

Designing for Children 2019

- Play and Learn

Unconventional Vs Conventional PictureBooks in Post-globalization

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Abstract:

There are plenty of Creative and media industries in post - globalization era and they are of many facets. Out of these, this paper investigates, on PictureBooks as the Creative Media. There are unconventional & conventional PictureBooks in the industry. Some scholars mention that PictureBooks especially Sri Lankan, are conventional. PictureBooks with unconventional components are, high in quality and enhances the creative imagination. As a creative practitioner and researcher, in order to update myself and others in the allied fields as what could be the brand of the future picturebook, this paper was done. The brand here is to create PictureBooks that elevates creative imagination in a child and be environmentally friendly from designing to final production. This paper is hence on the PictureBook within the timeline of 1997-2019. The globalized picturebook is the prime focus not the industry. Globalization has, enable to buy any book just in one click. But whether the quality of such overall picturebook is of high quality is questionable. The components of a PictureBook consists of Text, Illustrative styles, Format / composition and Content. The high quality mentioned above is referred to unconventional use of Text, Illustrative Style, Format / composition and Content. Some scholars state that abstract style of PictureBooks to be high ranking in the world. Abstract also, here means the unconventional illustrative style. If the conventional persists, there want be any innovations. So this research is going to find out whether Sri Lankan picturebooks are really conventional or unconventional. For this purpose, the researcher collected 200 picturebooks based on a common criteria and observed the components and tabulated. The outcome was that not only Sri Lankan but foreign also do have conventional books where the entire book is not unconventional. Other outcome is what is an unconventional text, illustrative style, format/composition and content was discovered.

Key words: PictureBook, Creativity, Imagination, Unconventional & Conventional

1.0) The PictureBook as background & context

1.1) The Book , The story book & The PictureBook

There are different genres of books in the book industry, across the world. Out of them some are Story Books narrating a story. Different scholars have different opinions on these Story Books. Some state PictureBooks within the genre of Story Books such as scholars like M.O Grenby. Some see PictureBooks separately. Hence the different opinions of scholars on PictureBooks are tabulated.

M.O Grenby	Story Books do have genres such as Fables, Poetry, Moral Tales and Problem Novels, The school story, The family Story, Fantasy, The Adventure Story, Illustrations and Picturebooks. Fables are used to convey a moral value, teaching lessons for life, Poetry is concerned with religious and moral education, Moral Tales and Problem Novels are based on fashionable social problems like poverty and divorce, learning disability and racism. The School story is a type in which the school is the main character of the story, The Family story depicts a story on the family as a character, Fantasy includes stories of magic, ghosts, talking animals, and superhuman heroes, hallucinations and dreams, Adventure stories are mostly fantasies, Childrens books with graphic content should be called as illustrations and picturebooks. (Grenby M.O,2014,10pg, 32pg,61pg,87pg,117pg,144pg,170pg,199 pg)
Kallie George	classifies the books as Realism, Cartoon and forms of abstraction including Dada, Cubism, Surrealism and Abstract expressionism. (George Kallie, 2007,pg 2)
Barbara. Z Kiefer	According to The potential of picturebooks from visual literacy to Aesthetic understanding by Barbara Z Kiefer Picturebook is in different forms however what is common is pictures play a major role in these forms. alphabet and counting books, toy books, concept books, information books, story books, chapter books or novels for children include illustrations as well. Bottom line is there are visuals in both Picture books and Illustration books. What I understood was in Picture books pictures are needed to narrate the story but in the illustration book the story is not depending on Pictures or visuals. Occasionally pictures are used but doesn't rely on the text. (Barbara Z Kiefer, 1995, pg 6)

Ken Marantz	There is a doubt within adults as to what constitutes a picturebook. Art educator Ken Marantz argues that picturebooks are not literature (i.e word dominated things) but rather a form of visual art. Similarly illustrator Uri Shulevitz suggests that ‘A true picturebook tells a story mainly or entirely with pictures.When words are used they have an auxiliary role. (Barbara Z Kiefer, 1995, pg 6)
Barbara Bader	explains:A picturebook is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document and foremost an experience for a child. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words on the simultaneous display of two facing pages and on the drama of the turning page. .(Barbara Z Kiefer, 1995, pg 6)
Barbara Cooney	Illustrator Barbara Cooney likened the picturebook to a string of pearls.She suggested that the pearls represent the illustrations and the string represents the printed text.The string is not an object of beauty on its own,but the necklace cannot exist without the string.Although in picturebooks a verbal text should certainly be beautiful and bring pleasure in and of itself, Cooney’s analogy supports the idea of the interdependence of pictures and text in the unique art object that is a picturebook. .(Barbara Z Kiefer, 1995, pg 6)

<p>Academy.bookcouncil .sg, (3/11/2020)</p>	<p>Illustration Books are as follows: • Stories with illustrations • Illustrations help to enhance the story • Illustrations describe a particular scene or what the story is about • Stories can be understood without the illustrations • It could help reluctant readers to pick up or read the book, Illustration Book</p> <p>Depending on the targeted age group, may go up to or beyond 300 pages, Illustrated Book 200-12,000, Illustration Book Comes in different sizes and shapes, Illustration Book Role To describe the story, Illustration Book Good for enhancing the reading experience and also to attract readers’ attention but the story can stand on its own without illustrations.</p> <p>But PictureBooks are as follows: Number of Pages Usually equal or less than 48 (Although 32 pages is considered to be standard), Picture Book Word Count 0-1000, Picture Book Role is to tell the story together with the lesser or no words at all.</p>
<p>Barbara Z Kiefer</p>	<p>The process of creating picturebooks starts with forming a story or concept. The artist should have a concept or a mental construct. In many cases the illustrator is not the writer.He is presented with an authors finished manuscript which is sent by an editor who thinks the two would be a good match.The illustrator takes over the job of giving visual life to the authors words.</p> <p>The illustrator whether it is their own stories or concepts or someone elses start with the process with meticulous research. Many illustrators do a lot of library research , archival research of old photographs for example,maps etc. you can see how an illustrators research can lend authenticity to her unique artistic interpretation. Even for artists who are not working with historical or cultural settings research is an important part of the creation process . Example Lois Ehlert whose bold bright graphic designs are highly up to date, reports that for ‘planting a rainbow’ I visited flower gardens and parks.I spend a long time checking my fact before I begin to paint” (Kiefer. Z.Barbara, 1995,pg 92)</p> <p>Once the pre-illustration stage is done most illustrators begin their artwork with a story board,which gives an overview of the entire book on one flat</p>

	<p>surface. Most picturebooks are 32 pages. For 32 page picturebook the artist would sketch out 17 rectangles one each for the opening and closing single pages that face each end page and 15 double-page spreads (Fig 1)</p> <p>On the storyboard the artist sketches in the major shapes or forms and the areas of the dark and light. Here the artist can see the flow from one to the next so on. This is the stage to finish the overall design of the book. Can be in rough form and the artist makes a dummy-a mock up of the finish book. (Kiefer. Z. Barbara, 1995, pg 93)</p> <p>This dummy allows the artist to decide how the verbal text will be placed through the book and satisfactorily through out the pages. If a single picture covers two pages in a double -page spread the artist has to be aware of the gutter or lines or images running across both pages can be lost, misaligned or distorted. The dummy also helps to design the cover page back page etc.</p> <p>The major decisions have been worked out in the dummy and the final artwork is executed.</p> <p>The media that the illustrator chooses for the original artwork can include any medium available to any artist including sculpture.</p> <p>Modern day printing techniques make It possible and inexpensive to reproduce such 3 dimensional originals as Molly Bangs cut - paper sculptures for The paper Crane or Jennie baker's collage construction in where the forest Meets the sea. Etc.</p> <p>The different mediums used by different artists: pen and ink, charcoal, pastel chalk, oil pastel and conte crayon based on the way to express ideas.</p> <p>Using design elements and principle of design such as color, composition to convey meanings. (Kiefer. Z. Barbara, 1995, pg 94)</p> <p>If this process is adhered to create a book it can be called as a PictureBook.</p>
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1.2) Picture Book or Picturebook: What's the Difference?

In Picture Book there is no narration while in PictureBook there is a narration not just mere pictures as in the Picture Book. (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006, pg 6)

“ books in which the story depends on the interaction between text and image and where both have been created with a conscious aesthetic intention” (Arizpe and Styles, 2003, p.22 from Gerrard Emily, 2008, pg8)

1.3) PictureBook Typologies

According to “How PictureBook Work” book there are several PictureBook Typologies. (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006,pg 6-7) The below describes the typologies. Typology by Gregersen of Denmark:

- a) The exhibit book:Picture dictionary (No narrative)
- b) The picture narrative: wordless or with very few words
- c) The picturebook, or picture storybook: text and picture equally important
- d) The illustrated book:the text can exist independently

Joseph Schwarcz does not see the difference between a illustrated book and PictureBook but he is concerned about the ratio of text and pictures called ‘verbal - visual narration’.Schwarcz outlines several ways the words and pictures cooperate:

- a) Congruency
- b) Elaboration
- c) Specification
- d) Amplification
- e) Extension
- f) Complementation
- g) Alternation
- h) Deviation
- i) Counterpoint

Joanne Golden on Visual-Verbal narrative, discusses several types of interaction:

- a) The text and pictures are symmetrical
- b) The text depends on pictures for clarification
- c) Illustration enhances,elaborates text
- d) The text carries primary narrative, illustration is selective
- e) The illustration carries primary narrative,the text is selective

Out of this classification of typologies this research focuses on Torben Gregersons wordless or with very few words. Out of the few words this research further concentrates on max 25 words per page for below 6 year olds as specified by the IBBY Sri Lanka section on Guildlines for a Good Childrens Story book.

1.4) The PictureBook & components

When studying 200 picturebooks I as the researcher discovered that there are four main elements, namely Text, Illustration, format/composition and Content. Gokce Irten also identifies picture book components in the following manner in his Analysis of the componens of a childrens picture book. Gokce identifies three components namely Typography, Illustration and layout.

In the essay The Crystal Goblet, or Printing should be Invisible, Beatrice Warde depicts good typography as ‘invisible’, which is a metaphor of successful typography. (Irten Gokce, 2016. pg52)

Having examined the 200 book samples I do agree to Warde and further describes that Text is illustratively designed and integrated to the Illustration In the entire book.

The illustrative style after the mid 20th Century used variety of new techniques though some still used traditional techniques such as oil,gouache,watercolour and pen,while some went for

collage,photograpgh,3d modeling and digital drawing. (Irten Gokce, 2016. Pg64) Book designer Kveta Pacovska used various media and crafting techniques with her own colour palette. “Pacovska has, in many ways raised the art of picture book to new levels” says Salisbury (Irten Gokce, 2016. Pg65) Another key person is Sara Fanelli who uses collage and childish hand writing creating a different illustrative style. So Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book is the way I define the future illustrative style for picturebooks.

Layout and composition is the third element. In the traditional layout and composition there is a picture on one side or both sides and has the text. The layout and composition doesn't convey the meaning of the narration. Layout and composition is breaking the conventional : text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages.These are unconventional layouts.

The last component is Content. Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus - that can be called as 'Utopia' in the entire book. Such is an unconventional PictureBook with unconventional content.

2.0) The objective -

The objective of this paper is to investigate whether Sri Lankan books are really conventional.

In order to find that 200 PictureBooks were collected based on the following criteria.

- **Time line** -1997- 2019
- **Context** - foreign published, illustrated, written & foreign printed books , Sri Lankan published, illustrated, written, printed books, locally published, printed books with foreign illustrated, written, books.
- **Typology** - wordless or few words picturebooks
- **Genre** - Fiction
- **User Group** -5/6 year old Grade 1

3.0) Methods -

3.1) Identifying Unconventional and Conventional components in a picturebook using the 200 PictureBook book sample

The PictureBook Unconventional and Conventional

Example of Unconventional and Conventional Text - Fig 2

Example of Unconventional and Conventional Illustrative Style - Fig 3

Example of Unconventional and Conventional layout/composition - Fig 4

Example of Unconventional and Conventional Content - Fig 5

3.2) Tabulating unconventional conventional components in a Table & Chart to find out whether Sri Lankan picturebooks are the only ones that have conventional components

The PictureBooks in Other Countries

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 1 & Chart 1

The PictureBooks in Sri Lanka

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 2 & Chart 2

The PictureBooks in Other countries & Sri Lanka mixed

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 3 & Chart 3

3.3) Analysing using pie charts the way conventional or unconventional components are used in picturebooks

- Text is illustratively designed & integrated to the illustration in the entire book- chart A
- Illustrative Style Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book- chart B
- Layout and composition breaking the conventional - chart C
- Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus - Utopia- chart D

4.0) The outcome(s) and results

Not only Sri Lankan but Foreign PictureBooks are also conventional. There isn't a single book in this sample where one picturebook has all the unconventional components in one entire book. Secondly the researcher managed to establish what an unconventional text, illustrative style, Layout/composition and content should be.

5.0) Conclusion

There isn't a single picturebook within the 200 book sample collected during the time period of 1997 - 2019 that is unconventional in all four components namely: Text, Illustrative Style, Format/Composition, Content. Therefore it is high time to produce such in order to expand the creative media which is PictureBooks in this paper. Eventually such an intervention can enhance and boost the media and its audience, the child to new paradigms of thinking. This paper also suggests and encourages new paradigms to emerge to expand the creative imagination in the child and strengthen the possibilities of what picturebooks could be!

List of Figures and Tables and Charts

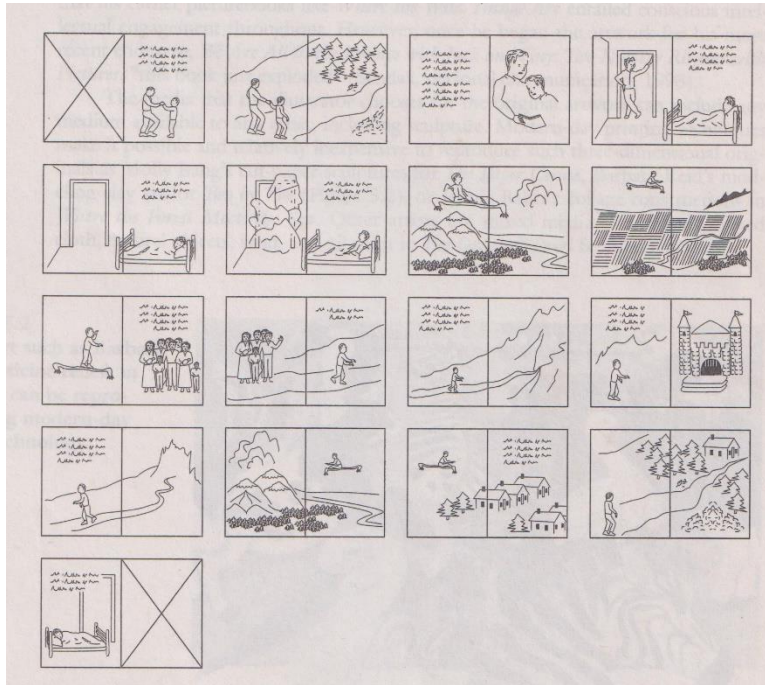
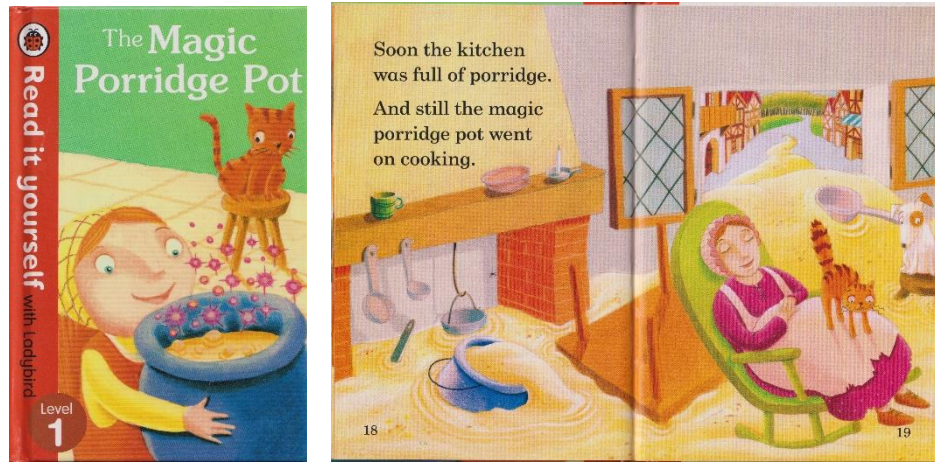


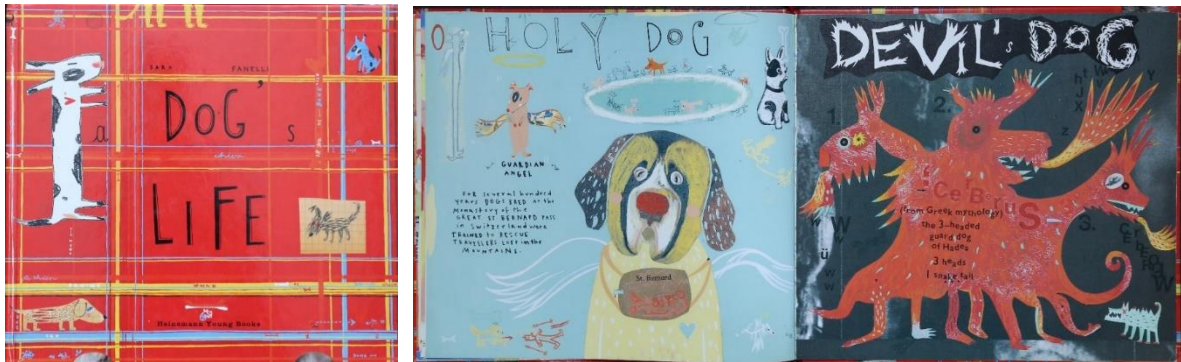
Fig 1: A Sample storyboard for



Fig 2 Left page is a conventional text
& Right is unconventional text



Top



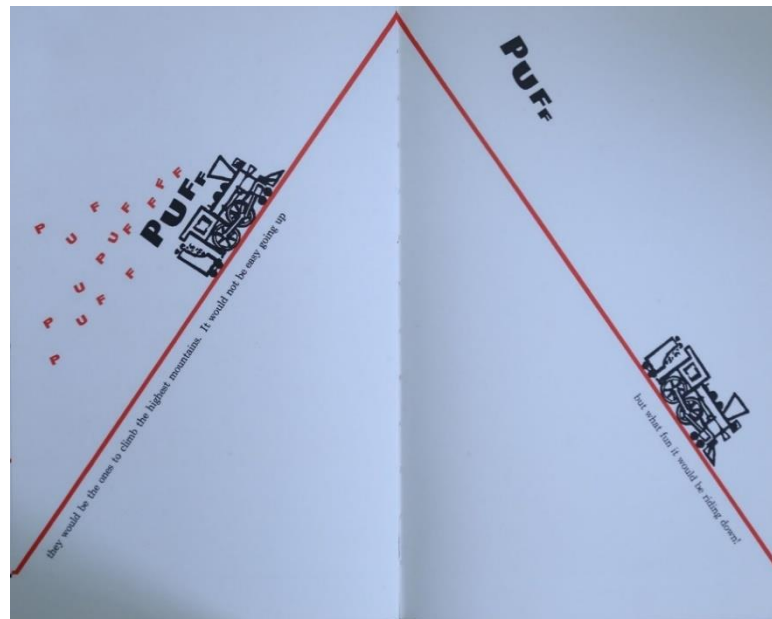
Bottom

Fig 3

Top illustrations , consists of conventional illustrative style while Bottom illustrations consists of unconventional illustrative style



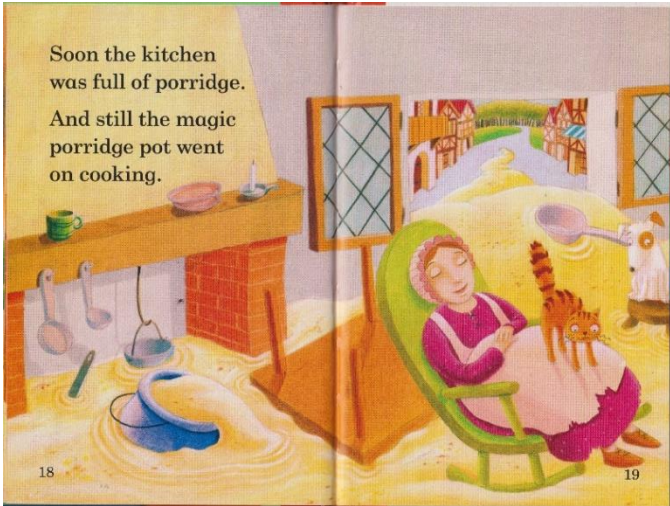
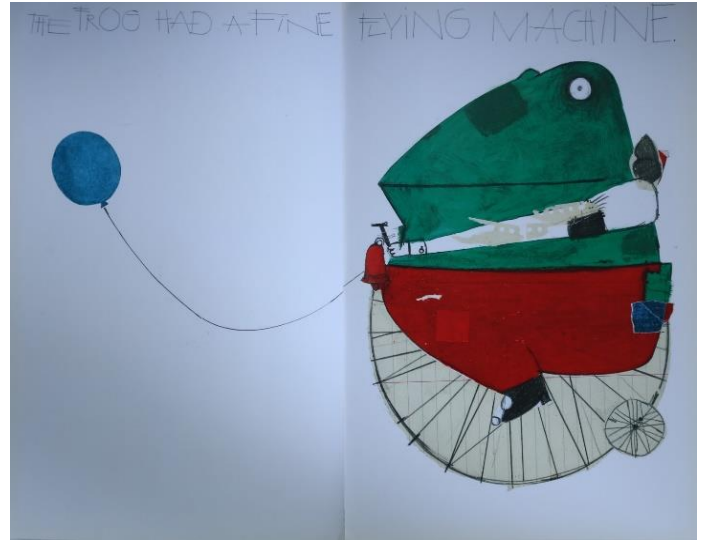
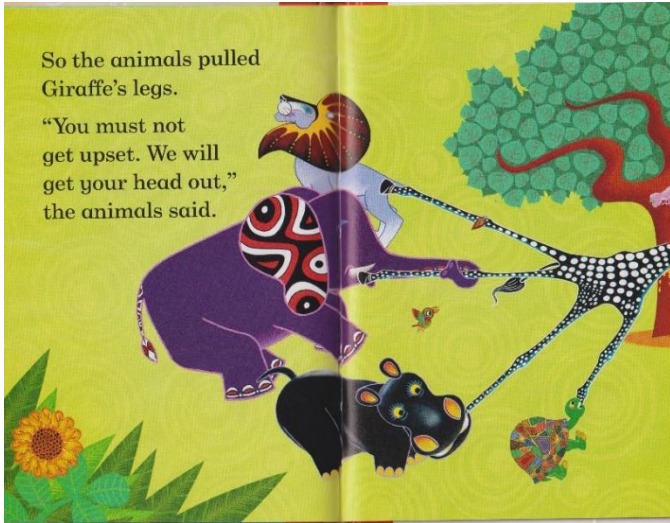
Top



Bottom

Fig 4

Top consists of Traditional Layout
 while Bottom consists of
 Unconventional Layout



Left

Right

Fig 5

Left consists of conventional content and Right consist of unconventional content

The PictureBooks in Other Countries

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- **Table 1** & Chart 1

Out of a Total of 205 picture books, Foreign published, illustrated, Written, printed nos of books are 106, wordless or few word Picture books , among this is 80			
Unconventional		Conventional	
Text is illustratively designed and integrated to the illustration In the entire book	0	Text is not designed and integrated to the illustration in the entire book	80
Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	0	Not Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	80
Layout and composition is breaking the conventional : text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	10	Layout and composition is not breaking the conventional :text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	70
Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus – Utopia in the entire book	1	Content has not got possibilities of imaginative apparatus- no Utopia in the entire book	79

Table 1 Tabulation of the status in **foreign** published, illustrated ,written, printed books

The PictureBooks in Other Countries

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 1 & **Chart 1**

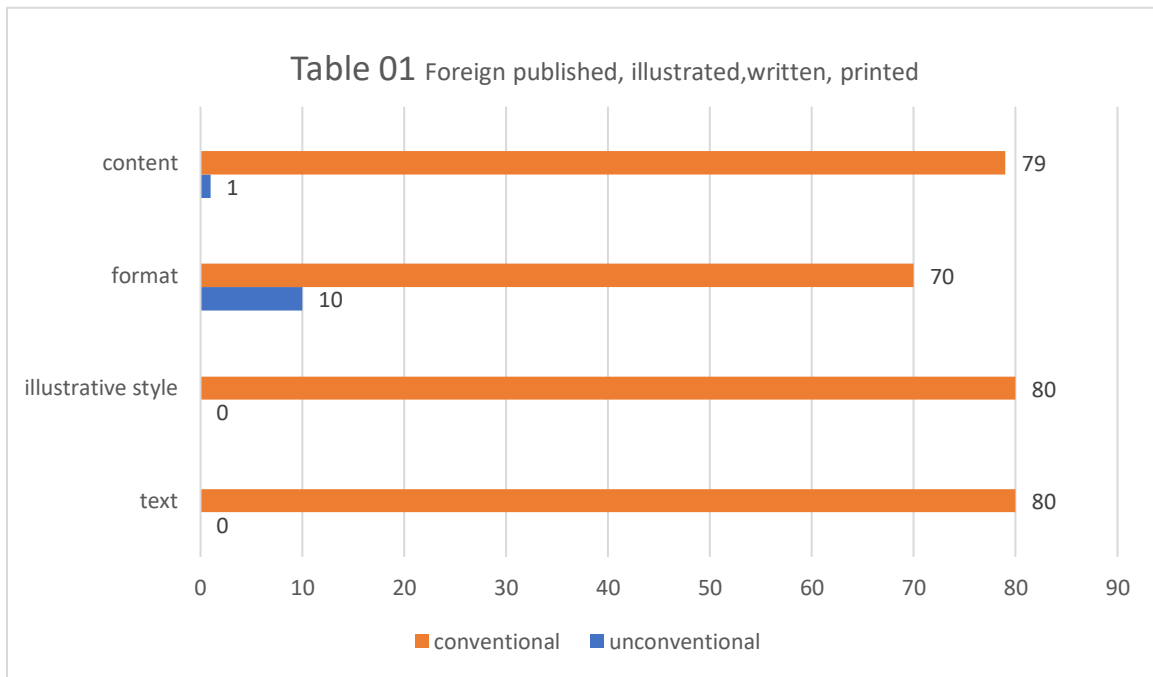


Chart 1 Tabulation of the status in foreign published, illustrated, written, printed books

The PictureBooks in Sri Lanka

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- **Table 2** & Chart 2

Out of a Total of 205 picture books, Sri Lankan published, illustrated, Written, printed nos of books are 64, wordless or few word Picture books , among this is 31			
Unconventional		Conventional	
Text is illustratively designed and integrated to the illustration In the entire book	0	Text is not designed and integrated to the illustration in the entire book	31
Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	0	Not Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	30
Layout and composition is breaking the conventional : text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	0	Layout and composition is not breaking the conventional :text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	31
Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus – Utopia in the entire book	0	Content has not got possibilities of imaginative apparatus- no Utopia in the entire book	31

Table 2 Tabulation of the status in Sri Lankan published, illustrated, written, printed books

The PictureBooks in Other Countries

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 2 & **Chart 2**

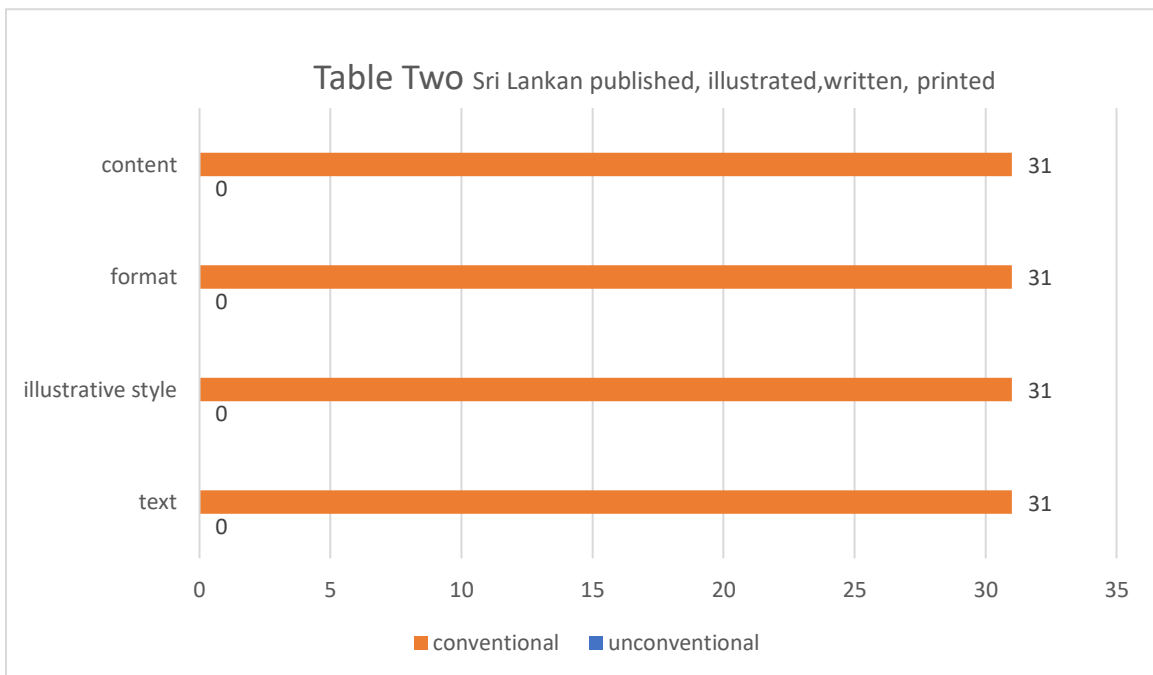


Chart 2 Tabulation of the status in Sri Lankan published, illustrated, written, printed books

The PictureBooks in Sri Lanka and Overseas mixed

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- **Table 3** & Chart 3

Out of a Total of 205 picture books, Sri Lankan published, Printed only illustrated, Written, by Foreign books are 35, wordless or few word Picture books , among this is 23			
Unconventional		Conventional	
Text is illustratively designed and integrated to the illustration In the entire book	0	Text is not designed and integrated to the illustration in the entire book	23
Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	0	Not Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book	23
Layout and composition is breaking the conventional : text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	0	Layout and composition is not breaking the conventional :text on one page and illustration on the other. Or text on both pages and illustration in one or in two pages	23
Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus – Utopia in the entire book	0	Content has not got possibilities of imaginative apparatus- no Utopia in the entire book	23

Table 3 Tabulation of the status in **locally** published, printed books with **foreign** illustrated, written, books

The PictureBooks in Sri Lanka & Overseas mixed

Text, Illustrative style,format/composition,content- Table 3 & **Chart 3**

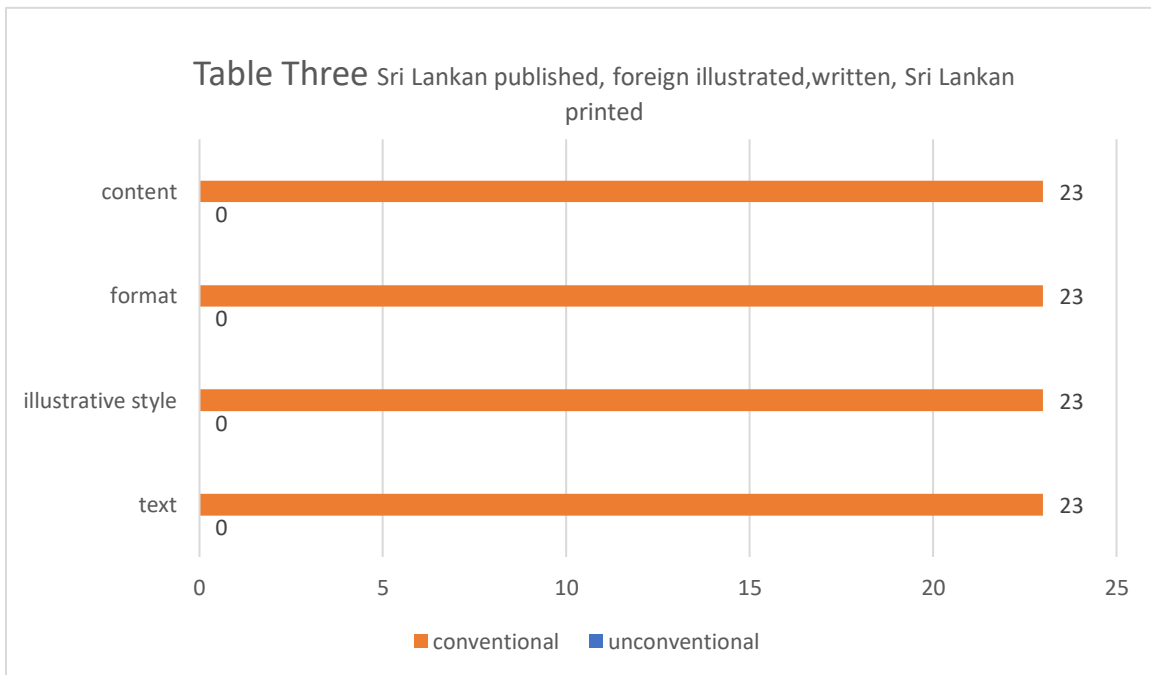
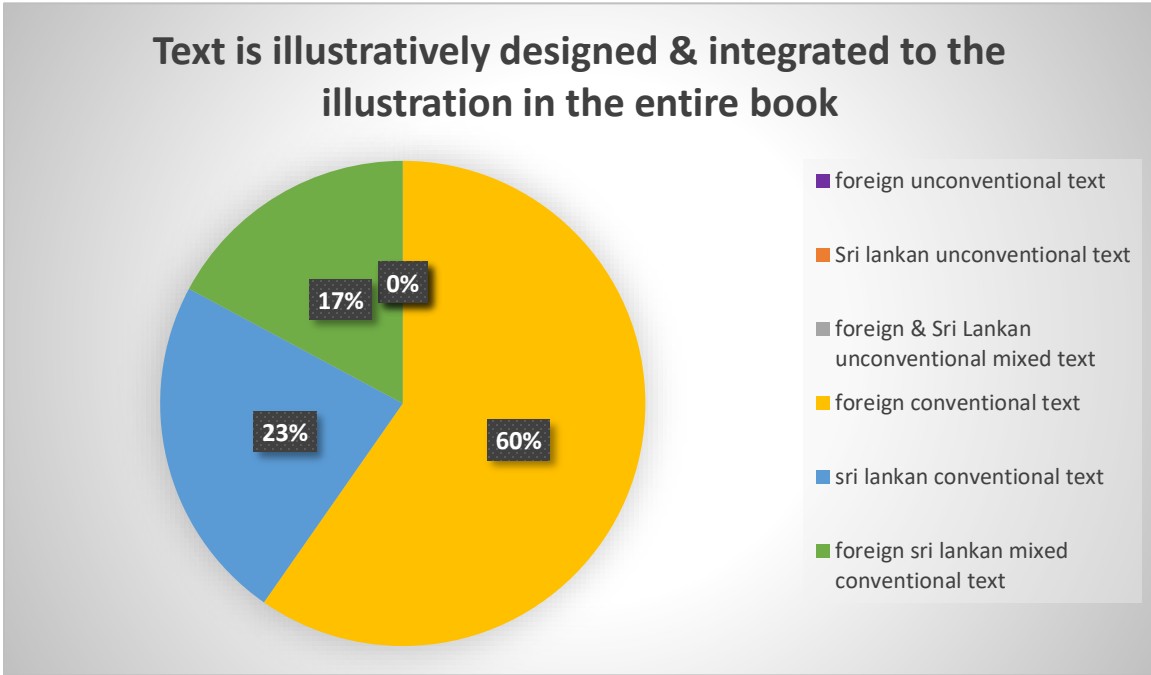
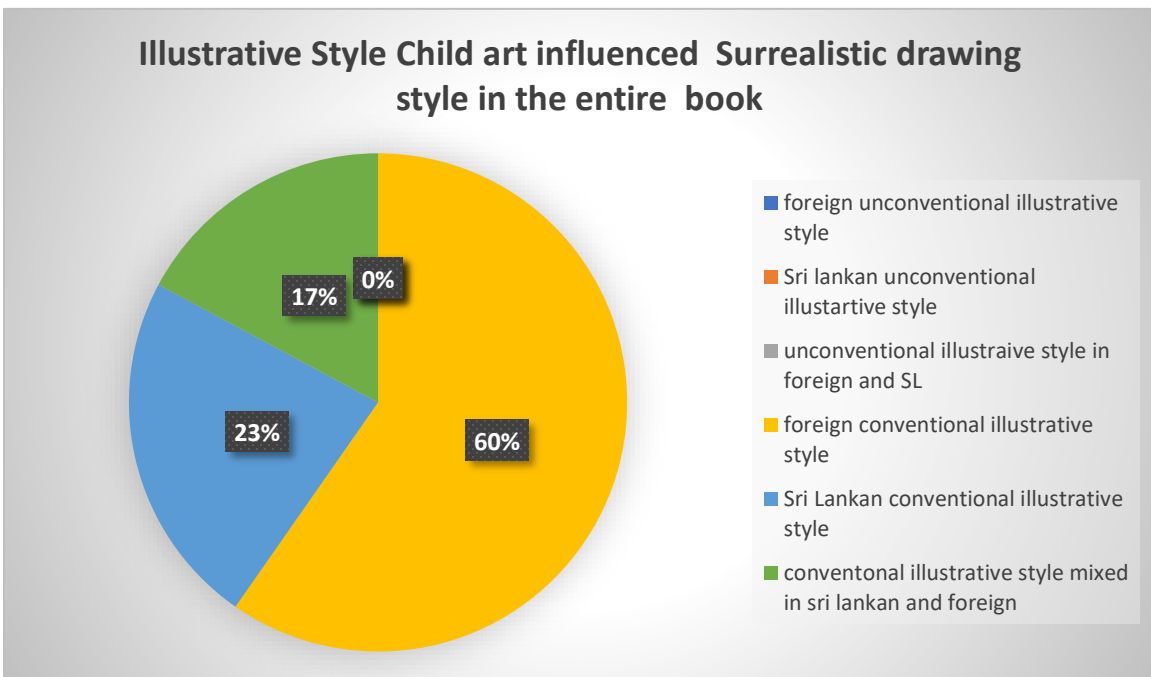


Chart 3 Tabulation of the status in locally published, printed books with foreign illustrated, written, books

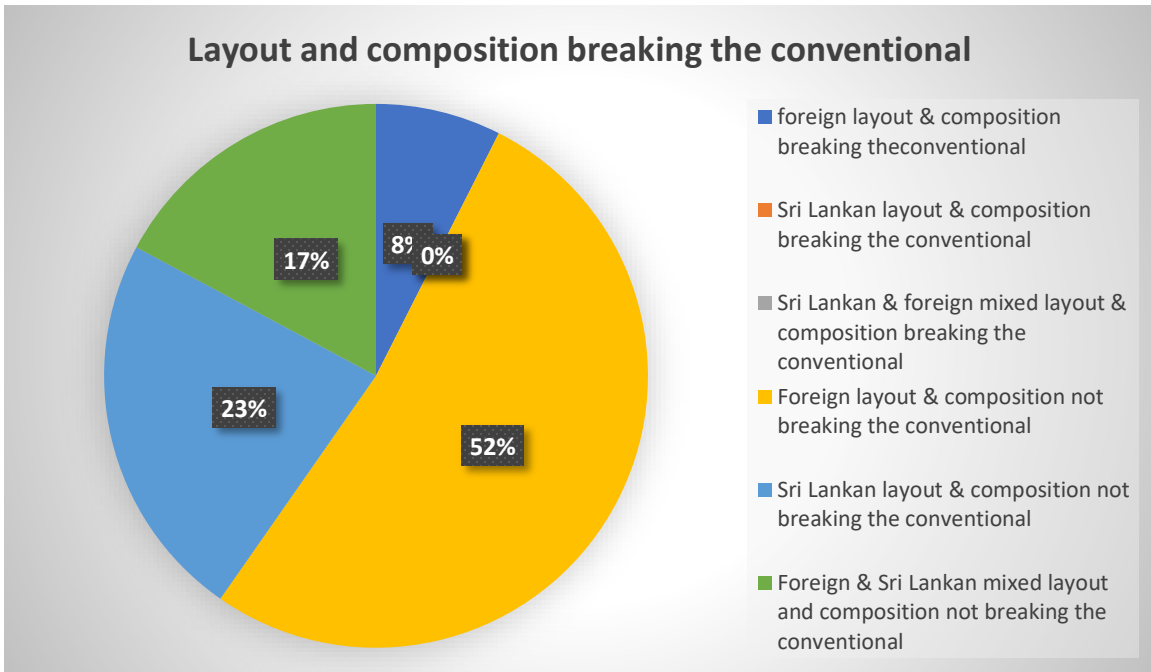
Analysing using pie charts the way conventional or unconventional components are used in picturebooks in Sri Lanka, Overseas, and Both mixed



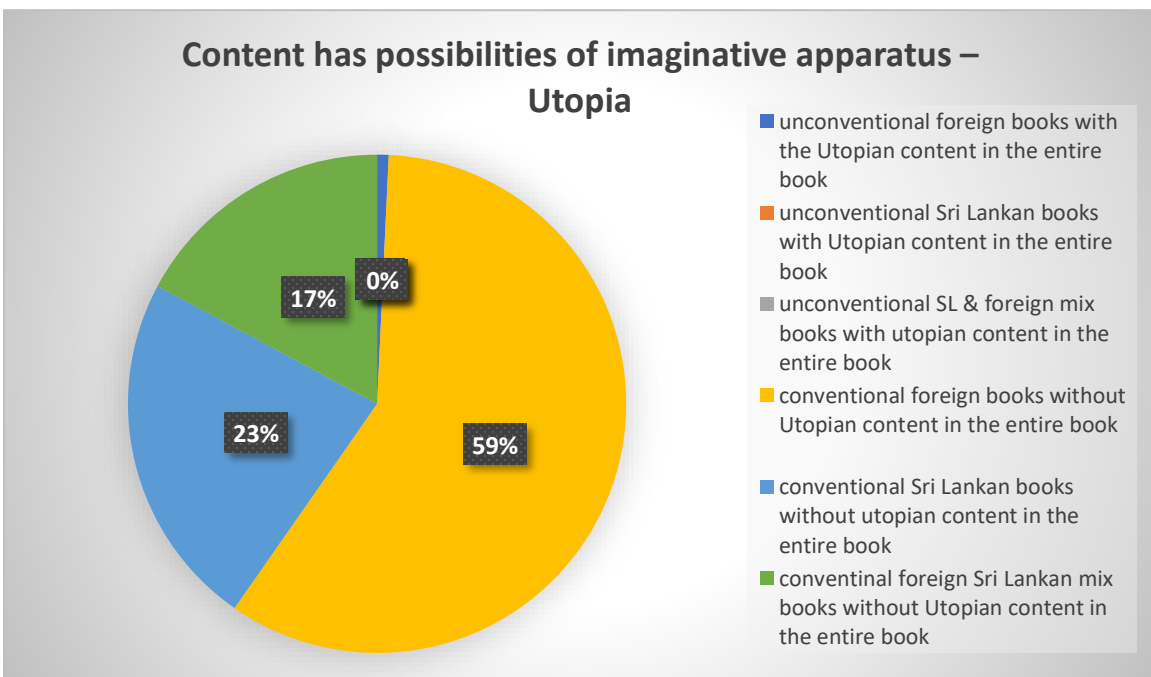
Text is illustratively designed & integrated to the illustration in the entire book- **chart A**



Illustrative Style Child art influenced Surrealistic drawing style in the entire book- **chart B**



Layout and composition breaking the conventional – **chart C**



Content has possibilities of imaginative apparatus – Utopia- **chart D**

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