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MASTER'S THESIS

Coraline and the other mother: different media, different experience?

A comparative study of children's experience of the characters in the book *Coraline* and the film *Coraline and the secret door*

Coraline og den andre moren: ulike medier, ulik opplevelse?

En komparativ studie av barns opplevelse av karakterene i boken *Coraline* og filmen *Coraline og den hemmelige dør*

Ina Fjelltveit

"Books and movies are like apples and oranges. They both are fruit, but taste completely different"

-   Stephen King

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Abstract

In this master's thesis I compare the child audience's experience of the characters Coraline and the other mother in an excerpt from Neil Gaiman's book *Coraline* and in Henry Selick's film *Coraline and the secret door.* My aim is to look at how the two media give children similar and different experiences of the two characters, and provide possible explanations for these similarities and differences.

Twenty children participated in the research, ten of whom read the book excerpt and ten watched the film clip. The children were then interviewed individually.

The thesis employs reader-response theory to explore the child audience's experience of the characters in the book and the film. I investigate how the children filled the gaps in the two media. The Iserian term "gap" refers to those unwritten parts of the text where the readers are invited to participate in the meaning-making of the story. The thesis also studies how and where the children adopted aesthetic and efferent stances in the two media. Louise M. Rosenblatt's terms refer to the readers' ability to immerse themselves in the story during the reading event (aesthetic reading) and their ability to focus on acquiring information and logical solutions (efferent reading). In addition, my analysis relies on Maria Nikolajeva's typology of character presentations as well as adaptation theory. I look at how books and films present characters differently, and how the children seem to be affected by this.

The findings reveal both differences and similarities in how the children experience the characters. In general, the children who read the book excerpt read more aesthetically and filled more gaps in the text, while the children who watched the film clip watched more efferently and filled fewer gaps. These differences are due to medium-specific features, the children's competence and expectations, as well as narrative choices that are not necessarily due to the given media. As the results reveal, film may give a better understanding of the narrative to children with limited literacy skills, while books may open up for more in-depth interpretations and gap-filling due to ambiguities that are not to be found to the same extent in films.

Sammendrag

I denne masteroppgaven sammenligner jeg barns opplevelse av karakterene Coraline og den andre moren i et utdrag fra Neil Gaimans bok *Coraline* med Henry Selicks film *Coraline og den hemmelige dør*. Formålet mitt er å se hvordan de to mediene gir barn like og ulike opplevelser av karakterene, samt gi ulike forklaringer på disse likhetene og forskjellene.

Tjue barn deltok i forskningen, der av ti leste bokutdraget og ti så filmklippet. Barna ble deretter intervjuet individuelt.

Oppgaven benytter leserorientert teori for å utforske barnas opplevelse av karakterene i boken og filmen. Jeg undersøker hvordan barna har fylt tomrommene i de to mediene. Det Iserianske begrepet "tomrom" refererer til de uskrevne delene av teksten der leserne inviteres til å delta i meningsskapingen av historien. Oppgaven tar også for seg hvordan og hvor barna har tatt i bruk estetiske og efferente leserposisjoner i mediene. Louise M. Rosenblatts begreper refererer til lesernes evne til å leve seg inn i historien under selve lesestunden (estetisk lesning) og deres evne til å fokusere på å tilegne seg informasjon og logiske slutninger (efferent lesning). I tillegg støttes oppgaven av Maria Nikolajevas typologi av karakterfremstillinger, samt adaptasjonsteori. Jeg undersøker hvordan bøker og filmer fremstiller karakterer ulikt, og hvordan barna ser ut til å være påvirket av dette.

Funnene avslører både forskjeller og likheter i hvordan barna opplever karakterene. Generelt sett leste barna som ble eksponert for utdraget mer estetisk og fylte flere tomrom i teksten, mens barna som ble eksponert for filmklippet så mer efferent og fylte færre tomrom. Disse forskjellene er grunnet mediespesifikke trekk, barnas kompetanse og forventninger, samt narrative valg som ikke nødvendigvis er grunnet mediet. Som resultatene viser kan film gi barn med begrensede leseferdigheter en bedre forståelse av fortellingen, mens bøker kan åpne opp for flere dyptgående tolkninger og fylling av tomrom grunnet uklarheter som ikke finnes i samme grad i film.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and purpose of the thesis

Children are constantly exposed to stories through different media, including books and films. Already in 1926 Boris Eikenbaum (quoted in Lothe, 2000) stated that "the competition of cinema with literature is an undeniable fact of our present culture" (p. 87). Today, almost a hundred years later, the statement is even more valid. Data from Statistics Norway [SSB] reveal that while the number of youth reading books remains stable, the number of youth watching films is increasing. In 2015, 36 % of Norwegian children aged 9 to 15 read books every day (Vaage, 2016, p. 98), while 55 % of the same age group watched films, videos or TV on the internet every day (Vaage, 2016, p. 106). The number of people watching video and films has increased (Vaage, 2016, p. 109).

Children meet different media also at school. According to the Norwegian curriculum, children should be able "to understand and interpret information from different expression forms" after the 7th grade (Utdanningsdirektoratet [Udir], 2013, p. 8, my translation to English). The Norwegian curriculum and the statistics from SSB show that Norwegian children read books and watch films both at home and at school. Books and films thus play a significant part in children's lives.

Many of the films children are exposed to are adaptations of literary texts. Jakob Lothe (2000, p. 86-87) claims that approximately one out of three fiction films takes a literary text as its starting point, and according to Arne Engelstad (2013, p. 15) this is also the case within Norway. The possibility of engaging with a story in different media has thus become a normality and nearly taken for granted. It is therefore more important than ever to understand how different media such as books and films affect the child audience. In this research I aim to create an awareness of this issue by looking at how children experience a specific line of events through a book and through a film, more specifically, Neil Gaiman's book *Coraline* and its filmic adaptation, *Coraline and the secret door*.

My interest in *Coraline* and *Coraline and the secret door* is based on their uniqueness and possibilities. Both the book and the film fit into several genres, from horror to fantasy and fairy tale, and they are read and watched by people of different ages. Both have a

mysterious atmosphere and blur the line between what is real and not−which might lead to many different interpretations. Also, the story in both media consists of several layers. After my meeting with the story about Coraline, I soon found out that I, as a future teacher, wanted to share it with my future pupils. I wondered how they would experience it. I did however also soon realise that I was not only interested in seeing how the child audience experiences this story, but also how the specific medium contributes to their experience. The book and film seem to convey the same story, but does the way the story is told affect the children's experience of it? This research therefore investigates children's experience of both the book and the film, and how each medium affects their experience.

More specifically this research focuses on the children's experience of the two main characters in the book and film. Character is one of the most important elements of a narrative. As Roland Barthes (quoted in Chatman, 1978) states, "there is not a single narrative in the world without a 'character'" (p. 115). Characters also seem to be important to the child audience. Maria Nikolajeva (2002, p. 16) points out that young readers might feel strong empathy with literary characters. Children identify with and share the characters' feelings. According to Joseph A. Appleyard (1991, p. 87), as children grow older, characters eventually become more important than actions. Children aged 10 to 13 are more interested in and can imagine other people's thoughts and feelings (Appleyard, 1991, p. 87). *Coraline*'s target group is just about this age. The fact that characters seem to become so important to the children at this age makes it relevant to investigate how the children experience characters in two different media. I therefore decided to study the two main characters in *Coraline* and *Coraline and the secret door*; Coraline and the other mother. Both characters have complex qualities and therefore provide an interesting object of study.

Further on, this research focuses on one particular scene in the book and the film. This has made it possible to do a detailed and lucid comparative study of children's experience of the characters in the two media. It may be preferable to study the entire book and film, but due to limits regarding time and resources, I had to narrow the research scope. The scene chosen is an important part of the story where the characters studied show their real selves.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the child audience's experience of Coraline and the other mother in an excerpt from Neil Gaiman's book *Coraline* compared to in Henry Selick's film *Coraline and the secret door*. In order to carry out this project, the following research questions will be addressed: Firstly, *How does the child audience experience*

Coraline and the other mother in the film and in the book? Secondly, *What are the similarities and differences in the experience of the characters in the two media?* Thirdly, *What are the possible explanations for these similarities and differences?*

The research questions are answered by interviewing 20 children, where half of them watched the film clip and half of them read the book excerpt. Wolfgang Iser's and Louise M. Rosenblatt's reception theory is used to explore the child audience's experience of the characters in the book and the film. In order to answer the second and third research question, a comparative analysis of the children's experience was conducted. Maria Nikolajeva's theory about character presentations was combined with adaptation theory in order to find out why the children experienced the characters as they did in the two media.

1.2. *Coraline*

Coraline is written by the critically acclaimed and award-winning author Neil Gaiman and illustrated by his long-time collaborator Dave McKean. Since its publication in 2002 the book has sold over a million copies worldwide and won several awards for best book for children, young adults and teenagers (HarperCollins, n.d.). One possible reason for its success is that it offers many meanings. Phillip Pullman (2002) has stated in a review of *Coraline* that it is a "marvellously strange and scary" book and that "part of the richness of the story comes from the fact that it offers many meanings without imposing any. (...) The story is much too clever to be caught in the net of one single interpretation" (Pullman, 2002). Pullman imagines for instance how the whole book might be read as an unconscious struggle in the main character's mind.

In 2009 the stop motion animated 3D film *Coraline and the secret door,* based on the book, was released. Directed by Henry Selick, it won a BAFTA for Best Animated Film and was nominated to Oscar in the same category (HarperCollins, n.d.). Gaiman states in an interview that the film is very faithful: "It's very much a film of my book and it hits all the beats of the book and it expands a little because it's not a very big book" (Weintraub, 2009). Although it is not included in this project, it is important to mention that in addition to the book and film, there also exists a graphic novel about Coraline, released in 2008 and illustrated by P. Craig Russell.

The core story in both the book and the film is that the girl Coraline is extremely bored because it is summer holiday and her parents are too busy working rather than playing with her. The family has just moved into a big old house with many odd neighbours. While Coraline is exploring the new house, she discovers a secret door leading her to another world. This world is very similar to her old one, but here she meets her other parents and her other neighbours, who are a lot more fun than the real ones−the strange thing is though that they have buttons for eyes. Coraline soon finds out that something is completely wrong. Before she knows it, she is trapped in the other world by her other mother, who wants to sew button eyes on her and keep her in the other world forever. In order to escape and to get her real parents back, Coraline has to overcome several challenges.

As mentioned earlier, *Coraline* is a complex story, which becomes evident if one tries to make the book fit into a genre. The book starts with an epigraph by C. K. Chesterton: "Fairy tales are more than true: not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us that dragons can be beaten" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 1). This indicates that *Coraline* may be read as a fairy tale. *Coraline* has indeed been compared to Lewis Carrol's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Rusnak, 2011, p. 140), and most of the story takes place in an unreal world, which is typical for fairy tales (Birketveit, 2013, p. 94). The characters in *Coraline* can also easily be assigned the different functions that, as Anna Birketveit (2013, p. 97) points out, are developed by Vladimir Propp in order to analyse fairy tales, and I will discuss this further in chapter 4. Gaiman's use of the macabre, the ghostly and the "anti-expected event or characterization" also make the book fit into gothic horror (Karen Coats, 2007, p. 78). *Coraline* is referred to as a children's book, by Gaiman himself and by critics. Gaiman states that he wrote it for his two daughters (Gaiman, 2009, p. 1).

The filmic adaptation, *Coraline and the secret door*, is also referred to as a children's or family film. However, the age limit of the Norwegian edition is 11 years (Selick, Jennings, Mechanic & Sandell, 2009), and the film is referred to in reviews as scary, even a "nightmare fodder for children" (Ebert, 2009)−also, parental guidance is recommended. The film fits the fantasy genre, as it is filled with even more magic, wonders and supernatural features than the book. Elements of horror and fairy tales are still very present in the film, as I will show in the analysis in chapter 4.

1.3. Relevance and previous research

Scholarly articles' focus on different aspects of *Coraline* (both the book and the film version), such as identity (Agnell, 2014; Ashley, 2007; Pons, 2014; Razey, 2015; Rudd, 2008) and the uncanny (Gooding, 2008; Rudd, 2008; Schers, 2016;) in the book, and the experience of 3D animation (González, 2011; Higgins, 2013; Jockenhövel, 2011), anti-feminism (Curtis, 2016) and fears (Myers, 2012) in the film, underscore the richness of the texts. There is however a lack of studies regarding the child audience's actual experience of the two works and a comparative study of the two. Although there exist many comparative adaptation studies of books and films, there are not many about *Coraline*. One exception is Marcin Rusnak's comparison of *Coraline* and the filmic adaptation, presented in the article "Blessings and curses of the Silver Screen: Film adaptations of *Coraline* and *Stardust* by Neil Gaiman" (2011). Rusnak looks at which elements that has been left out or added in the process of adaptation, and considers possible reasons for the alterations. He also investigates which influence these changes may have on the reading and interpretation of the story (Rusnak, 2011, p. 140). Rusnak (2011, p. 148) concludes with something many people have claimed about films before him; that the filmic adaptation of Coraline in its effort to entertain loose a bit of the subtle depth and richness of the book. He claims that although the adaptation is similar to the original, several changes in the presentation of characters may lead to altered readings of the entire story. As Rusnak, I do in this research look at the differences between the two versions of *Coraline*, but also the similarities. While Rusnak's research is theoretical and hypothetical as he investigates how the changes *may* affect the readings, my research is empirical and provides knowledge of how the child audience *actually* reads and watches the story. Rusnak mainly pays attention to the texts, while I provide information about the audience and what they bring to the reading and viewing.

Research on children's actual experience of films compared with books seems to be lacking in general. Laurene K. Meringoff did in 1980 a study of children's experience of the two media by exposing the children to an unfamiliar story. Her methods were similar to the methods used in this research. By letting 24 children watch the story through televised film and 24 through an illustrated book, Meringoff aimed to see how the children recalled the story content and how much they inferred about characters and events. Her findings are

presented in the article "Influence of the media in children's story apprehension" (1980), and reveal that the children who watched the film remembered more story actions and relied more on visual content as the basis for inferences. The children who read the illustrated book based their inference more on general knowledge, personal experiences and asked more questions and had more comments about the story (Meringoff, 1980, p. 240). Meringoff also investigates the media's impact on children of different ages. As Meringoff, I compare children's interactions with film and book. My research enlightens other aspects than what Meringoff has covered: while Meringoff's (1980, p. 241) focus lies on how the media affect how much the children remember and understand of the content, I investigate how the media affects the children's own experience of the story. Also, while Meringoff mainly looks at how the characteristics of the media have affected the children, I also look at other contributing factors, such as the children's knowledge, previous experience and expectations to the text, as well as the writer's and filmmaker's narrative choices.

This research aims to create awareness of medium-specificity and narrativity in general. Engelstad (2013, p. 7) points out that adaptation studies might give an understanding of a medium's expressive distinctiveness. This is important because films often are seen as inferior to books. According to Jason Mittell (2007, p. 162), many critics claim that film cannot achieve the narrative depths and complexity of great literature. Also Linda Hutcheon (2006, p. 2) points out that adaptations are often considered secondary or culturally inferior in both academic writing and journalistic reviews. Apparently, turning literature into film is often seen as "lowering" the story (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 3). This research may therefore contribute to an understanding of the film's medium-specific potentials and affect on the child audience. Engelstad (2013, p. 94-95) also states that adaptation studies might create awareness of narrative techniques the media use to affect its audience, and how the book or the film is a product of careful selections and options.

Unlike a large number of academics, journalists, critics and people in general who often see film as inferior to literature, Norwegian youth today seem to be exposed to films more than literature. As the already mentioned statistics from SSB reveal, Norwegian children watch more films than they read books. This fact is one of the reasons why knowledge about the two media and how they affect children's experience are important, and which experience children might lose out on when only watching films or only reading books.

I would like to emphasise that this thesis is only an example of how the interpretation of characters may differ in two different media, and in no way representative for every adaptation. My research reveals how the child audience experiences the characters in the book and film studied and identifies possible reasons for this. Further research on similar cases could strengthen the findings. The findings of this research therefore contribute to the research in the field, in creating an awareness of how children experience different media.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

This introductory chapter is followed by the theory chapter, which presents the theories this study is informed by. The theory chapter presents Louise Rosenblatt's and Wolfgang Iser's theories about the role of the reader and text in the meaning making of a story. Then, I turn to adaptation theory with a focus on narrativity and medium-specificity in books and films, mainly supported by the film theorists Arne Engelstad and Seymour Chatman. In the final section of the chapter Maria Nikolajeva's theory about character presentation in children's fiction and additional film theory is presented.

In chapter 3 the methods used in this research are introduced. In this chapter I describe my procedure regarding the interviews and comparative analyses. I describe the advantages, challenges and limitations with the methods chosen, as well as the ethical considerations that had to be made.

Chapter 4 provides a presentation of the scene in the book and film used in this study, as well as a presentation of the characters. The chapter includes a comparative analysis of the two characters in the book and film.

In chapter 5 and 6 I discuss and analyse the findings from the interviews by applying reader-response theory. Chapter 7 consists of a comparative analysis and discussion of the findings revealed in chapter 5 and 6, supported by Nikolajeva's theory about character presentation and film theory. In chapter 8 I present some concluding thoughts and propose possible further research. The appendices include the certifications, agreements, informal papers and interview guide that have been used regarding this thesis.

2. Theory

This chapter consists of the theoretical basis for this study and my analyses. As this thesis first and foremost deals with children's experience of book and film, it has a reader-oriented approach, which means that the children are seen as an active part of the creation of meaning in the works. Wolfgang Iser's theory of the reading process as a dynamic process, whereby the reader actively participates by filling the gaps in the text, will first be presented. Iser's theory will be employed in order to find out how the children experience the characters in the two media, by looking at where and how the children have filled the gaps in the book and film.

In addition to Iser, Louise M. Rosenblatt's transactional theory will be introduced. She claims that reading is a fluctuation between the efferent and aesthetic stances, and the emphasis on these stances will affect the outcome of the reading and thus the reader's experience. In this thesis, Rosenblatt's theory is used to investigate where and how the children's fluctuation between and emphasis on the two stances are different and/or similar in the book and the film.

Because this is a comparative study where I will compare the children's experience of the book and the film, I will present relevant concepts used in adaptation theory. I will look at "narrativity" and "medium-specificity" as conceptualized by Arne Engelstad and Seymour Chatman. These terms are useful because they give an idea of how book and film can be comparable and how they are different, which is an important basis for my entire research and analyses.

At the end of this chapter I will introduce Nikolajeva's approach to different ways of presenting characters in children's literature, as outlined in *The Rhetoric of Characters in Children's Literature* (2002). I will also consider how these ways of presenting characters might differ in book and film based on medium-specific features. Nikolajeva's theory about characters combined with elements of film theory becomes useful in the discussion part of this research, because these theories enlighten why the children experienced the characters in certain ways in the two media.

2.1. Reader-response theory

2.1.1. Wolfgang Iser: gaps in the text

In *The Implied Reader* (1974) Wolfgang Iser describes how the reader participates in the meaning-making of the novel. He explains that a literary work might be seen as having two poles; one artistic and one aesthetic (Iser, 1974, p. 274). While the artistic refers to the written text created by the author, the aesthetic refers to the realization of the literary text accomplished by the reader. Iser finds both of these poles equally important, and states that the meaning, or end product, of the literary work is created by the interaction between text and reader (1974, p. 276).

Iser sees the reading process as a dynamic interaction between the text and the reader, due to the gaps that exist in the text. Iser (1974) defines gaps as "those very points at which the reader can enter into the text, forming his own connections and conceptions and so creating the configurative meaning of what he is reading" (p. 40). There are always gaps in a text, because a story can never be told in its entirety. The text will always highlight certain elements of what the author wants to say, and other elements will have to be be left out. Iser refer to these kinds of gaps, which are of a structural nature, in an interview with Eva Maagerø and Elise S. Tønnessen (2001, p. 79).

Thus, a text consists of a written part and an unwritten part. The written part is the artistic pole; the author's work. The author has to select what to present and what to leave out. The author of the text will always influence the reader's imagination, because he has all the narrative techniques at his disposal, but according to Iser (1974), "no author worth his salt will ever attempt to set the *whole* picture before his reader's eyes" (p. 282). The author has to leave something unwritten, which is essential regarding the readers' imagination and thus experience:

> [W]ith a literary text we can only picture things that are not there; the written part of the text gives us the knowledge, but it is the unwritten part that gives us the opportunity to picture things; indeed without the elements of indeterminacy, the gaps in the text, we should not be able to use our imagination. (Iser, 1974, p. 283)

It is only by leaving things out that the story gains its dynamism (Iser, 1974, p. 280). Already Laurence Sterne discusses the topic in Tistram Shandy, where the importance of a literary text's ability to engage the reader's imagination is emphasised. Sterne's narrator explains that reading is only a pleasure when the readers are active and creative, and have the opportunity of working things out themselves (Iser, 1974, p. 275).

Iser states that in addition to structural gaps, there is another type of gap which is related to the reader's competence (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79). Some readers might have the knowledge to see certain connections in the text that other readers do not see. Based on their competence, the readers do therefore create gaps in the text. The interpretation of a work is thus dependent on both the reader and the work. How readers create gaps themselves or fill the structural gaps is connected to factors and habitual orientations based on the readers' previous experience and background (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 82). Iser does for instance point out that every book one has read affects the way one reads new texts (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 83). For this reason, the gaps may be filled in different ways:

> A text is potentially capable of several realizations, and no reading can ever exhaust its full potential, for each individual reader will fill in the gaps in his own way, thereby excluding the various other possibilities; as he reads, he will make his own decision as to how the gaps is to be filled. (Iser, 1974, p. 280)

The fact that everyone fills the gaps in different ways reveals the dynamics of the reading process. Readers are always actively participating in the reading process, because there are always gaps in the text. The question is rather *how* active the readers are in the participation, which depends on both the author's selections and the reader's competence. Both these factors affect the reader's experience of the literary work.

Based on Iser's theory of gaps, and of reading as a dynamic process dependent of both the reader and the work, my research investigates how the participating children engage in the creation of meaning and thus how they experience the characters in the book and film about Coraline. I will study how the children create and fill the gaps differently in the two media, and discuss if this is due to the medium. I will also discuss how competence, background or previous experience may have affected the children's gap-filling. As I

consider the reader and text as equally important, I will study both the children's answers *and* the works themselves in order to see *if*, *how* and *why* the children's experience and gap-filling differ in the book and film.

2.1.2. Louise M. Rosenblatt: aesthetic and efferent reading

Similarly to Iser, Louise M. Rosenblatt maintains that the text and the reader are equally important in the process of meaning-making. She claims that every reading act is a transaction, involving "a particular reader and a particular configuration of marks on a page, and occurring at a particular time in a particular context" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 4). While Iser mainly discusses the reading process regarding novels, Rosenblatt emphasises how the reading process might differ based on which text one reads and the reader's expectations and stances. She also focuses on the context in which the reading process occurs. While the experience of a literary text is often different from that of a non-literary text, Rosenblatt (1988, p. 4-5) argues that the classification of texts as literary or non-literary ignores the contribution of the reader. Both the text and the readers' purpose will affect the readers' experience.

The most important and earliest step in any reading process is adopting a stance (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 5). Rosenblatt differentiates between *the predominantly aesthetic stance* and the *predominantly efferent stance*. When the predominantly efferent stance is adopted, the focus lies on what is to be "carried away" or retained after the reading event (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 5). The attention is especially selective, and one concentrates on how the information can be useful after the reading is completed. One focuses on the abstract public meanings of the words and thus only the "tip of the iceberg" (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 5). When reading newspapers or textbooks one often adopts an efferent stance. In efferent reading one organises the abstract concept the verbal symbols point to. One focuses on what yields the information, the directions and the logical conclusions that will be the residue of the reading act (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 271).

In addition to the efferent stance Rosenblatt also discusses the aesthetic stance. However, the word aesthetic is used in a different way from Rosenblatt. While Iser's aesthetic pole refers to the reader's realization of the text (Iser, 1974, p. 274), both efferent and aesthetic readings in Rosenblatt's theory take place on the reader's side, so both types of

readings occur on Iser's pole. Rosenblatt (1988, p. 5) states that in aesthetic reading the focus lies not only on the abstract verbal signs as in efferent reading, but also on the sensations, images, feelings and ideas the words may refer to. Efferent reading is thus only the tip of the iceberg, while aesthetic reading reveals the whole. One pays attention to what happens *during* the reading event. Referring to the original meaning of the word, "to sense" or to "perceive" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 269), Rosenblatt describes how aesthetic reading makes one response to the text:

> In aesthetic reading we respond to the very story 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, our past encounters with spoken or written text. 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)

The reading is thus aesthetic when the reader immerses herself/himself in the story *during* the reading event, and efferent when the reader focuses on acquiring information and logical solutions which might be useful *after* the reading event.

The text's cues often guide the reader in choosing which stance to adopt, cues such as the title, the author announcing the intentions of the text or the structure of the texts. For instance, broad margins and uneven lines may automatically make the reader expect a poem and adopt an aesthetic stance (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 6). The reader thus uses his or her experience and the cues in the text to decide which stance to adopt.

The efferent and aesthetic stances are however two extremities, and most readings fall near the center of the continuum, where both parts of the "iceberg" are involved (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 5). The reader's attention might also change during the reading process, leading to both efferent and aesthetic readings. The reading process is therefore a "continuous, unconscious fluctuation between the two stances" (Eagleton & Dobler, 2015, p. 44).

In addition to highlighting the importance of both the text and the reader−a common in both Rosenblatt's and Iser's theories−Rosenblatt also emphasises the importance of the context in which the reading happens, which also affects which stance the reader adopts to a

great extent. While reading a literary text where one usually would adopt an aesthetic stance, the reader might for instance be a student at the school knowing that there will be a test in the plot and characters afterwards, and therefore read efferently and pay attention to specific things. While reading a newspaper where one usually would adopt an efferent stance, one might read aesthetically by immersing oneself emotionally in the topics, say for instance the life of refugees.

In my study, I will consider the factors that might influence the child audience's experience of *Coraline* and *Coraline and the secret door,* such as their previous experience, their expectations to the works, the work itself, and the context. I will also analyse how the children fluctuate between the two stances and at what instances they mainly adopt an efferent or an aesthetic stance. I will look at how the context and the children's expectations might have affected their stances, but I will mainly discuss how the medium might have induced different stances.

2.1.3. The child reader

While Iser's theory does not discuss the child reader directly, Rosenblatt' studies often focus specifically on children. She states that children early on in their life learn the public meaning of a word from parents and at school (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 271), which means that they learn to read efferently. Rosenblatt (1982, p. 271) does however point out that the private kinesthetic and affective elements also play an important part in children's early language acquisition. Rosenblatt (1982, p. 271) draws on studies of children's early language when she states that the child's earliest language behavior seems closest to a primarily aesthetic approach to experience. "Words are primarily aspects of sensed, felt, lived-through experiences" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 271). Children are therefore from an early age able to adopt both an efferent and an aesthetic stance. Rosenblatt (1982, p. 271) emphasises how important it is that the children are taught to read in both ways. Learning to read efferently is important in order to know the difference between reality and fantasy, and in order for the rational, empirical, scientific and logical components in our culture to be transmitted. Learning to read aesthetically is important because it presents images of life, to entertain, but also to learn how to deal with human situations and problems, and "to open up vistas of different personalities and different milieus" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 274).

As already mentioned, both Iser and Rosenblatt emphasise the importance of the elements that the reader brings to the text. Rosenblatt defines some of these:

> The reader brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and many other elements, interacting with the peculiar contribution of the work of arts, produce an unique experience. (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 37)

The elements mentioned are not reserved for adults, but something that every reader, regardless of her or his age, brings to the reading event. Child readers are also interacting, and of equal importance as the text in the creation of meaning. They might however have another starting point than adults. In the chapter "What the Student Brings to Literature" in the book *Literature as Exploration* (1938, p. 91-128), Rosenblatt shows how adolescents meet literature differently from adults, because they have other thoughts, attitudes, preoccupations and concerns. Children and adults are after all at two different stages in life. Children's lack of knowledge and their immature cognitive strategies however does not mean that they cannot live through aesthetic experiences, and have "their attention focused on what, in their transactions with the words, they can see and hear and feel" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 272).

Although children seem to be perfectly able to read both efferently and aesthetically, the fluctuation between the two might be more of an effort, especially for novice and struggling readers. While the skilled reader effortlessly moves between both stances and blends information and emotions, the novice reader is less able to move between stances and is also often less aware of her or his purpose of reading in the first place (Eagleton & Dobler, 2015, p. 44). This clearly affects the reading experience of a work.

Iser also emphasises the importance of the reader's own competence, background and previous experience in the reading process and relates them to the gaps. When Iser states that the gaps might differ from readers to readers (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79), he admits that every reader is different. What he does not mention anywhere in his theories is that readers can be different also due to their age, which again will affect their competence, literacy, previous experience and so on. In an interview with Maagerø and Tønnessen (2001, p. 74) Iser was asked about how his theory is applicable to children's literature. Similarly to

Rosenblatt, he pointed out that children are less sophisticated than adults (Maagerø and Tønnessen, 2001, p. 74). He did not exclude the idea of his theory being used on child readers. At another point in the interview he also stated that 'children, theoretically, can be as creative and imaginative as adults when reading (Maagerø and Tønnesen, 2001, p. 80-81). There is no reason to believe that children do not create and fill gaps when they read. They only have a different starting point than adults.

2.2. Adaptation

According to Walter Benjamin, "storytelling is always the art of repeating stories" (quoted in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 2). Almost all stories are retold through generations, and therefore copied, or adapted. To adapt means to adjust, to alter, or to make suitable (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 7). Linda Hutcheon (2006, p. 7-8) describes adaptation as an extensive transposition of a particular work. The transposition can be a shift of medium, genre, or change of frame and therefore context. As I am comparing a novel to the filmic adaptation in this research, I will further on be focusing on adaptation as the shift of medium, more precisely from book to film.

There is a reason why one often hears children say "read it again". According to Aristotle, imitation is a part of the instinctive behavior to humans, and the source of their pleasure in art (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 20). This is also one of the reasons why filmmakers turn to the bookshelf to find inspiration. As mentioned in the introduction, approximately one of three narrative fiction films takes a literary prose text as a starting point (Lothe, 2000, p. 86-87).

It is important to remember though the differences between books and films. Robert Stam (2008) points out that "[a] filmic adaptation is **automatically** different and original due to the change of medium" (p. 17). Also Hutcheon (2006, p. 6) emphasises that adaptations are autonomous works, and that they can be interpreted and valued independent of the prior text. They are aesthetic objects in their own rights. Fidelity to the adapted text should not be criterion of judgement or the focus when studying adaptations (Hutcheon, 2006, p. 6).

Still, something *is* similar between an adaptation and the "original" text. Hutcheon does for instance describe adaptation as a transposition, which means that *something* has to

be transposed. When comparing a film adaptation to the book, as I am doing in this thesis, it is useful to look at the differences and similarities between the two media in order to understand the transposability and originality of each of these works.

What are the similar elements in the two media's narrativity? According to Seymour Chatman (1978, p. 19), a narrative might be seen as consisting of two parts. The first part is the story, with all of its events, such as actions and happenings, and existents, such as characters and setting. The second part is the discourse, which is the expression, or the means, by which the content is communicated. The story is thus the *what* in a narrative that is depicted, and the discourse is the *how* (Chatman, 1978, p. 19). Each narrative consists of elements such as actions, characters, settings and so on. These elements are not tied to any particular medium. They can be expressed through both words and images. An example of this is that one can easily describe what happens in a film by using words (Engelstad, 2013, p. 44).

In the following I will elaborate the concept of narrativity in novel and film, highlighting those common features of the two media that allow for an investigation based on Iser's and Rosenblatt's theories.

2.2.1. Narrativity in book and film, and reader-response theory

Chatman (1978) points out that "[a] narrative is a communication; hence, it presupposes two parties, a sender and a receiver" (p. 28). Both book and film convey a meaning or a message which is possible to interpret (Dybvik, 2014). This makes reader-response theory applicable on films as well as literature.

Iser states that there will always be structural gaps in the narrative, because there are always abbreviations in the way a story is told (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79). One always has to restructure, cut and select the content of a story. As Iser states in the interview with Maagerø and Tønnessen (2001, p. 79), gaps are to be found in films as well, in the cut between the scenes. Whether the narrative is experienced through a film or through written text, the audience must respond with an interpretation. They cannot avoid participating, or filling the gaps with essential or likely events, traits, and objects which for various reasons have got lost (Chatman, 1978, p. 28).

Both novel and film are a narrative genre. One might argue that the story in a novel

sometimes have more in common with a story in a film than with another book or text. For instance, many would argue that *The Lord of the Rings* has more in common with the film adaptation with the same name than with a scientific paper. In this manner, Rosenblatt's theory of efferent and aesthetic stances becomes applicable also to films. When watching a documentary or watching the news, the viewer will most likely watch efferently and focus on what to carry away after the watching. When watching a fiction film the viewer will most likely adopt the aesthetic stance and pay attention to what happens *during* the process of watching.

The book and film about Coraline are both narratives that convey a story. Both media select which parts of the story they want to present, and both media convey a message or meaning that is possible to interpret. Based on this, Rosenblatt's and Iser's theories are relevant regarding both reading and viewing the story about Coraline.

What is different in the book and the film about Coraline, however, is that the two media convey the story and the elements such as characters in different ways, as they use different expressions. In the following subchapter I will pay more attention to what Chatman means by discourse and what I further on will refer to as medium-specific features.

2.2.2. Medium-specificity

As seen earlier, book and film can be said to have the same underlying structure, the narrative aspect, which is directly comparable in the two (Engelstad, 2013, p. 63). The surface structure of the two media is however different; while the book uses verbal expression, film also uses a visual and auditive expression. These expressions are referred to as a surface structure not because they are superficial, but because they meet the audience's senses directly (Engelstad, 2013, p. 63). Film is called a composed text, because it consists of several signs (Engelstad, 2013, p. 71). The visual and the auditive dominate the film medium, but there are also other sorts of signs such as the verbal, or written text. Books mainly convey the story through verbal expression, but might also have visual features such as pictures. Books might even have audial features, but that is most common in books for very young children.

Each medium has its own specificity, and can specialize in certain narrative effects and not others. I do not find it necessary to apply advanced film theory for my purpose in this

research: as Engelstad (2013, p. 70) points out, film aims to reach out to viewers without professional knowledge in the film field. In this study the viewers are the children, and as I aim to see how the children themselves refer to the medium and how it affects their experience of the narrative, it is not necessary to go into the depth of film techniques. Some basic knowledge about the two media is however important in order to understand the main differences between them.

Literature offers descriptive and evaluative vocabulary in order to convey a message. Narrative voice, grammar and word types such as adjectives are used to describe and evaluate elements of a storyworld (Mittell, 2007, p. 160). Film uses other techniques to convey a message and describe elements, for instance camera-angles, lights, music and sounds (Mittell, 2007, p. 160). I will continue to give more specific examples of how books and films express their content differently in the next subchapter regarding character presentation in book and film.

2.3. Characters and character presentation

Character is a narrative element that is common for both book and film. At least one character, that is an entity, individual or collective human or human-like being (Margolin, 2007, p. 66), is always present in a narrative. Iser states that a story can never be told in its entirety (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79), and the same can be said about the characters. As Arnold Bennett (quoted in Allott, 1962) wrote; "you can't put the whole of a character into a book" (p. 290). As there will always be gaps for the reader to fill in the text, there will also always be gaps the audience has to fill in about the characters. The audience projects additional details about characters on the basis of what is expressly said (Chatman, 1978, p. 29). Iser (1974, p. 283) emphasises how important the gaps are to the readers' imagination, and Chatman (1978, p. 138) states that the audience's inference and speculations about the characters are an important part of the aesthetic experience.

Murray Smith (referred to in Hutcheon, 2006, p. 11) claims that characters are crucial to the rhetorical and aesthetic effects of both books and films because they engage the audience's imagination through recognition, alignment and allegiance. The fact that the children can recognise and/or get to know the characters, will lead them further into the text

and make them read aesthetically and get a richer experience of the work. The children can participate in the story and identify with and share the characters' conflicts and feelings (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 270). This reveals how the children actively participate in the creation of the characters and how reader-response theory can be used in order to study the children's experience of the characters in both book and film, as this study aims.

While both writer and filmmaker have to make selections regarding what they want to reveal when presenting the character, the medium-specific expressions will also affect how characters are presented. In the following subchapters I will present the different character presentations outlined by Maria Nikolajeva in *The rhetoric of characters in children's literature* (2002). I will focus on description, narration, actions, speech acts and internal representation, and how these might differ in books and films. Although Nikolajeva mainly focuses on characters in literature, she does also at times refer to film, and I will make further connections by using film theory.

Nikolajeva's typology of character presentations will be used as a tool in my thesis in order to identify possible reasons for the children's experience. One important differentiation that will be important for my analyses is whether the given character presentation is due to medium-specific features or just narrative choices made by the author and filmmaker.

2.3.1. Description and narration

Description and narration are more or less always present in narratives, and important sources for gaining information about the characters. I therefore find it useful to look at how these features differ in books and films, in order to find out how this have affected the child audience's experience of the characters.

Descriptions are "the most elementary way of presenting a character" (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 183). A book might lack description and leave it to the reader, and it would then be one of the gaps that the reader has to fill. The film audience, on the other hand, gets an immediate and complete picture of what the characters look like (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 184). While books can choose what visual aspects they want to present, for instance the characters' clothes, film cannot avoid a precise representation of visual details (Chatman, 1978, p. 30). In illustrated books and picture books, however, the pictures serve the function of description, as is partly the case in *Coraline*. The perception of a character is instantaneous when watching a

film. Character descriptions in books are seldom complete, and cannot provide all details about the characters' looks. A novel needs to pause to provide a description of the character to the reader (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 184). One sees examples of this in *Coraline*, when there is a pause in the progress of the story when Coraline describes the other mother:

> The other mother had followed her in. Now she stood in the centre of the room, between Coraline and the mantelpiece, and looked down at Coraline with black-button eyes. It was funny, Coraline thought. The other mother did not look anything at all like her own mother. She wondered how she had ever been deceived into imagining a resemblance. The other mother was huge−her head almost brushed the ceiling of the room−and very pale, the colour of a spider's belly. Her hair writhed and twined about her head, and her teeth were sharp as knives… (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88)

The author can also use other techniques in order to describe the character in literature, for instance letting the character pass a mirror, letting the character compare himself/herself with another character, or letting a character describe another character (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 187).

When characters are described through narrative statements, "we move one step further from purely external description toward a portrayal of the characters' inner qualities" (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 196). Narrative statements are authoritative, which means that the reader has to accept them, and the author guides the readers rather than allowing them to draw their own conclusions. Such statements can be used to describe characters' appearances, social positions, intelligences, actions, feelings, states of mind and so on (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 196). An example from *Coraline* is when Coraline enters the drawing room in the other world and sees that it is similar to the drawing room in her old world: "Coraline was pleased to see that it had not transformed into the empty drawing that the rest of the house seemed to have become" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 87). No one can argue with Coraline's feelings. It is more difficult to use narrative statements in films, unless there is a narrative voice-over, which is not the case in *Coraline and the secret door*. The author uses narrative statements to fill textual gaps for the reader, as if the author did not trust the reader to recognise the characters' qualities. This is also an example of how gaps might occur due to the medium. Although narrative statements are most used in classic and traditional didactic children's fiction, Nikolajeva (2002, p. 196-197) states that such statements often are seen as inherent to

children's fiction in general. However, contemporary authors use other more sophisticated ways for characterization in children's literature, for instance actions and speech.

Hutcheon (2006, p. 24) points out that books and films aim at achieving some things better than the other. While a film provides its audience with constant and complete "descriptions" of the characters' appearance, a book can more easily provide its audience with narrative statements. In the analyses of this research I will look at how such medium-specific features have or might have affected the children.

2.3.2. Actions and speech acts

Actions and speech acts are always present in narratives, and important for the stories' progress. Most of the information about characters are often revealed by their actions and utterances, and as I suspect that the child participants in this research will be affected by these features, I find it useful to look closer at them.

Nikolajeva (2002, p. 198) points out that actions are external and therefore also authorial, which means that the readers have to accept them. However, the readers can interpret the actions according to their own understanding. While books easily describe characters' thoughts, feelings and plans, films usually infer the characters' thinking from what they say and do (Chatman, 1978, p. 30). Actions and dialogue are therefore some of the most important source of information about the characters in films. While literature can use narrative statements to describe the action and convey character's attitudes towards the action, film uses techniques such as camera angles and movement and music in order to guide viewer comprehension and emotional response to the story (Mittell, 2007, p. 160).

Speech acts have a central function in narrative. Not only what the characters say, but also how and why they say it contributes to the characterization (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 223). One can learn something about characters from what they say and from what other characters say about them (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 225). One can distinguish between direct and indirect speech. The following quotation from *Coraline* shows an example of direct speech: "'It's stands to reason' said Coraline" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88). If this was an indirect speech act, it would look like this: "Coraline said that it stands to reason". Nikolajeva (2002, p. 231) points out that direct speech is an extremely demanding and confusing form, because the absence of narrative agency leaves readers without guidance. One might for instance ask if

the characters are sincere in their statements, or if their opinions are conveyed in their utterances. The reader has to fill in the gaps between the utterances, but might be guided by narrative statements in books. The relationship between direct speech and narration is important, because the narrator's comments and reported speech might manipulate the reader to interpret the characters' utterances in a certain way (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 240). A specific verb, an adverb, or any additional comment will immediately manipulate our understanding of the character (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 225). In films direct speech is often employed as it is easier and more natural to use than a narrative voice-over. Engelstad (2013, p. 64) also points out how lines and dialogues are completely different in books and films. While narration gives the reader additional information about the characters in books, the film reveals additional information through what the viewers see or hear. The characters' sounds based on their vocalization, intonation, stress, pause and so on, combined with their body language (Engelstad, 2013, p. 64) and also facial expressions, can provide important additional information.

Both books and films thus provide its audience with actions and speech acts, but in different ways. A part of my investigation will look into how these features have affected the child audience's experience.

2.3.3. Internal representation

The final character presentation technique to discuss is internal representation, which can be an important source of information about the characters on a deeper level. Readers often have access to the characters' minds, and according to Nikolajeva (2002) the transparency of literary characters is the main appeal of fiction: "We are allowed to penetrate other people in a way that is absolutely impossible in reality" (p. 241). The child readers share the characters' feelings, their fears, dreams, secrets and so on. This is called internal representation. Authors use narrative techniques in order to reveal and reflect the characters' internal life, called "stream of consciousness" (Nikolajeva, 2002, p. 242). One example of this is interior monologue. One sees an example of this in *Coraline*: "I must not look at the mantelpiece, she thought. I must not even think about it" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88). The reader of Coraline has access to all of her thoughts and feelings. What about the film, then?

Lothe (2000, p. 86) points out that film cannot convey the character's thoughts,

feelings and plans in the way literary texts can. However, the audience has sometimes access to the characters' minds in films, for instance by hearing their voice although the character does not speak. This might be seen as the characters' thoughts. There are also other ways to reveal characters' thoughts in films. In *Coraline and the secret door*, some ghost children are repetitively occurring and whispering praises and advices to Coraline. Because they occur anytime and anywhere, and because only Coraline sees them, their utterances can be interpreted as Coraline's interior monologue.

Chatman (1978, p. 133) points out that films can show the unspoken inner lives of the characters laconically. He does not give any examples of this, but according to Mittell (2007, p. 159), facial expressions and gestures might show many emotions in a short time, and thus give an insight in the characters' internal life. In film the audience can also actually hear music and voices which might also reveal a lot of emotions to the audience. The film *Coraline and the secret door* uses gloomy and creepy music which might say a lot about Coraline's state of mind. Does this mean that instead of reading, one can *see* and *hear* how a person feel? However, while books can ascertain a feeling by using narrative statements, films cannot ascertain a feeling only by showing. The film audience often has to guess the characters' feelings.

As I mentioned earlier, another way to get into the characters' minds in film is making them talk to each other. The director Henry Selick chose for instance to create a whole new character in the film adaptation of *Coraline*, and one of the reasons was exactly the fact that Coraline needed someone to talk to and share her thoughts with (Rich, 2009). This shows how the creators of film and book have to do different choices when it comes to the presentation of characters, and thus how the presentation of them might be different. In the analyses and discussions of this research I will look at how the children's access, or lack of access, to the characters' internal life in the book and film have affected the children's experience.

Film and book can offer their audiences the same story but in different ways, and both media have their advantages and limitations. The typology I introduced will be used to analyse how the children have noticed and drawn conclusions based on the way the characters are presented, and whether their experiences in the two media are clearly due to the given medium, or rather to selections which may not necessarily be due to the medium.

3. Method

In accordance with the aims of this thesis and the research questions, this research has a qualitative approach. According to Tone Thagaard (2013, p. 17) qualitative research seeks understanding of social phenomena, either by analysing texts and visual expressions or by close relations in the fields by observation or interview. To answer the first research question, *How does the child audience experience Coraline and the other mother in the film and in the book?*, I have interviewed children who read the excerpt from the book and children who watched the same clip from the film adaptation. To answer the second and the third research question, *What are the similarities and differences in the experience of the characters in the two media?* and *What are the possible explanations for these similarities and differences?*, I have undertaken a comparative analysis of the findings from the interviews. In this chapter I explain the choice of methods in further detail, how I collected and analysed the data, and challenges and ethical considerations taken into account.

3.1. Qualitative research interview

According to Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann (2009, p. 21), qualitative research interview seeks to get a person's own understanding of the world. Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Keith Morrison (2007, p. 349) point out that interviews enable the participants to discuss their interpretation of the world and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. I therefore found this method most suitable as I aim to understand and let the children explain how they experience two of the characters in the book *Coraline* and the film *Coraline and the secret door*. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 22) describe qualitative interview as a conversation where the researcher and the participants construct the information together. As my attempt was to elicit as much original response from the children as possible, I chose to conduct a qualitative semi-structured interview. What characterizes such interview is that several questions are prepared, but they are open-ended and might also change in order to accommodate the participants (Crabtree & DiCicco-Bloom, 2006, p. 315). Also, follow-up questions were asked based on the children's answers. I prepared an

interview guide with several questions as a basis in order to make sure the interview did not get out of track and that I got relevant information. The interview guide is to be found in appendix 10.6.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 21) point out that it might be easy enough to interview, but difficult to do it properly. I will in the following present some of the choices I had to make and some of the challenges that occurred during the interview process. At the end of the method chapter I will account for the ethical considerations I had to make regarding the interviews and also the analyses.

3.1.1. Choice of participants and location

The choice of participants in a research is important because it will affect the research's conclusions about transferability (Thagaard, 2013, p. 60). In qualitative research the study is often based on a strategic sample of participants, which means, participants with qualities or qualifications which are strategic regarding the purpose of the thesis (Thagaard, 2013, p. 60). As I aim to look at the child audience's experience of *Coraline* and *Coraline and the secret door*, I chose to interview 7th graders, and there are several reasons for this specific age group. Firstly, it is the age group which the book and the film are aimed at. I do not think that one should be guided by such age limits, and as already mentioned, both the book and the film about Coraline are enjoyed by different age groups. Still, I found it appropriate to present the film clip to children older than the film's recommended age limit, which is 11 years. Regarding the children who read the book excerpt, I found 11 and 12-year-olds to be a suitable age group, as most children at this age are able to read longer texts fluently by themselves and at the same time pay attention to the content. Another important reason for choosing this age group concerns the children's maturity and communication skills at this age, although this may also vary a lot from child to child. At the age of 11 and 12, they are still children, but old enough to reflect upon the characters and the characters' actions and give complete answers and explanations, which makes it easier for me as a researcher to interpret their answers and get reliable results.

I chose to interview 10 children who read the book excerpt and 10 children who watched the film clip, because I needed sufficient amount of participants in order to see if there were tendencies in each group and to be able to compare the two groups with each

other. I chose not to interview more children because I wanted to focus on and make the conversation with each child valuable in order to get as useful and relevant information as possible in the time limit available. As I also wanted to be able to do an effective and qualitative analysis of the interviews afterwards, 20 seemed like a manageable number. More than 20 would be more than I could handle in the time limit available, and the analysis of the data would then have been more superficial, and thus lowered the quality of the research.

The selection of participants was based on what Thagaard (2013, p. 61) calls convenience sample. This means that I found the participants where they were most available to me, in primary schools. I selected children from four different classes of 7th graders at two different schools. The interviews took place at the schools. The advantages of doing the interviews at school was that the children were in a familiar surrounding, and as they could see that other children were interviewed as well might have made it easier for them to open up. One disadvantage was that they might have felt that they needed to perform and give the most correct answers, as they were at school. I therefore needed to be clear about the purpose of the research and my role as a researcher.

All of the children in the four classes of 7th graders were given a brief summary of the book and the film about Coraline. The children who were interested in participating volunteered by raising their hands. In some of the classes there were too many volunteers, and the participants were then selected by drawing lots. An equal number of boys and girls were chosen for each group in order to have both sexes represented.

It was an important prerequisite that the children chosen to read the excerpt had not seen the film and those chosen to watch the clip had not read the book. The reason for this is that my aim is to see how the medium affects the children's experience, and if the children base their experiences on both media, the findings of this research would not be reliable.

The interviews took place at Norwegian primary schools. The children read the book excerpt in Norwegian, and watched the film clip in English with Norwegian subtitles. This is because I wanted them to understand the content as much as possible. The interviews were also conducted in Norwegian, because children often express themselves more easily in their native language. This also helped to avoid misunderstandings in our communication, and therefore lead to more reliable data.

There are advantages and limitations with the choice of participants and location. The participants have in common that they volunteered, they have the same age, and each of the

groups contained an equal number of boys and girls. This will strengthen the results of this research, and make the two groups comparable. There is also reason to believe that the participants had the same interests regarding types of films and books because they volunteered, although there also is a chance that the children volunteered because they wanted to be interviewed, and not necessarily because they wanted to see more of the film or read more of the book after being told what they were about. The children might however have different knowledge skills and different backgrounds. These are factors that can make their answers less comparable.

The number of participants has both advantages and limitations. A larger number would have given more certain and correct conclusions of the differences and similarities between the child audience's experience of the book and film. However, a smaller number of participants gave the opportunity to go deeper into the children's answers and gain a better understanding. In qualitative research, there will always be limitations and uncertainties. It is important to be aware of this. My research cannot draw definite conclusions, but it can reveal the tendencies I found in the small selection of participants in this research, and by being open and specific about my methods, the transferability to other researches will be larger.

3.1.2. The interviews

The interviews took place at group rooms at the schools during the school day. The teachers let me take the children out of the class, one by one. The children were first either shown the film clip, which took five minutes, or they got to read the book excerpt, which took everything from five to 15 minutes depending on the children's reading pace. Afterwards they were interviewed for five to ten minutes. I wanted to keep the children interested and engaged, so if I sensed that they started to get bored, I moved on to the next question. By interviewing the children directly after having read the excerpt or watched the clip, their experiences were fresh and not affected by others. In order to keep the children's interest and also to gain enough information, 10 minutes seemed like a decent time.

Before the children watched the clip or read the excerpt I gave them a brief plot summary in order for them to understand what they were about to watch or read. I prepared this summary beforehand, and the same summary was given to both groups so that they would have the same starting point. The summary is included in appendix 10.5. One of the

challenges was not to reveal too much−or my own interpretations. I did not want to affect the child participants' experience. I also emphasised to the children that I wanted their experience of the characters based on what they saw or read themselves, but naturally they could have been affected by what I told them about the plot. During the interview I tried not to ask leading follow up questions, and stuck to open questions such as "why do you think so?" and "what do you mean by that?". The participants will always be influenced by the researcher and the interview situation, but it is desirable to limit this influence as much as possible.

The interviews were recorded with a cellphone. An advantage of recording the interviews is that the researcher can focus on the child and have a more fluent conversation. Thagaard (2013, p. 203) also points out that recording the interview can strengthen the reliability, as the creation of data is less dependent of the researcher's opinions and interpretation as it would be if the researcher took notes and had to select the information. The recordings were kept safely and deleted after this thesis was finish regarding confidentiality.

I tried to design the interviews in a way that they would provide me as valid and reliable information as possible. I did for instance interview the children directly after they read the excerpt or watched the film, so that they would not be affected by others and have their experience fresh in mind. I also tried not to lead them towards specific interpretations, and allowed them come up with as much as possible by themselves. A limitation of interviews is the researcher's influence on the children. Of course, the whole interview situation is artificial, which might have affected the children's answers. They might for instance have been nervous, or answered what they thought I wanted them to say. I tried however to be clear about what I wanted and that there were no right or wrong answers.

3.1.3. Working with the interview data

Choices had to be made and challenges were present when processing the data as well, during the transcription, selection and analysis of the interviews. Firstly, I transcribed the interviews. This was a time consuming, but straightforward procedure, as everything said during the interviews was kept on a cell phone. After the transcription, I had to read through the interviews several times and carefully select the information that was relevant for this research. Thagaard (2013, p. 41) points out that the interpretation of an interview text can be

seen as a dialogue between the researcher and text, where the researcher is studying the meaning that the text is conveying. This way, reader-response theory is relevant on two levels in this thesis. The interview text, or transcription, is also a text that, in interaction with the researcher, conveys a certain meaning. Rosenblatt (1988, p. 4) describes the reading process as a transaction which involves the text, the reader and the context in order to come up with an understanding. The transcription of the children's answers, me as the reader as well as the whole research context affected the final outcome of the interviews.

Clementine Beauvais (2015), who mainly studies picture books, points out that there are gaps in the data obtained when studying children's readings. She also claims that such gaps in many cases might be due to the verbal limitation of the participants. Children can find it hard to verbalize their experiences, and several children in this research also stated that "it is hard to explain". Beauvais (2015) states that the content of the gaps are both a motivation and a challenge in empirical research. She states that such research rely on the researcher's "ability to decrypt, frame, and rearticulate children's responses, by looking into gaps of the children's discourses" (Beauvais, 2015). This is similar to the way Iser describes gaps in novels. Iser states that there always will be structural gaps (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79), which also is the case with the child participants. They cannot reveal all of their thoughts, neither always convey them in the way that they want to due to verbal limitations. I therefore had to fill some of the gaps that the interview texts contained. This also led to some ethical issues I will discuss further in the subchapter about ethical considerations.

3.2. Analysis

The fieldwork and the processing of the data was followed by analysing the data. First, I read through the whole data material to get an overview of it and look at what was interesting and relevant for the research. I created categories to make it easier to sort out and select which statements from the children that could be used. Categorizing made it easier to look at similarities and differences between the book and film.

The analysis thus consists of two parts. First, in order to answer the first research question, *How does the child audience experience Coraline and the other mother in the book and the film?*, I analysed the data from the children who read the book excerpt and the data

from the children who watched the film clip separately. I used reader-response theory in order to see how the children experienced the characters.

Secondly, I had to put all the pieces together in order to answer the second and third research questions: *What are the similarities and differences between the children's experiences of the characters in the two media?* and *What are the possible explanations for these similarities and differences?* In order to answer these questions, a comparative analysis was carried out.

3.2.1. Comparative analysis

According to Chris Pickvance (2005, p. 2) there are two features that define comparative analysis. The first feature is an interest in the question of why the observed similarities and differences between cases exist. In this research I am interested in seeing how and why the child audience experiences the characters differently or similarly in the book and film about Coraline. The second feature that defines comparative analysis is the reliance on the collection of data on two or more cases, ideally according to a common framework. In this research I rely on the information given from 20 children, whereby half of them read the book excerpt and the other half watched the film clip. I used Nikolajeva's typology of presenting characters as a tool when comparing the children's experience in the two media, in order to find possible reasons for the their experience. By using Nikolajeva's different character presentations, I could investigate and discuss if the children experienced the characters in a certain way based on medium-specific features or narrative choices. I will in the following give an example of how I accomplished the analysis.

In the first separate analysis I found, among other things, that the children who read the book excerpt empathised with Coraline and shared her fears and feelings. This could be related to the first research question, as it is a part of how the children experienced Coraline. Later on, in the comparative analyses where I compared the findings from the two groups, I found that the children who watched the film clip also seemed to empathise with Coraline. This answer could be related to the second research question, which is about the similarities and differences between the children's experience of the media. One similarity seems to be that both groups empathised with Coraline. Then, this leads us to the last research question and what possible explanations for this similarity might be. By using Nikolajeva's theory

about character presentations, I investigated how Coraline is presented in the two media, and how the children, based on their answers, seem to have been affected by this. The findings indicate that the children who read the book excerpt empathised with Coraline because of their access to her thoughts in the book. The children who watched the film clip seem to have empathised with Coraline because of her facial expression and actions in the film. Thus the comparative analysis revealed that the media's different ways of internal representation affected the audience, and caused the children to experience Coraline similarly.

While doing the comparative analysis of the book and film I had to be careful not to present one of the media in a better light. As mentioned, adaptations are often considered inferior, but it is important to remember that the book and film are two different pieces of art. I had to be careful not to look for the best version. The analyses were however naturally based on my own views and interpretations. Iser points out that, seen from a reader-oriented perspective, the interpreters' most important task is to enlighten the multiple features of a text and the relationships between them (Maagerø & Tønnessen, p. 77). Then it is up to the receivers to interpret this as they want and do what they want with the information. As a researcher I have to be as objective as possible when presenting and discussing the information I have acquired. I have tried to be critical in the process of analysing, as well as to be clear about my interpretations of the data and how I drew my conclusions based on the analyses, which according to Thagaard (2013, p. 205) strengthens the validity of the research.

Qualitative research can reveal a lot of information about a small number of participants (Thagaard, 2013, p. 17). This thesis provides an understanding of how the child participants experience the characters in the book and film studied and why. The findings cannot be generalized, and count for children's experience of characters in books and films in general. This research can still enlighten the issue and the tendencies that I have found. By being concrete and specific in the description of the procedure of the research regarding the collection and analysis of the data, the reliability and transferability to other researches is strengthened (Thagaard, 2013, p. 202).

3.3. Ethical considerations

Every researcher has to account for the ethical choices made during research (Cohen et al.,

2007, p. 51). These choices will not only affect the researcher, but also other people, whether it is people within the same faculty or the people that are being studied. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 51) points out that each stage in the research sequence raises ethical issues. I will in the following present some of the ethical considerations I had to make and be aware of during this research.

3.3.1. Interviews

As this research involves human participants and therefore deals with personal data, I first had to fill out and send an application form to the *Norwegian Centre for Research Data* [NSD], where I provided the necessary information about my project. The application is to be found in appendix 10.1. The research was approved by NSD, and the reply is to be found in appendix 10.2.

Cohen et al. (2007, p. 52) emphasise the importance of informed consent, which is based on the participant's rights to freedom and self-determination. This involves competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. In the case of this study, informed consent concerned other parts than only the participants. As the selection of participants and the interviews took place at schools, I first had to inform and get an agreement from the schools and the children's teachers.

According to *The Norwegian Research Ethics Committee for Social Sciences and Humanities* [NESH] (2016, p. 20), informed consent is more problematic when the research participants are children rather than adults. Children are often more willing to obey authorities, and many times feel that they cannot protest. Also, they do not always realise the consequences of sharing certain information with the researcher (NESH, 2016, p. 20). Cohen et al. (2007, p. 54) point out that the researcher has to explain their research to the child participants in a credible and meaningful way, and that it is important that the children are given a real and legitimate opportunity to say no to participating at any time during the process. I therefore told the children what my research was about, how they could contribute, and how I was going to use what I got from them in a way that they could understand. The children were given the opportunity to ask questions if they wanted to know more or if something seemed unclear. I emphasised that this was voluntary, and that they could choose

to opt out whenever they felt like. All of this information was provided to the whole class before I chose the child participants, and also repeated to each of the children before the interviews started.

As all of the children were under the age of 15, I had to inform and get agreement from their parents (NESH, 2016, p. 20). A paper with information about the research and participating was given to each child to bring home and to be signed by their parents. This paper is to be found in appendix 10.3.

I also had to be sure that the research may not cause the participants any kind of harm. To avoid this, one measure taken was to ensure the participants' anonymity. In this research the children did not necessarily need to share any sensitive information, as they were asked questions about the characters and not themselves. I did however ask about their experience, which could be very personal. The book and film might have evoked sensitive feelings in the children. Anonymity therefore becomes important, in order for the participants not to be afraid of sharing their feelings or afraid of saying something "stupid". This is important for the research's validity, but also considering the participants' self-esteem and right to privacy. Fictive names are therefore used in this thesis.

During the interviews, it was important that I treated the participants as subjects rather than objects, and that I treated them with respect. Cohen et al. (2007) point out that it is desirable that the participants "should be enriched by the experience and should leave it with the feeling that they have learned something" (p. 67). If the children were unsure about how to answer a question I tried to help and encourage them, but not push them too much. After all I wanted the children's immediate responses and experience based on what they came up with themselves, but I also wanted them to be comfortable. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 62) point out the importance of talking to the participants afterwards, telling them that they did well and ensure that they leave with a positive feeling. I put aside some time to talk to the children afterwards. Some of the children asked me curiously more about the book, film and/or the research, and the teacher to some of the participants could tell me later that the children who participated had fun doing it, which reassures me that at least some of the participants had a positive experience. By being sympathetic, accommodating, helpful and respectful I tried to establish a trustful relationship to all of the participants. This was in order to gain more valid information, and at the same time give the child participants a positive experience.

3.3.2. Analysis

When analysing the interviews I had to proceed carefully, in order not to give the children's answers too much of my own interpretation. Writing a research text involves putting people's experiences into words (Clifford, referred to in Christophersen, 2010, p. 162). This is problematic because one can never really see the world through other's eyes, and as Samantha Punch (2002, p. 6) points out, especially not children's. Even though adults have been children once, they soon forget certain aspects of their childhood, and often have problems with recognizing their own assumptions about children and childhood (Punch, 2002, p. 6-7). It is impossible to get full empathy and understanding of other's intentions and opinions. Misunderstandings may therefore easily occur.

Although an advantage of interviews is that one has the opportunity to ask the participants about what they mean if something seems unclear, and thus prevent misunderstandings, the participants are not present afterwards to defend their statements or explain those further. When analysing the interviews, I had to be careful not to misrepresent the participants, even though they were anonymous. The participants might for instance read the paper afterwards and feel misunderstood or even betrayed.

I read the interview data efferently, to use Rosenblatt's term, because I was especially selective and paid attention only to the information useful and relevant for this research. I had to be careful not to read aesthetically, and not to use too much of my own feelings, imaginations and ideas of what the child participants meant. I did several things in order to prevent too much of my own interpretation; I read the whole interview transcriptions carefully before I used and commented on a statement, in order to make sure that I understood what the child really meant by the statement. I have also used a lot of quotations from the children so that their own voices will be heard in the analyses. I analysed the data shortly after the interviews took place, so that I still had the interviews fresh in mind. Further on I have tried to make a clear distinction between the participants' utterances and descriptions and my own statements and interpretation.

When writing the analysis, I had to be especially aware of not to change the children's answers, because I also had to translate the children's utterances from Norwegian to English. I did of course try to give their answers the same meanings when I translated them into English, but because of linguistic differences between the two languages I had to change their

sentences a little bit to convey the meaning of the original statements.

4. Presentation and analysis of the scene and characters studied

This chapter provides a presentation and comparative analysis of the characters Coraline and the other mother in the scene studied. This is in order to give an overview of the material used, and create a basis for the comparison of the child audience's experience of the characters in the book and the film. First, I will give a brief plot summary of the scene. As the scene in the two media is quite similar, I find it appropriate and more lucid to provide one summary for the two. The differences between the scene in the two media will be presented and discussed in the comparative analyses of the characters in the following subchapters.

The summary and the analyses are based on an edition of Gaiman's *Coraline* published in 2009, p. 87-92. The child participants did however read an excerpt from a Norwegian edition published in 2003, p. 119-125. The entire book excerpt (the English version) is to be found in appendix 10.4. The film used in this research is a Norwegian edition of Selick's *Coraline and the secret door* from 2009, but the option of Norwegian subtitles is the only difference from the original film. The film scene's time frame is 01:18:02-01:22:06.

In the scene Coraline stands face to face with the other mother in the drawing room of the house in the other world, after having found the three objects that the other mother had hidden. Coraline is accompanied by a black cat from her real world. The deal was that if Coraline found the three objects and where her parents were hidden, she would be allowed to return home. Coraline's real parents, as well as the ghosts of three children that the other mother had caught earlier would also be free to escape. Coraline realises eventually that the other mother will never let her go, even if she finds everything. Coraline therefore has to be clever and brave in order to escape. She has found out that her parents are captured in a snow globe placed on the mantelpiece in the room which they are in. However, she convinces the other mother that she thinks that they are hidden in the passageway between the other world and the real world. The other mother is therefore forced to unlock the passageway in order to

prove Coraline wrong. When the other mother is doing this, Coraline acts quickly, and throws the black cat at the other mother. She then grabs the snow globe and hits for the passageway while the black cat is scratching the other mother's face. The other mother comes after her, and a struggle of closing the door begins. The scene ends with Coraline managing to close the door and return home.

4.1. Coraline

4.1.1. Analysis of Coraline in the book

It is natural to begin with Coraline's name. The name is unusual, and may therefore indicate that Coraline is an unusual girl. It is however similar to the more common name Caroline, and that might suggest that she is also just an ordinary girl. Perhaps she is a mix between the two. The novel has a 3rd person narrator, but the focalizer is Coraline, and the readers have access to her thoughts and feelings. She is therefore the character the readers get to know most, and most likely the character a child audience would understand and sympathise with. Her appearance is not described, so the children have to go with her behavior, actions, thoughts and statements. When Coraline enters the drawing room and faces the other mother in the book, she seeks comfort in the black cat, who she refers to as her friend. She wants to hold on to him like a teddy bear, and is clearly afraid of what is going to happen. She is however pleased and reassured by the old familiar things in the room as well as the cat: "Her grandmother's formal furniture was still there, and the painting on the wall of the strange fruit" (p. 87). These are things from her real home. She may appear as brave to the child reader, when she walks steadily into the room and pretends that she does not see that the other mother is watching her from the shadows. The black cat and its relation to Coraline is important. They clearly have a connection, as Coraline seems to be able to reassure the cat, by thinking that everything will be all right and feeling that the cat relaxes in her arms and that it understands her (p. 89). She wants to get them both out, which shows that she cares about the cat, and the child audience might find her sympathetic. At one point Coraline does however throw the cat at the other mother (p. 89). How does this action, and the fact that she is throwing her friend at the enemy, reflect Coraline's character? Is it a part of a clever plan,

since she takes the snow globe and runs for the door in a hurry? Is it premeditated, as she knows that the other mother is afraid of the cat and would not be able to hurt it? Is it spontaneous, or a selfish sacrifice of her friend in order to escape and save herself and her parents? Coraline screams "leave her!" (p. 91), and waits for the cat before she closes the door, so she definitely cares about the cat's safety. In addition to the help from the cat, Coraline gets help from her parents and the three ghost children to escape. In the book it says that "[t]he other people in the corridor—three children, two adults—were somehow too insubstantial to touch the door. But their hands closed about hers, as she pulled on the big iron door handle, and suddenly she felt strong" (p. 91). Does this mean that she could not have managed to overcome the other mother herself? This is not necessarily negative. It shows that she is only human. She cannot do everything on her own, and help now and then is necessary, even for a brave little girl. On the other hand, one might argue whether she really gets help from her parents and the ghost children, or if it is just thinking about them which makes her stronger.

Coraline realises that the other mother will not let her go home even though she found everything she was supposed to: "She knew it was true, then. The other mother had no intention of letting her go or of keeping her word" (p. 88). This, and also the fact that she tricks the other mother to unlock the door, indicate that Coraline is a clever girl. She found out, though one might also say that she assumed, that the other mother would never let her go, which made her think ahead and think fast. She was able to escape based on her cleverness and calmness. Tricking the other mother and throwing the cat may be examples of this.

4.1.2. Analysis of Coraline in the film

In the film Coraline has blue hair, which is quite unusual and fits her unusual name. Other than that she looks just like a regular young girl. The reader has access to Coraline's thoughts in the book, but how is this transferred to the film? The viewer observes many of the happenings from over Coraline's shoulder, and this combined with her facial expressions shows, as Mittel (2007, p. 159) points out, things from her perspective. It might also reveal her feelings. Several times in the film the viewer also sees through Coraline's eyes. In the film there is nothing normal or homely about the drawing room. It is dark and magical, with

alive and insect-like furniture, and spider web on the walls. This alienates the other world and makes it more dreamlike. Coraline looks scared when she enters the unfamiliar room which might make the child audience sympathise with her. The black cat is with her in the film as well. Before entering the drawing room, Coraline and the cat look confirming at each other, almost like "we can do this", which indicates that they have an important connection in the film as well. Due to her facial expression, Coraline also appears brave in the film. She looks angry and very determined when facing the other mother. Her statements are direct and firm, and show that she is not afraid. She is however clearly scared, which is revealed by her facial expressions when she is not facing the other mother. She is putting on her brave face. Her facial expressions are thus conveying her feelings. Coraline's parents appear in the snow globe they are captured in for a brief moment, when the other mother is not looking. Coraline exclaims "Mom! Dad!" in a longing way, while she reaches for them with a smile on her face and tears in her eyes. This shows how much she misses her real parents, and it makes her look vulnerable. After all, she is just a little girl, even though she is putting on her brave face.

One of the ghost children appears in one of the objects that Coraline has found, and says: "Be clever, miss. Even if you win, she'll never let you go." This indicates that Coraline is not smart enough to realise this herself. However, the fact that it is more of a challenge to convey characters' thoughts in films than in books might be the reason why the ghost child informs Coraline of the other mother's plan. The fact that Coraline believes that the other mother will never let her go is important for the story, and the filmmakers have managed to preserve this.

Coraline throws the black cat at the other mother in the film as well, but after a lot of struggling, it is the other mother who eventually throws the black cat away from herself. The black cat is running straight through the door back to the real world, and Coraline does nothing to save her friend.

When Coraline runs for the door, the filmmakers have added a part to the story that is absent in the book, before Coraline reaches the door. The room turns into a large spiderweb, where Coraline gets caught in the middle. Coraline's physical abilities become important, because she has to climb away from the other mother as fast as she can. This part might have been added in order to give the extra. It makes Coraline's situation look more dangerous, and might make the audience hold their breath before Coraline overcomes one more obstacle. When Coraline finally reaches the door and tries to close it, the ghost children's hands are

folding over Coraline's, and this gives the same impression as the book; Coraline gets help to close the door.

4.1.3. Comparative analysis of Coraline in the book and film

Coraline appears as a brave character in both book and film as both media, in different ways, manage to show that Coraline stays calm and determined even though it is quite clear that she is scared. The black cat is important for the understanding of Coraline's character in both media. The fact that she chooses to throw it at the other mother might be seen as an act of selfishness, but it might also be seen as an act of bravery or cleverness in a vital situation. According to Rusnak (2011, p. 146) there is an aura of being selfish around Coraline in the film, very visible when she is throwing the black cat at the other mother. In the book she is at least waiting for the black cat, but in the film she is apparently not caring for what happens with it afterwards. Does this, as Rusnak claims, make her appear more selfish in the film and more caring in the novel? She is presented slightly more vulnerable and more dependent on others in the film, which makes her look more like a victim. This might partly be because films use actions in order to convey emotions, and to make these emotions clear, they have to be more emphasised than in the book. While Coraline feels relaxed by seeing familiar things in the beginning of the book, the filmmakers have chosen to show her longing for something familiar by showing her reactions to her parents' appearing in the snow globe. The extra sequence where Coraline is caught in the spider web presents her as braver and physically skillful, while she might be seen as more clever and caring in the book.

Vladimir Propp's character functions provide an easily applicable tool for comparing characters in books and films (McFarlane, 1996, p. 24-25). By observing if the functions are kept in the filmic version, one can conclude if the filmmaker has preserved the underlying structure of the original story in the book, or if the filmmaker has radically reworked the structure. The characters in both *Coraline* and *Coraline and the secret door* can be easily assigned the different functions in Propp's model of fairy tales. Coraline might be seen as the hero, because she has to face her fears and overcome obstacles. She does not only save herself, but also her parents and the ghost children. In the book she is also saving the cat. She might however also be seen as a victim, because she has been trapped by the other mother, and is dependent on help from others in order to escape. The cat functions as the helper, a

character one often finds in fairy tales. Without the cat, Coraline would not have succeeded. The cat is an important support and company for Coraline when she enters the room and knows that she is not alone. When the cat is thrown at the other mother, it is maybe more of an involuntary helper. Most children like animals, and would maybe sympathise with the cat and feel sorry for him when thrown at the other mother. This might also make them experience Coraline as mean or unsympathetic. The three ghost children are also important helpers to Coraline. In both book and film they help Coraline to close the door. In the film one of the ghost children also helps her realise she will be tricked if she is not clever.

4.2. The other mother

4.2.1. Analysis of the other mother in the book

Since the focalizer of the story is Coraline, the audience gets all the information about the other mother through Coraline's observations and thoughts about her, and through what the other mother says and does in front of Coraline. The other mother is described as follows: "The other mother was huge—her head almost brushed the ceiling—and very pale, the color of a spider's belly. Her hair writhed and twined about her head, and her teeth were sharp as knives. . . ." (p. 88). Coraline sees no resemblance between her and her real mother, at this point she is presented as the opposite of a safe and cosy mother figure. One rather gets the feeling of her as a villain or a monster. She appears from the shadows, from a dark place. The book includes an illustration of her to which also complements the descriptions (*Picture 1*) (p. 90). In the picture she has long skinny fingers and sharp teeth, and she resembles a witch. The black button eyes, which are essential to the story, is also visible in the picture.

Picture 1: The black cat thrown at the other mother (Gaiman, 2009, p. 90).

"You brought vermin with you" (p. 87), the other mother says, referring to the cat. She clearly does not like the cat, which might make her seem unsympathetic to the children. They will probably sympathise with the cat because it is a friend of Coraline, and because it is an apparently harmless animal. When the cat is thrown at her she is "flailing" (p. 91). Black tarry blood comes oozing out when the cat is scratching her, which makes her even less like a human. The picture (*Picture 1*) complements this action, and shows how horrified the other mother is.

The other mother is presented as untruthful: "'You know I love you', said the other mother flatly" (p. 87), and it seems like she does not really mean it. The game she is playing with Coraline is also in fact just "entertainment, and nothing more" (p. 88). She is thus presented as a dedicated player. Coraline's plan is also dependent on the other mother's "needing to gloat, needing not only to win but to show that she had won" (p. 89). When she opens the door and proves that Coraline is wrong and has lost the bet, she has an "expression of delight" on her face (p. 89). The child audience will most likely, based on these actions, find her mean, unsympathetic and scary.

4.2.2. Analysis of the other mother in the film

The other mother appears from the shadows in the film as well, as the camera is approaching her slowly, which creates the same horror of seeing her as Coraline feels. She has a very scary and grotesque appearance. Her body only consists of a white skeleton and her face looks almost like a broken vase; white and skinny with a lot of black cracks. She has long and skinny mechanical fingers which look like a bunch of needles. She has a black belly and black clothes at her torso, which makes her look like a spider. This is also strengthened by all the spider web on the walls. She is very tall, and has four spider feet. She is like a black widow. And of course she has black lifeless button eyes. Several times in the film the viewer sees the other mother through Coraline's eyes, which gives an uncanny feeling that she looks directly at the viewer. The other mother is disgusted by the cat and calling it vermin in the film as well. When the cat is thrown at her, she is struggling and screaming. The cat tears out her button eyes and thus blinds her. The other mother says that she loves Coraline in the film as well. Due to the tone and the way she points at Coraline while saying it in the film, she obviously does not mean it.

The other mother seems very pleased when things do not happen in Coraline's favour. She has the same evil smile when she opens the door, proves Coraline wrong, and says: "Now you're going to stay here forever". She holds up needle and thread, showing that she is going to sew button eyes on Coraline. In the extra sequence added in the film, where Coraline is caught in the web, the the viewer sees the other mother jumping towards them, as if they were Coraline. The other mother is half laughing and half screaming in this shot. She has just two black streaks where her button eyes used to be. She looks completely insane and desperate, which makes her even more uncanny, as *Picture 2* illustrates.

Picture 2: The other mother in the film (Selick et al., 2009)

She has fully become a spider that is after her prey, with a constant mad smile on her face. She almost gets Coraline before she reaches the door. Most likely, and as already mentioned, this part is added to make the story more exciting before Coraline at last manages to escape. The effect of this part is that the other mother becomes more uncanny, mainly because she suddenly looks and acts like a spider who chases her prey.

4.2.3. Comparative analysis of the other mother in the book and the film

Rusnak (2011, p. 145) points out that the characters in the film have a grotesque appearance, which makes them scarier than in the novel. The other mother is presented in a uncanny way in both media, but maybe all the elements in the film, for instance the extra sequence at the end, make her appear even more uncanny? As Mittel (2007, p. 161) points out, films can present more complete details than books, and maybe that also influences the other mother's appearance, although the book also includes a picture of her to complement the text. She is presented as a dirty player and a villain in both media. Her resemblance to a spider is present in both, but even more in the film where she metamorphoses into a spider at the end. In both media she also tells Coraline that she loves her. Why does she even bother saying it, when it sounds so half-hearted? Or is she misunderstood? Does she really want a daughter, but does not know how to approach, or how to be a real and caring mother? It is not clear exactly why she wants Coraline to stay with her. Is she, like so many other villains in film and literature, just a poor misunderstood creature who wants to be loved, and does not know any other way than forcing someone to love her? Or is she simply a spider who is playing with her dinner?

Looking at *Coraline* as a fairy tale, the other mother serves the function as the villain in both media. In many ways she is like the typical "evil stepmother" in fairy tales, because she replaces Coraline's real mother in the other world. She apparently wants to hurt Coraline and seems pleased when she fails, most evidently in the film.

The analyses of Coraline and the other mother reveal that the two characters can be experienced and interpreted in many different ways, as Pullman (2002) already has stated is the case with the book. The analyses also show how the same character differs in two different media and possible reasons for this. Some of the differences are due to the change of medium, for instance the fact that character's thoughts cannot be conveyed in the same way. Other differences, like the extra part added in the film, is not necessarily do to the medium, but rather a choice made by the filmmakers in order to make the other mother appear scarier or to excite the audience. That being said, the characters have strong similarities and some of the dialogues are for instance nearly identical in the book and the film. The characters also fit the typical fairytale-functions in both. The following chapters will show how the child audience experienced and interpreted the two characters.

5. The children's experience of the characters in the book excerpt

In this and the following chapter I will present and analyse the findings from the interviews with the children in order to answer the first research questions: *How does the child audience experience the characters in the book and the film versions?* These two chapters will also provide the basis for the comparison and discussion of the children's experience of the characters in book and film in chapter 7.

Chapter 5 comprises the findings from the interviews with the children who read the book excerpt, and chapter 6 the findings from interviews with the children who watched the film clip. Both chapters will be structured in the following way:

Firstly, I will, by using Rosenblatt's theory of efferent and aesthetic reading, investigate how profoundly the children have experienced the characters. Secondly, I will, by using Iser's theory of gaps, look at how the children have speculated and filled the gaps about

the characters. Thirdly, I will explore how the children's previous experience and expectations regarding the story and the characters have affected their experience, by using both Rosenblatt and Iser's theories.

I wish to emphasise that the interviews with the children were conducted individually. When direct quotations from different children occur at the same place, it is because I wish to discuss all of these quotations together in order to look at similar tendencies. I also wish to remind that the children's names are fictive.

5.1. Aesthetic and efferent reading

The children's responses reveal that they immersed themselves in the story about Coraline. They used their own personal feelings and experience to understand the characters. This is what Rosenblatt calls aesthetic reading. The children's responses also reveal that they collected facts and information from the text in order to understand the meaning of the characters, that is, they also read efferently. As Rosenblatt (1988, p. 5) points out, efferent and aesthetic stances are to extremities, and most readings fall near the continuum where both of the two stances are involved, which is also the case with the children in this research. At different points during the reading the reader might however move closer to one of the stances. In this subchapter I will present and analyse the child participant's experiences of the characters by looking at how and where it is most evident that they read aesthetically and where they read mostly efferently.

5.1.1. Empathy with the characters: aesthetic reading

All of the children who read the book excerpt were able to enter the imaginary world and empathise with at least one of the characters. It is not unexpected that the children would empathise with the main character Coraline as she is the focalizer, and one gets access to her thoughts and feelings. She is also a child, and therefore probably the character the children identify mostly with.

One of the children, Henry, clearly understood why Coraline is tempted to run away to another world: "She was unsure about her life. She thought her parents were boring, and

she did not know what she wanted with her life." Further on, Henry stated that Coraline seems like a regular girl because she brings the black cat: "She probably wanted to bring something she cared about to the other world." Henry's remark indicate that the fact that Coraline is a regular girl might have made it easier for him to identify with her. He clearly seemed to be able to imagine Coraline's feelings; firstly that she does not know what she wants in her life, and secondly that she wants something familiar she cares about accompanying her in an unfamiliar place. Henry's reactions to the story are examples of what Rosenblatt calls aesthetic reading. In aesthetic reading "[w]e participate in the story, we identify with the characters, we share their conflicts and their feelings" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p. 270). Henry seemed to really enter the story and identify with Coraline by imagining her feelings.

Many of the other children also seemed to understand and identify with Coraline, as one can see from Scott's comment: "She was rude towards the lady, she said something like 'now we are done'. I would also have been rude if my parents were kidnapped." Scott imagined what he would do in Coraline's situation, even though her situation is not very realistic. Also Nicholas inferred with Coraline: "She seems quite forgivable, because she wants to save her parents even though they did not have time for her, but also kind of angry with her parents because maybe they do not help her when she needs help." Nicholas seemed to recognise the feeling of being annoyed when one does not get help.

Several of the children expressed how Coraline and her actions evoked certain feelings in them. One example is Nora's response regarding one of Coraline's feelings: "She wanted to hug the cat like a teddy bear. I thought it was nice." Liam expressed that he found Coraline's inner strength positive: "She heard voices inside of her head, she talked to herself, that she had to be strong. That was good." These examples reveal that the children to a large extent adopted an aesthetic stance. Aesthetic reading is "a reader's sense of enjoyment and personal connections made with the text" (Eagleton & Dobler, 2015, p. 44). The children seem to have gotten emotionally affected by elements in the text during their reading, and thus read aesthetically.

In many ways, there is a larger distance between the child audience and the other mother. The other mother's thoughts and feelings are not revealed in the text, and she is also an adult, having less in common with the children. Celine described the other mother as follows: "Kind of disgusting, a person who wants everybody under her control, she wants to

rule everyone in order to feel alive." When I asked Celine why she thought so, she was unable to give me any concrete examples from the text, but stated that it was a feeling that she got. This shows that Celine read aesthetically, and mainly focused on what was going on *during* the reading, and not what to use afterwards. She tried to understand the other mother's feelings.

The children seemed to be emotionally affected by the other mother as well. Nicholas for instance, expressed that he was annoyed with the other mother because she kidnapped parents and people only because she cannot be Coraline's mother. Scott referred to the picture of the other mother when he tried to describe her: "I did see a picture here. It was, not scary, but kind of scary, but not like I was afraid or anything." Scott here admitted that he found the other mother scary, and in a way he also admitted that the picture might scare the reader, even though he quickly stated that he was not afraid. Only three of the children who read the book referred to the picture of the other mother, but all of them experienced it as frightening. These examples show how the children were able to engage with the text and respond emotionally to it, which suggest that their readings were aesthetic.

Although many of the children described the other mother as mean and scary, half of the children found her more complicated than that. Nora, for instance, described the other mother in the following way:

> A mother who wants to take care of her [Coraline]. It seems like she really cares about her. That she wants to take care of her and wants her in her family. She wanted to sew button eyes on her so that she could stay in her family.

Nora really tried to walk in the other mother's shoes, and used her own feelings to understand why the other mother acts in the way that she does. Jakob also tried to understand the other mother's feelings: "I think she wants to do that to Coraline, so that she can have a daughter. Maybe she has no daughter, and really wants one." These are examples of aesthetic reading, because both Nora and Jakob tried to go beyond what the text reveals, they tried to understand the other mother on a deeper level.

As the examples show, the children were able to empathise with both Coraline and the other mother. All of the children seemed to sympathise with Coraline, and half of them also with the other mother. The children did to a large extent read aesthetically. The children's

response is in line with Nikolajeva's (2002, p. 16) claim that young readers feel strong empathy with literary characters and that children's writers appeal to their readers' feelings in an immediate way.

5.1.2. Seeking information: efferent reading

The previous subchapter showed that the children were able to empathise with the characters and use their own personal feelings and experiences to understand them and *live through* the text, as recognisable in aesthetic reading. However, the children also read efferently, which means that they gathered information and details from the text in order to understand it. Based on seven of the children's answers it is especially evident that they sometimes moved closer towards the efferent stance in the continuum of reading. Some of Henry's comments are clear examples of this. He did for instance describe the other mother's appearance as follows: "She had… she was pale, big, very tall I think it [the text] said… I do not remember her hair color…" Henry here tried to remember the exact information revealed in the text. When I asked Henry about what he thought the other mother really wanted, he answered that he did not know. This shows that he was looking for information while he was reading, and could not answer this question because it was not revealed in the text. In efferent reading the focus lies on the information, ideas, conclusions or directions that can be used or acted on after the reading event (Rosenblatt, 1988, p. 5), which seems to be the case that Henry was after here. The comments from Henry in the previous chapter about empathy with the characters revealed that he did empathise with Coraline, but the last comments reveal that he did not empathise with the other mother in the same way. He read more efferently than aesthetically about the other mother, and focused on the facts and information revealed about her in the text. At one point Henry did however state that the other mother seems to care about Coraline and is also angry with her at the same time, and here he moves towards an aesthetic stance. He was however quick to point out that he did not understand or know what the other mother wanted. Henry's example reveal how the reading process is an "continuous, unconscious fluctuation between the two stances" (Eagleton & Dobler, 2015, p. 44).

Liam showed similar tendencies as Henry, and moved towards an efferent stance when he described the other mother: "At first she was kind. Because she made a deal with Coraline. Then she became meaner and meaner. She did not want Coraline to leave, she

chased her." Like Henry, Liam pointed to what is revealed in the text when describing why she first is kind, then mean. This is also evident when Stella tries to explain why the other mother is mean: "She had a killing glance and said that she had to look for the door or something." When Henry, Liam and Stella described the other mother, they stuck to the information provided by the text, and not the personal feelings they were left with. They read mostly efferently when it came to her character.

As seen in the previous subchapter, all of the children empathised with Coraline, and read aesthetically about her, but at some points nearly all of them seemed to move towards an efferent reading. Seven of the children used adjectives such as "brave" and "smart", and five of these referred to Coraline throwing the cat at the other mother. Another example is Scott's explanation of why he found Coraline brave: "No, that she decided to go back, after what you told, she went back to save her parents. And she threw the black cat at the button-eyed lady." Further on, Scott described Coraline as clever: "She was clever. She tricked the other mother to unlock the door." Scott focused on what he remembered from the text, which reveals that he read efferently.

It is important to note that, to a certain extent, my questions might have provoked such efferent answers. As mentioned earlier, the school situation might also have affected the children's readings and made those more efferent. One might get this impression from one of Henry's comments. When he commented that Coraline brings the cat, and I asked him a follow-up question about why he thought she brought the cat, he answered: "Was it in the text?" The response indicates that Henry thought that I wanted to know what he remembered from the text. His comment says something about his expectations to a text like this in a school context. All of the children knew they had to answer questions about what they read afterwards. That being said, efferent reading is necessary in order to understand the meaning of the text, so to a certain extent, all of the children read, and also needed to read, efferently.

All of the children also seemed to read aesthetically. They were unable to remember information from the text or describe why they got a certain feeling or impression of the characters, which reveals that they read more aesthetically. This might also have been provoked by me. I tried to be clear before the reading started that I did not want the children to remember any particular thing from the text. I just wanted them to read it and share their thoughts about it afterwards. This might therefore have affected the children's adoption of a stance and lead them to a more aesthetic reading.

5.1.3. Coraline and the black cat: aesthetic reading

Even though the black cat is not one of the characters studied in this thesis, he is an important part of the scene studied, and also plays an important part in the characterization of Coraline. I therefore prepared some questions that included the black cat, as visible in the interview guide in appendix 10.6. Seven of the children who read the book excerpt did however bring the cat up themselves, which indicates that also they found him important.

Eight of the ten children found the relationship between Coraline and the black cat good, which seemed to make the children feel more sympathy for Coraline. Nicholas did for instance put it like this: "Uhm, it was good, but then it became even better, when the other mother approached them, and you could notice that the cat cared even more about Coraline. He went closer to her." He also commented further on their relationship: "No, it was kind of fun that the cat still cared about Coraline afterwards when she had thrown him at another person." Nicholas did mainly talk about how the cat felt about Coraline, but the examples indicate that Coraline is a good comfort for the cat, which seemed important to Nicholas' experience of Coraline. He read aesthetically, by engaging with the cat's feelings and understanding how much it cared about Coraline.

One of the other children, Jakob, described the relationship between Coraline and the black cat in the following way:

> Ina: How would you describe Coraline's relationship to the black cat?
> Jakob: Very strong, because usually cats do not obey when to attack, come back, bite, scratch…
> Ina: Cats usually do not obey, do they?
> Jakob: No, except when you are on the couch and say "come up", then they obey.
> Ina: So they had a strong relationship?
> Jakob: Yes, a very special bond.
> Ina: So what do you think about Coraline throwing the cat at the other mother?
> Jakob: It was smart, but I found it a little bit strange that she threw the only friend that she had. She could maybe have thought about what might have happened.
> Ina: What could have happened?
> Jakob: That the lady steps aside, stamps on the cat, and comes towards the girl and sews

button eyes on her.

Jakob also seemed to find it amusing that Coraline has such a strong relationship to the cat, but he seemed to find it slightly negative and thoughtless of Coraline to throw the cat at the other mother. He used his own previous and personal experience, which means that he read aesthetically.

Stella was one of the three children who described the relationship between Coraline and the black cat as not simply good: "She was afraid that he was going to bite." Stella referred to Coraline's feelings about the cat. Diana was the other child who was unsure about Coraline and the black cat's relationship:

> No, it was bad. No, good. Because she was, she wanted to get to the hallway, so she threw the cat at the face because she was afraid that the other mother was going to run after her, but the cat distracted her.

Diana expressed earlier in the interview that she did not like that Coraline throws the cat at the other mother. Her comment cited above does, however, show that she understood why Coraline acted the way she did. Celine described the relationship between Coraline and the cat in the following way:

> Yes, it was trustful, I do not know. Comforting. Yes. It was kind of like, the cat could help her, and then it is probably like she can help the cat as well. At least I think that is the case.

The children's responses reveal that they mainly understood the relationship between Coraline and the black cat as good, and experienced Coraline in a positive way because she manages to have such a strong relationship to a cat. The exceptions are Jakob, Stella and Diana who found some of Coraline's actions towards the cat negative. As all of the examples above reveal, the children seemed to understand Coraline and the cat's relationship mainly by reading aesthetically, by engaging with Coraline and the cat's feelings.

5.2. Filling of gaps

It is evident from the interviews that all of the children speculated about and added things to the characters in different ways, which also caused the children to have different experiences of the characters. They filled the gaps in different ways. As Iser (1974, p. 280) states, a text is potentially capable of several realizations, and each individual reader fill the gaps in his or her own way. One example is how differently the children interpreted Coraline throwing the black cat at the other mother.

All of the children were asked about what their thoughts were regarding Coraline throwing the cat, but six of the children brought it up without being asked, which indicates how important this action is in the characterization of Coraline.

One of Scott's comments reveal that he was aware of the fact that Coraline throwing the cat can be interpreted in different ways: "One might think about this in two ways. Poor cat or cool cat. I choose to think about the positive part." This shows that Scott was clearly aware of his own power and participation in the meeting with the text. He knew that he had several options of how to interpret this action, and chose the interpretation he probably liked the most, or the interpretation that matched his already established experience of Coraline and the black cat's relationship.

Many of the other children seemed to share Scott's thinking. Five of the ten children seemed to think that the cat attacks the other mother of its free will, and that this act only strengthens the relationship between Coraline and the cat. One example is Liam's comment: "They helped each other. Coraline threw the cat, it started to scratch, and then it went back to Coraline." Stella did also describe it quite simple: "He [the cat] was jumping." The other half of the children got the impression that the cat was thrown against its own will, but they seemed however to care more about the fact that it is helping Coraline, as Nicholas states: "It wasn't good for the cat, but it was good that the mother did not manage to catch Coraline." Two of the children did however experience Coraline as not very nice because of this act. One of them was Nora:

> Ina: Okay, is there anything about Coraline that you did not like?
> Nora: Maybe throwing the cat at her.

> Ina: You did not like that? Why not?
>
> Nora: Because, she could have done it herself, or she could have taken the cat and run for the door.

Nora's statements indicate that she considers Coraline's act as unnecessary or even cowardly. The statements indicate that Coraline should have attacked the other mother herself, or just run for the door without throwing the cat. One of the other children, Diana, did not find the act very nice of Coraline either. When asked about the relationship between Coraline and the black cat she answered: "I do not think it was… when she threw the cat at the other one… I do not think it was very nice." Nora and Diana did therefore get a negative experience of Coraline because of this act. As mentioned, Jakob also found the act thoughtless of Coraline, and a strange thing to do towards a friend.

Another gap in the text is the other mother's intention. The children knew that she wants to sew button eyes on Coraline and keep her in the other world forever, but the text does not reveal why, which really triggered the children's imagination. The following quotations show how two of the children were aware of this gap, but did not know how to fill it:

> Henry: She cared about, or did she care about Coraline? She cared about her and at the same time she was angry with her. She wanted her to stay with her forever, but I do not know why.
>
> Scott: I do not know… There has to be a reason, right, it is not like she takes prisoners in order to say 'I have prisoners, I am cool', right? There are so many possibilities. Maybe she wants human blood instead of the tarry black stuff that she has?

Scott and Henry's statements clearly show how the text has gaps for the audience to fill. Three of the other children did also state that they did not know what the other mother wanted because it was not in the text. According to Nikolajeva (2002, p. 16), a children's author will probably be more explicit about characters' traits, behavior and motivation than when writing for adults. The children might therefore be used to being more lead to an interpretation, and therefore stated their insecurity of how to fill the gaps. That being said, all of the children were able to provide possible solutions. As many as three children suggested that the other mother maybe wants Coraline as a slave:

Scott: Maybe… sell her for money?

Celine: I think she wanted her to do things for her so that she did not have to do it herself. Like a slave.

Henriette: Maybe she wants to capture her so that she can be her slave?

Four of the children thought that the other mother only wants a daughter to take care of, and two of them that she just wants to lock Coraline in and keep her in prison. These different answers from the children reveal the dynamics of the reading process. Iser states that "the written part of the text gives us the knowledge, but it is the unwritten part of the text that gives us the opportunity to picture things" (Iser, 1974, p. 283). The unwritten part, the gaps, are important for the readers' experience. Chatman (1978, p. 138) states that the audience's inference and speculations about the characters are an important part of the aesthetic experience. The gaps in the text might therefore have had a strong effect on the children, because they tempted the children to engage with the text and speculate about the characters, and might therefore also be one of the reasons why the children read aesthetically.

Coraline proved to be especially good for exploring how children fill gaps, partially due to its richness, as pointed out by Pullman (2002): "[P]art of the richness of the story comes from the fact that it offers many meanings without imposing any." The novel clearly opens up for multiple interpretations, as Coraline's act of throwing the cat was experienced by some of the children as clever and brave, and by some of them as not nice and unnecessary. Also, the children experienced the other mother as both caring and mean.

5.3. Previous experience and expectations to the text

Several times I got the impression from the children's responses that they used their own expectations and previous readings in order to explain the characters. There seems to be a tendency for instance that the children understood *Coraline* as a fairy tale. This is especially evident in two of the child participants' answers to my question about the other mother and how they would describe her:

Liam: The witch? I will describe her as evil.

Henry: She wasn't exactly a good person, I guess she was the villain in the text.

While Liam described the other mother as an evil witch, Henry gave her the title as the villain of the story. Both character types are classic in fairytales. Nikolajeva (2002, p. 110) states that fairy tale provides the model for most children's fiction, and there is therefore reason to believe that the children have been exposed to such stories in the past. As fairy tales often contain a hero and a villain, the children might expect the story about Coraline to do so as well. Iser states that the reader creates gaps based on their competences (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79). According to Iser, all books that one has read affect the way one reads new texts (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 83). The children's knowledge of the fairy tale genre might therefore have affected how they filled the gaps about the characters and how they experienced them.

Although Liam and Henry's responses were the most clear links to the fairytale genre, the other children's responses sometimes gave the same impression. Six of the children did for instance describe the other mother as mean, terrible or scary, which are classic villain-qualities. Coraline was described by eight of the children as brave, and by half of the children as smart, which are typical hero-qualities.

As the children most likely are used to fairy tales, they might have focused on the overt information that revealed the hero and villain of the text. The adjectives "brave" and "mean" were the first words the children came up with when asked to describe the characters, which indicate that they focused on the characters' overt functions in the narrative in order to understand them. As I have shown, *Coraline* does indeed fit the fairy tale genre, but that the children expects it to be a fairy tale could have made them read more efferently than aesthetically, focusing more on what to get from the text rather than experiencing it.

Having said that, most of the children seemed to read aesthetically, and use their personal connections while reading and experience the characters based on their feelings there and then, as shown in the previous subchapter about the children's empathy with the characters.

This is an example of how the children's readings fall near a center of the continuum, where efferent is one extremity and aesthetic another. The children seemed to constantly read efferently by gaining information and understand the characters as the hero and the villain. Occasionally the children read more aesthetically by immersing themselves with the

characters, based on their own personal feeling and experience.

6. The children's experience of the characters in the film clip

6.1. Aesthetic and efferent viewing

6.1.1. Empathy with the characters: aesthetic viewing

The responses from the children who watched the film clip reveal that the majority of the children empathised with the characters. Not unexpectedly, most of them empathised with Coraline. One example is Catherine: "She was not afraid of doing anything wrong. She knew what to do. (...) She did not feel afraid when she was going to kill the other mother." Catherine almost seemed to be talking on Coraline's behalf, and knew exactly how Coraline felt. Another child, Martin, did also imagine Coraline's feelings when he described her: "A little girl who was very afraid and very worried about her family." It seemed like Martin could recognise the feeling of being without one's parents. Another child, Evelyn, described Coraline like this: "She is very kind towards the people she cares about. Because, if she had been spoiled for instance, she would probably not have helped them. Her parents." Evelyn also engaged with Coraline and her situation.

One of the children found it hard to identify with Coraline, but was nevertheless more than able to empathise with her:

> Charlotte: Maybe she has... maybe she is a girl that does not get noticed.
>
> Ina: What makes you say that?
>
> Charlotte: Because I can feel it. I do not know.
>
> Ina: What made you think of her as brave then?
>
> Charlotte: I would never have done what she did.
>
> Ina: No? What is it that you would never do?
>
> Charlotte: Go back. Or, if I found a world like that I think I would never go back in there. (...)
> She [Coraline] was kind of determined, I would maybe, if I were her... No, I do not know.

Ina: Yes, she seemed determined? How could you see that?

Charlotte: ehm… I do not know

Ina: But did you not like it, that she seemed determined?

Charlotte: No… just, it seemed like she had been having a hard time.

Ina: Why?

Charlotte: Because, she wanted to go back in there. And she wanted to be appreciated by the other parents. And then I think that she might have had a hard life before. And then, when she was appreciated, she should have been more… She was a little bit selfish. Yes, she seemed a little bit selfish.

The example from the interview with Charlotte shows her engagement with the story and how she tried to understand Coraline, even though she had some difficulties expressing it. She used her own imagination and experience to try to understand Coraline's feelings. She read aesthetically, as she really participated in the story and imagined what she would have done herself. It seems like she would have done things different if she was Coraline, and that she did not understand some of her choices.

A few of the children did also empathise with the other mother. This was most clearly expressed by four of the children who said that they found her scary, one of them being Sean: "She pulled up a needle and a thread. That was kind of creepy." Also Charlotte described the other mother as scary and stated that: "I think I would have been scared." Evelyn stated that "[s]he seems absolutely terrible." These examples reveal that the other mother evoked feelings in some the children, but fewer of the children tried to understand her feelings or why she acted in the way that she did. For instance, only three children tried to imagine her feelings:

Lena: I feel that she could not manage on her own, if she did not have Coraline there. (...) Uhm, maybe, because she really wanted Coraline, she cared about her.

Milly: I do not know, maybe company, someone to talk to? Although she did have other children there as well, but…

Lena and Milly tried to imagine how the other mother felt. Also Ted tried to understand the other mother's feelings: "I would say that she is selfish, because she wanted Coraline to herself. She did not want her to be with her real parents, even though she [Coraline] wanted

to." Ted labeled the other mother as selfish based on what he *thought* she wants; that Coraline should be with her and not her parents.

These findings reveal that it was easier for the children to empathise with Coraline. Although four of the children expressed that they were scared by the other mother, only three of the children seemed to try and understand her feelings. The findings still reveal that the majority of the children's watching moved more towards an aesthetic viewing, especially regarding Coraline.

6.1.2. Seeking information: efferent viewing

While the majority of the children were able to empathise with the characters and thus watch aesthetically, it is also evident that all of the children at times leaned more towards an efferent viewing. Lena did for instance describe Coraline as smart based on information from the film: "She tricked the other one [the other mother], she went to open the door, then she threw the cat, then the cat ripped out the eyes, and then she could…. yeah, escape." Lena did more or less summarize all of Coraline's actions in the film, and seemed to remember a lot. Sean and Conrad described Coraline as brave because she in the film clip tried to save her parents, and Robert because she throws the black cat at the other mother. Conrad expressed that he found it hard to understand Coraline based on the information in the film:

> I did not understand why she [Coraline] said that when they was in that globe. Because the deal was that Coraline could go if she found her parents as well. But I did not understand why she wanted to call off the deal. She found everything, right?

Conrad referred to the fact that Coraline said that her parents were behind the door to the hallway, when she knew that they were in the snow globe. It is especially evident here that he watched more efferently than aesthetically, because he searched for information in the film and how to make sense of it, which he however did not seem to fully achieve.

Lena, Sean, Conrad and Robert found Coraline brave simply based on factual information from the film. They watched rather efferently.

Regarding the other mother, seven of the ten children described her based on her actions shown in the film. The following examples illustrate this:

Milly: She captured other children, and captured Coraline's family and she had captured them inside the glass globe, and she was running after Coraline and tried to catch her.

Lena: She chased Coraline.

Sean: She tried to sew button eyes on Coraline and make her stay there forever.

Robert: She tried to sew button eyes on her. Took the parents and burned that one thing.

The children's comments reveal that they remembered a lot of the other mother's behavior in the film, they focused on the information given, and watched more efferently. They did not engage much with the text on a personal level. This is also evident when looking at how the children described the other mother based on her appearance. A tendency is that the children found her strange. Six of the children directly stated so:

Martin: Very strange, hard to describe. She was bone-like, like a skeleton.

Cathrine: She walked in a strange way. And was just strange.

Sean: She was strange. She was like half a spider and half… No, I do not know.

Charlotte: She had a crushed skull, almost like pieces of skeleton on her head. She looked kind of weird.

Ted: The mother? She was pretty strange. She did at least not look like a human. She almost looked like a spider.

One of the children, Conrad, found the other mother's behavior strange: "She acted strangely. She tried to catch her [Coraline], and kill her or something. She tried to rip her face off." Statements such as "hard to describe" and "I do not know" combined with pure descriptions of how the other mother looks like or acts in the film indicate that the children experienced the other mother based on what they saw rather than what they felt or imagined. However, the fact that the children found the other mother strange reveal that the children reacted to her. Even though they used the information gained, they also touched an aesthetic viewing. Still, it seems like the majority of the children moved more towards an efferent viewing regarding the other mother in an attempt to describe her and her role in the narrative.

The information provided by the film seemed to be an important source for the children's inferences, especially regarding the other mother. Most of the children described her based on her actions and looks in the film, without adding their own personal emotions or

opinions. The findings also reveal that some of the children described Coraline purely based on her actions in the film. That being said, most of the children read aesthetically regarding the character of Coraline, as already shown in the previous subchapter about empathising with the characters.

6.1.3. Coraline and the black cat: efferent viewing

As already mentioned, the black cat's role is important in the characterization of Coraline both in the book excerpt and the film clip. However, only two of the children who watched the film clip brought up the black cat without being asked (eventually all of the children were asked about the cat). Nine of the children described Coraline and the black cat as friends, four of them based on specific and factual information from the film:

> Milly: She said she brought a friend.
> Ted: I am not sure, but I guess they are friends or something. In the beginning she [Coraline] did at least say that it was a friend. I do not know much more than that.
> Conrad: I did not get to see the beginning, I guess that is where more information was revealed, but it looked like they were friends. She said it herself, so….
> Cathrine: Because when the lady, or the mother, said that she brought a vermin or something, she [Coraline] said something like 'watch out, this is my friend'.

From the children's answers above it is clear that they based their statements on what the film revealed. Statements such as "I did not see the beginning" and "I do not know much more than that", indicate that they focused on what to retrieve from what they saw, which means that the viewing was rather efferent.

One of the other children, Sean, did also describe Coraline and the cat as friends based on what he saw: "They cooperated in getting Coraline's parents back, by Coraline throwing the cat at the other mother." Robert also used information from the film: "Good friends. Because it seemed like the cat showed where the parents were." Robert referred to the cat jumping up at the mantelpiece next to the snow globe where Coraline's parents appeared.

Although the majority of the children seemed to read efferently regarding Coraline's

relationship to the black cat, it is worth mentioning that three of the children seemed to lean more against an aesthetic viewing, which is especially evident in Charlotte's comment:

> That he [the cat] was a friend, that it had been with her before, because it seemed like he knew how she [Coraline] felt. (...) I think that when she entered that door, because he seemed quite calm, I think that he knew her, what was her name, Coraline? He knew her pretty good because… Yes.

Charlotte clearly used more of her own personal feelings and assumptions than factual evidence from the film. Her example is however an exception. As shown, the majority of the children relied on the visual information and Coraline's utterances in the film when describing her relationship to the cat. They clearly leaned towards an efferent viewing.

6.2. Filling of gaps

Based on the children's answers, *Coraline and the secret door* clearly opens up for more than one interpretation of an event or a character. As the children who read the book excerpt, those who watched the film clip also interpreted in different ways Coraline's act of throwing the black cat.

Mostly, this is seen as a positive act done by Coraline and half of the ten children got the impression that it is planned or that the cat does it in order to help:

> Lena: It seems like they have a very good friendship, because the cat did that thing for her, the cat wanted to attack her so that she could do something else while Coraline could take those things and… Yes.
> Charlotte:−and then it started to attack. I do not think, or I think that… Either she had him trained to do so or… that she was a very good friend, and that they had agreed on it on forehand.

It is evident from Lena and Charlotte's comments that the action is seen as an act of kindness from the cat towards Coraline.

Only one of the children, Evelyn, did not like Coraline's action, and found her

relationship to the black cat problematic: "I do not think it is very good. Because I do not think that she would have thrown something she liked at an evil lady like that." Further on she stated that she did not like that Coraline threw the cat. Also Ted wondered about it:

> Ina: What do you think of Coraline throwing the black cat at the other mother?
> Ted: Now, that was kind of strange.
> Ina: It was strange? Why?
> Ted: Because she said in the beginning that he was a friend, and then she is throwing him at that button-eyed lady.
> Ina: Yes, why do you think she did that?
> Ted: To distract her. To take the parents in that globe or what it was.
> Ina: So what do you think the cat thought of that?
> Ted: No, I do not think he liked it very much. Being thrown.

Ted pointed out that it is strange of Coraline to throw a friend, but did not express that he disliked her for doing it. He did, as many of the other children, explain and understand why Coraline did it. In fact, half of the children did not think that the cat likes being thrown, but they still thought that it is fine that Coraline throws him. They do not think of Coraline in a negative way because of it:

> Martin: She did it in order to save herself. It was maybe not very nice of her, but the cat did manage to escape and run through that door. He [the cat] was maybe glad to help.
> Catherine: I felt sorry for the cat, but I would also have rescued myself if I was her.

As one can see from Martin and Catherine's comments, many of the children did find Coraline's act not very nice. Still, everyone excerpt Evelyn seemed to excuse her, mainly because the cat did not get hurt and because they understood that Coraline needed to do it in order to save herself. Coraline throwing the cat was clearly a gap for the children to fill.

It is clear that the other mother's intention is another gap in the film, based on the children's different answers about her. Charlotte's answer reveals how she interacts with the story by trying to fill the gap, the unwritten part of the story:

> I think she had some sort of use of her, that she had to do… maybe she and the father had

something planned. Wasn't it a step dad or something as well? Yes, I think that she [Coraline] had done something, or it was something special about her behavior that made her [the other mother] want *her* specifically.

Charlotte is really speculating. She is very vague in her explanation, and does not come up with any conclusion, but it is clear that she tries to fill the gap based on information from the text and her own assumptions.

Further on, two of the children thought that the other mother wants to kill Coraline, Conrad being one of them: "To catch her, to kill her or something." Lena thought the other mother wants Coraline as a slave, and Milly thought that she just wants company.

Although the previous examples reveal that the other mother's intention is a gap for them to fill, some of the children did not seem to reflect much upon this:

Robert: Sew button eyes on her.
Martin: She wanted to make her one of her owns.
Evelyn: I think that she wanted to catch her, because she had captured other children and stuff.
Sean: Sew button eyes on Coraline and make her stay there forever, in the other world.

When I tried to ask Robert, Martin, Evelyn and Sean further about why they thought so or what they meant, all of them answered that they did not know. They did not bother to speculate too much about the other mother.

As the book version, the film *Coraline and the secret door* seems to provide its audience with multiple interpretations, and contains different gaps. Especially Coraline throwing the cat seems to be interpreted in different ways: while some of the children thought it is planned and accepted by the cat, some of the children thought it is against the cat's will. However, all of the children except one seemed to experience this happening as positive, as it helps Coraline escape. Also regarding the other mother's intention did the children come up with different explanations. An interesting note, however, is that four of the children did not see the other mother's intention as a gap at all. They seemed to think that the film provided sufficient information.

6.3. Previous experience and expectations to the film

While interviewing the children who watched the film clip I did, as with the other group, get the impression that many of the children connected the story about Coraline to the fairytale genre. The most clear example of this is how Charlotte referred to the other mother: "The stepmother was a person who was selfish and had some sort of use of Coraline." One can here see a direct connection between Charlotte's comment and the classic evil stepmother one finds in fairy tales. In addition to Charlotte's comment, three of the other children (Milly, Evelyn and Catherine) constantly referred to the other mother as "the evil mother", which gave the same impression. Otherwise, seven of the ten children gave the other mother the classic villain-stample by describing her as being mean. Coraline was described as brave by nine of the ten children, which is a classic hero-quality in fairy tales.

As with the book, the children might have expected the story to contain a hero and a villain based on previous stories they have seen or read. The children who watched the film seemed to expect the classic "good vs. evil" theme, and clearly showed more sympathy for and understanding of Coraline than the other mother.

This indicates that the children watched more efferently, by understanding the characters based on overt information revealed in the film. This is maybe especially evident regarding the other mother, because the majority of the children did not empathise or sympathise with her, but simply understood her as the evil mother.

7. Comparative analysis of the children's experience of the characters in the book and the film

In this chapter I will compare the findings from the children's experience of the book to the children's experience of the film which were presented and analysed in the two previous chapters (chapter 5 and chapter 6). I will take a closer look at the possible explanations for why the children experienced the characters in the way that they did, and why they experienced the characters similarly and differently in the two media. I will use Nikolajeva's typology of character presentation and film theory, and answer the second and third research

questions: *What are the similarities and differences between the children's experience of the characters in the two media?* and *What are the possible explanation for these similarities and differences?*

7.1. Empathy with Coraline in both the book and the film

All of the children who read the book excerpt and nine of the children who watched the film clip empathised with Coraline. In the two last chapters I gave examples of how the children read and watched aesthetically in both book and film. More or less all of the children were able to imagine Coraline's feelings. In the following I will look at possible reasons for why they read or watched aesthetically.

Many of the comments from the children who read the book excerpt about Coraline reveal that the children were affected by having access to Coraline's feelings and thoughts in the text. An example is Nora's comment about Coraline wanting to hug the cat like a teddy bear, which she found nice. She got this from a narrative statement in the text, where Coraline's thoughts are revealed: "Coraline wanted to hold on to him like a teddy bear, for reassurance" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 87). Nora also stated that "Coraline thought that she [the other mother] was scary", which she also might have gotten from a description of Coraline's feelings in the book, for instance when Coraline is "pretending that she could not feel the other mother's blank black eyes on her back" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 87). Nora's comments show how access to Coraline's mind made her empathise with Coraline.

Another one of the children who read the book excerpt, Henry, stated that Coraline was an insecure girl, and explained it in the following way: "She was not sure if the other mother would keep the promise, so she just run through the door." This shows how Henry experienced Coraline as insecure or not trustful, based on what she thinks, as one can read in the text: "She knew it was true then. The other mother had no intention of letting her go, or of keeping her word" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88).

Another child who read the book, Liam, said that "[s]he [Coraline] heard voices in her head that said she had to be strong. That was good." Liam indicated that Coraline has an inner strength that is visible because she talks to herself, which he found very positive. He might have gotten this impression from the following quotation from the book:"'Never let up,

miss! Hold strong! Hold strong!' whispered a voice in her mind" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 91). This can be interpreted as interior monologue, and a way to reveal a character's thoughts, which clearly affected Liam's experience of Coraline.

That the child readers share the characters' feelings, their fears, dreams and secrets is a part of the aesthetic experience, and according to Nikolajeva (2002, p. 241) the main appeal of fiction. The reader gets into the mind of the characters. The children's access to Coraline's thoughts might be the reason why they found it so easy to empathise and sympathise with her, and might have made them read more aesthetically.

What about the film, then? Lothe (2000, p. 86) states that films cannot convey characters' feelings and thoughts in the same way as literature can. In the film clip the audience has no access to Coraline's thoughts. Still, nine of the children who watched the film were able to empathise with Coraline. Catherine seemed for instance to understand Coraline's feelings very well, when she stated that Coraline was not afraid of doing anything wrong. Further on she stated: "One could see it on her face." Catherine did also state that Coraline did not like the other mother, which she could see from her facial expressions. Mittell (2007, p. 159) states that facial expressions and gestures reveal emotions and give an insight into the character's' internal life in film. Catherine's comments confirm this. Also Martin, who described Coraline as "[a] little girl who was very afraid and very worried about her family", explained it by stating that "[s]he looked sad when she saw her parents in the snow globe." Martin was able to understand her feelings by looking at her face.

Sounds such as voices and tones can also be important sources to emotions in films. Catherine stated that one of the reasons why one could notice that Coraline did not like the other mother was "from the way she talked to her". Catherine did not seem to have gotten the impression from *what* Coraline says, rather from *how* she says it. As Engelstad (2013, p. 64) points out, film can reveal additional information through what the viewers hear, such as the characters' sounds based on their vocalization, intonation, stress, tone and so on.

Catherine also commented that Coraline seemed confident and determined "from the way that she acted". One of the other children, Charlotte, also really seemed to engage with Coraline and her feelings, and although she found it hard to express why, it is clear that she found Coraline determined from the way that she acted in the film clip. Chatman (1978, p. 30) states that film infer the characters' thinking from what they overtly say and do. Another example of this is how Evelyn was able to understand Coraline's feelings based on her

action:

> Evelyn: In the beginning Coraline thought that she was kind, but now it seems like she is afraid of her [the other mother].
>
> Ina: How can you tell?
>
> Evelyn: Because she runs from her.

Evelyn clearly expressed that she was able to understand Coraline's thinking from one of her actions, and that the fact that Coraline runs from the other mother indicates that she is afraid of her. Coraline's actions seemed to be a source to her thoughts and feelings, and the reason why some of the children watched aesthetically.

The children who read the book excerpt and the children who watched the film clip had similar experiences of Coraline. They were able to empathise and sympathise with her. While the book's ability to show Coraline's inner feelings and thoughts by narrative statements clearly affected the children and made them infer from the text, the film's immediate expression of the characters' face, actions and sounds had the same effect on the children who watched the film clip. Both media allowed the children to get caught up in Coraline's inner life and feelings, and invited the children to a more aesthetic reading and viewing, although in different ways.

7.2. Empathy with the other mother in both the book and the film

The other mother seemed to evoke feelings in both of the two groups of children, which reveal that both the children who read the book and the children who watched the film experienced the other mother aesthetically. The children who read the book were annoyed with her, they found her disgusting, and three of them referred to the picture of her as creepy, as shown in chapter 5.

According to Nikolajeva (2002, p. 184), films give an immediate and more or less complete picture of the characters, but pictures in illustrated books might have some of the same functions. The picture by the other mother that is included in the book (Gaiman, 2009, p. 90) seems to be important in the evocation of feelings among the children who read the book excerpt.

Nikolajeva (2002, p. 187) states that a technique the author can use in order to describe a character in literature is to let another character describe her or him. This is the case when Coraline describes the other mother. The children might have been affected by this description, but few children mentioned it, thus the picture of the other mother seems to have affected them more.

The children who watched the film mainly empathised with the other mother by finding her scary based on her actions. Sean did for instance refer to her showing a needle and thread when describing her as scary. The fact that the other mother pulls up the needle and thread in the film emphasises Coraline's dangerous situation. It becomes clearer that there is a chance that Coraline will have button eyes sewed on. This action is absent in the book. This is not necessarily a medium-specific feature, but an extra choice made by the filmmakers. Evelyn and Charlotte found the other mother scary because she tries to capture Coraline, which might be due to the extra sequence where Coraline is being chased by the other mother in the giant spider web. This is thus not necessarily a medium-specific feature either.

An equal number of children from both groups found the other mother scary, which reveals that they read and watched aesthetically because they got emotionally affected by her. While the children who read the book excerpt seemed to be affected by the picture of her, the children who watched the film seemed to be affected by some of her actions. These actions are added in the film, and not present in the book. No one of the children who watched the film seemed or expressed that they were scared by the other mother's appearance, but this might also be because they found her strange and thus maybe unrealistic. This is for instance evident by Charlotte's comment: "She looks quite strange. She had, it seemed like she was technological, because she had those things [mechanical-like arms and legs] … yes, it seems like she was controlled by someone."

The children who read the book excerpt might find the other mother slightly more human-like and maybe more realistic than those who watched the film, because they cannot actually *see* how she looks like or behaves all the time. The other mother *is* to a certain extent presented as strange and inhuman in the book as well, she does for instance have "deep tarry black stuff" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 91) instead of blood, and teeth which are "sharp as knives" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88). The other mother is however presented as more strange and spider-like in the film. The children who read the book excerpt might therefore have seen her

more like a human being than the children who watched the film clip.

Because books cannot provide a complete and constant picture of the characters to the same extent that films can, the children who read the book excerpt might have been scared and emotionally affected by the illustrations of her, since they might have pictured her more human-like in their minds based on the information provided in the text. The children who watched the film might have gotten used to see her grotesque appearance, and did therefore not get scared by it. Some of the other mother's actions in the film do however seem to have scared the children more. Medium-specific features, such as books' and films' different presentation of a character's looks, might thus have affected the children's experience.

On the other hand, Gaiman could have chosen to describe the other mother in an even more grotesque way, or the illustration of her could be excluded. Selick could have chosen to make the other mother look less grotesque in the film, or chosen not to add the extra actions in the film. Authors and filmmakers always have to make choices of how to present the narrative, and not all of these choices are medium-related. Whether their choices are due to the medium or not, Gaiman and Selick have, nevertheless, achieved the same effect: the child audience empathised with the other mother by being emotionally affected by her. In both media the children were scared by the other mother's looks or actions.

7.3. The other mother: aesthetic reading vs. efferent viewing

As the efferent and aesthetic stances are not mutually exclusive, and the reading (and viewing) consist of fluctuation between the two (Eagleton & Dobler, 2015, p. 44), both those children who read the book excerpt and those who watched the film clip seemed to switch between reading and watching efferently and aesthetically. In some cases, most evident regarding the other mother, the children who read the book excerpt seemed to lean more towards an aesthetic reading, while the children who watched the film clip leaned more towards an efferent viewing. What might this difference between the children's experiences in the two media reveal?

As already discussed, the access to Coraline's mind seems important in order for the children who read the book excerpt to be able to understand her and read aesthetically. The children had however no access to the other mother's thoughts and feelings. Still, over half of

the children who read the book seemed to be able to empathise and even sympathise with the other mother. Nora, for instance, stated that "[i]t seems like she [the other mother] really cares about her [Coraline]." As mentioned, the children who read the book excerpt might have found the other mother more human-like than the children who watched the film, which might have made it easier for them to imagine her feelings. Many of them seemed for instance to experience her as an ordinary mother who wants a daughter to take care of.

The children who watched the film found it harder to empathise and sympathise with the other mother. They referred to her overt actions revealed the film while describing her. This might be due to the other mother's unique and extreme looks in the film, visible in some of the children's comments, for instance Ted's: "She got easily angry. High temperament and stuff." This reveals that the other mother looks or acts angry. In the film she does for instance scream and yell a lot at Coraline. In the book the other mother does not appear as desperate or mad as that. Only one line seems to indicate her madness or how desperate she is: "'No!' screamed a voice from beyond the door, and it no longer sounded even faintly human" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 92), but in the film she seems crazy and desperate throughout the whole part where she jumps at and chases Coraline in the spider web. Another child who watched the film, Conrad, stated that "[s]he talks in a rude way and has a loud voice", which reveals how the characters' voices and tones affect the audience and their interpretation of the character. Ted's and Conrad's comments indicate that the children found the other mother more extreme in the film than the children who read the book. Words like "crazy" and also the fact that six of the children described her as "strange" supports this. The other mother is described like a weird creature in the book as well, and might look strange in the picture, but not to the same extent as in the film. The children who watched the film clip might thus have felt a larger distance between themselves and the surreal other mother, which made them sympathise and empathise less with her. They simply saw her as the villain of the story, as I will show it in the subchapter about fairy tale tendencies.

Mittel (2007, p. 161) points out that films cannot choose to leave details ambiguous. Films have to contain all the elements of the storyworld. If some elements are not there, they can be said not to exist. When writing books, on the other hand, the author has to select what he or she wants to present. Books are thus more ambiguous than films (Mittel, 2007, p. 161). Also, Nikolajeva (2002, p. 184) points out that films provide the audience with an immediate and complete picture of the characters, while books might lack descriptions of the characters

and leave it to the reader as a gap to fill. The children who read the book excerpt might therefore have lacked information about the other mother which the film audience received.

Even though the book contain a description of the other mother as well as a picture of her, it does not, and cannot, reveal as many details about her looks as the film. The children who read the book excerpt might therefore have been more invited to an aesthetic reading, by speculating about the other mother and see her as a human being with feelings. The children who watched the film might have felt that they saw everything that needed to be seen, which invited them to a more efferent viewing. The children's experience might thus be due to the medium. That being said, the filmmakers could have chosen to make the other mother look more like a human, and Gaiman could have chosen to describe her in an even more grotesque way. It is therefore possible that narrative choices have affected the children, and caused different experience of the other mother in the two media.

7.4. Coraline and the black cat: aesthetic reading vs. efferent viewing

While seven of the children who read the book brought up the cat without being asked about it, only three of the children who watched the film did. This indicates that the children who read the book excerpt found the cat more important when characterizing Coraline. Both groups experienced the black cat and Coraline's relationship as good, but they talked about the relationship in different ways. While the majority of children who read the book excerpt seemed to have read aesthetically about the relationship, the majority of the children who watched the film clip seemed to have watched more efferently. Why is that?

Access to Coraline's thoughts might again seem to have directed the children who read the book excerpt into an aesthetic reading. Coraline's thoughts about the cat are revealed in details, and the children seemed to be affected by this. For instance, Nora found it as mentioned nice that Coraline wanted to hug the cat. One of the other children, Stella, also seemed to have been affected by Coraline's thoughts, but not in the same positive way as Nora, because she stated that Coraline was afraid that the cat was going to bite her. Nora and Stella clearly got their impressions from the following quotation from the book excerpt:

Coraline wanted to hold on to it [the black cat] like a teddy bear, for reassurance, but she

knew that cats hate to be squeezed, and she suspected that frightened cats were liable to bite and scratch if provoked in any way, even if they were on your side. (Gaiman, 2009, p. 87)

Stella's and Nora's focus were different though. While Nora focused on the first part where Coraline wants reassurance and to hug the cat, Stella focused on the part where Coraline suspects the cat might bite or scratch her. They both engage with the text and use their own feelings in order to understand the text, and thus read aesthetically, yet in different ways.

Another child who read the book excerpt, Henry, stated that Coraline cared about the cat, and also commented on the fact that Coraline tried to make the cat relax: "Coraline said that it was going to be okay, that they would get away." In the book, this is actually not something Coraline says, but something she thinks: *"Just stay there for a few minutes longer*, she thought at it, wondering if it could hear. *I'll get us both home. I said I would. I promise.* She felt the cat relax ever so slightly in her arms" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 89). Henry was able to imagine Coraline's feelings based on her thoughts directed at the cat.

Nicholas imagined the cat's feelings based on its action when he stated that the cat cared about Coraline in the text as it went closer to her when the other mother came towards them. The text from the book excerpt says that "[t]he cat hesitated for a moment; then, seeing the other mother was coming toward them, it ran to Coraline and stopped by her legs" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 91). Narrative statements, access to the characters' thought as well as the characters' actions seem to have lead the children to an aesthetic reading.

The children who watched the film clip did not have access to Coraline's thoughts, and they also talked differently about their relationship than the children who read the book excerpt. They seem to have watched efferently, by referring to the factual information they got or did not get from the film. Nearly half of the children referred to Coraline's line in the film: "No, I brought a friend" (Selick et al., 2009), and made comments such as "I do not know much more than that." In the book excerpt Coraline also says that she brings a friend: "'No,' said Coraline. 'I brought a friend'"(Gaiman, 2009, p. 87). Yet, not one of the children who read the book referred to this, but rather seemed to care more about their personal impressions of Coraline and the black cat's relationship, mostly based on Coraline's thoughts revealed in the text. The children who watched the film clip did not seem to draw conclusions based on their own or the character's feelings. They focused on the overt information provided in the film. Not only did they refer to Coraline's line about the cat, but also actions

such as Coraline throwing the cat, or that the cat jumps up at the mantelpiece in order to show Coraline where her parents are.

Both groups found the relationship between Coraline and the black cat good, but the findings indicate that the children who read the book excerpt engaged more with Coraline and the black cat by imagining their feelings, leading to a more aesthetic reading. The children who watched the film focused more on the actual information and evidence in the film when stating that their relationship is good, leading to a more efferent viewing. Also, the number of children who brought up the black cat by themselves was significantly larger among those who read the book excerpt than among those who watched the film clip.

The differences between the children's experience in the two media might be due to medium-specific features, such as the access to Coraline's thoughts, feelings and observations regarding the cat in the book. Thoughts, feelings and inner monologues are not as easily transferrable to film.

That being said, the differences between the children's experience in the two media might also be due to narrative choices. The film could have found ways to emphasise Coraline's relationship to the black cat which would make the children who watched the film feel more strongly or personally about it. If Coraline and the black cat's glances met more often, or if their facial expressions towards each other were shown, their inner emotions would be more revealed. This could lead to a more aesthetic viewing. The relationship was emphasised more in the book than in the film.

7.5. Filling of gaps in the book and the film

The children's answers confirm to my expectations that there are two quite clear gaps in both the book and the film for the children to fill. Firstly, there is Coraline throwing the cat at the other mother, and secondly, the other mother's intention.

The children who read the book excerpt seemed to be more aware of these gaps than the ones who watched the film. This is for instance evident by Scott's comment about Coraline throwing the cat: "One might think about this in two ways", and his comment about the other mother's intention: "There are so many possibilities." The gaps seem to be more clear to the children who read the book excerpt. This might be due to the children's

awareness and knowledge of the media. As mentioned, Mittell (2007, p. 161) points out that filmmakers cannot choose to leave visual details ambiguous, and that if a film shows a scene, all elements in the storyworld must be included in the image or they will be assumed not to exist. A film must typically depict every single detail within the portion of the storyworld appearing on the screen, while the book has to select what to reveal. The children who watched the film might have expected everything to be revealed in the film, while the children who read the book knew very well that everything can not be revealed, and expected that something would be left out.

7.5.1. Coraline throwing the cat at the other mother

In both groups, half of the children thought that the cat is thrown at the other mother by Coraline with its consent, and that it helps Coraline. Three of the children who read the book and one of the children who watched the film did not find it nice of her. This means that the children experienced the event where Coraline threw the cat quite similarly in the book and the film, and also that it represented a gap in both media. Why is that?

According to Chatman (1978, p. 30) there are indeterminacies that arise from the peculiar nature of the media. For instance, films present characters easily without expressing the content of their minds, but from what they overtly say and do. Verbal narrative such as novels, on the other hand, continues Chatman (1978, p. 30), finds such restrictions difficult. As I understand it, Chatman claims that characters' thinking might be a gap in the film, but that it is difficult not to present the characters' thinking in verbal narrative. "[E]ven Ernest Hemingway, at such pains to avoid directly stating his characters' thoughts and perception, sometimes 'slips'" (Chatman, 1978, p. 30). Still, it seems like Gaiman has avoided revealing the characters' thoughts and perception in some cases with *Coraline*, for instance regarding Coraline's action of throwing the cat. The children's comments about this action are assumptions, as evident from one of the comments from Stella, who read the book: "He [the cat] did it in order help", Stella could not possibly know that the cat was glad to help, because this is not revealed in the text. The text provides the following information of the cat being thrown:

"No," said Coraline. "I'm not." And, hard as she could, she threw the black cat toward the

other mother. It yowled and landed on the other mother's head, claws flailing, teeth bared, fierce and angry. Fur on end, it looked half again as big as it was in real life. (...) The cat made a deep, ululating yowl and sank its teeth into the other mother's cheek. (Gaiman, 2009, p. 89-91).

The fact that Coraline throws the cat and that it is yowling should indicate that it is thrown against its will. However, the fact that the cat is angry and biting the other mother can also indicate that the cat is attacking. The additional illustration in the book reveals that the cat arches its back, but whether it looks surprised or angry is hard to say. This part is ambiguous, as also is evident from the children's different experience of it.

The children who watched the film also came up with different interpretations of Coraline throwing the cat. Although films do not reveal the characters' emotions, they show their faces, gestures and actions continually when they are in the shot. Despite of this, the filmmakers have managed not to reveal too much of the cat's emotions when it is thrown at the other mother. As with the illustration in the book, it is hard to tell if the cat is surprised or just angry when it is thrown in the film. The children also clearly interpreted this act in different ways. Some of the children stated that the cat attacks the other mother and some of them stated that it did not seem to like being thrown.

Coraline throwing the cat is interpreted differently by both groups because both book and film only reveal the action and what happens, not the characters' thinking or intentions in this case. This indicates that both the book and the film present narrative choices in what to reveal and what not to reveal. Iser (1974, p. 282) states that no author will set the whole picture before his reader's eyes. The author has to choose what he or she wants to highlight in the story, and what to leave out. Gaiman chose not to reveal Coraline's thoughts or intentions regarding the act, and Selick chose, and managed, to make the cat's facial expression and attacking of the other mother look neutral. As shown, this act is ambiguous in both book and film. The children could not know for sure if the cat is doing it voluntarily or not, so they had to fill this gap themselves.

7.5.2. The other mother's intention

As we saw in chapter 5 and 6, the children who read the book excerpt seem to have

speculated more about the other mother than the children who watched the film clip.

The children who read the book excerpt were very creative and had many different suggestions for what the other mother wanted; have Coraline as a slave or prisoner, take care of her like a daughter or use her human blood. Henry for instance, stated that the other mother both cared about and was angry with Coraline. He found her angry because she "kept Coraline imprisoned there", but he did not explain why he thought that the other mother cared about Coraline. In the book the other mother says that she loves Coraline: "'You know I love you' said the other mother flatly" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 87). Not one of the children mentioned this in the interviews, but many children stated that the other mother cares about Coraline, which they might have gotten because she says so.

The excerpt chosen for this study contains direct speech. According to Nikolajeva (2002, p. 231), direct speech can be confusing, because absence of narrative agency leaves readers without guidance. One might for instance ask if the characters are sincere in their statements, or if their opinions are conveyed in their utterances. The reader has to fill in the gaps between the utterances, but might be guided by narrative statements in books. Nikolajeva (2002, p. 225) points out that additional speech verbs and adjectives will immediately guide the reader, which is the case with *Coraline*.

The adverb "flatly" which is used when the other mother says that she loves Coraline indicates that she does not mean what she says, but maybe the children did not see it in this way. This might have made many of the children who read the book excerpt sympathise with the other mother, because they saw her as nice towards Coraline. The children might have speculated more about the other mother, because the fact that she says that she loves Coraline contradicts with her behavior, as Henry's comment shows.

Further on, Nicholas commented that: "She [the other mother] was not nice towards her, but she was not… she smiled at her for instance. She was not mean in every single way." The book says that "[t]he other mother looked daggers, but she smiled sweetly" (Gaiman, 2009, p. 88). Iser (1974, p. 280) states that a reader fills a gap in the text in her/his own way, and will always exclude other possibilities. The reader will make up her/his own mind about how a gap is going to be filled. Iser also emphasises the importance of the reader's competence in the gap-filling (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79), and this is evident in the example with Nicholas. It seems like Nicholas ignored some of the text and the fact that the other mother "looks daggers", and he focused on the fact that she smiles. The example with

Nicholas also suggests that the children got mixed signals from the text about the other mother, and were thus forced to engage more with the text and try to understand her themselves.

The children who watched the film also speculated about the other mother, but those who did, except for two of the children, thought that she had evil intentions, like killing Coraline or make her a slave. That being said, nearly half of the children who watched the film clip did not speculate very much at all, which is evident from Robert who just stated that the other mother wanted to "sew button eyes on her [Coraline]." The children who watched the film clip did not speculate as much with the other mother as the children who read the book excerpt. Why is that?

In the film the other mother says "[y]ou know I love you, Coraline*"*, which is almost identical to her line in the book. The other mother's flat and slightly sarcastic tone, and the way she is picking at Coraline while saying it, might however have given the impression that she does not mean it. Charlotte said the following about the other mother: "She said that she cared about her [Coraline], but I think that it was not really true." Milly did also state something similar when describing Coraline and the other mother's relationship: "It was maybe good once, but it was probably just nonsense from the mother". Engelstad (2013, p. 64) points out that dialogues are very different in books and films. While books can give additional information by using narrative statements and adverbs, such as "flatly", the film can give additional information through sounds and body language. Charlotte and Milly seem to have understood the other mother as a liar when she says that she loves Coraline. As it might have been clear to the children who watched the film clip that the other mother is mean and that she is lying, there might have been no gaps for them to fill regarding her intentions.

The children's competences might thus have affected how the children filled the gaps in the different media. Reading requires linguistic skills and understanding of many different types of words. Viewing requires understanding of human reactions and behavior. The findings indicate that the children who read the book excerpt lack some of the literary knowledge the book requires. The children who watched the film seem to have understood when the other mother is being sarcastic, or untruthful. She does for instance smile a lot in the film as well, but it seems like the children were not "fooled" by her lifeless and evil eyes and her body language. Iser states that the readers create gaps based on their competence (Maagerø & Tønnessen, 2001, p. 79). The children who read the book might therefore have

created a gap based on their competence, a gap that invites them to speculate about the other mother and also to see her as something else than what she is. This might also be one of the reasons why the children who read the book seemed to read more aesthetically and sympathise more with the other mother, while the children who watched the film watched more efferently.

The reason why many of the children who watched the film did not speculate as much about the other mother can also be due to her appearance in the film. As mentioned earlier, the children's answers indicate that the other mother's behavior, sound/voice, and physical appearance made them experience her as purely evil in the film. In other words, there was no gap to fill. The extra sequence where the other mother chases Coraline in the spider web and where the other mother pulls up a needle and a thread also seems to have affected the children. The children who watched the film thus speculated less because they found not much to speculate about, it was so clear to them that the other mother has evil intentions.

The gaps in the texts are clearly transferred to the film. Lack of access to the characters thoughts is evident in both book and film. Still, there seem to be more gaps in the book than in the film, due to the children's competence. The fact that books cannot present the characters and storyworld in complete details, but often more ambiguous than films, might of course also have affected the children. Some of the actions and events added in the film also seem to have affected how the children filled the gaps and speculated about the characters.

7.6. Fairy tale tendencies

The link to fairy tales was evident both for the children who read the book excerpt and those who watched the film clip, especially by Henry's description of the other mother as a villain in the book, and Charlotte's description of her as a stepmother in the film.

The fairy tale-theme is also evident by looking at the adjectives the children used to describe the characters. While eight children found Coraline brave in the book, nine found her brave in the film. While six children found the other mother mean in the book, seven found her mean in the film. Coraline is the hero and the other mother the villain in both media.

When the children were asked to describe the characters, most children in both groups first answered by using only one word; "brave", "smart", "mean" or "evil". This is therefore probably their first thoughts and first impression of the characters. All of the children seemed, and also needed, to read and watch efferently and labeling the characters in order to understand the core story.

Although some of the children who read the book excerpt seem to have missed some important part of the narrative as shown in the last subchapter, all of the children seem to have understood the core narrative, which is the same in both book and film; Coraline dares to face the other mother, she throws the black cat at her, and tries to save her parents. The other mother has captured Coraline's parents and chases Coraline. All of the children read more or less efferently. Many of the children were also able to get carried away and use their own personal connections and feelings when reading about or viewing the characters. They were thus also able to read and watch aesthetically.

The fairy tale functions seem to be the surface of the children's experience of the characters, the top of the iceberg, the efferent reading, that was common for both groups. The children might be so used to the fairy tale model in narratives that their previous experience with stories and their expectations to new ones might be said to be public, not personal.

The children's experience of the characters as hero and villain in both groups seem to be due to narrative choices and the children's competence, and not the medium at all. This seems to support McFarlane's claim (1996, p. 24-25) that the underlying structure is similar in the book and its filmic version when the characters can be said to have the same functions in the two media. This means that the filmmakers have chosen to keep the novel's structure in the film.

In my opinion this is a very important finding. If the children watched the film or read the book about Coraline in another context, where they would not be interviewed and their answers would not be studied further, this is probably what the majority of the children would have said about the characters in both media; that Coraline is a brave and smart girl, and that the other mother is mean and creepy. This was also my immediate impression after the interviews were done. However, as the analyses and discussions in this and the two previous chapters reveal, this research have offered a more nuanced view of the children's experience, that would not be revealed in an everyday situation.

8. Conclusion

In this chapter I will summarize the main findings and the tendencies from the interviews with the children, which have answered the research questions about the children's experiences and possible reasons for these.

Both groups experienced the character of Coraline similarly. The children tried to understand her feelings and engaged with her emotionally, and thus read and watched aesthetically. The children who read the book excerpt referred to the inner life of Coraline when they explained and justified their experience, and were mainly affected by narrative statements in the text that revealed Coraline's thoughts and feelings. The children who watched the film referred to Coraline's facial expression, actions or the sound of her voice. Books and films use different techniques in order to reveal the characters' inner lives, and both media evoked an aesthetic reading/viewing.

Coraline's relationship to the black cat was experienced differently in the two media. The children who read the book excerpt seemed to use their own personal experience and feelings when talking about both Coraline and the black cat, and read more aesthetically. The children who watched the film did not engage as much with Coraline's feelings, but referred to her utterances and information revealed in the film, which show that they watched more efferently. The findings reveal that the children who read the book did so more aesthetically due to their access to Coraline's thoughts and feelings, which is medium-specific and reveals books' ability to penetrate the characters. The children who watched the film had no access to Coralines' inner feelings towards the cat, so they trusted Coraline's overt actions and speech acts. The fact that the children watched more efferently is however not necessarily due to the medium. The filmmakers could have revealed more of Coraline's and the black cat's feelings by showing their emotions and affections by using facial expression and actions. The difference of the children's experience in the two media might therefore be due to both narrative choices and medium-specific features.

Although most children in both groups experienced the other mother as scary, and got emotionally affected by her, which reveals that they read and watched aesthetically, the other mother was also experienced differently by the two groups. While the children who read the book excerpt read more aesthetically, and empathised and sympathised more with the other

mother, the children who watched the film clip watched more efferently and focused on the information provided by the film. The children who read the book excerpt also speculated more about her and created a larger gap in the text than those who watched the film clip. The difference between the children's experience might be due to medium-specific features. While film can provide an immediate and complete picture and normally include all the details that exist in a storyworld, it is impossible for books to provide such a complete picture. The children who watched the film might have felt that they saw everything and got all the information that they needed, and did for instance not need to figure out more about the other mother. Another reason for the difference between the two groups might be due to narrative choices. The other mother looks more like a spider and less like a human in the film than in the book. Actions such as her pulling up a needle and a thread and chasing Coraline in the spider web seem to have made the children experience her simply what she looks and acts like: a monster and/or a villain. In the book the other mother is presented more human-like than in the film, even in the picture, which might have made the children who read the book understand her more as a human being with feelings and reasonable intentions. A third reason for the difference between the children's experience of the other mother might be due to the children's competence. The children's lack of the literary skills required for understanding *Coraline* made some of the children experience the other mother as caring and some of the children to speculate more about her, as she seemed both nice and mean at the same time. The children who watched the film clip seemed to experience the other mother as purely evil based on the information given by the film. It seemed like they did not need to speculate that much about her.

A similarity between the two groups is the clear link to fairy tales. The majority of the children gave the characters qualities like brave, smart and mean, and the other mother was referred to as a villain in the book and a stepmother in the film. The immediate impression in both media is therefore similar: Coraline serves the function of the brave hero, and the other mother as the mean villain, or stepmother. The underlying structure of the book is therefore preserved in the film. The children's experience of Coraline and the other mother as fairy tale characters might also be based on the children's common expectations of narratives, and their previous experience.

In general, the children who read the book excerpt read more aesthetically and filled more gaps, and the children who watched the film clip watched more efferently and filled less

gaps. The fact that the book and film have evoked different stances indicate that children need to be exposed to both media because they can offer them different experience. Both stances are important, and Rosenblatt (1982, p. 271) does for instance point out that both of them should be taught.

Hutcheon (2006, p. 23) points out that several theorists claim that there is no significant difference between a verbal text and visual images. Hutcheon (2006, p. 23-24) however asserts that due to the different modes of engagement and different means of expressions, telling and showing *is* quite different. This means that a medium can aim at and achieve certain things better than other. For instance, as the findings indicate, film can in some cases give a better understanding of the narrative to children with limited literacy skills, and provide the necessary efferent viewing. Books might open up for more speculation and gap-filling due to the ambiguities that are not to be found to the same extent in films. This might also lead to a more aesthetic reading, as the children are more invited to use their own personal connections and experience.

The narrative choices that have affected the children, for instance the other mother's appearance in the two media, are not necessarily medium-specific. However, as Engelstad (2013, p. 94-95) points out, this creates an awareness of how narratives in both media are products of careful selections. The findings also reveal that while the book and film use different techniques, they can achieve the same effect, such as deep engagement with the characters.

8.1. Comparison of my findings to previous research and suggestions for further research

Rusnak (2011, p. 148) claims that although the the filmic adaptation of *Coraline* is similar to the original in many respects, several changes in the presentation of characters lead to altered readings of the entire story. For instance, he claims that Coraline is more selfish in the film, visible when she throws her ally, the black cat, at the other mother without saving it afterwards (Rusnak, 2011, p. 146). According to Rusnak (2011, p. 147-148), for an ordinary spectator it might prove difficult to say what Coraline has done to deserve the help she is given in the film, and he here suggests that the audience will find her selfish.

My research has shown that the characters in some cases are presented and experienced differently, which is in line with Rusnak's conclusion. Still, the majority of the children who watched the film clip does not seem to look at Coraline as more selfish than the children who read the book excerpt. As shown, both groups mainly sympathised with Coraline and seemed to understand her. This reveals the importance of empirical researches. While Rusnak speculates about how an ordinary spectator might experience the characters, I have shown how the children actually have experienced them. That being said, Rusnak studies the entire book and film, while this research focuses on a particular scene, which of course might give different impressions of the characters. The need for and importance of empirical research is however clearly shown.

As pointed out in the introduction, there seems to be a lack of comparative studies of children's experience of books and films. The exception is Meringoff's study from 1980. Meringoff (1980) hypothesised that film's and television's "ability to depict story actions dynamically and concomitantly" (p. 242) would cause the children to recall more of the actions and rely more on visual information. She also suggested that book's provision of "limited and static pictorial information" (Meringoff, 1980, p. 242) would make the children recall more language, textual content use outside-story knowledge as the bases for inferences. Her results reveal that the children who watched the televised film *did* make their inferences based on visual information, while the children who read the book based on textual information and outside-story references (Meringoff, 1980, p. 245).

The children who watched the film clip from *Coraline and the secret door* seem to have watched more efferently and remembered and even understood the characters and story actions better based on the visual information, which is similar to Meringoff's results. The children who read the excerpt from *Coraline* seemed to read more aesthetically. Even though the children who watched the film also watched aesthetically, the children who read generally seemed to use more of their own experience and speculate more, as was also the case in Meringoff's research.

Like Meringoff, I also found that films ability to provide the audience with complete and detailed information, and book's limited ability to do the same, might have been the reason for the children's inferences. However, I also found other explanations for the children's inference and experience, such as narrative choices and the children's own knowledge and competence. Still, the tendencies in this research are quite similar to

Meringoff's research. Further research about adaptation and children's experience of book and film is necessary in order to confirm and quality prove the findings of this research.

The thesis have shed lights on some important and interesting issues regarding children's experience of characters in books and films. The findings are not representative for every adaptation, or every book and film, but might inform further research and raise interest in the topic. Research about children's experience of different media are important. As one of the findings of this research indicates, the children's linguistic skills made them miss some of the information in the book. Janice Bland (2015, p. 25) argues that pictures can help the reader to follow the story when their linguistic competence is still limited. She talks about multimodal texts such as picture books and graphics novels, and uses the graphic novel version *Coraline* as example in her article. The graphic novel is another medium besides film that can be used by children with limited linguistic competence. A study of the children's experience of the characters in the graphic novel might therefore also add to this topic.

The intention of this research is not to point out which media gave the children better experience, and I hope that I have not indicated anything to that effect in this thesis. As the findings reveal and as I have argued, children should be exposed to both books and films, because both media can offer them different experiences of the characters. Christian Metz (quoted in Hutcheon, 2006) once said that cinema "tells us continuous stories; it "says" things that could be conveyed also in words; yet it says them differently. There is a reason for the possibility as well as for the necessity of adaptation" (p. 3). Books and films can offer different experiences, both which are equally important.

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10. Appendices

10.1. Application to NSD

MELDESKJEMA

Meldeskjema (versjon 1.4) for forsknings- og studentprosjekt som medfører meldeplikt eller konsesjonsplikt (jf. personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter).

1. Intro

Samles det inn direkte personidentifiserende opplysninger?	Ja ○ Nei ●	En person vil være direkte identifiserbar via navn, personnummer, eller andre personentydige kjennetegn. Les mer om hva personopplysninger. NB! Selv om opplysningene skal anonymiseres i oppgave/rapport, må det krysses av dersom det skal innhentes/registreres personidentifiserende opplysninger i forbindelse med prosjektet.
Hvis ja, hvilke?	□ Navn □ 11-sifret fødselsnummer □ Adresse □ E-post □ Telefonnummer □ Annet	
Annet, spesifiser hvilke		
Samles det inn bakgrunnsopplysninger som kan identifisere enkeltpersoner (indirekte personidentifiserende opplysninger)?	Ja ● Nei ○	En person vil være indirekte identifiserbar dersom det er mulig å identifisere vedkommende gjennom bakgrunnsopplysninger som for eksempel bostedskommune eller arbeidsplass/skole kombinert med opplysninger som alder, kjønn, yrke, diagnose, etc.
Hvis ja, hvilke	Alder og kjønn (Eventuelt kombinert med bosted og skole, men vil prøve å unngå dette. Er ikke viktig for undersøkelsen)	NB! For at stemme skal regnes som personidentifiserende, må denne bli registrert i kombinasjon med andre opplysninger, slik at personer kan gjenkjennes.
Skal det registreres personopplysninger (direkte/indirekte/via IP-/epost adresse, etc) ved hjelp av nettbaserte spørreskjema?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Les mer om nettbaserte spørreskjema.
Blir det registrert personopplysninger på digitale bilde- eller videoopptak?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Bilde/videoopptak av ansikter vil regnes som personidentifiserende.
Søkes det vurdering fra REK om hvorvidt prosjektet er omfattet av helseforskningsloven?	Ja ○ Nei ●	NB! Dersom REK (Regional Komité for medisinsk og helsefaglig forskningsetikk) har vurdert prosjektet som helseforskning, er det ikke nødvendig å sende inn meldeskjema til personvernombudet (NB! Gjelder ikke prosjekter som skal benytte data fra pseudonyme helseregistre). Dersom tilbakemelding fra REK ikke foreligger, anbefaler vi at du avventer videre utfylling til svar fra REK foreligger.

2. Prosjekttittel

Prosjekttittel	The child audience's experience of Coraline and The Other Mother in an excerpt from Neil Gaiman's book Coraline compared to in Henry Selick's film Coraline and the secret door.	Oppgi prosjektets tittel. NB! Dette kan ikke være «Masteroppgave» eller liknende, navnet må beskrive prosjektets innhold.

3. Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Institusjon	Høgskolen i Bergen	Velg den institusjonen du er tilknyttet. Alle nivå må oppgis. Ved studentprosjekt er det studentens tilknytning som er avgjørende. Dersom institusjonen ikke finnes på listen, har den ikke avtale med NSD som personvernombud. Vennligst ta kontakt med institusjonen.
Avdeling/Fakultet	Avdeling for lærerutdanning	
Institutt		

4. Daglig ansvarlig (forsker, veileder, stipendiat)

Fornavn	Zoltan	Før opp navnet på den som har det daglige ansvaret for prosjektet. Veileder er vanligvis daglig ansvarlig ved studentprosjekt.
Etternavn	Varga	
Stilling	Førsteamanuensis, Engelskseksjonen	Veileder og student må være tilknyttet samme institusjon. Dersom studenten har ekstern veileder, kanbiveileder eller fagansvarlig ved studiestedet stå som daglig ansvarlig.
Telefon	55 58 55 17	
Mobil		Arbeidssted må være tilknyttet behandlingsansvarlig institusjon, f.eks. underavdeling, institutt etc.
E-post	Zoltan.Varga@hib.no	
Alternativ e-post	Zoltan.Varga@hib.no	NB! Det er viktig at du oppgir en e-postadresse som brukes aktivt. Vennligst gi oss beskjed dersom den endres.

Arbeidssted	Høgskolen i Bergen	
Adresse (arb.)	Inndalsveien 28	
Postnr./sted (arb.sted)	5063 Bergen	

5. Student (master, bachelor)

Studentprosjekt	Ja ● Nei ○	Dersom det er flere studenter som samarbeider om et prosjekt, skal det velges en kontaktperson som føres opp her. Øvrige studenter kan føres opp under pkt 10.
Fornavn	Ina	
Etternavn	Fjelltveit	
Telefon	90176491	
Mobil		
E-post	inafj@online.no	
Alternativ e-post	Ina.Fjelltveit@stud.hib.no	
Privatadresse	Gamlevegen 25A	
Postnr./sted (privatadr.)	5212 Søfteland	
Type oppgave	● Masteroppgave ○ Bacheloroppgave ○ Semesteroppgave ○ Annet	

6. Formålet med prosjektet

Formål	Jeg skal undersøke hvordan barnemottakerne opplever hovedpersonene i en bok sammenlignet med hvordan de opplever dem i filmadaptasjonen. Boken er Coraline av Neil Gaiman, og filmer er Coraline og den hemmelige dør, med Henry Selick som regissør.	Redegjør kort for prosjektets formål, problemstilling, forskningsspørsmål e.l.

7. Hvilke personer skal det innhentes personopplysninger om (utvalg)?

Kryss av for utvalg	☐ Barnehagebarn ■ Skoleelever ☐ Pasienter ☐ Brukere/klienter/kunder ☐ Ansatte ☐ Barnevernsbarn ☐ Lærere ☐ Helsepersonell ☐ Asylsøkere ☐ Andre	
Beskriv utvalg/deltakere	Rundt tolv elever på 12 år vil bli intervjuet	Med utvalg menes dem som deltar i undersøkelsen eller dem det innhentes opplysninger om.
Rekruttering/trekking	Jeg vil rekruttere dem gjennom skole	Beskriv hvordan utvalget trekkes eller rekrutteres og oppgi hvem som foretar den. Et utvalg kan trekkes fra registre som f.eks. Folkeregisteret, SSB-registre, pasientregistre, eller det kan rekrutteres gjennom f.eks. en bedrift, skole, idrettsmiljø eller eget nettverk.
Førstegangskontakt	Jeg vil først ha kontakt med læreren deres, og deretter møte dem i en time/fritime	Beskriv hvordan kontakt med utvalget blir opprettet og av hvem. Les mer om dette på temasidene.
Alder på utvalget	■ Barn (0-15 år) ☐ Ungdom (16-17 år) ☐ Voksne (over 18 år)	Les om forskning som involverer barn på våre nettsider.
Omtrentlig antall personer som inngår i utvalget	12	
Samles det inn sensitive personopplysninger?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Les mer om sensitive opplysninger.

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Hvis ja, hvilke?	☐ Rasemessig eller etnisk bakgrunn, eller politisk, filosofisk eller religiøs oppfatning ☐ At en person har vært mistenkt, siktet, tiltalt eller dømt for en straffbar handling ☐ Helseforhold ☐ Seksuelle forhold ☐ Medlemskap i fagforeninger	
Inkluderes det myndige personer med redusert eller manglende samtykkekompetanse?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Les mer om pasienter, brukere og personer med redusert eller manglende samtykkekompetanse.
Samles det inn personopplysninger om personer som selv ikke deltar (tredjepersoner)?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Med opplysninger om tredjeperson menes opplysninger som kan spores tilbake til personer som ikke inngår i utvalget. Eksempler på tredjeperson er kollega, elev, klient, familiemedlem.

8. Metode for innsamling av personopplysninger

Kryss av for hvilke datainnsamlingsmetoder og datakilder som vil benyttes	☐ Papirbasert spørreskjema ☐ Elektronisk spørreskjema ■ Personlig intervju ☐ Gruppeintervju ☐ Observasjon ☐ Deltakende observasjon ☐ Blogg/sosiale medier/internett ☐ Psykologiske/pedagogiske tester ☐ Medisinske undersøkelser/tester ☐ Journaldata	Personopplysninger kan innhentes direkte fra den registrerte f.eks. gjennom spørreskjema,intervju, tester, og/eller ulike journaler (f.eks. elevmapper, NAV, PPT, sykehus) og/eller registre (f.eks.Statistisk sentralbyrå, sentrale helseregistre). NB! Dersom personopplysninger innhentes fra forskjellige personer (utvalg) og med forskjellige metoder, må dette spesifiseres i kommentar-boksen. Husk også å legge ved relevante vedlegg til alle utvalgs-gruppene og metodene som skal benyttes. Les mer om registerstudier her. Dersom du skal anvende registerdata, må variabelliste lastes opp under pkt. 15
	☐ Registerdata	
	☐ Annen innsamlingsmetode	
Tilleggsopplysninger		

9. Informasjon og samtykke

Oppgi hvordan utvalget/deltakerne informeres	☐ Skriftlig ■ Muntlig ☐ Informeres ikke	Dersom utvalget ikke skal informeres om behandlingen av personopplysninger må det begrunnes. Les mer her. Vennligst send inn mal for skriftlig eller muntlig informasjon til deltakerne sammen med meldeskjema. Last ned en veiledende mal her. NB! Vedlegg lastes opp til sist i meldeskjemaet, se punkt 15 Vedlegg.
Samtykker utvalget til deltakelse?	● Ja ○ Nei ○ Flere utvalg, ikke samtykke fra alle	For at et samtykke til deltakelse i forskning skal være gyldig, må det være frivillig, uttrykkelig og informert. Samtykke kan gis skriftlig, muntlig eller gjennom en aktiv handling. For eksempel vil et besvart spørreskjema være å regne som et aktivt samtykke. Dersom det ikke skal innhentes samtykke, må det begrunnes.
Innhentes det samtykke fra foreldre for barn under 15 år?	Ja ● Nei ○	Les mer om forskning som involverer barn og samtykke fra unge.
Hvis nei, begrunn		

10. Informasjonssikkerhet

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Hvordan registreres og oppbevares personopplysningene?	☐ På server i virksomhetens nettverk ☐ Fysisk isolert PC tilhørende virksomheten (dvs. ingen tilknytning til andre datamaskiner eller nettverk, interne eller eksterne) ☐ Datamaskin i nettverkssystem tilknyttet Internett tilhørende virksomheten ■ Privat datamaskin ☐ Videoopptak/fotografi ■ Lydopptak ☐ Notater/papir ■ Mobile lagringsenheter (bærbar datamaskin, minnepenn, minnekort, cd, ekstern harddisk, mobiltelefon) ☐ Annen registreringsmetode	Merk av for hvilke hjelpemidler som benyttes for registrering og analyse av opplysninger. Sett flere kryss dersom opplysningene registreres på flere måter. Med «virksomhet» menes her behandlingsansvarlig institusjon. NB! Som hovedregel bør data som inneholder personopplysninger lagres på behandlingsansvarlig sin forskningsserver.
Annen registreringsmetode beskriv		Lagring på andre medier - som privat pc, mobiltelefon, minnepinne, server på annet arbeidssted - er mindre sikkert, og må derfor begrunnes. Slik lagring må avklares med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon, og personopplysningene bør krypteres.
Hvordan er datamaterialet beskyttet mot at uvedkommende får innsyn?	Lydopptakene skal transkriberes inn på privat datamaskin og deretter slettes fra mobiltelefonen. Datamaskinen er sikret med passord og oppbevares og brukes kun hjemme eller i låst rom.	Er f.eks. datamaskintilgangen beskyttet med brukernavn og passord, står datamaskinen i et låsbart rom, og hvordan sikres bærbare enheter, utskrifter og opptak?
Samles opplysningene inn/behandles av en databehandler?	Ja ○ Nei ●	Dersom det benyttes eksterne til helt eller delvis å behandle personopplysninger, f.eks. Questback, transkriberingsassistent eller tolk, er dette å betrakte som en databehandler. Slike oppdrag må kontraktsreguleres.
Hvis ja, hvilken		
Overføres personopplysninger ved hjelp av e-post/Internett?	Ja ○ Nei ●	F.eks. ved overføring av data til samarbeidspartner, databehandler mm.
Hvis ja, beskriv?		Dersom personopplysninger skal sendes via internett, bør de krypteres tilstrekkelig. Vi anbefaler for ikke lagring av personopplysninger på nettskytjenester. Dersom nettskytjeneste benyttes, skal det inngås skriftlig databehandleravtale med leverandøren av tjenesten.
Skal andre personer enn daglig ansvarlig/student ha tilgang til datamaterialet med personopplysninger?	Ja ○ Nei ●	
Hvis ja, hvem (oppgi navn og arbeidssted)?		
Utleveres/deles personopplysninger med andre institusjoner eller land?	● Nei ○ Andre institusjoner ○ Institusjoner i andre land	F.eks. ved nasjonale samarbeidsprosjekter der personopplysninger utveksles eller ved internasjonale samarbeidsprosjekter der personopplysninger utveksles.

11. Vurdering/godkjenning fra andre instanser

Søkes det om dispensasjon fra taushetsplikten for å få tilgang til data?	Ja ○ Nei ●	For å få tilgang til taushetsbelagte opplysninger fra f.eks. NAV, PPT, sykehus, må det søkes om dispensasjon fra taushetsplikten. Dispensasjon søkes vanligvis fra aktuelt departement.
Hvis ja, hvilke		
Søkes det godkjenning fra andre instanser?	Ja ○ Nei ●	F.eks. søke registereier om tilgang til data, en ledelse om tilgang til forskning i virksomhet, skole.
Hvis ja, hvilken		

12. Periode for behandling av personopplysninger

Prosjektstart	26.09.2016	Prosjektstart Vennligst oppgi tidspunktet for når kontakt med utvalget skal gjøres/datainnsamlingen starter.
Planlagt dato for prosjektslutt	15.05.2017	Prosjektslutt: Vennligst oppgi tidspunktet for når datamaterialet enten skalanonymiseres/slettes, eller arkiveres i påvente av oppfølgingsstudier eller annet.
Skal personopplysninger publiseres (direkte eller indirekte)?	☐ Ja, direkte (navn e.l.) ☐ Ja, indirekte (bakgrunnsopplysninger) ■ Nei, publiseres anonymt	NB! Dersom personopplysninger skal publiseres, må det vanligvis innhentes eksplisitt samtykke til dette fra den enkelte, og deltakere bør gis anledning til å lese gjennom og godkjenne sitater.
Hva skal skje med datamaterialet ved prosjektslutt?	■ Datamaterialet anonymiseres ☐ Datamaterialet oppbevares med personidentifikasjon	NB! Her menes datamaterialet, ikke publikasjon. Selv om data publiseres med personidentifikasjon skal som regel øvrig data anonymiseres.Med anonymisering menes at datamaterialet bearbeides slik at det ikke lenger er mulig å føre opplysningene tilbake til enkeltpersoner. Les mer om anonymisering.

13. Finansiering

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Hvordan finansieres prosjektet?		

14. Tilleggsopplysninger

Tilleggsopplysninger		

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10.2. NSD Approval

NSD

Zoltan Varga
Avdeling for lærerutdanning Høgskolen i Bergen
Postboks 7030
5020 BERGEN

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 06.09.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

49798	*The child audience's experience of Coraline and The Other Mother in an excerpt from Neil Gaiman's book Coraline compared to in Henry Selick's film Coraline and the secret door*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Høgskolen i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Zoltan Varga*
Student	*Ina Fjelltveit*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 15.05.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Audun Løvlie

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Kontaktperson: Audun Løvlie tlf: 55 58 23 07
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Ina Fjelltveit inafj@online.no

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykke til deltakelse. For å tilfredsstille kravet om et informert samtykke etter loven, må utvalget informeres om følgende:

- hvilken institusjon som er ansvarlig
- prosjektets formål / problemstilling
- hvilke metoder som skal benyttes for datainnsamling
- hvilke typer opplysninger som samles inn
- at opplysningene behandles konfidensielt og hvem som vil ha tilgang
- at det er frivillig å delta og at man kan trekke seg når som helst uten begrunnelse
- dato for forventet prosjektslutt
- at data anonymiseres ved prosjektslutt
- hvorvidt enkeltpersoner vil kunne gjenkjennes i den ferdige oppgaven
- kontaktopplysninger til forsker, eller student/veileder.

Foreldre samtykker for sine barn. Selv om foreldre/foresatte samtykker til barnets deltakelse, minner vi om at barnet også må gi sin aksept til deltakelse. Barnet bør få tilpasset informasjon om prosjektet, og det må sørges for at de forstår at deltakelse er frivillig og at de når som helst kan trekke seg dersom de ønsker det. Dette kan være vanskelig å formidle, da barn ofte er mer autoritetstro enn voksne. Frivillighetsaspektet må derfor særlig vektlegges i forhold til barn, og spesielt når forskningen foregår på eller i tilknytning til en organisasjon som barnet står i et avhengighetsforhold til, som for eksempel skole. Forespørselen må derfor alltid rettes på en slik måte at de forespurte ikke opplever press om å delta, gjerne ved å understreke at det ikke vil påvirke forholdet til skolen hvorvidt de ønsker å være med i studien eller ikke. Videre bør det planlegges et alternativt opplegg for de som ikke deltar. Dette er særlig relevant ved prosjekter som foregår i skoletiden.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at studenten etterfølger Høgskolen i Bergen sine regler for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal lagres på privat pc/mobile enheter, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 15.05.2017. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:
- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lydopptak

10.3. Information to the parents [English translation]

Dear parents,

I am a master student in Children and Young Adults' Literature at Bergen University College. In my master thesis am studying children's experience of book compared to film, with focus on characters. I am doing this by having some children read an excerpt from a book, and others watch a scene from a film about the same story. Afterwards the children will be interviewed one by one.

The book being studied is *Coraline* by Neil Gaiman, and the film is *Coraline and the secret door*. This is a fantasy story for children. The film's age limit is 11, and the book is said to be for children aged 9-12 years.

Your child is willing to participate in the research, and as he/she is under 15 years, your consent is necessary to do so. The children will be asked about their opinion of the excerpt/scene. The research is anonymous, only age and sex will be indicated. I will record the interviews. The recordings will be saved and kept on a private cell phone for a short period, and deleted after being transcribed.

☐ Yes, I agree that my son/daughter _____ is allowed to participate in the research

☐ Yes, I agree that the interview will be recorded.

Name: _____

Signature

_____

If you have any questions, please contact me:

Telephone: 90176491

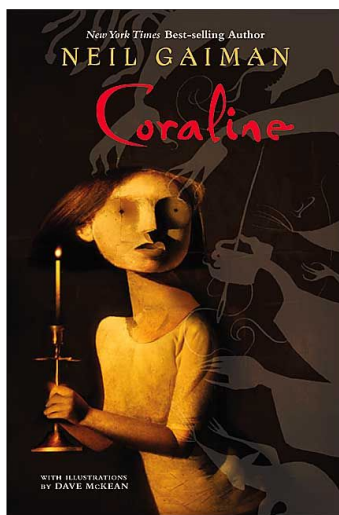E-mail: inafj@online.no

Best regards

Ina Fjelltveit, master's student at Bergen University College

10.4. The book excerpt from *Coraline* [English]

Coraline by Neil Gaiman (2009, p. 87-92)

Once inside, in her flat, or rather, in the flat that was not hers, Coraline was pleased to see that it had not transformed into the empty drawing that the rest of the house seemed to have become. It had depth, and shadows, and someone who stood in the shadows waiting for Coraline to return.

"So you're back," said the other mother. She did not sound pleased. "And you brought vermin with you."

"No," said Coraline. "I brought a friend," She could feel the cat stiffening under her hands, as if it were anxious to be away. Coraline wanted to hold on to it like a teddy bear, for reassurance, but she knew that cats hate to be squeezed, and she suspected that frightened cats were liable to bite and scratch if provoked in any way, even if they were on your side.

"You know I love you," said the other mother flatly.

"You have a very funny way of showing it," said Coraline. She walked down the hallway, then turned into the drawing room, steady step by steady step, pretending that she could not feel the other mother's blank black eyes on her back. Her grandmother's formal furniture was still there, and the painting on the wall of the strange fruit (but now the fruit in the painting had been eaten, and all that remained in the bowl was the browning core of an apple, several plum and peach stones, and the stem of what had formerly been a bunch of grapes). The lion-pawed table raked the carpet with its clawed wooden feet, as if it were impatient for something. At the end of the room, in the corner, stood the wooden door, which had once, in another place, opened onto a plain brick wall. Coraline tried not to stare at it. The window showed nothing but mist.

This was it, Coraline knew. The moment of truth. The unraveling time.

The other mother had followed her in. Now she stood in the center of the room, between Coraline and the mantelpiece, and looked down at Coraline with black button eyes. It was funny, Coraline thought. The other mother did not look anything at all like her own mother. She wondered how she had ever been deceived into imagining a resemblance. The other mother was huge—her head almost brushed the ceiling—and very pale, the color of a spider's belly. Her hair writhed and twined about her head, and her teeth were sharp as knives. . . .

"Well?" said the other mother sharply. "Where are they?"

Coraline leaned against an armchair, adjusted the cat with her left hand, put her right hand into her pocket, and pulled out the three glass marbles. They were a frosted gray, and they clinked together in the palm of her hand. The other mother reached her white fingers for them, but Coraline slipped them back into her pocket. She knew it was true, then. The other mother had no intention of letting her go or of keeping her word. It had been an entertainment, and nothing more. "Hold on," she said. "We aren't finished yet, are we?"

The other mother looked daggers, but she smiled sweetly. "No," she said. "I suppose not. After all, you still need to find your parents, don't you?"

"Yes," said Coraline. *I must not look at the mantelpiece*, she thought. *I must not even think about it.*

"Well?" said the other mother. "Produce them. Would you like to look in the cellar again? I have some other interesting things hidden down there, you know."

"No," said Coraline. "I know where my parents are." The cat was heavy in her arms. She moved it forward, unhooking its claws from her shoulder as she did so.

"Where?"

"It stands to reason," said Coraline. "I've looked everywhere you'd hide them. They aren't in the house."

The other mother stood very still, giving nothing away, lips tightly closed. She might have been a wax statue. Even her hair had stopped moving.

"So," Coraline continued, both hands wrapped firmly around the black cat. "I know where they have to be. You've hidden them in the passageway between the houses, haven't you? They are behind that door." She nodded her head toward the door in the corner.

The other mother remained statue still, but a hint of a smile crept back onto her face. "Oh, they are, are they?"

"Why don't you open it?" said Coraline. "They'll be there, all right."

It was her only way home, she knew. But it all depended on the other mother's needing to gloat, needing not only to win but to show that she had won.

The other mother reached her hand slowly into her apron pocket and produced the black iron key. The cat stirred uncomfortably in Coraline's arms, as if it wanted to get down. *Just stay there for a few moments longer*, she thought at it, wondering if it could hear her. *I'll get us both home. I said I would. I promise.* She felt the cat relax ever so slightly in her arms.

The other mother walked over to the door and pushed the key into the lock.

She turned the key.

Coraline heard the mechanism *clunk* heavily. She was already starting, as quietly as she could, step by step, to back away toward the mantelpiece.

The other mother pushed down on the door handle and pulled open the door, revealing a corridor behind it, dark and empty. "There," she said, waving her hands at the corridor. The expression of delight on her face was a very bad thing to see. "You're wrong! You *don't* know where your parents are, do you? They aren't there." She turned and looked at Coraline. "Now," she said, "you're going to stay here for ever and always."

"No," said Coraline. "I'm not." And, hard as she could, she threw the black cat toward the other mother. It yowled and landed on the other mother's head, claws flailing, teeth bared, fierce and angry. Fur on end, it looked half again as big as it was in real life.

Without waiting to see what would happen, Coraline reached up to the mantlepiece and closed her hand around the snow globe, pushing it deep into the pocket of her dressing gown.

The cat made a deep, ululating yowl and sank its teeth into the other mother's cheek. She was flailing at it. Blood ran from the cuts on her white face—not red blood but a deep, tarry black stuff. Coraline ran for the door.

She pulled the key out of the lock.

"Leave her! Come on!" she shouted to the cat. It hissed, and swiped its scalpel-sharp claws at the other mother's face in one wild rake which left black ooze trickling from several gashes on the other mother's nose. Then it sprang down toward Coraline. "Quickly!" she said. The cat ran toward her, and they both stepped into the dark corridor.

It was colder in the corridor, like stepping down into a cellar on a warm day. The cat

hesitated for a moment; then, seeing the other mother was coming toward them, it ran to Coraline and stopped by her legs.

Coraline began to pull the door closed.

It was heavier than she imagined a door could be, and pulling it closed was like trying to close a door against a high wind. And then she felt something from the other side starting to pull against her.

Shut! she thought. Then she said, out loud, "Come on, *please*." And she felt the door begin to move, to pull closed, to give against the phantom wind.

Suddenly she was aware of other people in the corridor with her. She could not turn her head to look at them, but she knew them without having to look. "Help me, please," she said. "All of you."

The other people in the corridor—three children, two adults—were somehow too insubstantial to touch the door. But their hands closed about hers, as she pulled on the big iron door handle, and suddenly she felt strong.

"Never let up, Miss! Hold strong! Hold strong!" whispered a voice in her mind.

"Pull, girl, pull!" whispered another.

And then a voice that sounded like her mother's—her own mother, her real, wonderful, maddening, infuriating, glorious mother—just said, "Well done, Coraline," and that was enough.

The door started to slip closed, easily as anything.

"No!" screamed a voice from beyond the door, and it no longer sounded even faintly human.

Something snatched at Coraline, reaching through the closing gap between the door and the doorpost. Coraline jerked her head out of the way, but the door began to open once more.

"We're going to go home," said Coraline. "We are. Help me." She ducked the snatching fingers.

They moved through her, then: ghost hands lent her strength that she no longer possessed. There was a final moment of resistance, as if something were caught in the door, and then, with a crash, the wooden door banged closed.

10.5. The summary to the children [English translation]

The story is about a girl named Coraline. She has just moved into a new house together with her parents. Her parents work a lot, and Coraline is very bored. One day she discovers a secret door in the new house, a door that leads her to another world. The world is very similar to the old world, but everything is magical and much more exciting. In the other world she has other parents, who cook more tasty food and have more time to Coraline than her real parents. What is odd is that they have buttons for eyes. Coraline finds the new world very exciting, but when her other parents ask if she wants to stay there forever, and say that they then have to sew button eyes on her, Coraline wants to go home. She goes back to the real world, but soon finds out that her real parents have been captured by the other mother. Coraline has to go back to the other world and make a deal with the other mother. The deal is that if Coraline manages to find three objects that the other mother has hidden, as well as where her parents are hidden, she will get her real parents back and get to go home. Also three other ghost children, who have been captured by the other mother earlier, will be free if Coraline manages the task. If she does not manage it, she has to stay in the other world forever, and have the button eyes sewed on. In what you are going to read/watch now, Coraline has found all the things that she had to, and is going to face the other mother in order to see what happens next…

10.6. Interview guide [English translation]

The interview was semi-structured, which means that I based it on the following questions, but I also asked follow-up questions to the children's answers.

1. How would you describe Coraline based on what you read/saw?
2. How would you describe Coraline's relationship to the black cat?
3. What do you think about Coraline throwing the black cat at the other mother?
4. How would you describe the other mother based on what you read/saw?
5. How would you describe the other mother's relationship to Coraline?

6. What did the other mother want?