the page, Coraline stares into the darkness of the hallway. Here, the reader is placed behind Coraline. This is probably done to give the reader a picture of what Coraline is seeing through the door.

In the next page, the first panel is a very large panel taking up half the page depicting Coraline in the door opening staring into the hallway (see figure 3). The doorway with Coraline in it is very tiny, which could suggest that Russell wants the reader to focus on the mystery of the dark and unknown hallway. He tries to create a mysterious sensation of the room by not including any details other than darkness and some dust clouds in the corners. He has also chosen to include the text from the original text stating: "there was a cold and musty smell: it smelled like something old and very slow" (Russell, 2008, p. 29). Here, Russell has chosen to present the text in a white color to make it stand out from the dark hallway, and the text is not in a straight line but rather wavy like smoke waves. Further, he has also chosen to gradually separate the letters throughout the sentence almost like the sentence is slowing down. This could potentially help the reader visualize the information in the text by only watching how the letters flow differently and it creates a mysterious atmosphere over the content. One effect of this mysterious atmosphere is that it could potentially make the reader curious about what is happening next. However, the sensation of the room seems to be very important in this scene. Relating back to reader response theories, the combination of words and images complement each other and fills each other's gaps making it easier for the reader to try

to imagine the smell and feeling of the room. Also, the fact that Russell has chosen to place the reader inside the room is probably because he wants the reader to try to imagine that they are inside the room. There is a possibility that this could also contribute to creating an uneasy atmosphere for the story and give the reader an unsettled feeling. In the gutter between the large panel on the top and the three bottom panels, Russell fills the gap between the two scenes by telling the reader what is happening next through text. The text tells the reader that Coraline walks through the door, and in the three next panels the reader can see her gradually disappearing into the darkness of the hallway (see figure 3). Here the text in the gutter and the images in the panels complement each other and help the reader understand what is happening in the scene. The reader is now standing behind Coraline, watching her disappear into the

Figure 3 - Russell, 2008, p. 29

darkness. What is interesting here is how Russell moves the reader from being inside the room Coraline is going to enter to placing the reader behind Coraline when she enters the room. I think he does this to create tension and mystery to the story. The spatial organization of the composition of an image is considered as a crucial element to the relationship between an image and a viewer (Rose, 2001, pp. 44-45). The positioning of the reader could affect how they experience the story. Simultaneously, this positioning of the reader is done to help the reader to see the hallway through Coraline's perspective. The author probably does this to emphasize that Coraline is the narrator of the story. The reader has already, through the top panel, experienced what the room feels like and will keep this experience in mind when watching Coraline entering the room. What is also interesting is how the colors of the panels changes from being bright to fade gradually

into darker tones as Coraline walks further into the unknown. This helps set the eerie and mysterious atmosphere to the story. Through creating an eerie and mysterious atmosphere, the author invites the reader to read aesthetically. The author wants to awaken the reader's emotions through through the eerie and mysterious atmosphere, and this aligns with what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading. Further by creating an eerie atmosphere throughout the story, the author creates a pattern throughout the story to influence the experience the reader may have of the text. This aligns with what Iser (1972) claims about how the text and the reader's experience of the text are interacting and influencing one another.

In the next page, the first panel shows Coraline walking in the darkness. Next to the first panel, there are two other panels and a gutter which is located between all three panels including text and a thought bubble (see figure 4). What is interesting here is that Russell challenges the typical reading of a graphic novel by creating a panel sequence that can be read in multiple order sequences. The gutter in between the panels provides the readers with information in which the images are not portraying. This invites the reader to let the different panels fill each other's gaps. In the gutter, it is stated that Coraline walks uneasily, and in the top panel Coraline's feet are shown walking on the carpet, while there are thought bubbles showing what she is thinking about while walking. Here, the text in the gutter and in the thought bubbles complements the image in the panel giving the reader an idea of how Coraline is experiencing the hallway. Through this the author fills the gaps between the images and the text and provides the reader with more information about the content. Through the thought bubbles, Coraline tells the reader that the room she is entering feels and looks familiar. Further, the colors are gradually coming back, as Coraline moves further into the unknown world and starts to recognize the apartment. Rose (2001) claims that colors are an important component of an image's compositionality. Further, she claims that the colors of an image
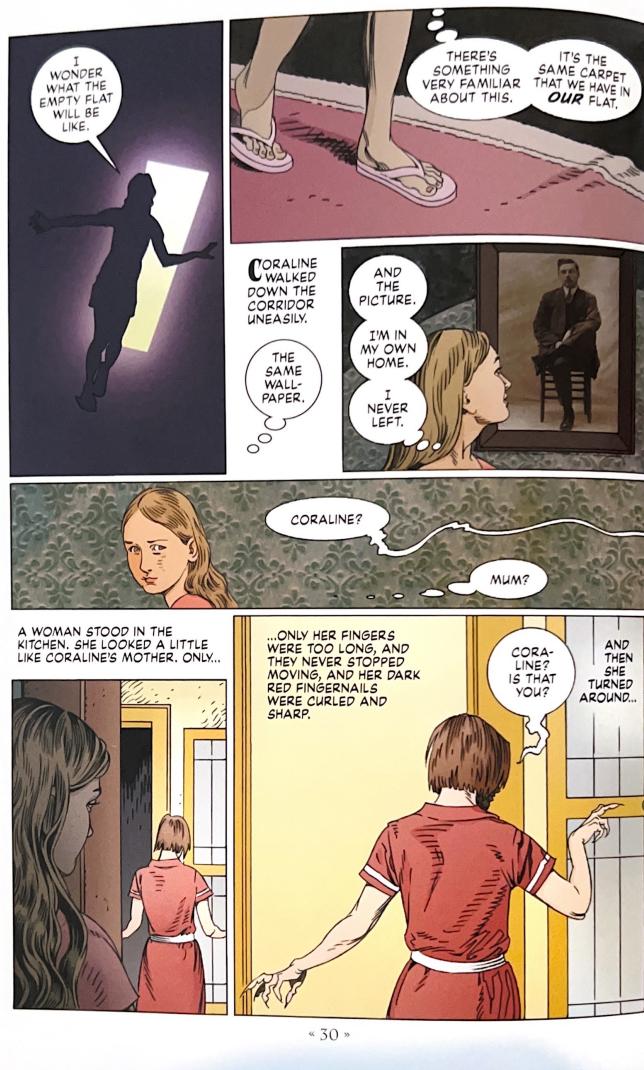
Figure 4 - Russell, 2008, p. 30

can be used to stress certain elements or situations of an image (p. 39). The use of colors in this moment then creates a less scary experience of the other world as the

mysterious darkness disappears into bright and familiar colors. Through the transition from a dark color scheme in the hallway into a more bright and colorful color scheme as Coraline proceeds into the kitchen, Russell creates what may resemble how a reader potentially could visualize something scary gradually transitioning into something less scary. Often, darkness is associated with something scary, whilst brighter colors could mimic a safer and happier atmosphere. This could be seen in relation to Rosenblatt's (1982) theory of aesthetic reading where the reader draws in their own feelings into the reading. In the bottom panels on page 30, we get to see how Coraline discovers her other mother. First, Coraline hears a familiar voice speaking her name in the mid panel, then she discovers the lady looking like her mother in the bottom left panel. Here the text contributes to creating a mysterious atmosphere as it presents a hint of something not being quite right with the lady standing in the kitchen. In the last panel, which is larger than the previous one, Russell has chosen to include some more text inside the panel describing the other mother. Further, to create tension to the upcoming scene, he has included to write "and then she turned around…" in the corner of the panel (p. 30).

In the very first panel of page 31 (see figure 5), the other mother is portrayed with a close-up image of her face. The other mother has an evil and grim smile over her face which makes her look quite scary. Her black button eyes stand out in her pale face making her look creepy. Further, the other mother is portrayed looking down as if she is looking down on Coraline. Rose (2001) refers to this as the spatial organization of the image and may affect the readers viewpoint on who or what to pay attention to in an image. How the subject is placed in an image may affect how the reader experiences the subject. In this case, the author draws attention to the other mother, and the other mother could be experienced as scary and dangerous. In the corner of the panel there is a text box stating "…and her eyes were big black buttons" as if the author wants the reader to focus on this specific detail in the image. Often, eyes are the one thing which stands out in a person's face, and when these are not normal, it creates an eerie atmosphere about the person. Buttons are not a dangerous thing, neither are eyes, but when combining these two, the person get a doll-like appearance. In the next panel, Coraline asks her other mother: "who are you?" and the other mother presents herself as the other
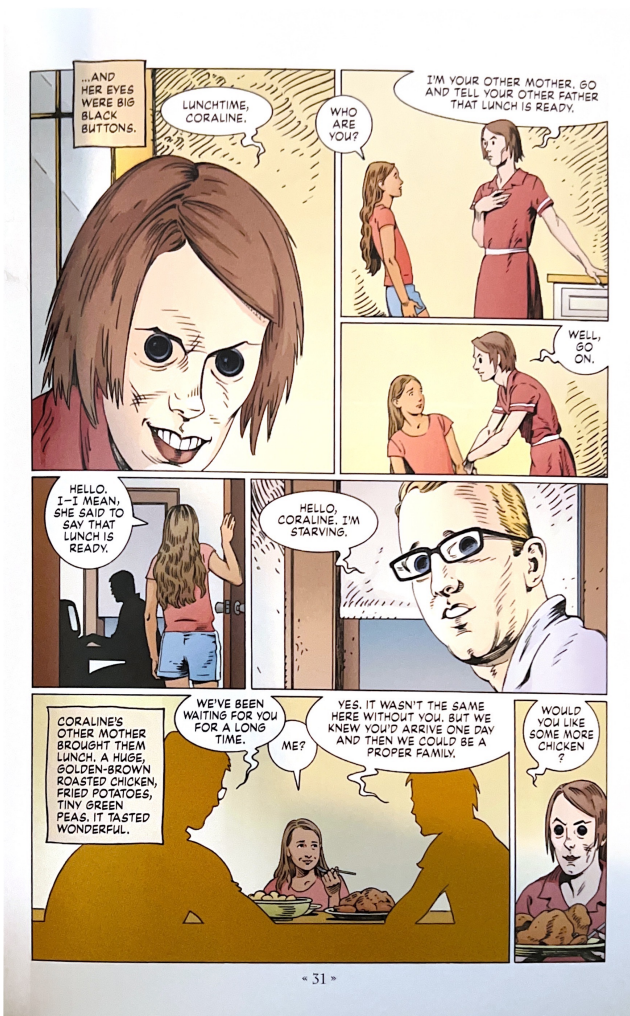

Figure 5 - Russell, 2008, p. 31

mother. What is interesting here is how Coraline's speech bubbles are normal when she talks, with a pointy tail like regular speech bubbles have. The speech bubbles of the other mother have crooked tails, which could indicate that her voice is not quite normal.

This contributes to creating subtle hints of unfamiliarity regarding the other mother which contributes to her seeming even more scary. Here, Russell in similarity to Gaiman, tries to include uncanny elements into his adaptation of the text. Even though the colors in the panel are bright and clear, the atmosphere is eerie. The image portrays Coraline meeting with her other mother for the first time. Coraline is leaning away from her other mother, which could indicate that she is uncomfortable with the situation. The same with the next panel, where the other mother asks Coraline to "go on", Coraline is again leaning away from the other mother. This could indicate that Coraline is aware of something being off with the other mother even though she seems like her real mother. Here, Russell again includes uncanny elements to his story. The boundary between her real mother and her other mother is not that big in these panels, yet the other mother is described as being different. Further, Russell creates a gap in the text for the reader to fill. First, it seems like Coraline is uncomfortable in the meeting of her other parents, then she is having dinner with them and seems to be happy with her situation. The reader must try to identify what Coraline is actually feeling as this is not explicitly stated. This is an example of how the author creates what Iser (1980) refers to as a gap in the text.

In her first meeting with her other bedroom, the first panel on the page is a tinier one depicting Coraline staring into her other bedroom through her bedroom door. The next panel is showing an image of her other bedroom in bright colors. There is a thought bubble starting in the previous panel going into the bedroom panel showing what Coraline is thinking about her other bedroom (see figure 6). Here, Russell has tried to provide the reader with more information through Coraline's thoughts. It shows that Coraline is a bit sceptic to her other bedroom, although it seems a lot more interesting than
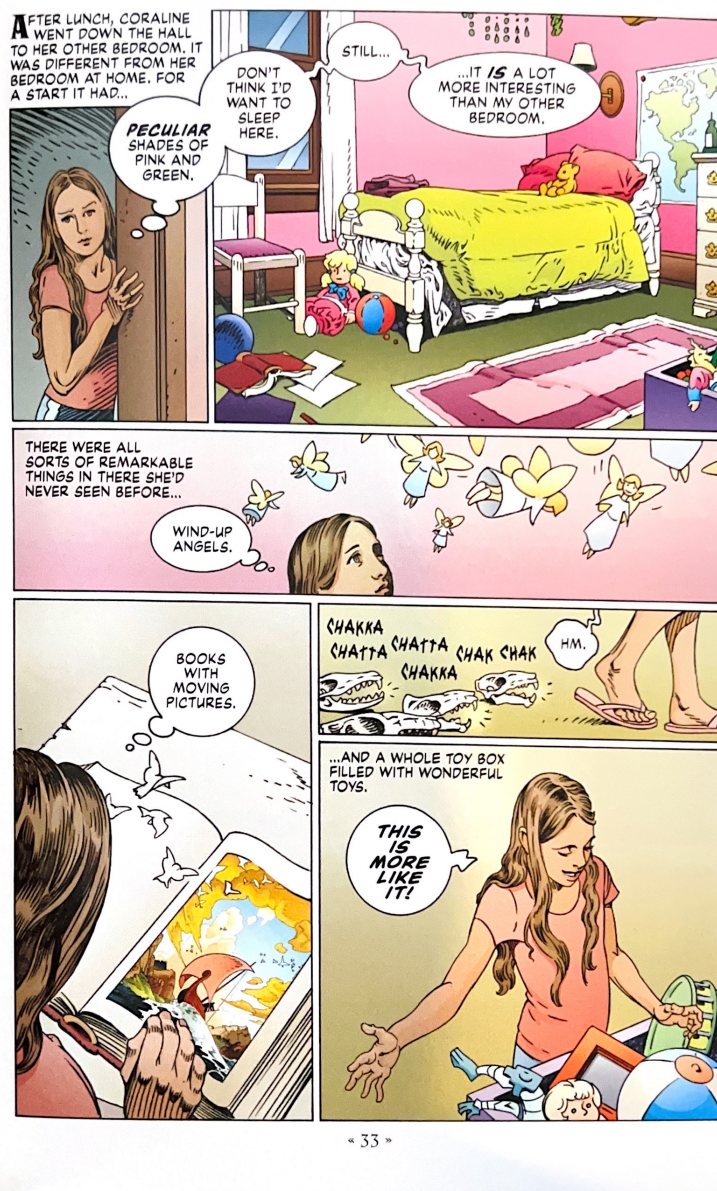

Figure 6 - Russell, 2008, p. 33

her real bedroom. What is interesting in this scene is how she in the last thought bubble describes the bedroom in her real apartment as her "other bedroom" through thinking: "still…it **is** a lot more interesting than my other bedroom" (p. 33). It seems like even though she finds this new bedroom a bit off, she still recognizes it as her real bedroom. Further by emphasizing on the word 'is', it seems like Russell wants to emphasize that Coraline probably likes this bedroom better than her real one. In her other bedroom, her toys are living and moving making her other bedroom seem like a fantasy world. One of the ways Russell has chosen to show how the toys are moving is by using onomatopoeia. Where the dinosaur skulls are moving on the floor in one of the bottom panels, the only text provided is "chakka chatta chatta chak chak chakka" (p. 33) which could imitate the sound of chattering teeth. This gives sound to the image in the panel and gives the reader a sense of what the teeth would sound like. The dinosaur skulls are also depicted going after Coraline's feet. The combination of the sound of the chattering teeth and the image of the skulls going after her feet gives the panel an unpleasant tone.

Through the use of varying sizes of the panels and by including text in different ways Russell tells the story in a compelling way. He makes it easy to follow the action and creates space for the reader to interpret the story themselves which allows the reader to fill gaps. Further, he utilizes colors to create different atmospheres throughout the story making the story interesting to read. Through multiple forms of literary devices, he also creates moments where the readers' own experiences and feelings could be awoken by reading the text. This suggests that the text serves opportunities for what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading.

4.1.3 Comparative analysis of the graphic novel and the original text
When it comes to the narrative form of the two extracts, the main difference is the medium through which the story is presented. While there are illustrations used throughout Gaiman's novella, in the extract chosen for this study the story is told through words which leaves the reader to rely on their imagination to visualize the characters and the settings described in the text. However, Gaiman uses very descriptive language in his novella, which could assist the reader with the visualization and imagination of the text. When it comes to the graphic novel, Russell (2008) presents the story through a combination of visual images and verbal text. Through the illustrations, visual representations of the characters and the settings are presented, often conveying information and emotions which are not necessarily stated in the text. This could potentially provide the reader with a different experience of the story than what is presented in the original novella. If the reader has read the original work before, and then proceeds to read the adapted version, the reader will experience that the versions could potentially fill each other's gaps.

Both extracts share the same plot and storyline, where Coraline decides to explore what is behind the locked door in the drawing room. However, when she is retrieving the black key, the scenes are portrayed differently. In the graphic novel, it is not shown which room Coraline retrieves the key from as it is not a very relevant part of the story. However, in the original text, it is stated that the key is retrieved in the kitchen, and that it is placed high up. As the graphic novel mainly consists of visual representations, there is limited space for text and the author needs to exclude certain details or scenes from the original work like in this case here. Nevertheless, Russell (2008) keeps the element of the black key being kept stored high up and that it is hard to reach, which is the same as in the regular novel. He also has kept the color of the key in his images. After opening

the door, Russell includes the same text as in the original work: "The door opened on to a dark hallway. It was like the bricks had never been there" (Russell, 2008; Gaiman, 2003). This could indicate that Russell wants to keep some information from the original text in his adapted version.

In his attempt to try to reproduce the feeling and smell of the room Coraline was about to enter, Russell again chose to include the original text. Hutcheon (2012) emphasizes that adaptations should include both re-interpretation and re-creation of an original work. However, even though an adaptation includes several layers of interpretations they are still their own work of art. The author of the adaptation must decide what is suitable to include from the original work and what is not. Sometimes when making an adaptation of an original work, it could be difficult to recreate everything, and this moment from the original work is one of the key moments. Therefore, I think Russell chose to include the exact words from the original text. By not drawing his own interpretations of what "something very old and very slow" (Russell, 2008, Gaiman, 2003) looks and smells like, Russell has chosen to keep the mystery of the original work in his adapted version and leaves it up to the reader to interpret of what the meaning of these words are.

In the first meeting with the other mother, the scenes from both extracts are quite similar. In the original text, Coraline is described walking into the kitchen finding her other mother standing with her back to Coraline, and the panels in the graphic novels depict the same. Simultaneously, the scenes from the original work portrayed in the graphic novel also have parts of the original text included. Even though Russell could have recreated the scenes solely through images, he has chosen to include parts of the original text to keep the eerie atmosphere from the original text in his own interpretated and adapted version. One of the differences from the original text is that the reader gets to see the faces and emotions of the characters portrayed a little differently through the graphic novel. Through the original novella, the reader will have to solely rely on the information given in the text and use their imagination to envision how the characters or the location may look. Even though the other mother is thoroughly described in the original work, seeing her through the images of the graphic novel including the textual descriptions, gives the reader a clearer image and experience of her. Nevertheless, in the graphic novel, she is portrayed looking like a human through the images, whilst in the original text she is described as both taller, and thinner and maybe not looking so much human-alike. It is possible that Russell has chosen to keep the characters looking a little more human-like so that the version does not appear too scary for children to read. In adaptations, the author must make decisions about how to portray characters and scenes. If a reader of the adapted version has read the original text prior to reading the adaptation, the readers may already have an impression of what the characters should look like. The experience of characters in the adapted version could be challenged by these previous experiences. This is an example of how the adaptation works in a way that Hutcheon (2012) refers to as "an extended intertextual engagement with the adapted work" (p. 8).

In the scene where Coraline enters her other bedroom, the scenes from both extracts again depict the same story. In the original text, the bedroom was described to have an "off-putting shade of green and a peculiar shade of pink" (Gaiman, 2003, p. 41). However, in the graphic novel, the room is described through Coraline's thoughts in thought bubbles, and instead of including the word "off-putting" Russell has chosen to simply call the colors peculiar. Further, instead of making textboxes including more of the

original text, he has chosen to tell the story through Coraline's thoughts through several connected thought bubbles. This is probably due to the colorful and detailed images in the panels complementing the text providing the reader with the necessary information about the scenes. Providing the reader with images reduces the necessity to include a lot of text to describe the situation as the images provide the reader with the information. Further, the scenes describing the toys in Coraline's bedroom are a little different. In the original text, the toys are listed with a short description, whilst in the graphic novel the toys are depicted through images with thought bubbles stating what the toys are. In the graphic novel, the reader could clearly see a satisfied and happy Coraline exploring her other bedroom through the emotions shown in the images. However, in the original novella, Coraline's feelings are not as clearly portrayed. This could potentially give readers of the two different extracts a different experience of the same scene.

Through the descriptive and vivid language, Gaiman keeps the eerie atmosphere throughout the extract. In his attempt to recreate the fantastic work by Gaiman, Russell has chosen to keep some of the key elements of the original text in his adaptation to try to keep the same atmosphere as the original work. This aligns with Hutcheon's (2012) claims that adaptations should include both re-interpretation and re-creation of an original work. Further, Russell gives the reader a different experience of the text by telling it in a multimodal format. This provides the reader with images complementing the text which could help the reader imagine the content in a different way. A reader who is familiar with the original work would probably be able to make connections between the two literary pieces and would be able to fill the gaps each of the works could provide. The intertextual experience a reader may have of an adapted version may be affected by whether the reader has read the original text before. The reader may compare the original text to the adapted text if they have prior experiences with the original work. Hutcheon (2012) refers to this as extended intertextual engagement with a text. The reader utilizes their previous experiences with the original text to contextualize their experience of the adapted text. Their experience could potentially develop further.

5 Findings from questionnaire

In this chapter, I will present and discuss my data findings that resulted from my questionnaire with the group of seventh graders. The results are analyzed and discussed in connection with relevant theory such as Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theory, Krashen's theory about free voluntary reading and theory about graphic novels in general.

5.1 Reading habits and motivation

In total, I had seventeen participants participating in my research. After going through the data, I unfortunately had to eliminate three of them as their answers were not reliable. One of these participants forgot to answer which of the extracts they got to read, leading to being difficult for me to analyze the data since I do not know if these are data about the graphic novel or the regular novel. The two other participants have probably answered incorrectly regarding which extract they have read, as their answers in the question regarding if there were many images in their excerpt did not match the answer to which of the excerpts they got to read. This makes these two participants' answers unreliable, and therefore not applicable for this research. After removing these three participants' answers from my data collection, I am left with fourteen participants in total. All the data from the questionnaire presented and discussed in this chapter are from these fourteen participants.

In the beginning of the questionnaire, I asked my participants about their reading habits and their desired type of literature to read in the English language. The results from this group of participants indicated that six of the participants enjoyed reading in English, seven of the participants enjoyed reading in English sometimes and one of the participants did not like reading in English (see appendix 1). In this particular group, majority of the participants is on the positive side of reading in the English language, at least to some extent. Reading is considered to be an important aspect of language learning as it contributes to input of the language. One could therefore argue that it is positive that this group of participants is positive to reading in English. Further, Krashen (2011) argued that free voluntary reading is a powerful tool to enhance the learners' attitudes towards reading. I did not ask in what settings the participants normally read English texts, however, I asked them what types of English texts they enjoyed reading (see figure 5.1). This was done to get a perspective of what is the preferred literature to read amongst young readers. For the question about preferred literature, the participants could choose more than one option. Due to this, there are more than fourteen answers to this question. Findings from this question indicates that the preferred literature in English in this group are graphic novels as 10 out of 14 participants chose this option. 6 out of 14 participants said they like to read regular books, 2 like blogs, 1 likes newspapers and 1 participant said they did not like reading literature in English (see figure 7).
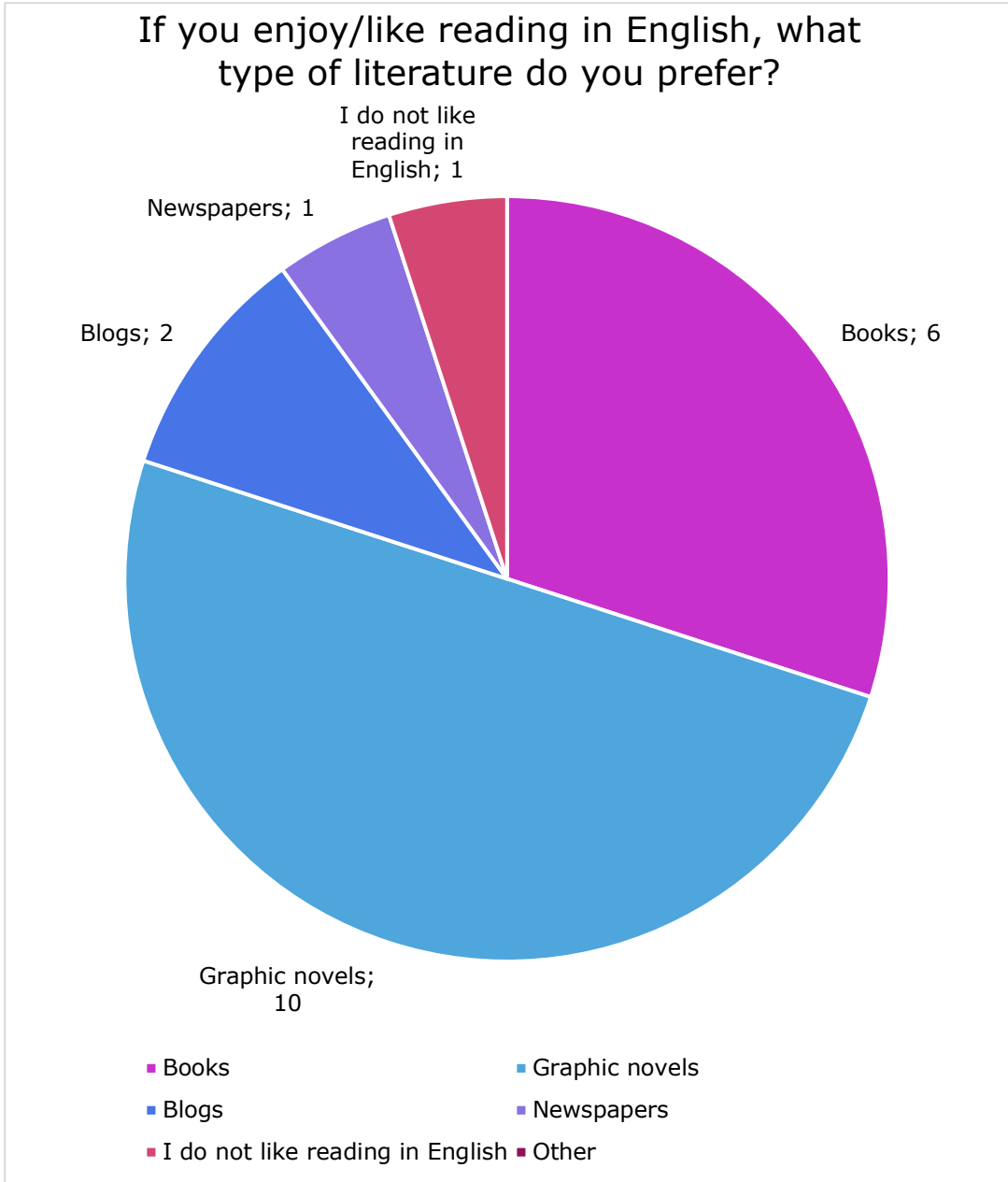
Figure 7 - Types of preferred literature

5.2 Aesthetic and efferent reading

When responding to the questions in the questionnaire, the participants, hereby also referred to as child readers or children, had the opportunity to utilize the extract as a help. However, none of them chose to do so. If they had utilized the extract as a help, their reading stance would have automatically become what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as the efferent stance, as they would have searched for answers to the questions in the text. However, since none of them chose to open their extracts while answering the questions, it is up to me as a researcher to try to investigate and discover what reading stance they adopted during their reading prior to answering the questions.

The children's responses reveal that a lot of them have immersed themselves in the story about Coraline. Their responses also indicate that some of them have taken into consideration their own personal feelings and experiences to understand the characters and the situation, this is done regardless of which of the extracts they have read. Relating it back to the reading response theories, this complies with what Rosenblatt refers to as aesthetic reading. Further, the children also collected facts about the characters and situations to better understand them, and due to this, they also read efferently. Rosenblatt (1988) points out that readers often tend to fall in the center of the continuum, in between the aesthetic and efferent reading as the borders between these often could be unclear (p. 7). This applies to the child readers participating in this research too. Throughout this subchapter, I will analyze and discuss how the participant's reading stance affects their experiences of the characters and the settings portrayed in the extracts. Further, I also want to exhibit in what ways some of the participants responses reveal that they fill some gaps in the text.

5.2.1 Responses to the extract from the original novella

When the children were asked to describe Coraline, the place Coraline entered, and the other mother based on what they read in the original text, their responses revealed that some of them were able to empathize with Coraline. It is not unexpected that they would empathize with Coraline as she is the character which holds the focalization point throughout the story. It is probably also helpful that the reader gets access to her thoughts and feelings which will make it easier for the young readers to relate to her. Further, Coraline is a child protagonist, and she is probably a character that the children may be able to identify with.

One of the children was able to empathize with and imagine how Coraline must have felt when entering the other apartment; "It did not seem so cozy. If I were Coraline I would be really scared. It was darker, it was other colors on the wall" (participant 4). Here, the young reader shows that she relates to Coraline by saying how she would feel if she was in Coraline's situation. This harmonizes well with Rosenblatt's aesthetic reading, as the young reader brings in her own emotions into her reading experience. Even though the young reader does not explain what a cozy place for her is, as she is clearly not imagining this place to be cozy. This could indicate that she has a clear picture in her mind of what is a cozy place and not. Iser (1980) suggests that the author creates gaps in text to interpret and engage with the text through their imagination. When this reader discusses the environment of the other apartment, she includes her own imagination and interpretations. A suggestion here is that she is trying to fill a gap in the text by including her own feelings. Further, in her response where she describes Coraline, the reader also exhibits signs of aesthetic reading. Her response also is connected to her response about

the other apartment: "based on what I read I describe Coraline as a brave girl with black hair" (participant 4). In her description of Coraline, the reader once again demonstrates that she is empathizing with Coraline by characterizing her as brave. It is not stated in the text that Coraline is brave, so this is something the reader has imagined herself. By including her own imagination and impression of how Coraline is as a person, the reader demonstrates that she has immersed herself in the story.

One of the other children demonstrated that she was able to identify with Coraline: "I would describe Coraline like a 12 year old girl that like to find special things. She is a little bit scared I think" (participant 13). Even though it is not stated in the extract how old Coraline is, the reader chooses to describe her as a twelve-year-old girl. This could indicate that the reader is imagining Coraline being around the same age as herself. The young reader has earlier in the questionnaire also stated that she has read the original text before participating in this research which could have influenced her response about the age. Even though the age is not correct, the young reader's response still could indicate that she is trying to relate Coraline to herself, probably to immerse herself more into the story. This could indicate that the reader is trying to fill the missing gap in the text by including her previous experiences which harmonizes with Iser's (1980) theory about filling gaps. Further, this response also harmonizes with how Rosenblatt describes aesthetic reading: "We participate in the story, we identify with the characters, we share their conflicts and their feelings" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 270). A particularly interesting moment from this young reader's responses is when asked to describe the place Coraline enters, one of them describes it including elements of the uncanny in her descriptions: "The place Coraline entered after she went through the door was dark, and it smelled something weird. I thought it was a bit scary because it was exactly the same as her other home" (participant 13). By recognizing that the unfamiliar familiarity as scary, she describes the uncanny atmosphere in the text. Gooding (2008) claims that children have limited sensitivity to recognize uncanny elements in the same way as adults, but in this particular case, the reader is demonstrating that she is getting closer to being able to identify the uncanny.

Another of the young readers reacted to the other apartment and the other mother in a way that would suggest that she had adopted the aesthetic reading stance: "the place Coraline entered looked like she is home, but it was cold and scary". First the young reader chose to describe the other apartment as cold and scary. The word cold is a word mentioned in the text, which is a fact from the text. This could suggest that an efferent reading stance was partly utilized in this case. However, since the reader also claims that the other apartment is scary, it could indicate that this reader falls in between the two reading stances which harmonizes well with Rosenblatt's claim of it being normal to fall in between the stances from time to time. The young reader also addresses the other apartment in her description of Coraline: "I would describe Coraline as dumb because she did not understand that it was something wrong with this place" (participant 7). By claiming something is wrong with the other apartment, the response could indicate that the other apartment gives the reader an uneasy feeling. She also says that Coraline is dumb for entering this place, which could indicate that she has immersed herself in Coraline's situation. This could suggest that the reader is emotionally reacting to the text, which is a part of what Rosenblatt refers to as aesthetic reading. Further the reader also described the other mother: "I would describe the person Coraline met as scary" (participant 7). She chose to only to describe the other mother with the adjective 'scary'. A suggestion here is that this reader is feeling scared by the description of the other

mother. Here the young reader reacts with emotions to the content of the text which also harmonize with Rosenblatt's theory of aesthetic reading. All these young readers' responses indicate a strong aesthetic experience with the text as their responses show traces of both identifying with Coraline herself and her feelings.

5.2.2 Responses to the extract from the graphic novel

When examining the responses of the children reading the extract from the graphic novel, some of their responses also revealed traces of aesthetic reading. In similarity to the readers of the original novella, the readers of the graphic novel were also able to express that they empathized with Coraline. It is not unexpected that the readers of the graphic novel also showed empathy for Coraline as the graphic novel shares the same type of focalization as the original novella, where the readers follow Coraline's thoughts and feelings both through the images and the text. Since the graphic novel includes images of Coraline portraying Coraline's reactions to what she is experiencing, the young readers' responses indicates that some of them tried to give Coraline some qualities which are not explicitly mentioned in the text or through the images. This could indicate that the readers tried to fill what Iser (1980) refers to as gaps in the text.

One of the young readers revealed that he thought that the place Coraline entered was creepy and scary: "I personally think it was a bit creepy and scary" (participant 1) was the exact words he utilized to describe the room. This indicates that he has reacted to the scene with his own personal feelings which aligns with Rosenblatt's aesthetic stance. This could indicate that this reader has immersed himself in the story of Coraline. Coraline is also a bit sceptic to enter this other apartment, and it is likely to think that she also is feeling both creeped out and a little scared by the experience. Further, the same child described the other mother by saying: "I think she look quite ugly with black eyes" (participant 1). Here, he does not only show traces of aesthetic reading by including his thoughts of the other mother's appearance, he also is including facts from the text with the black eyes. This could suggest that this reader has adopted both the aesthetic and the efferent reading stance. He relies his answers both on facts from the text and on his own thoughts and feelings. Once again, the participating children proves that Rosenblatt's claim about falling in between the two stances is something normal.

Participant 2 had an interesting way of reacting to the question about the room Coraline entered. He answered: "everything there was just like a normal house". This could indicate that he included his own impression of what is a normal in his response to the story. Including own impressions and experiences in the reading could suggest that this child experienced the text aesthetically. When addressing his experience of the other mother he says: "her other mother looks like a creepy woman with black buttons for eyes" (participant 2). It is not stated in the text of the graphic novel that the other mother has a creepy appearance, so this is the readers own impression of the other mother. However, in his response, he includes facts from the graphic novel, which could indicate that he also has utilized Rosenblatt's (1982) efferent reading stance. His responses suggests that Rosenblatt's claim about falling in between a continuum of the two stances is the case for this reader. In his description of Coraline he claims that Coraline is "just a completely normal girl with blonde long hair". Coraline is portrayed looking like a normal girl in the images of the graphic novel, so it is not strange that this is the response of the young reader. He has relied his answer upon the images of Coraline, which could suggest that his response is based on efferent reading. Rosenblatt

(1982) claims that when a reader reads efferently the reader collects information from the text. His impression of Coraline is based on what he has taken away from the text. However, his response could also indicate that he has made a connection between his real world and the story. This could indicate that he has created a gap in the text between the real and the fictional world, which is up to him to fill. It would have been interesting to ask this reader about what he meant about this claim about Coraline being a completely normal girl.

Participant 5 also showed traces of aesthetic reading in her response to the question about the other mother: "Coraline's other mom was kind of creepy looking. She had black button eyes and pale skin. And a pink dress". Her first response was that the other mother had a creepy looking appearance. This could indicate that this reader included her own feelings when describing the other mother. This aligns with Rosenblatt's aesthetic reading stance. However, throughout the rest of her description, the young reader utilizes information portrayed in the images which could suggest that the reader also utilized what Rosenblatt refers to as efferent reading.

Participant 9 includes her own interpretations and imagination when describing what she read in the extract. "When Coraline went through the door it looked old, cold and someone had not cleaned the place in 100 years" (Participant 9). In her description of the hallway, she includes small hints from the text aiding the image in the panel by using words as "old" and "cold". This could indicate that she has read the text efferently as these are words used in the text. However, she also claims that the place has not been cleaned in hundred years. This claim is based on her own assumptions and experience of the text. It is not stated in the text that there is a hundred years since last cleaning. By including her own assumptions, she shows traces of utilizing what Rosenblatt refers to as aesthetic reading. Further, the reader also has read the images and tried to imagine how Coraline's personality is. In her description of Coraline, she describes her as: "A shy, kind, strong, brave girl. She has long brown hair and blue eyes" (Participant 9). First, she includes adjectives such as shy, kind, strong and brave. This could indicate that the reader is feeling emotionally connected to Coraline, as these adjectives were not used in the text. Further, this could be information the reader has picked up and experienced from the images. Perhaps the reader found that the facial expressions of Coraline portrayed some of these qualities. Nevertheless, this indicates that the reader has read and experienced the text aesthetically and has tried to fill gaps in which the text has not provided the reader about Coraline's personal qualities. These are all indicators of this reader showing empathy with Coraline. Participant 10 has also in similarity with participant 9 chosen to give Coraline a quality not described in the text by claiming that Coraline is a kind girl (see appendix 1). This could indicate that also this participant is trying to fill what Iser (1980) refers to as a gap in the text. By including ideas of how Coraline's personality is, this reader in similarity with the other reader indicates that she is feeling empathy for Coraline.

6 Discussion

The findings in this thesis are divided into two chapters: chapter 4 presenting my analyses of the two text extracts and chapter 5 presenting my findings from the questionnaire. Through this chapter, I want to discuss the findings from my two previous chapters and examine what are the implications of the findings from this research. This discussion will bring back Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theories as well as Krashen's (2011) theory about Free Voluntary Reading. Further, this discussion will be supported by theory about graphic novels, adaptations, and multimodal literacy. My research questions were: 1) What are the differences between the traditional novella and the graphic novel? 2) Based on Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theories, how does the child reader perceive and experience the content of the *Coraline* extract given to them?

6.1 Pedagogical implications for graphic novels in the EFL classroom

As I have already addressed in chapter 2, section 2.2, reading serves as one out of the four basic skills in ELT in Norwegian classrooms. Further, the curricula emphasize that reading in English should contribute to both reading pleasure and language acquisition (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019). This could suggest that the teacher should include texts in the classroom which serves as both educational but also motivational for the students to read. I propose that one way of promoting a motivating- and educating reading environment in English could be to bring in graphic novels in the EFL classroom. This is supported by the curricula in English which states that the teachers should include multimedia texts into the classroom to help students develop their reading skills (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2019). It is not only the reading skills which are considered when reading a graphic novel. Development of multimodal literacy skills could also be enhanced and developed by reading a graphic novel. Graphic novels are complex text including several modes, with their panels, gutter and the variety of ways text is presented through text boxes, thought- and speech bubbles. As multimodal literacy refers to the ability of meaning-making through reading, understanding, and responding to a multimodal text, it could give the reader a livelier reading experience than what a regular text could. The fact that graphic novels are built on several modes could also be helpful for reluctant readers. As I found in my analysis of the graphic novel, a lot of times the images in the panels are complemented by the text stated in the text boxes or in the thought- or speech bubbles. For the less proficient readers this could be beneficial as the image and the text complementing each other also help filling each other's gaps and making it easier for the reader to pick up on the story.

When examining the reading habits of the students participating in this research, most of them enjoyed reading in English, at least sometimes. Further, when asked about their preferred type of literature, ten out of fourteen participants replied that they enjoyed reading graphic novels. Krashen (2011) claims that it is positive if students could freely choose what to read (within reason) when reading in school. By examining what is the preferred type of literature amongst the participants in this study, one could suggest that incorporating more graphic novels into the classroom could be beneficial, as this type of literature seems to be well-liked by the participants. This could further suggest that it likely could contribute to a positive reading experience for them.

6.2 Promoting filling gaps, and aesthetic- and efferent reading

6.2.1 Discussing the findings from the book selection

My findings from the analyses I have conducted suggest that both the extracts offer the readers several opportunities to immerse themselves in the text through what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading. Further, the two extracts also offer many opportunities for the reader to fill what Iser (1980) refers to as the gaps in the text. Revisiting the findings from the original novella by Neil Gaiman, the use of descriptive language and different literary devices throughout the text gives the reader a very visual experience of a verbal text, creating moments where it is easy to imagine what is going on without relying on any images. Further, Gaiman includes uncanny and unpleasant elements to his text which makes the text appealing to adult readers too. All this promotes the reader with several opportunities to fill gaps, and to read aesthetically.

In regards of the graphic novel, Russell has tried to keep the same unpleasant atmosphere as Gaiman did in the original work by keeping some of the key elements in his adapted version. By recreating the scenes from the original work through the use of images and different sizes of panels, using different shades of colors to create different atmospheres, Russell also invites the reader to immerse themselves in the story about Coraline. This creates moments where the readers' own experiences and feelings could be awoken by reading the text. The graphic novel then serves several opportunities of what Rosenblatt (1982) refers to as aesthetic reading.

However, the analyses present me with results suggesting that there is little difference in how much each of the books offers the readers to fill the gaps and whether the books promote aesthetic reading. I experience that both the texts, in both similar and different ways promote the same number of opportunities when it comes to gap-filling and aesthetic reading. Despite the different ways of portraying the same stories, neither one of the texts are proving to be more effective than the other in regards of these matters. That said, this could suggest that perhaps another selection of books would have been more suitable for this type of research. Another suggestion is that both books are beneficial in their own ways. I will address further suggestions for changes in the last chapter of this thesis.

6.2.2 The readers' responses to the extracts

As the aesthetic reading stance is often emphasized as primary stance of reader response approaches (Spiegel, 1998), my primarily focus in my analyses has been to examine how the two texts has provided the readers with opportunities to read the text aesthetically and to fill gaps. Further, from the responses of the questionnaire I have tried to examine how and if the readers have read the extracts aesthetically or if their responses have indicated otherwise. I have also tried to look for attempts of filling gaps in the text. The findings from the questionnaire demonstrated that there was little difference in the children's readerly responses with the two texts in regards of whether they have utilized the aesthetic or efferent reading stance. The readers of the extract from the original novella had to solely rely on their imagination when reading the text as there were no images in the extract. Relating back to reader response theories, one

could argue that this could have opened a larger opportunity for the reader to utilize the aesthetic reading stance which according to Rosenblatt (1982) relies on awakening the readers emotions and imagination. Nevertheless, the results indicated that half of the participants responses indicated clear signs of aesthetic reading. Their responses indicated that the ones reading the text aesthetically were able to immerse themselves in the story about Coraline, they found the other apartment to be scary, and even one of them demonstrated that they were able to recognize the uncanny elements in the text. Some of the young readers also demonstrated that they were able to empathize with Coraline and gave Coraline qualities not stated directly in the text. This could indicate that some of the readers filled some gaps in the text by including their own impression of Coraline. Of course, one could argue that since their responses to the text is in a written form, it is difficult to discover their full reactions to the text. Neither was I able to ask follow-up questions about their responses to check if they have experienced and read the text aesthetically or efferently. Due to this, the results are based on assumptions of the readers experiences with the text. Since the other half of the participants only recited facts from the text, it could indicate that the children most likely utilized an efferent reading style. In their descriptions, they have focused on the facts from the text, and not included their own thoughts or feelings into their descriptions. However, it could be argued that the reading situation may have influenced the responses of the participants. The participants were aware of having to answer a questionnaire about the text after reading which could have led to a pressure of remembering facts from the text for some of the participants.

Five of the seven participants reading the graphic novel had responses indicating that they have experienced the text aesthetically or at least being in the continuum between aesthetic and efferent reading. Some of these respondents also demonstrated that they were able to create and fill gaps in the text by including their own impressions of the content. In similarity with the original novella, the readers of the graphic novel were able to empathize with Coraline. What is interesting is that the readers of the graphic novel have given Coraline more qualities not stated in the extract than the participants reading the original text. When asked to describe Coraline, the participants reading the graphic novel could have relied on the images in their descriptions, which a lot of them did. However, in their descriptions, they have described Coraline with adjectives such as: brave, curious, kind, smart, shy, and strong. If we take a closer look at the speech- or thought bubbles from figure 4, these could in example provide the reader subtle hints of how Coraline is feeling about walking through the hallway. Coraline says: "I wonder what the empty flat would be like" (see figure 4 in chapter 4). Here, the text has implicitly provided the readers with information about Coraline being curious without explicitly stating it. Since the readers has described Coraline as curious, the readers must have made a connection between what is explicitly written and what is not stated and filled the gap created by Russell. This is an example of how a gap in the text is made by the author, and how the reader has filled this gap. It is not stated anywhere that Coraline is shy or a kind girl, however some of the readers have experienced Coraline like this. This is a strong indication that the readers are immersing themselves in the story about Coraline. The readers may have read and found information in the images which have given them the impression that Coraline is like this. However, since I did not have the opportunity to ask the readers about this it is hard to prove it.

Some of the responses about the graphic novel are solely based on facts from the text. Through the responses the children have reproduced the information from the book. This

could indicate that not all of the children were able to immerse themselves in the story but is rather focused and concerned with being able to answer the questions from the questionnaire correctly. Since all the children knew that they were to answer respond to a questionnaire after reading, they may have lost the focus on the book as an aesthetic object and have focused more on reading the story itself. This is not necessarily something negative, it rather suggests that their reading situation implied that focusing on the content of the text in this moment was important. Rosenblatt (1982) claims that the reading-situation matters in regards of what reading stance the reader adopts and this could help prove her claims right. Another reason to why the children did not respond to the graphic novel in an aesthetic way, could be due to the fact that there were images portraying the situations and the characters. This could potentially make it slightly harder for the children to ignore the visual clues given in the book. However, this is not necessarily something negative. This could rather suggest that when the reader needs to collect facts from a text, a multimodal text such as a graphic novel could prove to be beneficial as the visual representations from the graphic novel could aid the reader in a way where the visuals could make it easier for the reader to remember the information read.

7 Conclusion

In this chapter I will describe the main findings, limitations, and suggestions for further research. My thesis has described Iser and Rosenblatt's reader response theories, three analyses of two text extracts and an analysis followed by a discussion about the readerly responses of young readers to the two text extracts.

7.1 Main findings

Even though there is an insignificant difference in how much the two text extracts promotes filling gaps, and efferent- and aesthetic reading, the findings indicate that the texts provide the readers with the opportunity to do so. The major difference between the two extracts is the form of media in which the content has been presented. One being a regular novella, and one being presented in a graphic novel format. That said, the readers of the graphic novel presented me with information which could suggest that there was a slightly increased opportunity for creating and filling gaps in the graphic novel compared to the original novella. This could suggest that even though the reader has visual images of the story in a graphic novel, the reader is still able to utilize their own imagination and interpretation when reading and experiencing a story. This aligns with Iser's (1980) theory of filling gaps which invites the reader to actively engage with the narrative using their own imagination and interpretation. When analyzing the extracts, I suggested moments where the readers had opportunities for aesthetic reading and gap filling. Even though the results from the questionnaire did not address the same moments from the literature as I discussed in my analyses, the results exhibit that both text extracts promote aesthetic- and efferent reading as well as gap-filling. These findings are, however, not necessarily negative for the research. They rather suggest that perhaps another approach of research method would have been favorable for what I was aiming to achieve out of this research. Suggestions for changes and further research will be examined in chapter 7.2, where I discuss limitations of the research and suggest implications for further research of the topic.

7.2 Limitations and further research

My research has had its limitations. One of the limitations is the fact that I chose to utilize a case study approach. A case study is often criticized for being too narrow in its focus which often leads the results to be hard to generalize (Crowe et al., 2011), this could further question the validity and the reliability of the research. The scope of my research is quite narrow. I wanted to investigate whether there was a difference in the child reader's readerly response to a novella vs. a graphic novel and what these differences could imply, however, the results indicated that there was not much difference between the responses of the two texts. A suggestion here could have been to include different texts, as the original novella of *Coraline* is quite visual in its language and may be too similar to the adapted version by Russell. Further, it has been an issue with finding enough participants for this research. I struggled to find participants willing to participate in my research. And when having to eliminate three of the participants due to unreliable answers it further limited my research. I have also discovered that my research method has contributed vastly to the insufficient and limited findings that my research has provided. I have come to the realization that if I have done the analysis prior to creating the questionnaire, I could potentially have created more specific questions. Further, I think that conducting interviews with the participants and observations of. them would have provided the research with a clearer image of the

participants' readerly responses to the text extracts, as I could have asked follow-up questions about their responses and observe their bodily reactions to the text. Even though the scope and the findings of this research are quite limited, I hope that my research could inspire and motivate for further research for this topic.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Responses from questionnaire
*(*participants marked in pink are the ones who read the graphic novel)*

1. I identify as:

Participant:	Boy	Girl	Non-binary
1	x		
2	x		
3	x		
4		x	
5		x	
6		x	
7		x	
8		x	
9		x	
10		x	
11		x	
12		x	
13		x	
14	x		

2. Do you enjoy/like reading literature in English?

Participant:	Yes	No	Sometimes
1			x
2			x
3	x		
4			x
5			x
6			x
7		x	
8			x
9	x		
10	x		
11	x		
12			x
13	x		
14	x		

3. If you enjoy/like reading literature in English, what type of literature do you prefer?

Participant:	Books	Graphic novels	Blogs	Newspapers	I do not like reading in English	Other:
1		x				
2		x				
3		x				
4		x				
5		x	x			
6		x	x			
7					x	
8	x					
9	x	x				
10		x				
11	x	x				
12	x	x				
13	x			x		
14	x					

4. Please choose what suits your English reading experience:
When I read in English:

Participant:	I always understand what I read	I understand what I read most of the time	I sometimes struggle to understand what I read	I never understand what I read
1	x			
2	x			
3		x		
4		x		
5	x			
6		x		
7		x		
8	x			
9		x		
10	x			
11		x		
12		x		
13		x		
14	x	x		

5. Have you read *Coraline* before you participated in this study?

Participant:	Yes, I have read the novel	Yes, I have read the graphic novel	Yes, I have read both the novel and the graphic novel	No, I have not read *Coraline* before
1	x			
2	x			
3				x
4				x
5				x
6				x
7	x			
8				x
9				x
10		x		
11				x
12				x
13		x		
14				x

6. Which excerpt of *Coraline* did you get to read?

Participant:	The graphic novel	The regular novel
1	x	
2	x	
3		x
4		x
5	x	
6	x	
7		x
8		x
9	x	
10	x	
11	x	
12		x
13		x
14		x

7. Where did the door Coraline went through go?

Participant:	To her bedroom	To the drawing room	To an apartment similar to the one where she lives
1			x
2			x
3			x
4			x
5			x
6			x
7			x
8			x
9			x
10			x
11			x
12			x
13			x
14			x

8. How would you describe the place Coraline entered after she went through the door?

Participant:	Written answers:
1	I personly think it was a bit creepy and scary
2	Everything tere was just like a normal house
3	I will describe as a darker werson of her apartment
4	It dident seam so cosy. If I were Coraline I wuld be really scard. It was darker, it was other colors on the wall
5	After she went through the door, I only saw a black room at first. And a painting Coraline had in her house. Then she came to the apartment that looked similar to her house. In that apartment was also her "other mom", her eyes were like buttons (they were black). Coraline also had another bedroom. It was much more colorfull, ad had rats under the bed.
6	It seeams like she goes to a hallway and then comes to the apartment similar to the one where she lives. The hallway has some pictures of people and the walls is painted green.
7	The place Coraline entered looked like she's home but it was cold and scary
8	It was an long hallway, with the same pictures and carpet they had home
9	When coraline went through the door it looked old, cold and somone had not cleaned the place in 100 years
10	Coraline entered a place whear it lookt just the same but her perens vas difrent. They had butens as eays. Coraline's room was feeld whit butefull toys and lots of coller
11	I would describe the place coraline entered to like an apartment were her mom and dad looked much the same but also difrent. Her bedrom was really difrent to.
12	The plase coraline entered was just like her own apartment only something was different for example a picture hanging on the wall had a difret expresen then the picture at home
13	The place Colorline entered after she went througt the door was dark, and it smell something weard, I tought it was a little bit scary because it was exact the same as her other home.
14	She saw her famili but they was a bit differ. They had buttons as eyes

9. Who did Coraline meet when she entered the door?

Participant:	Her mother	Her other mother	Some strangers
1		x	
2		x	
3	x		
4		x	
5		x	
6		x	
7		x	
8		x	
9		x	
10		x	
11		x	
12	x		
13		x	
14		x	

10.   How would you describe the person Coraline met when she entered the door?

Participant:	Written answers:
1	I think she look quite ugly with black eyes
2	Her other mother looks like a creepy woman with black buttons for eyes
3	Coraline met a women that had long finger, lighter skin, botten eyes
4	Wen Coraline entered the door she first saw her other mother. She lookt like her mother just that her skin was wite as paper and she had bottons as eyes and the father looked the same.
5	Coraline's other mom was kinda creepy looking. She had black button eyes and pale skin. And a pink dress
6	She saw her "other mother" who looked like the real mom but have longer and spiss nails. And big black eyes. Her fingernails where long sharp and curled and longer than it usely is.
7	I would describe the person Coraline met as scary
8	A tall woman with hvite skin like paper. She was tin and had button in her eyes
9	She saw a woman whit black button eyes
10	When coraline entered the door she meet her other mother and she vas verry good to coke and she had made a delicus turky
11	The pearson Coraline met has short brown hair, a pink dress, big black eyes and long dark fingernails
12	Coraline's other mother was strange she was taller thinner and had longer nails than her real mother, but the moust strange part was her eyes was black like buttuns
13	The person was a skinny, white woman that say she was colorline's other mother. She had big black eyes.
14	She was tall and thinner and withe as paper

11. How would you describe Coraline, based on what you read/saw?

Participant:	Written answers:
1	Caroline looked like a quite normal girl
2	Just a completely normal girl with blonde long hair
3	I will describe Coraline as a curious girl and she don't like to be bored
4	Based on what I read I describe Coraline as a brave girl with black hair
5	Coraline had brown/blond hair a pink t-shirt and blue denim shorts
6	Coraline is a young girl who has brown long hair. She has a pink t-skirt an and a blue shorts
7	I would describe Coraline as dum because she diden't understood that it was something wrong whit this place.
8	An curious little girl that weited for her mother to com home
9	A shy, kind, strong, brave girl. She has long brown hair and blue eyes.
10	I wood say she is a kind girl that juselig have a boring life but now have a very interesting life
11	I would describe Coraline as a interested and curious pearson
12	I would diskribe Coraline as a little girl who is curius on the word and likes to explore
13	I would describe coraline like a 12 years old gir that like to find special tings. She it a littlebit scared I think
14	A girl ho was home alone and bord and wery happy girl

12. Was it hard to understand what you read in your excerpt?

Participant:	I understood everything I read	I understood most of what I read	I found it difficult to understand some of what I read	I did not understand anything I read
1	X			
2	X			
3		X		
4		X		
5	X			
6	X			
7		X		
8	X			
9		X		
10	X			
11		X		
12	X			
13		X		
14		X		

13. Were there images in the excerpt you read?

Participant:	Yes, many	No	A few
1	X		
2	X		
3		X	
4		X	
5	X		
6	X		
7			X
8		X	
9	X		
10	X		
11	X		
12		X	
13			X
14		X	

14.   I understood what I read only by reading the text.

Participant:	I agree	I somewhat agree	I somewhat disagree	I disagree
1		x		
2		x		
3	x			
4	x			
5	x			
6	x			
7	x			
8	x			
9		x		
10	x			
11		x		
12	x			
13	x			
14		x		

15.   The images helped me understand more of what I read.

Participant:	I agree	I somewhat agree	I somewhat disagree	I disagree	There were no/little images in my excerpt
1	x				
2			x		
3					x
4					x
5	x				
6	x				
7		x			
8					x
9	x				
10	x				
11	x				
12					x
13					x
14			x		