

# FROM COHESION TO THEMATICS IN THE MULTIMODAL SITUATION

THE PROBLEM OF THE MODAL BARRIER

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*From cohesion to thematics  
in the multimodal situation  
(the problem of the 'modal barrier')*

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I

Concepts and premises

1 - Introduction

1.1 The 'writing of images' is one way to describe the production of written narratives, and the intensity of the reader-produced imagery may be thought of as the main criterion by which an 'author' is to be judged. It has certainly been a main quality of my own favorite reading experiences. The process of actually producing the written narrative, however, is what I would call a 'reduction' of the 'source experience', be it an imagined or a real experience.

1.2 The 'acting out' of the written segment would be the inverse activity, or the inversion of a tendency anyway, a move from the narrowing to the expansion of the realizational potential. The multimodal text would seem to be infinitely more complex than the written text. The traditional narrative, then, to me seems to be essentially a process of reducing the 'source experiences' in such a way that the writer maximizes, or enhances within the borders of the efficient, the reader's ability to reconstruct the source experiences. This is, of course, not all the written narrative is. I am merely pointing towards key landmarks in the direction I am going.

1.3 What is my purpose? I would have to say it is to allow for the possibility of reducing the barrier between the modalities, or at least reducing the unsurmountability of that barrier. And why? Curiosity, I would say, most of all. I suppose the benefits of such an endeavor would be partially hidden beyond the horizon, as would the traps, which makes it prudent to take small steps. But be they small, let them also be bold, in the sense of 'fearless', and possibly also 'impudent', but never reckless. The rationale, or the set of reasons for wanting to try this

angle, however, boils down to the analysis - the analysis of the multimodal narrative, which remains a huge challenge in my opinion.

1.4 The main objective of the analysis to my understanding must remain the enhancement of the experience of the story, perhaps especially the analyst's experience of the story. I imagine an analysis that is viewer-oriented might make an analyst of the viewer - and perhaps make the marginally engaged analyst a borderline enthusiast instead. I shall be careful not to stake out more territory than I can hold, although I might have to take a step back once in a while, and will be prepared to do so. Let me start with the issue of using one modality to shed light, so to speak, on another. I am referring to the activity of talking about observed regularities in the flow of multimodal impressions reaching the viewer:

## 2 - "Visual grammar" - the term

2.1 It is the Greek *gramma* 'letter' that the *Scribner-Bantam English Dictionary* gives as the basis for the combination form "-gram": 'something written'. From this I deduce there may be etymological support that "grammar" - which by the same dictionary is defined as 'phonology, morphology, and syntax of a language...'; or 'the rules governing this' - in etymological terms rather means 'rules/regularities of a written language' or 'rules for writing'.

2.2 "Visual grammar" is a potentially problematic term in multimodal linguistics. If one wanted to question the applicability of the term "visual grammar", or the validity of the term in general, an alternative term could be postulated. Such a term would need to indicate the concept of regularity within visual signification (see B. and T. 2006, p. 204 for a perspective on 'kinesic action' that implicates the regularity involved both with respect to process, participant and circumstance being "conflated into a single indissoluble configuration in the visual-spatial field of simultaneous relations unfolding in time" and also with respect to the logical relations in "visual semiosis".) However, while the concept of 'visual grammar' might produce unwanted associations to the inherent confinements of lexicogrammar, I see no term that can express the observed regularity within the visual semiosis as well as the term already in use (also see Kress and van Leeuwen: *Reading Images*, as well as *The Grammar of Visual Design*).

2.3 This should not, however, be seen as a validation of the above mentioned assumptions or propositions concerning the applicability or validity of the term, which in my view in many ways is an argumentation that builds on the ascribing of a flawed understanding of the term to the multimodal linguists who use it.

2.4 The term "visual grammar" is in my view perfectly understandable as a metaphor. The abstracted sense is well within the reach of comprehension since it embraces the essence of the meaning in the source context of 'written language'. Moreover, the two contexts, 'written language' and 'visual signification/meaning-making', are not confounded by the use of the term "grammar" in the new context. Besides, the users of the term "visual grammar" must be assumed to only assign meanings that make their statements true, relevant and coherent when they abstract the term "grammar" from the source context of 'written language'.

2.5 For this reason an argumentation against the validity or against the significance of certain observations in multimodal texts (for example vectors and transitivity frames) will in my view have to be flawed if it builds on the assumption that the description of these observations are made either in a state of confusion with respect to the limitation of the analogy between the two contexts, or with the intention of prescribing or limiting the meaning-making activities in the visual modality.

2.6 The metaphor of 'visual grammar' is valid as long as the user of the term intends to say something true and relevant, and as long as a true and relevant interpretation is available to the listener in the context of use, i.e. if the speaker produces what the listener sees as meaningful relations between lexico-grammatical units and the observed phenomena referred to.

2.7 The use of the term "visual grammar" does not necessarily imply the proposing of prescribed regularities. 'Visual grammar' in my view merely describes certain observed regularities, and not even necessarily universal regularities. Hence the use of the term "visual grammar" does not in my view necessarily rest upon any global regularity, much less a set of global regularities, in the meaning-making practices within the visual modality. Still, if we were to construct another term, that term would the way I see it probably not be referring specifically to the modality of written

language as a source context. Instead I expect it would simply be built on the concept of 'meaning-making' or 'signification', and probably also on the concept of 'regularity'.

2.8 If we consider the etymological aspect the term "visual grammar" might seem misplaced. However, being the result of a broadening of an established reference-field, from 'writing' to 'signifying', the new context forms a new branch of abstraction that is just as valid as the previous branch. Hence I believe we have to accept the availability of the term as a part of the lexico-grammatical resources in the field of describing the meaning-making activities in the visual modality.

2.9 Some visual or ocular vectors seem to be dependent on the viewer's inferring of intention, others not. In either case a perceived absence of visual vectors or visual transitivity in an image does not in my view prove a flaw in what is referred to as "visual grammar", nor in the applicability of the term. I tend to see the perception of narrative relevance as a criterion for the inferring of visual transitivity in multimodal texts. I therefore see 'visual grammar' as a concept first of all valid within the experience of the viewer and not necessarily inherent in the images. Moreover, I do not see the absence of vectors in images depicting/involving e.g. introversion, or in images or parts of images where no relevant transitivity seems to be inferred by the viewer, as indicators of non-grammatical phenomena or non-grammatical behaviour.

### 3 - The text-specific and the intertextual

3.1 The following is an attempt to illuminate in general terms the way the text-specific and the intertextual intersect in the local relations within the shot, and I will do so by pointing at certain established principles around the foundation for the thematic considerations. These principles include the following:

- "An ITF is an analytical abstraction from the thematic patterns constructed across (potentially) many texts from one social occasion of discourse to another" (Thibault: *The Televised Text*, p. 91).

- "Text-specific thematic patterns are instantiations of more global **intertextual thematic formations..**" (the same page) - and on page 97 of the

same work, in a reference to the contrasts within one of the two film-texts analyzed in the work, we have a further description of the relationship between the two levels of semantic specificity:

- "The text-specific meanings they (i.e. 'the contrasts', my comment) have depend on our ability to assign them to the relevant ITF's. These are not given in the forms themselves" ("These" referring to 'the text-specific meanings').

3.2 The paragraph starts with an example of potential ambiguity inherent in a contrast of a specific segment, and a way to distinguish the relevant meaning from the rest:

- "The contrast created here is specific to the thematics of its text although it is implicit in the whole ITF to which these relations are assignable" (p.97, my underlining).

3.3 The 'text-specific meanings' of the contrasts within a given film-text aren't given in the forms themselves, but in relation to the intertextual whole to which they are seen to belong. The local meanings and relations are in other words disambiguated by their being assigned to the relevant ITF's. And by expecting the local meaning-relations to be specific to the thematics of their text and conform to the intertextual thematics instantiated by the text - we, the viewers, disambiguate not only the forms in the text, but the relationships between the forms as well.

3.4 We choose the relations that are assigned relevancy by the intertextual thematics of the text. The assigning of relations to the relevant ITF's determines the meanings we perceive them to have.

- "The point is that there are various potential lexico-semantic dimensions along which these contrasts (and other relations, my comment) might be construed" (T. *The televised text*, p. 97).

3.5 Furthermore, the assignability of texts to some common intertextual formation can be analyzed as occurring on the basis of "criteria of either co-thematicity or co-actionality" (p. 101). Co-thematic texts would be those that "share a common thematic pattern", while texts that can be seen to "operate the same or some similar activity-structure type" could be described as co-actional (p.101, same paragraph). Also note on page 101:



- "the ways in which global co-patternings of selections in the interpersonal components of the lexico-grammar (mood, modality, modulation and interpersonal lexis) enact global axiological formations in texts".

#### 4 - The shot as units of information

4.1 In order to clarify the role of cohesion I find it necessary at least to attempt to find some common ground in which meaning-making can be discussed and analyzed, regardless of modality. In the following I will move from the specific to the general in order to investigate possible similarities of basic traits across the modal barrier:

4.2 In the 'information unit' of language 'new' information is typically placed somewhere after 'given' information, which then becomes the current 'focal point' of a 'semantic frame'. The relevancy of the 'new' typically becomes evident in the presence of a 'contextual focal point' of 'given' information located within a 'contextual semantic frame'; or the 'given' information can be seen as an extracted section of the sense that is currently being treated. The 'new' information typically has its relevancy in light of the 'given', which becomes a vehicle for the 'new'.

4.3 I see discourse as depending on a cognitive process of identifying the 'given'-element of the 'information-unit' as part of the present consciousness of each participant. We should perhaps find a similar mechanism associated with the multimodal text, regardless of which of the semiotic modalities are involved.

4.4 Themes, or common semantic denominators, take shape as the interplay between 'given' and 'new' units of meaning generates relations that involve change, the structure of which can be analyzed as 'rhetorical formations' (cf. Thibault: B2, p. 11).

4.5 The relevancy of change produces progression in the discourse, through the introduction of unknowns. Each change raises potential questions (cf. T, B2, p. 12). Change redefines the 'axis of present choice', which represents the availability of alternative paths of information to be enquired. 'New' or salient information is connected to a section or extract of a 'contextual semantic frame' and thereby directed into the 'context'.

4.6 I see the interplay between the 'new' and the 'given' as a cohesive resource on the most basic level. In multimodal analyses I look at information units as 'semiotically dynamic units', (SDU's), which I will define in a moment (par. 4.11) But first: In linguistic cohesion textual statuses are assigned to elements of the clause, and the speaker then proceeds to behave accordingly:

A typical combination of such statuses is: Given  
Recoverable (Identifiable)  
Continuous  
Clause Theme

4.7 If an 'information unit' is seen as 'given' it is usually because it is seen as 'identifiable', in which case it may even be seen as 'continuous' (and a candidate for ellipsis). Such a unit is usually placed in the 'clause theme' position.

4.8 The opposite is also true: If a unit is seen as 'new' it is usually because it is seen as 'not identifiable', and/or as 'contrastive', in which case it will usually be placed outside the 'clause theme' (cf. Halliday, 2004).

4.9 In language the speaker attempts to produce, in the most efficient way, what the listener will perceive as local cohesion and relevancy. In language the relevancy of change produces progression in the discourse. Change redefines the 'axis of present choice'. How well then does the local production of cohesion and relevancy in the visual semiotic correspond to that of language?

4.10 I do not presume to find a way to make the descriptions of language valid in the visual modality. But I do wonder if there would not be new ways to describe part of the meaning-making process, ways that would fit both modalities, and I think van Leeuwen's 'CRU' (conjunctively relatable unit, van Leeuwen 1990, p. 76-77) brings an interesting perspective to the field of analytical considerations available for further investigation.

4.11 In the cluster analysis the SDU's (cf. par. 5.6) could be seen as constituents in the realization of 'rhetorical formations': [action - action], [action - motivation], [problem - solution] etc. (cf. T, bibl.2,

p. 11). In addition, and assuming full validity of Lenke's principles with respect to the conjunctive relations and the associated CRU's, I propose the following concerning the conjunctive relations between the CRU's:

**proposition 1**

- 'Narratively conjunctive relations' would hold between configurations of narratively relevant shapes and processes; units we might label CRUN's: 'Conjunctively relatable units of narrative discourse/content'; and perhaps these can be defined as being mapped, not onto the series of shots, but directly onto the narratively relevant SDU's found both within and between shots, occupying smaller or larger portions of the screen.

**proposition 2**

- 'Presentationally conjunctive relations' would hold between camera shots, parts of shots or series of shots, which are realizations of CRUP's: 'Conjunctively relatable units of presentation'.

4.12 The distinction is an important one: The conjunctive relations that hold between visual presentations, i.e. between the ways of presenting, may need to be held separate from the ones that hold between the presented, i.e. the content of the images. An example would be if the relation of causality and the relation of visual distillation are instantiated between the same two shots. The first relation would hold between 'units of narrative discourse', while the second would hold between 'units of presentation'.

4.13 That brings me to the possibility of a functional unit that allows us to see each narratively relevant unit, of either 'new' or salient visual information, as relating to at least one representative unit in either a 'given' or a semiotically less salient visual context, thereby forming a 'semiotically dynamic unit' (SDU). This term could possibly be used about sound and language too. In the next section, which brings my attempt to apply the concept to an actual text, I have combined the experimental functional unit of the SDU with an experimental form of cluster transcription (transcr. I-1):

5 - The cluster transcript

5.1 The following refers to the enclosed cluster transcript of the

Metacortex office scene in *Matrix*. The transcript is an experimental demonstration showing the viewer's experience as depending both on a process of assigning statuses to parts of the multimodal information-clusters, and on a process of identifying meaning produced among the elements as relations specific to the thematics of their text - and assignable to the wider contextual frame of relevant ITF's. The following is not intended as a transcript of 'the multimodal segment', only of one viewer's experience of the segment, viz. my own.

5.2 It shows an experiment in which a viewer's interpretation of the multimodal text involves the construing of relations between the semiotic elements from various modalities. The lateral pairs are suggested combinations of meaning-making elements into integral units that are semiotically dynamic; units that possibly could be seen as resulting from some basic traits of our minds - traits that I could only describe as sketchy and tentatively as 'prototypical cohesive tendencies', or priorities, manifested through the cognitive process taking place in the viewer.

5.3 In accordance with these tendencies a salient or 'new' semiotic element receives its semantic relevancy, as well as its level of specificity, in the presence of less salient or 'given' semiotic elements in temporal or spacial proximity. In the following transcript the units that I see as narratively relevant form horizontal and perhaps diagonal 'generative fields' of cohesive relations resulting in the inferring of visual and multimodal 'information units' - each formed according to its dynamic properties within the particular viewer's coding system, in this case mine; or in other words according to its function as an SDU. The CRUN's (see ch.7) are then 'mapped' onto the SDU's. The CRUP's are interpreted by direct reference to the shot numbers in the far left column. A CRUP may extend across either a shot, a part of a shot, or a series of shots.

5.4 The visual SDU can be transcribed analytically as 'given' or 'non-salient' visual information glossed in lateral proximity to 'new' or 'salient' information. The SDU's within a shot can be indicated graphically as clusters of narratively relevant configurations of shapes and processes'

(realized as 'visual inf. units', VIU's; possibly joined by relevant units of other modalities) and indicated alongside conjunctive relations and visual transitivity (see the 'visual information unit'/SDU cluster transcript, transcr. I-1).

5.5 We would in other words use the concept of a 'semiotically dynamic unit of visual information', where 'given' and 'ground' would be seen as related features of the same functional constituent. The label SDU can thus be used to signify all of this.

5.6 A 'rhetorical formation' (RF, cf. Thibault, *From Grammar to Discourse*, unit 12) is a minimal type of functional pattern (e.g. Challenge - Response), identified as a stratum between that of lexicogrammar and that of the 'schematic structure elements' of the so-called genres (e.g. the 'Complication-stage' of the narrative structure); or, as I sometimes try to see it - with variable success - as a stratum between that of lexicogrammar and that of the various 'discourse functions', which are also 'discursive features', e.g. the 'features' of 'Complication' and 'Resolution', which may not always be easy to separate out as distinct stages on the macro level (cf. par. 4.6 and 4.11).

5.7 The Metacortex office scene is where I see *Matrix* in the process of leaving the Orientation-stage behind, although it very much appears to be a gradual transition that might be seen to extend through and perhaps beyond the next scene, where the main character's confusion is addressed - and the elements of the plot begin to reveal themselves. The initial scenes of the film introduce the viewer to a series of complications, beginning with Trinity's incredible escape from the police by way of what appears to be some form of inexplicable elimination or re-configuration of a digital presence in the real world - or, as it turns out, by way of manipulation of a digital presence in a digitalized reconstruction of the real world the way it used to be, before its destruction. The phenomenon of the disappearing-act is confusing, not only to the viewer, but apparently to some of the characters as well.

5.8 From the action-filled introduction the viewer enters the realm of Neo the computer hacker (**plate 1, photo 1**). The entry is by way of a simulated rear-view mirror perspective on a digital-electronic intrusion into Neo's

digital-electronic realm, which is a representation of the world. It is reality as Neo knows it. Inside the representation of Neo's apartment the viewer is assigned the status of objective observer, perhaps as a simulation of the perspective of whomever it is that is trying to tell Neo something. The vertical angle shot from the ceiling shows Neo taking a nap by his desk in his apartment, while a message is being typed on his computer screen (6:45 into the film, **plate 2**). Somebody has taken control of his entire computer. The keyboard is inoperative (7:40). The message says: "Wake up, Neo - The Matrix has you - Follow the white rabbit" - and then: "Knock, knock, Neo" a second before we hear a sharp knocking on his door.

5.9 Neo is selling illegally acquired software (8:10), and the group of young people at his door are one of his customers with friends. The young man comments on Neo 'looking a little whiter than usual' and asks if something is wrong, whereafter Neo expresses concern about how to separate dreams from reality. He is invited out by the group, but declines since he's going to work in the morning. Then he sees the tattoo of a white rabbit on the shoulder of a female in the group (9:07). He realizes the probability of a connection to the message on his computer (9:07) - "follow the white rabbit" - and next we see him at a club, where he is approached by Trinity (9:40, **plate 3**), who seems to know all about him and evidently expected to see him there.

5.10 The rhythm of the music is joined by the identical pulse of his alarm clock (11:27), which is carried over into the next shot, inside his bedroom (**plate 4**), leaving the music behind. This induces an empathy that causes the viewer to share Neo's brief bewilderment when he wakes up for the second time and realizes he must have been dreaming. Neo, after his first awakening, expressed concern about how to know if he's awake or still dreaming. He knew Trinity had to be observing him when she wrote on his computer screen, and at the club she tells him "they" are watching him.

5.11 He now wakes up a second time, in the bedroom of what appears to the viewer as being a different apartment, and goes to work - at Metacortex (see the VIU/SDU cluster transcript, shot number 1). The forms within this shot, together with a number of other factors available to the viewer in the

preceding context of the shot, constitute what I try to see as a 'semiotically dynamic unit' (SDU). We have the following given context:

- There is Neo and his 'going to work in the morning';
- There is his occupation with information technology;
- There is a prosody of being observed from beyond reality, from a 'meta-reality'. The 'cortex'-metaphor relates the building to the essential operating principles of the brain.

5.12 I see ['Metacortex'] as a compound of references to 'given' information, while the [ building ] is a 'new' element visually connected to the given context. There is a conjunctive relation of Temporality between the process of 'waking up' and the process projected when Neo initially declined the invitation to go out - the process of 'going to work'.

5.13 There is a meaning being produced that goes beyond the meaning of each clause and each shot; a tendency on the discourse-level. One aspect of it relates to Neo's attitudinal stance and a consistency in his way of perceiving his surroundings - which I see as mainly an example of what is referred to as the 'axiological' dimension of discourse-meaning (cf. Thibault on "*The Systemic-Functional Approach to the Concept of Genre*", the opening chapter of part 4 of *The Televised Text*, p.89-90), realized by the gradually stronger prosody produced by the multiple wake-ups; the merging of dream and reality. I gloss it as:

- 1) 'the unreliability of perceptions'

5.14 The repeated actions of waking up might be seen to index:

- 2) 'the shifting to higher ranks of reality'

At this point in time Neo already knows he's being observed from beyond his reach. And now there's a distracting sound coming from beyond the office (**plate 5**). The wiping of the windows seems to constitute the operation of a relevant thematic pattern, and therefore seems to index what I see as a mainly thematic discourse-level meaning which I suggest might be glossed as:

- 3) 'the reconstitution of reality'/ or ' - of the ambience'

5.15 The leader of Trinity's group is Morpheus. From his base inside the

hovercraft Nebuchadnezzar, constructed in the year of 2069, he sees all that goes on in Neo's dimension. There is even a third awakening, from his present state, without ever having gone to sleep first. It takes place in the second phase of the Metacortex scene. Morpheus has a cellphone delivered to Neo at his work, and calls him up to warn him about the police coming to get him.

5.16 Despite the attempt to get away Neo is arrested and gets a tracer violently implanted in his abdomen. He then wakes up for the third time, as out of a nightmare - his bedroom being a different bedroom from the one in the previous wakeup. He is relieved it was only a dream. But then the phone rings. It's Morpheus, who sends Trinity and two other rebels to pick him up. Trinity removes the implanted tracer from his abdomen and they bring him along to their safe-house within the Matrix.

5.17 Morpheus, the leader of the god-like overseers of his dimension, tells Neo he is still not awake. Neo is living his life permanently in virtual reality. But so is everyone else, except for the rebels. They establish his location in virtual space and cause him to wake up for the first time in his life. He finds himself connected to, and a part of, an automated system of bio-battery-cells; racks of comatosed humans serving as power-packs for the Matrix, the ruling program.

5.18 The complication that started with Trinity invading Neo's computer screen, and continued through the series of wake-ups, reaches a crisis - the resolving of which in itself is an entry, from what I would say the viewer is likely to perceive as the Orientation stage, into the Complication stage of the narrative as a whole (31:45).

5.19 The dream state Neo used to perceive as real has been taken away from him and for the first time he sees the enormous power plant that he is a part of (32:15). Being awake means he is no longer controlled by the Matrix. This provokes the physical unplugging of his brain from the bio-electric power plant and the expulsion into the waste canal where he is picked up by Morpheus' hovercraft.

5.20 The discourse-meanings compound into 'text-specific themes', e.g:

- 4) 'the mind-control of the Matrix'
- 5) 'Cypher's regret' (the crew who returned to Matrix)



6) 'Neo's transformation'

Each text-specific theme joins those of other texts, and together they form 'intertextual themes', or 'intertextual formations', ITF's, e.g:

7) 'the dangers of unrestrained progress'/'man versus the machines'

8) 'the bliss of ignorance'

9) 'the celebration of individual thought'

5.21 The visual SDU can be transcribed analytically as 'given' or 'non-salient' visual information glossed in lateral proximity to 'new' or 'salient' information (cf. transcr. I-1). The SDU's within a shot can be indicated graphically as clusters of narratively relevant configurations of shapes and processes' (realized as 'visual inf. units', VIU's; possibly joined by relevant SDU's of other modalities) and indicated alongside conjunctive relations and visual transitivity (see the 'visual information unit cluster transcript', transcr. I-1).

5.22 We would in other words use the concept of a 'semiotically dynamic unit of visual information', where 'given' and 'ground' would be seen as related features of the same functional constituent. The label SDU can thus be used to signify all of this.

5.23 The rhetorical formations (RF) can be identified by the reader of the enclosed transcript I-1, labelled 'VIU/SDU Cluster Transcript', through the inferring of 'vertical' relations between the horizontal (and/or diagonal) 'generative fields', or between the configurations of transcribed elements; i.e. between the SDU's onto which the viewer directly or indirectly 'maps' the CRUN's - through the inferring of conjunctive relations - as suggested for the first five shots of the transcript. An example is seen in shot 2 and involves the emerging interior as a result of the wiping of the windows (**plate 5**). Neo's waking up and the resulting awareness of his duty, as seen in his presence at Metacortex, is another rhetorical formation.

5.24 In shot 13 the gaze vector of Neo's superior is already aimed at Neo at the second release of the word 'problem', and I see the two elements; {problem} and {gaze vector}, functioning as an SDU (**plate 6, photo 4**). As Neo's superior speaks, the word {choice} in shot 15 combines with his gaze vector, still directed at Neo.

VIU/SDU Cluster Transcript, the Metacortex scene, phase 1

shots,			
visual		CRUN's	TIME
conjunct.		narratively relevant VIU's/SDU's	
&			
transtvty	GIVEN/non-salient		NEW/salient

-1 [Neo] [the 2nd awakening of Neo]  
[alarm]

temporal sequence

1 [unit of time: same morning] [the building]  
[circumst: computers] ['metacortex' logo]  
[the human anatomy]

spatial ident.

2	[the window pane]	[cleaner's arm]		
		[action: the wiping]		
			RF	
	[the Metacortex building]	[the emerging interior]		subph.
ocular	[emerging: Neo]	[emerging: Neo's superior]		A1
transit.		[action: his typing]		
frame				
(gaze)				
	[Neo]	[his head turning]		
		[gaze vector]		
			RF	

recipr.persp.

3	[window cleaners]		
Target	[the window panes]		
	[their wiping]	[the emerging view]	

4-2: Elab./intersecting perspective

4	[Neo's superior]	[his focus]
		[gaze vector]
	[the side of the pc screen]	
	[the keyboard]	[his accentuation of the final key stroke]
		[his hands leaving the keyboard]
		[his leaning backwards]
		[implicit gaze]

5-4: Elab./reciprocal perspective

5	[Neo]		RF
	[gaze vector]		
		[his eyes and head turning]	
		[gaze vector]	
	[superior's arm]	[movement of elbows/hands]	
gaze tr.	[telephone]	[its prominency in the frame and in the perspective]	
frame			

visual  
 conj.  
 & trans. GIVEN

NEW

---

6 [Neo's superior] [gaze vector]  
 [prosody: judgemental]  
 mutual [his fingers drumming]  
 gaze tr. [his brows lifting]  
 frame [his head shaking]  
 [the invert nod]  
 [Neo's side & arm]

---

7 [Neo] [his shifting gaze]  
 mutual [his micro nod]  
 gaze tr. [his face micro sway R]  
 frame [his face L & up]  
 [his reestabl. mutual gaze]  
 [superior's arm]  
 [the telephone]

---

8 [Neo's superior] [facial features]  
 [his deep voice]  
 mutual [his face swaying and  
 gaze tr. nodding]  
 frame [his L brow micro moves]  
 [gaze vector]

---

9 [Neo] [facial features]  
 mutual [gaze vector] [emotional detachment]  
 gaze tr.  
 frame

---

10 [Neo's supervisor]  
 mutual [gaze vector]  
 gaze tr. [his head turning]  
 frame [gaze vector] subph.  
 single A2

---

11-10: Extens./add./reciprocal perspective

11 [Neo] [his weight shifting]  
 [his head turning]  
 concerted [emotional detachment] [gaze vector]  
 gaze tr.  
 frame

---

12 [window cleaner]  
 Target [window pane] RF  
 [the wiping] [the emerging view]

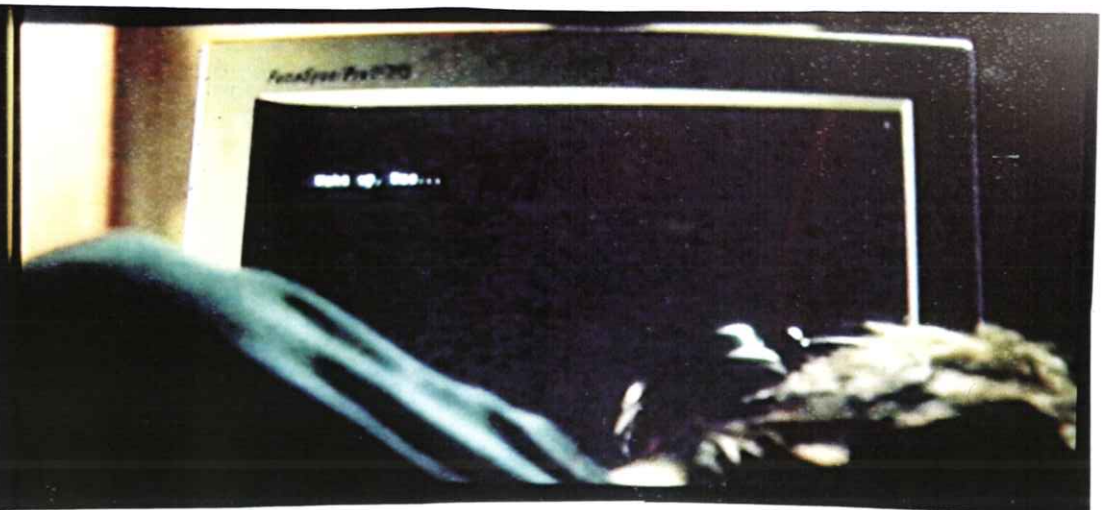
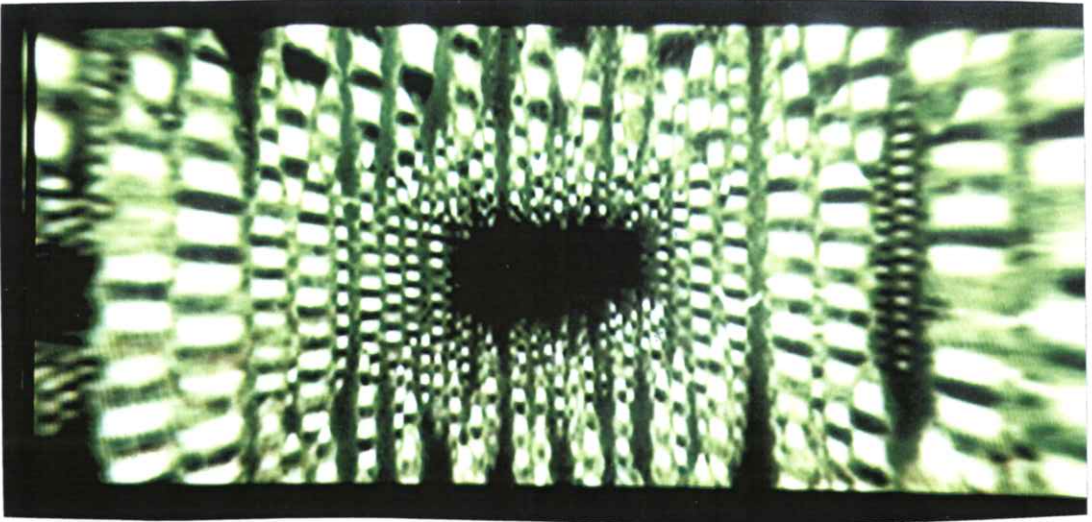
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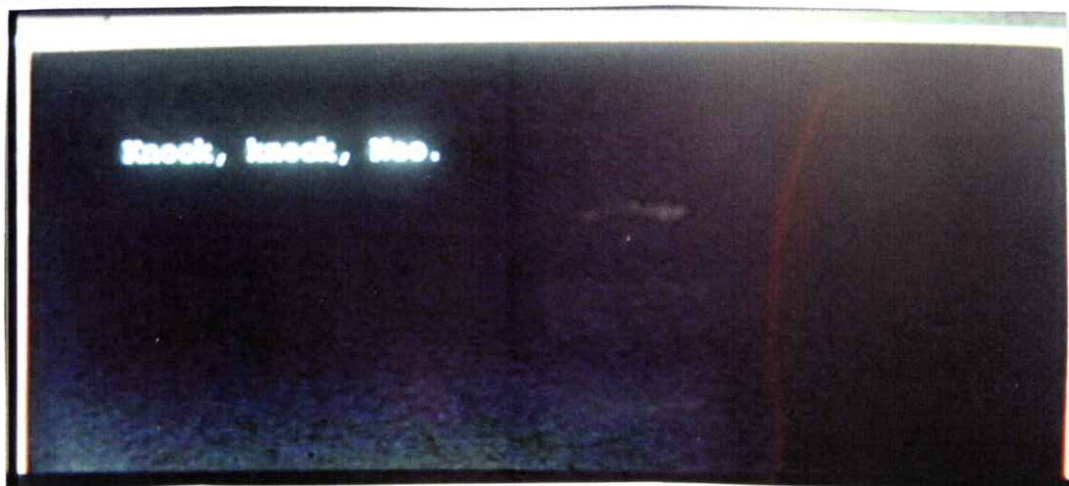
visual conj. & trans.	GIVEN	NEW
13	[Neo's supervisor]	[facial features]
single		[tilting of head]
	[gaze vector]	{"problem"} [face & eyes moving R] [focus shift]
gaze tr. frame	[gaze vector]	RF {"problem"}
	{prosody: 'problem'}	
	[blurred view of the city]	[leaning forward] [slant of the neck reducing & resetting] [folding of hands] [facial features]
single		
14	{prosody: 'problem'}	
Target	[Neo]	
	[gaze vector]	
	[emotional detachment]	
gaze tr. single	[introversion]	[eyes turning] [head turning] [focus shift]
	[gaze vector]	
mutual		
15	[Neo's superior]	[intensity % persistency of stare] subph.
gaze tr. frame	[gaze vector]	
mutual		{"choice"} A3
	[prosody: 'choice']	
16	{prosody: 'choice'}	
mutual	[Neo]	[multiple focus shifts] [head movements]
gaze tr.	[gaze vector]	{squeaks}
		{"choose"} [head bowing] [focus change] [CRISIS]
Target	[introversion]	{"on time"}  {squeaks}
17	[Neo's supervisor]	[facial expression] [determined attitude]
single		
	[gaze vector]	
gaze tr.	{prosody: 'choose'}	{"choose"} {"on time"}
mutual		{"another job"}

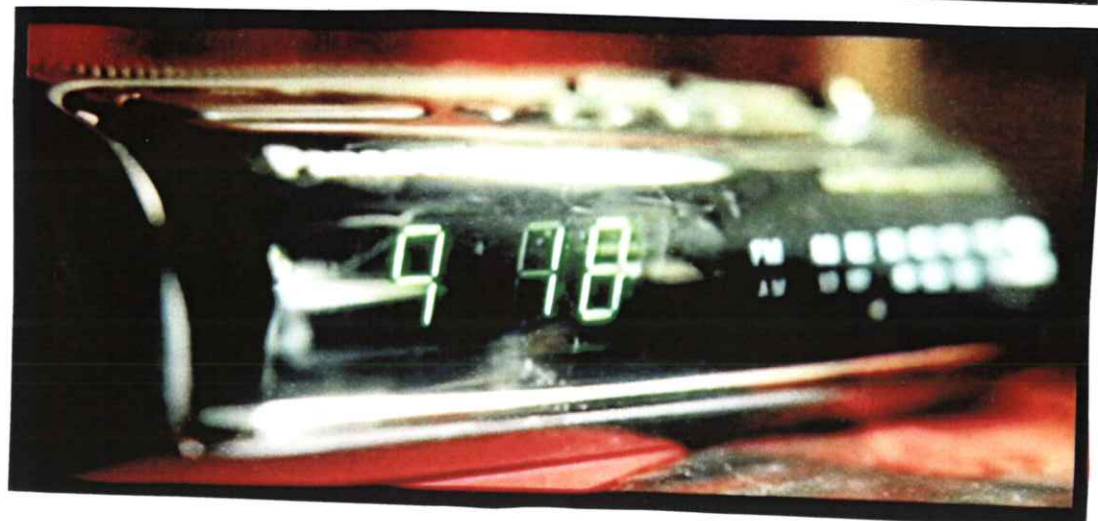
visual conj. & trans.	GIVEN		NEW
<hr/>			
18	{prosody: 'choose' 'on time' 'another job'}		
mutual gaze tr.	[Neo]	[facial expression]	[RESOLUTION]
	[gaze vector]		
	[introversion]	[head bowing, eyes lowered]	
		[reestablishing focus]	
	[gaze vector]		
	[emotional detachment]		
<hr/>			

### Legend

CRU	conjunctively relatable unit
CRUN	conjunctively relatable unit of narrative content/discourse
CRUP	conjunctively relatable unit of presentation
RF	rhetorical formation
SDU	semiotically dynamic unit
VIU	visual information unit



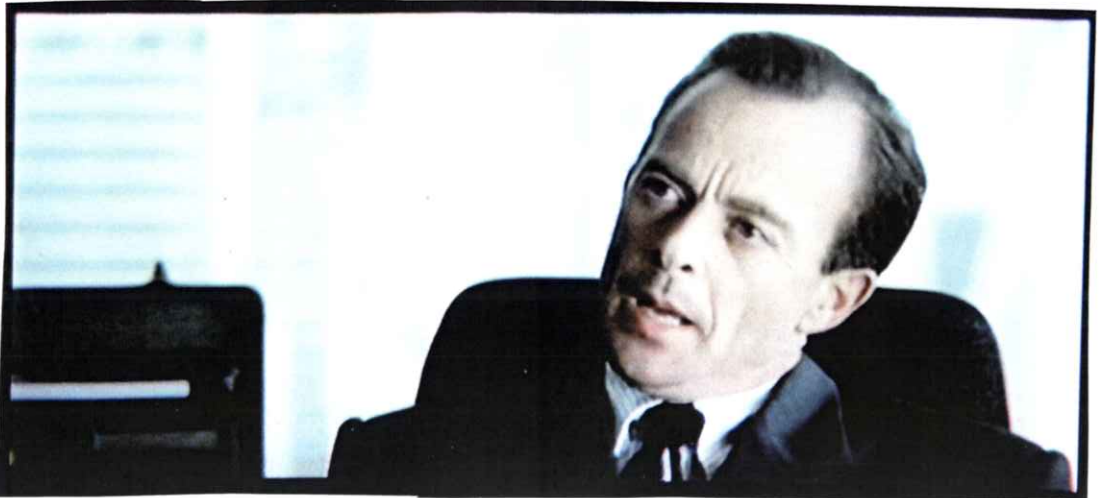
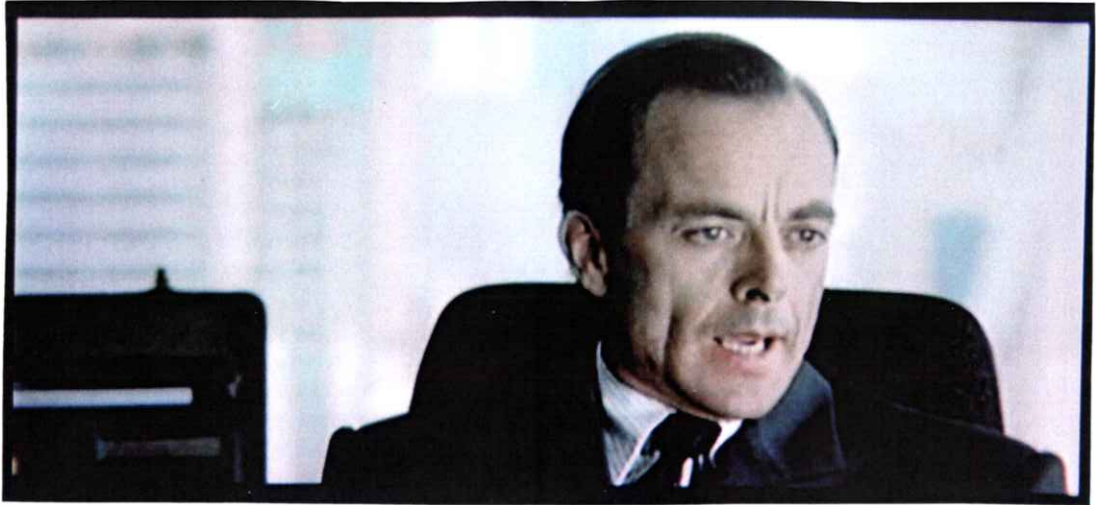
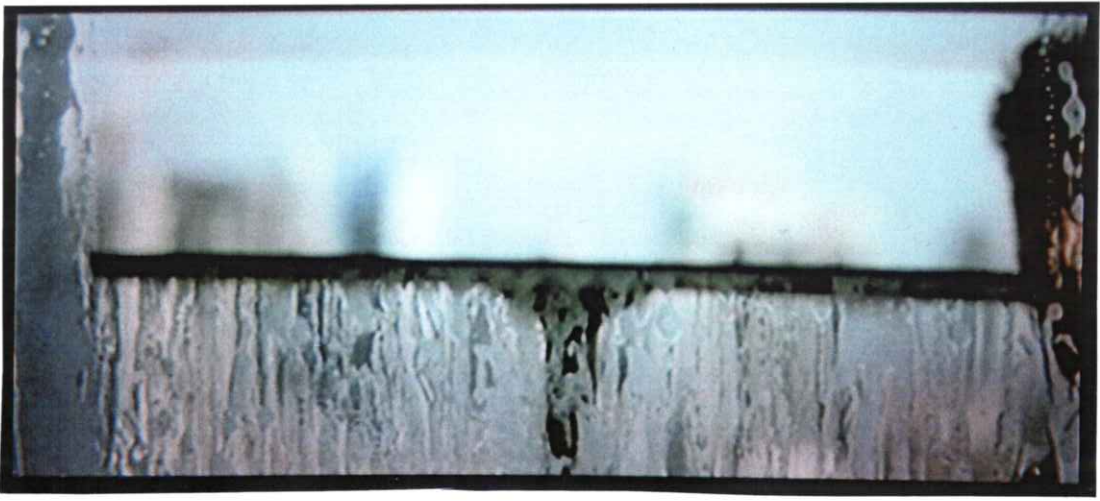














5.25 At the release of the word {choose} in shot 16 we see Neo's very differently modulated gaze vector as he reacts to the gravity construed by the previous SDU, and in shot 17 {choose} again combines with the [gaze vector] of Neo's superior.

5.26 Later in the film Neo must choose to believe in reality, and in himself, just as he must choose to disbelieve in the restrictions imposed by the Matrix. [Choice] and [authority] are two important prosodies in the film as a whole, and the two elements may be seen as constantly combining with other elements, forming multimodal SDU's. Or they can be seen as constantly contributing to the SDU's formed, regardless of their modality.

5.27 This ties the micro-level meaning-production within the SDU's, and the cohesive tendencies projected onto the clusters, to two very productive prosodies. It is an example, I believe, of the consistency in the way the narratively relevant micro-level multimodal units of information relate to the more macro-level units in the formation of the thematics of the multimodal narrative, and we have seen the resources of visual semiosis fronted in the operation of thematic patterns. Part II of this thesis will deal with an example where the resources of non-linguistic audible events plays a lead role in the cementing of the macro-level thematic coherence:

## II

### The resource integration of a selected scene

in

*Unbreakable*

(written, produced and directed by  
M. Night Shyamalan)

starring Bruce Willis, Samuel L. Jackson and Robin Wright Penn

#### 1 - Introduction

1.1 The following is an analytical look at the resource integration through a 3 minutes and 47 seconds long scene from the film *Unbreakable*, by M. Night Shyamalan - featuring Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson as the two main characters - with the aim of collecting observations relevant to the question of the role of resource integration in the production of cohesion and thematic formations. For more details regarding the 'resource integration principle' see Anthony Baldry and Paul Thibault: *Multimodal Transcription and Text Analysis*, 2006, on how meaning making needs to be explained as relying on the combination of semiotic resources into a whole rather than (my paraphrase:) individual semiotic contributions of partial semiotic 'end-products'. Also see Jay Lemke's article from 1998 titled *Multiplying meaning: visual and verbal semiotics in scientific text*.

1.2 Following the analysis there will be a series of discussions on relevant issues as they appear at different stages of the narrative. Throughout all discussions relating to this narrative I intend to limit the reader's access to details in such a way that the reader's knowledge of key details at no time exceeds that of the viewer of the narrative. At the same time I intend to dwell on key elements and key segments, and let these analytically oriented considerations accompany the discussions, in hopes the reader might enjoy a different look into an interesting and very successful multimodal narrative. Before I proceed with the analysis, allow me to introduce:

#### 2 - the plot

2.1 Elijah Price's main interest in life is comic-books. He has spent a third of his life in hospital beds, with nothing but time to read. He was

born in a Philadelphia department store in 1961, with broken arms and broken legs, and the total number of breaks has by now reached 54. But Elijah Price refuses to accept what he has felt since childhood: that he is one of nature's mistakes.

2.2 Long ago he emersed himself in the fantasy world of comic books. He now believes that comic books are "our last link to an ancient way of passing on history" (27:40), "a form of history that someone somewhere felt or experienced" (27:52), a form that has been "chewed up in the commercial machine" (28:00). Driven by the need to insert the world of comic books into the larger context of his own reality he has come to define his place in life as a necessary opposite of the unbreakable hero, viz. the arch-villain.

2.3 In the comic books the hero and the arch-villain define one another, at least according to Elijah Price's interpretation. In order to realize himself as a functional unit in the real world he must therefore find a hero. There can be no arch-villain if there is no hero. But the arch-villain must exist, ergo Elijah Price must if needs be produce or provoke the realization of the hero - or, as Elijah sees it, enable the hero to see his potential as a hero.

2.4 Before that can happen Elijah Price must of course find a worthy candidate and make the potential hero believe in himself as a hero. What may seem like an elaborate scheme to make David Dunn entrap himself in a web of self-deception is to Elijah Price more like a light push in the right direction, or an encouragement for David Dunn to open his eyes and see the implications of what has happened to him.

2.5 In the film's opening scene the viewer is introduced to Elijah Price's troublesome birth (**plate 7**), in the next to David Dunn's emotional detachment from the relation that his ring speaks of - the one he takes off and puts in his pocket before he makes a futile attempt to charm the female sports agent who sits down beside him on the train from New York (**plate 8**).

2.6 Through the slowing down of time as viewed through David Dunn's eyes, indicated by a slow motion close shot of his face as he turns his head (08:17, **plate 9**), accompanied by the alarming sound of friction against metal, and what sounds like the train's horn, the viewer is asked to infer

the natural burst of fear-induced adrenalin and the heightened level of awareness that results from it. David Dunn's head moving in slow motion indexes how he perceives his surroundings in the moment of the disaster.

3 - The emergency room scene (09:28 - 13:15, plates 10-17)

3.1 Later the same day, as the "soon to be" sole survivor of the derailed Eastrail 177, David Dunn walks out of the emergency care at Philadelphia City Hospital without a scratch on his body. Though he is fully conscious, he still feels somewhat detached from the reality of the present. The panning of the camera does not seem to simulate David Dunn's sweeping eyes as he walks, but instead seems to point to the sum of simultaneously occurring processes, all of which he is constantly fully aware.

3.2 The sensory overload is met by what the viewer experiences as a partial detachment within David Dunn. The orchestration of multimodal selections lets us know that the present only occupies a rather small part of David Dunn's conscious mind. In the preceding shot, just moments ago, the viewer has seen David Dunn move from lying down to sitting on his hospital bed (09:32), with his shirt half open and wrinkled, observing his new surroundings and trying to orient himself - a shot where the viewer has full access to his many audible clues:

3.3 We have the long-lasting sound-event of an oxygen pump. We have the short and high-pitch one-per-second events of what I interpret to be a pulse-meter. We have men's voices in the proximity of the camera, and a more distant loud-speaker sending out a female's voice that resounds off concrete walls in a large indoor environment; and steps. There is a series of five weak guttural sounds. This is accompanied by the rhythmical expansion of a white shape in the foreground, a shape that covers the entire width of the lower part of the screen. We also have the impacts of plastic tubes against the metal tubes of the bed in the foreground, and the light rattling of syringes and straps and such.

3.4 Early in the shot (9:50) a white-robed man holding a clip-board (**plate 10**) introduces himself to David Dunn saying: "Hi, I am Dr. Doogan, you're in the emergency room at Philadelphia City Hospital. You've had a serious accident. Look at me." And while the white foreground moves rapidly



out of rhythm: "How are you feeling?". At the uttering of his "okay" (10:07) David Dunn hears the doubling of the number of events per unit of time coming from the high-pitch source. He studies the activity, or fragments of the activity, in the foreground of the shot.

3.5 The viewer sees the concerned look of David Dunn, as well as the turning of Dr. Doogan's head, first briefly to trace the delimited optical array available in the direction of David Dunn's gaze, which is towards the viewer's observation point on the other side of the bed of the last of David Dunn's co-passengers still alive. Then Dr. Doogan turns his head again to take a better look after David Dunn has tilted his head to study the increase in the activity.

3.6 Like David Dunn, the viewer sees only fragments of the activity in the foreground of the shot, David Dunn's view being limited by the curtains on both sides of the direct line towards the viewer, while the camera's view is limited by its proximity to the activity.

3.7 The doctor's enquiry into David Dunn's whereabouts at the critical moment, and indeed whether he was actually on the train itself, is an attempt to construct the logical possibility for such an escape from death to actually happen - to readjust impressions and arrange for the conclusion that all things are normal, or within the boundaries of the fathomable. Dr. Doogan needs to merge the facts of the disaster with the reality he knows, or reality as he knows it, at least bring the two closer together.

3.8 He isn't having much success though. Instead we have a partial separation, a slipping away as David Dunn detaches parts of himself from the reality of the present and directs his attention to events that are no longer taking place.

3.9 Audibly this separation is indicated through the introduction of sound-events as they are being recalled by David Dunn. The viewer is exposed to the audible part of David's recalled memories. From 10:33 we have a barely noticeable but gradually increasing echoing sound of rushing wind, resembling the experience of travelling through a tunnel. At 10:59 it becomes more distinct and takes on the unmistakable characteristics of the sound of a train either passing through a tunnel or at an excessive speed,

or perhaps very close to a large object alongside its track, the quality of the sound fairly accurate with respect to how it might be experienced by one of its passengers.

3.10 At the same time what seems to be a wet spot appears in the center of the white shape in the foreground (**plate 10, photo 2**), and keeps growing rapidly, making it clear that death could be imminent. The image of the screen is dominated by the purple colour of the curtains, which reflects off the neighboring surfaces. The transgression of the borders of the natural is a modalization of the image presented to the viewer and raises the value of the explicit and subjective orientation of the image, thereby influencing the experience of viewing. The contribution offered by the purple stain seems to lie in the domain of the hyperreal. It gives the viewer a taste of how David Dunn probably sees the whole experience as being slightly beyond the real. The growing stain within the blurred, white foreground causes the activity-level to increase further at which time the camera begins to zoom in very slowly, excluding the unrhythmically heaving chest in the foreground and drawing the attention towards David Dunn (11:22).

3.11 The train-sound gradually increases and is further specified by the sound of high-pitch metallic friction, barely audible (11:06-07), a sound that returns with increased strength (11:13-20). At the same time the white foreground heaves higher and faster. We have a short and weak guttural sound at 11:15, and again a second later, identical to those in the beginning of the shot. And while this drama is being played out the camera slowly zooms in on David Dunn (11:09-25), focussing on his processing of the experience rather than the content of his observation.

3.12 As the amazed doctor interviews D.D. the viewer hears the simultaneous acting out of both the present and what transpired during the train accident - the way it sounded to David Dunn, or the way he remembers hearing it. As the doctor gets to the specifics of the situation with the words "Your train derailed" (11:21) the train-in-tunnel sound changes slightly and grows in strength (11:24). Then, at 11:25, the 'visual present' and the 'audible present' - although only for six seconds in the visual - are both reassigned to the 'past present' tense through the extension of the hospital-bed shot into the new present, resulting in a

double exposure.

3.13 At 11:27, as David Dunn gets up from the hospital bed and starts walking, we have the reappearing of the high-pitch sound of metallic friction. It grows in intensity while the echoing train-sound becomes more distinguished and involves the rattling and thumps associated with a train moving at high speed. The people in the waiting-room direct their attention towards a point in the direction opposite of the camera's forward travel as it sweeps left to right, its direction of recording passing through the 270 degree angle, or 'nine o'clock position', relative to its forward motion (**plate 11**). As the doctor continues: "...And to answer your question: There are two reasons why I'm looking at you like this...", we have the last doubling of the frequency of the pulse-meter (11:42). The train-sound gains strength and we have the introduction of a very high-pitch electronically produced steady tone (11:45). Moving right to left "Give blood" is graphically co-deployed with the sonic fragment "...the only survivor..." (11:49-51), preceded by: "...you didn't brake one bone..." (11:46); and "...You didn't have a scratch on you..." (11:49). Then the steady sound from the pulse-meter speaks its clear message of death (11:59), a message that stays with David Dunn as he walks out of the emergency room, away from death and towards life.

3.14 The visual overlapping of the two shots indicates to the viewer that while walking David Dunn directs his attention backwards towards the impulses that reached him and caught his attention while sitting on the hospital bed. Some of these impulses were recalled from his short to medium term memory of the accident, while the rest arrived from the ambience within the emergency room.

3.15 I see the brief double exposure as co-thematic with the panning of the camera as David Dunn walks (**plates 11-13**). It seems appropriate to analyze and interpret the panning in light of the broader discourse-level thematic meaning produced in the two succeeding shots. Moreover, the strongest narrative relevance of the panning in this instance seems to be obtained by analyzing the visual kinaesthesia (Baldry and Thibault 2006) of the panning not only as an engagement of the viewer in a simulation of material processes within the ambience of the camera, but also as the metaphysical

comment of a temporary metanarrator; a comment from beyond time and space, realized as a window into the metaphysical dimension of David Dunn's mind.

3.16 The viewer, in my opinion, is likely to experience the panning as a visual kinaesthesia where the perceptive faculties indeed are those of David Dunn. But the physical sweeping of the visual lens, on the other hand, will the way I see it by most viewers probably not be ascribed to David Dunn's sweeping eyes or rotating head motion. Still, I do not see any reason why there should be any doubts with respect to the object of the resulting empathy of the viewer. It is David Dunn's state of mind that is being described by the panning.

#### 4 - The thematics

4.1 The specific meanings of the audio-visual, later audible only, double exposure - as well as of the panning - may be obtained firstly by allowing these resources to be disambiguated by the text-specific themes emerging at this stage in the film:

1. The escape from death is still a mystery that separates D.D. from the 'normal'.
2. The hiding of his wedding-ring speaks of a failed relationship, a detachment that I think is recognized by most.
3. D.D.'s lack of self-fulfillment and the resulting readiness to detach himself from the path that his life has led him down will be increasingly evident in the scenes that follow.

4.2 Secondly, the double-exposure and the panning may be assigned narrative relevancy by the correlation of the text-specific themes to one another. The resulting thematic configuration could be seen to act prosodically by colouring the viewer's interpretation and thereby adding specificity.

4.3 Thirdly, the intertextual background may, depending on the individual viewer's access, confirm the validity of the viewer's interpretation of the forms. The element of intertextuality seems to complete the process of disambiguating the forms and their placement, as well as their sequence, relative intensity (prominence), similarities, contrasts and so on (cf. B. and T., p.97-101).

4.4 The most relevant discourse-level meanings I see expressed in this scene are what I gloss as 1)detachment and 2)fear/awe. In addition I mention what I gloss 3)hope/purpose, which will be construed as consequences of what has transpired up to this point and is initiated towards the end of the scene.

4.5 The panning of the camera, centered in a point ahead of David Dunn, leaves him behind when he stops momentarily where the hallway begins (**plate 10, photo 4**)- and the camera keeps panning while moving forward through the crowd, producing a spiralling sweep to a close range backward view towards D.D. as he walks (11:53, **plate 12, photo 2**) - head and eyes pointing forward in a frozen gaze that seems to be focused in the distance, beyond the confinements of the hospital building.

4.6 At this point we have the high pitch sound of metallic friction returning (11:58) and the train-in-tunnel sound gaining (11:59). The camera continues its direction of travel while panning right, keeping David Dunn on the screen as he walks. At 12:05 the camera moves ahead of him, towards the right (**plate 13**), and keeps panning until pointing forward. Awaiting him on a bench along the corridor, his wife and son initially look the other way as David Dunn approaches (12:10). The reservation in the woman contrasts the less inhibited enthusiasm in the boy, who runs to greet his father (12:13).

4.7 As the boy embraces his father we hear David Dunn's mental presence in the past as a rush of what I consider to be normal train sounds (12:16). Three seconds later the sound, which almost entirely is David Dunn's replaying of the disaster, is gradually muffled as the camera pans slightly left to include his wife (**plate 14**).

4.8 The hugging of his wife (12:32), instead of a kiss, contributes to the feeling of detachment. At the same time the camera starts moving sideways towards the right as seen by the viewer, while keeping the family in the center of the screen, producing an orbit around the family, with everything else moving from left to right on the screen and the camera aiming towards the center of the orbit (**plate 15**). Without hesitation, almost casually, the son grabs the mother's left fingers with his left hand and with his right

hand he guides his father's right hand (**plate 16**), until the hands of the two parents touch and actively grab hold of each other (12:54). David Dunn's 'past present' experience is at this time taking him through a series of sound events involving what resembles strong pneumatic pump discharges from a train's systems for stabilizing, shock absorption and braking (12:50-55 and 13:05).

4.9 The mildly but physically coerced hand-holding only lasts five steps down the corridor towards the exit, after which both hands release their grip (13:01). At 13:09 the distinct sound of a rattling train is synchronized with the flashes of a dousin cameras by the exit door (**plate 17**). The sound events of David Dunn's past present overlap and gradually defeat the sound events of the present, moving the orientation of both the image and the sound-track towards the explicit and subjective (cf.H., p.196-197). The frequency of the flashing cameras grows with the increasing intensity of the thundering echoes of the rattling train as they approach the door (13:13). And the final blow of metal wheels against rails gives a sharp bang at the very instant of the cut to the kitchen scene (13:15), where David Dunn has stopped eating while he studies the spoon in his hand and listens to the sharp sound of its vibrating action against the porcelain bowl on the table in front of him.

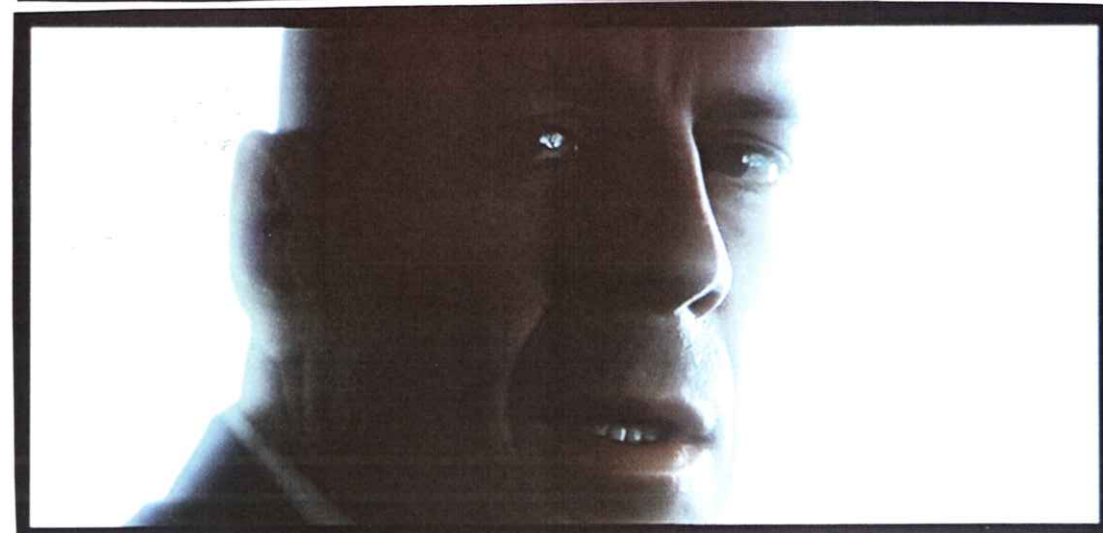
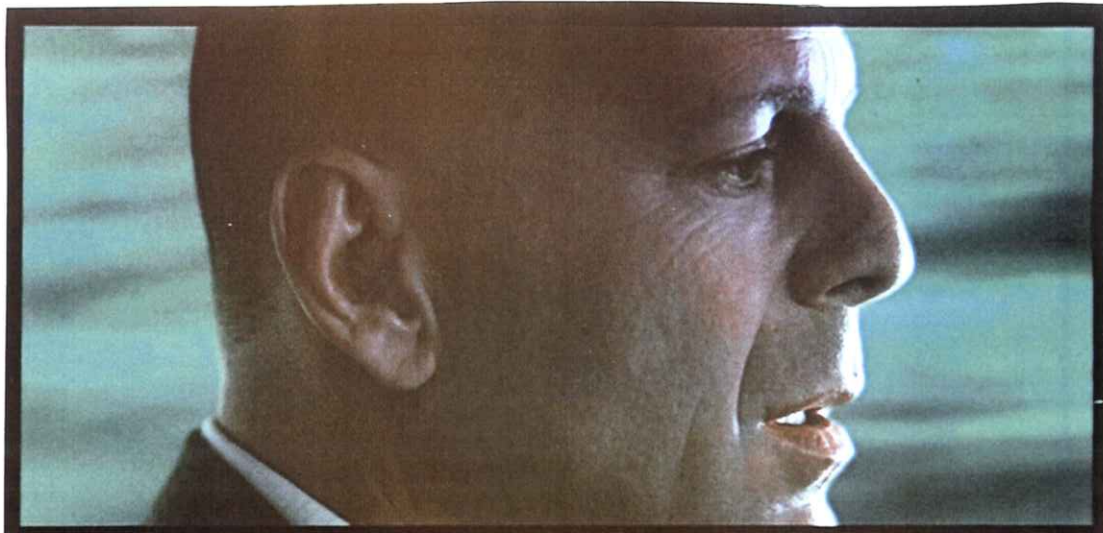
4.10 To sum it up then I suggest the following:

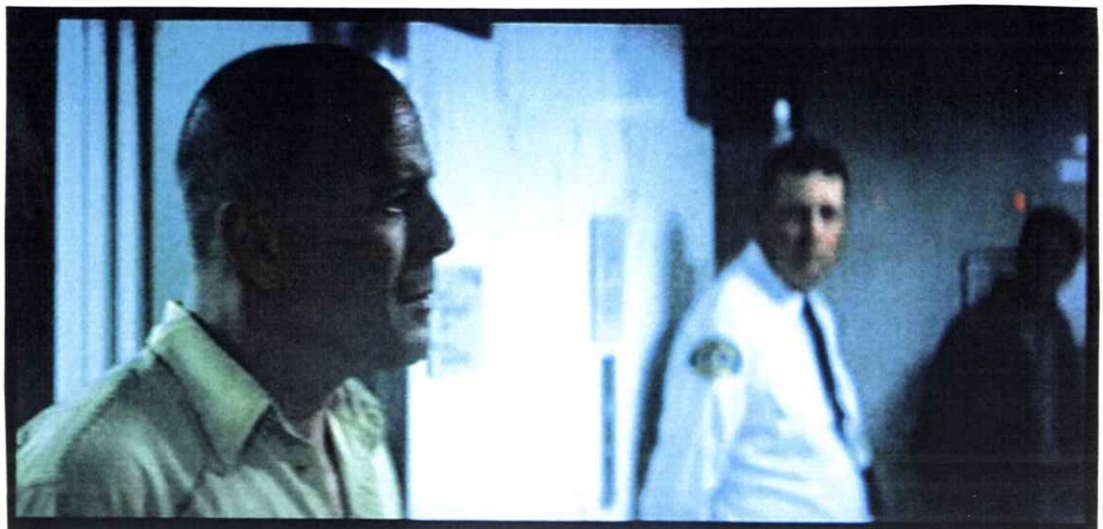
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|-----------------------|--|
| Discourse-meaning:    | - detachment                                   |
|                       | - fear/awe                                     |
|                       | - hope/purpose                                 |
| Text-specific themes: | - D.D.'s incredible escape from death          |
|                       | - D.D.'s failing marriage                      |
|                       | - D.D.'s lack of self-fulfillment              |
| ITF's:                | - extraordinary capabilities (and superpowers) |
|                       | - new beginnings                               |
|                       | - the male mid-life crisis                     |

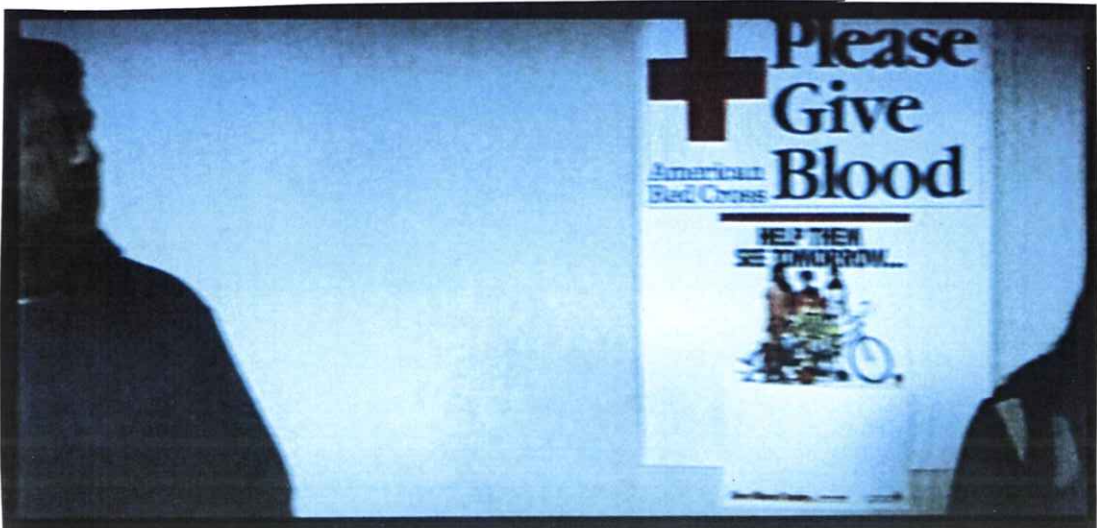
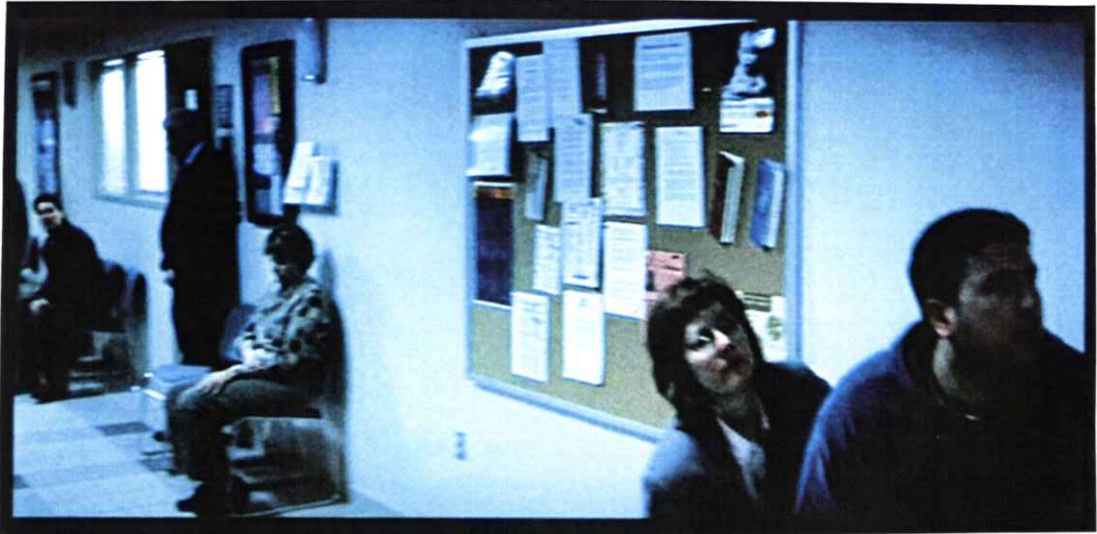


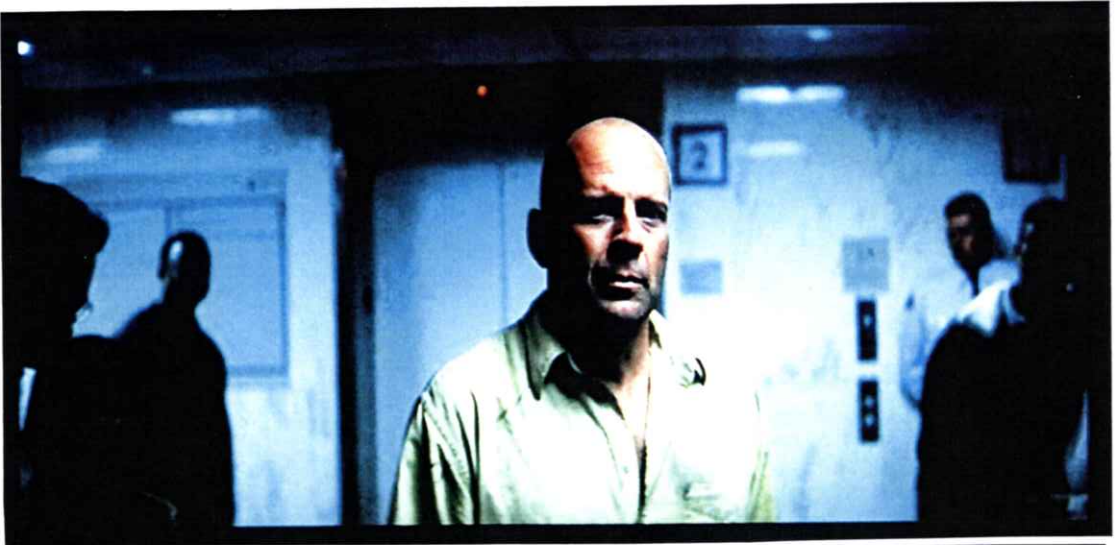




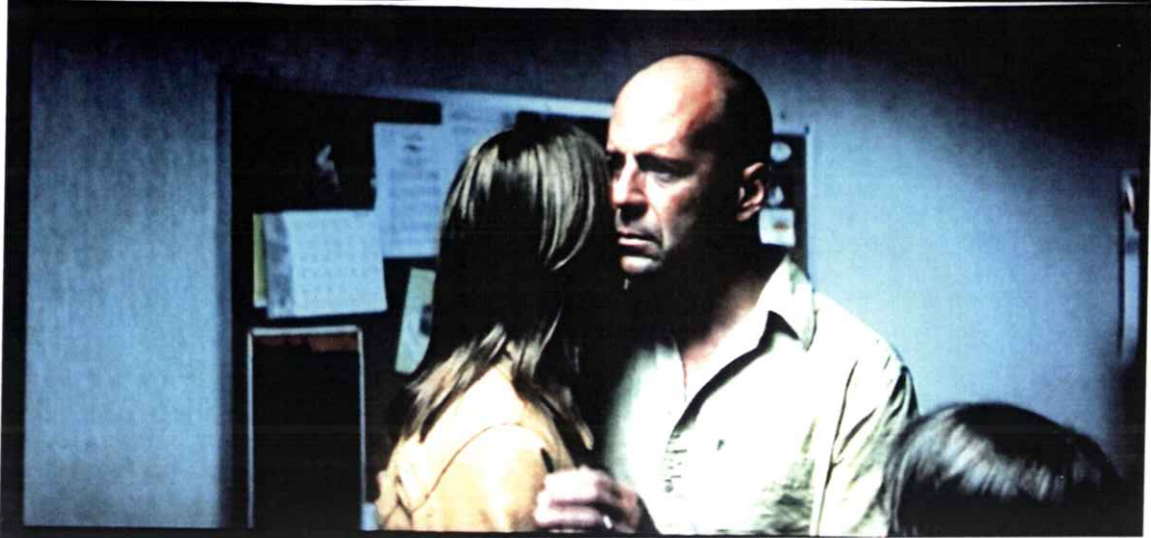
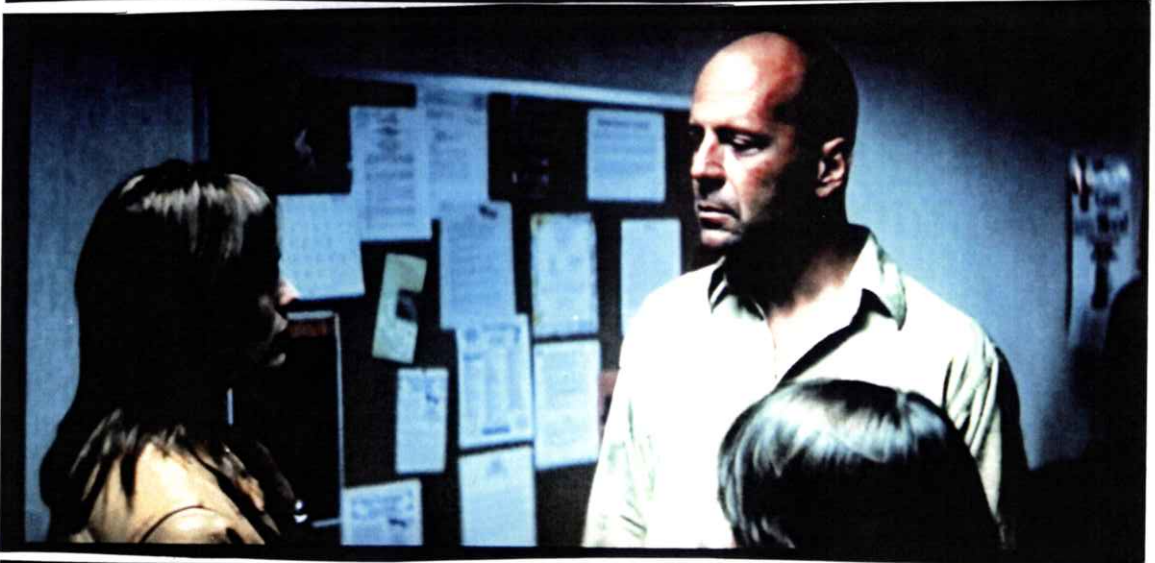


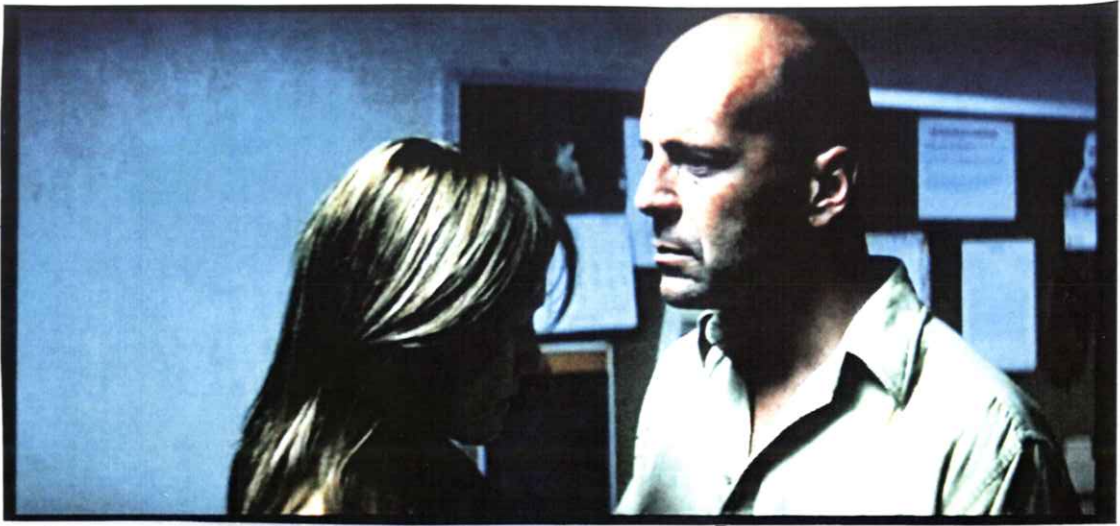








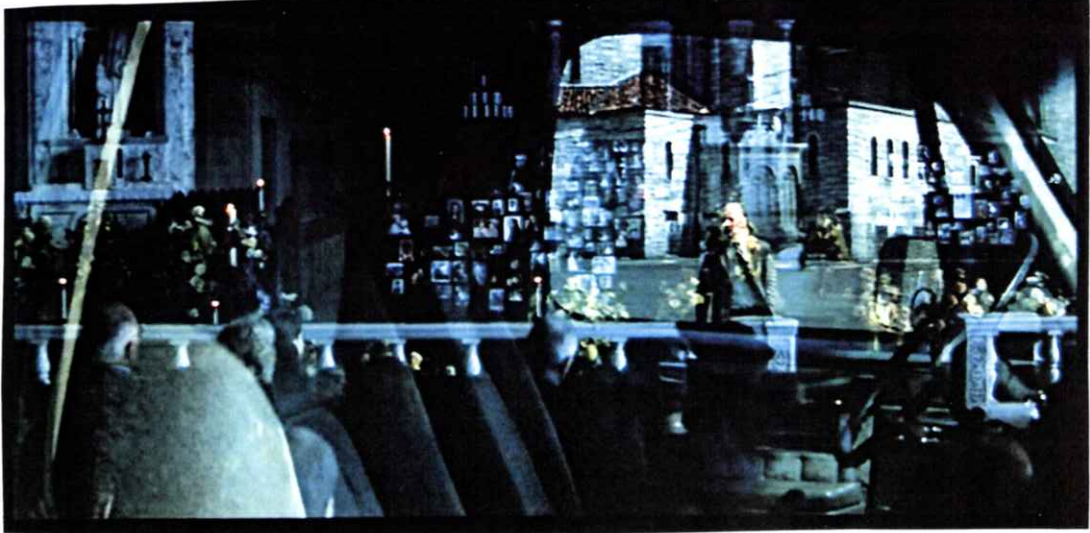


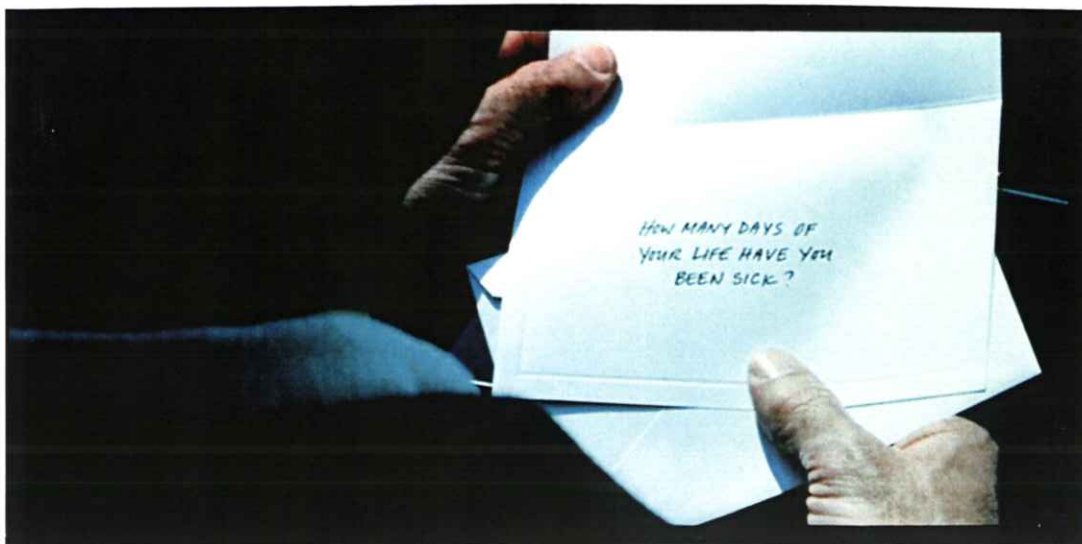






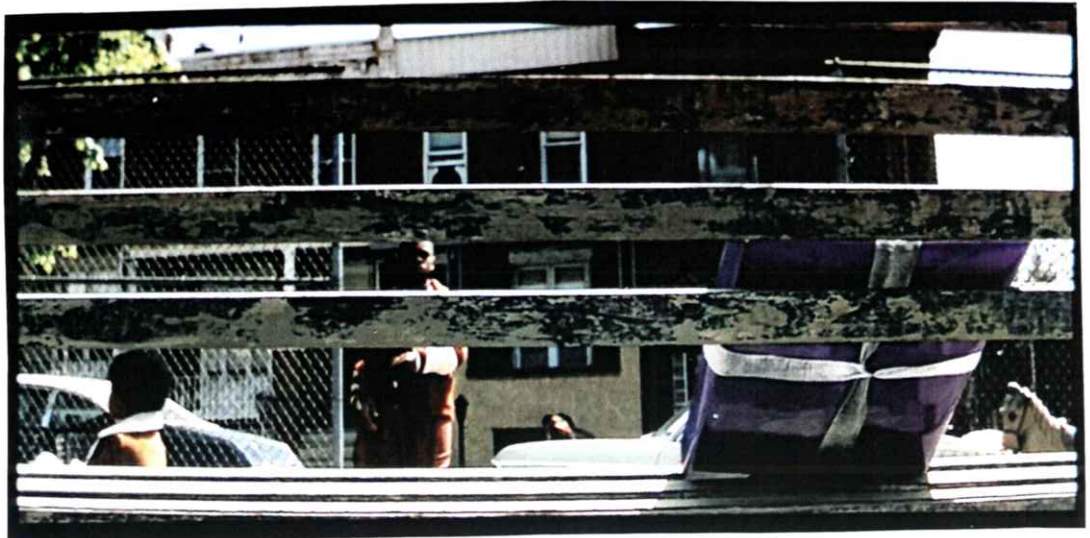
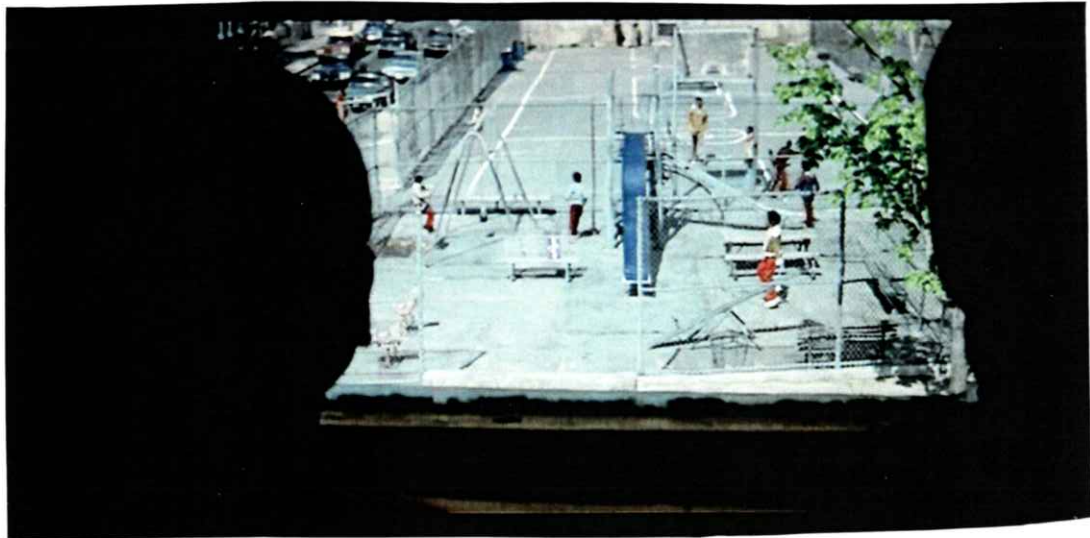


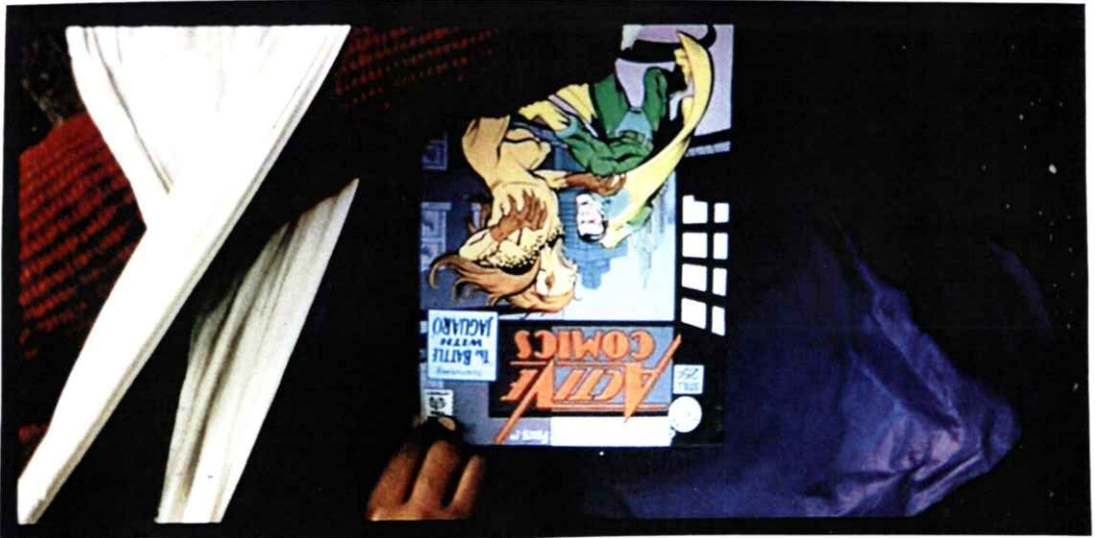


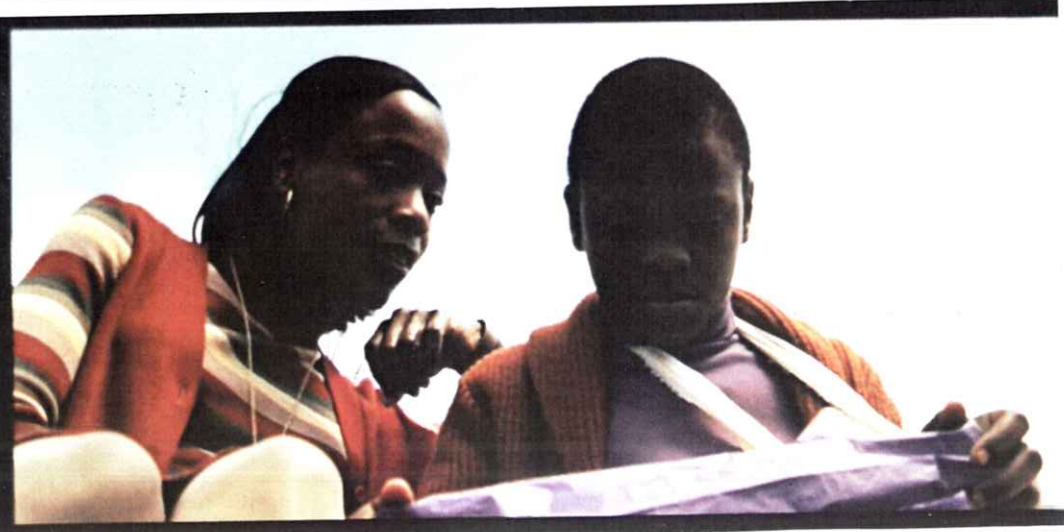
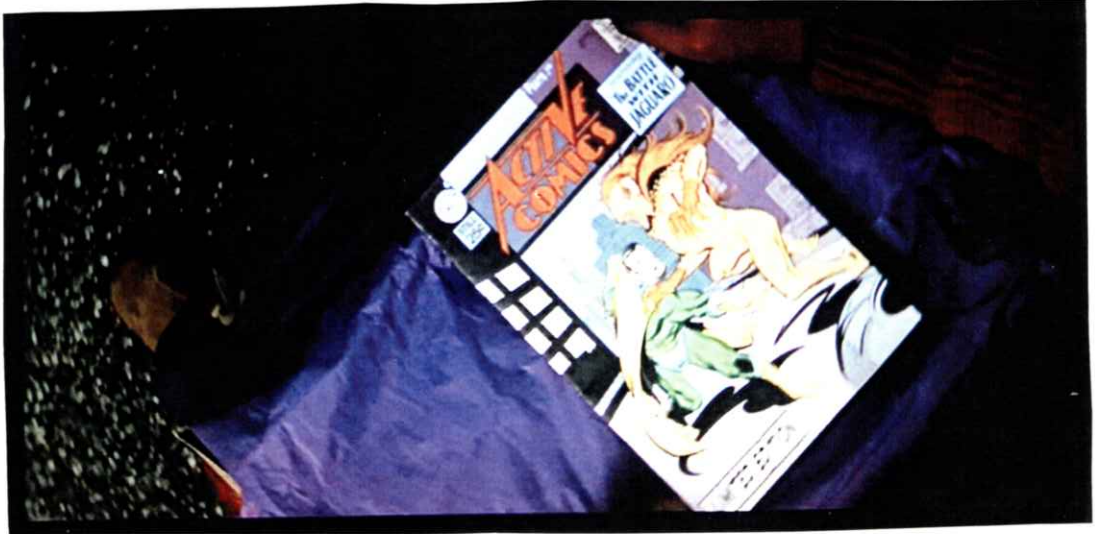
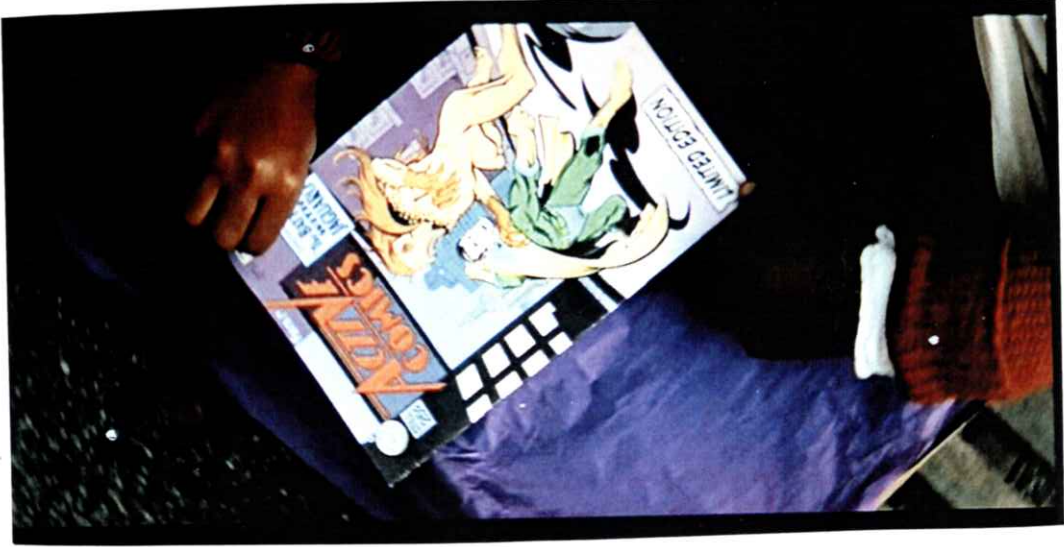
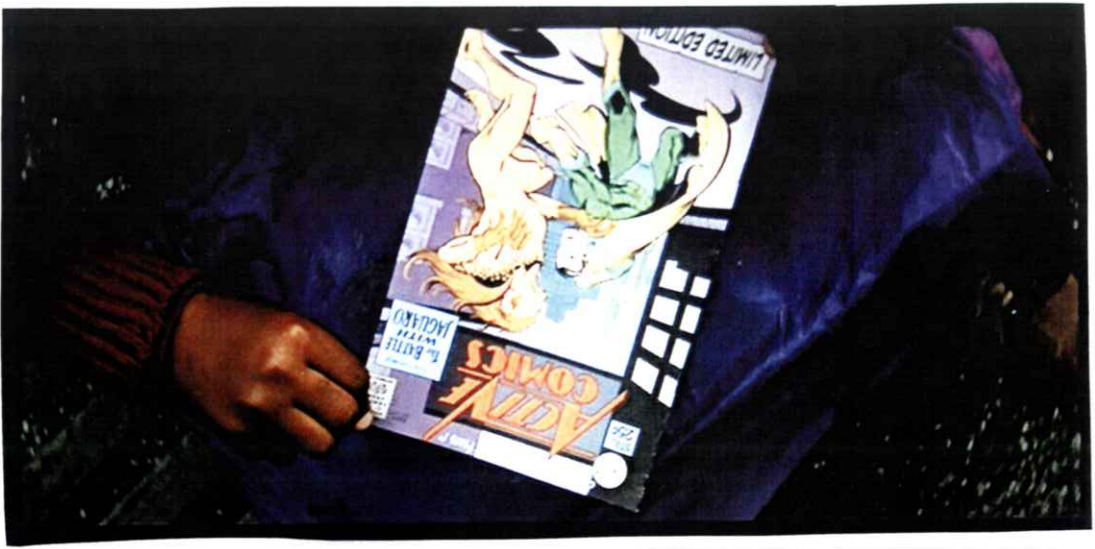




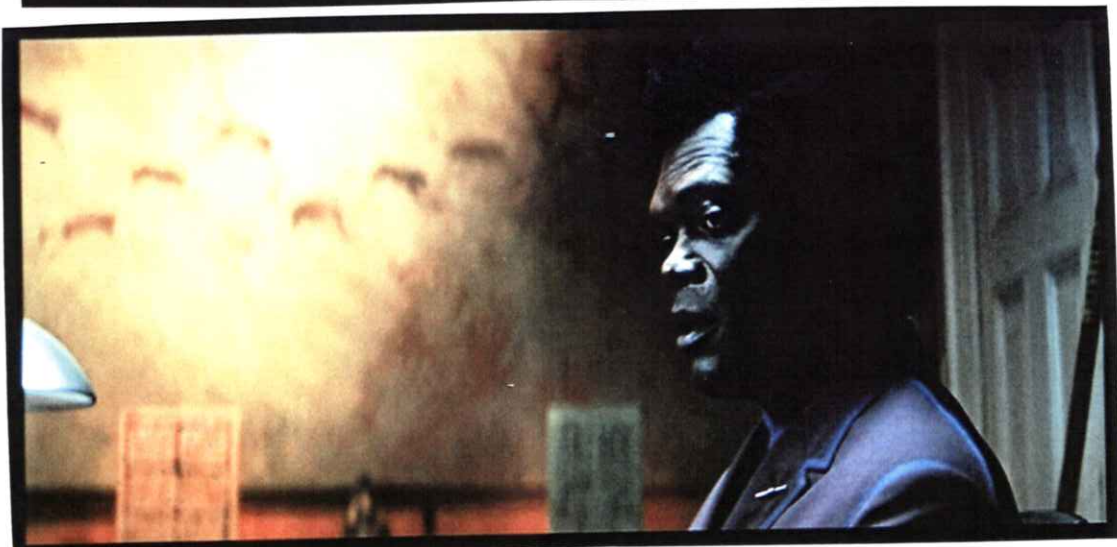
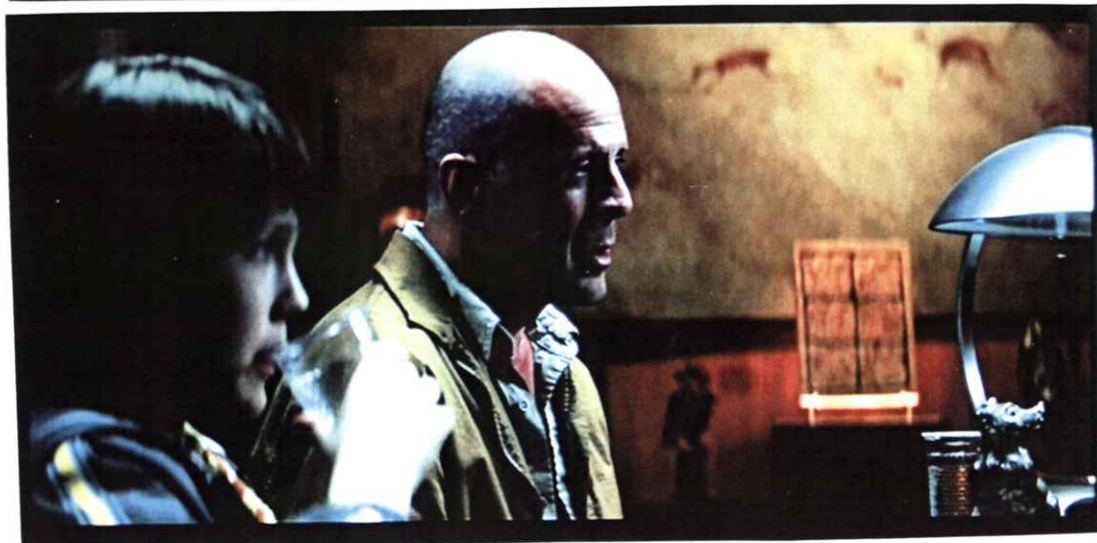


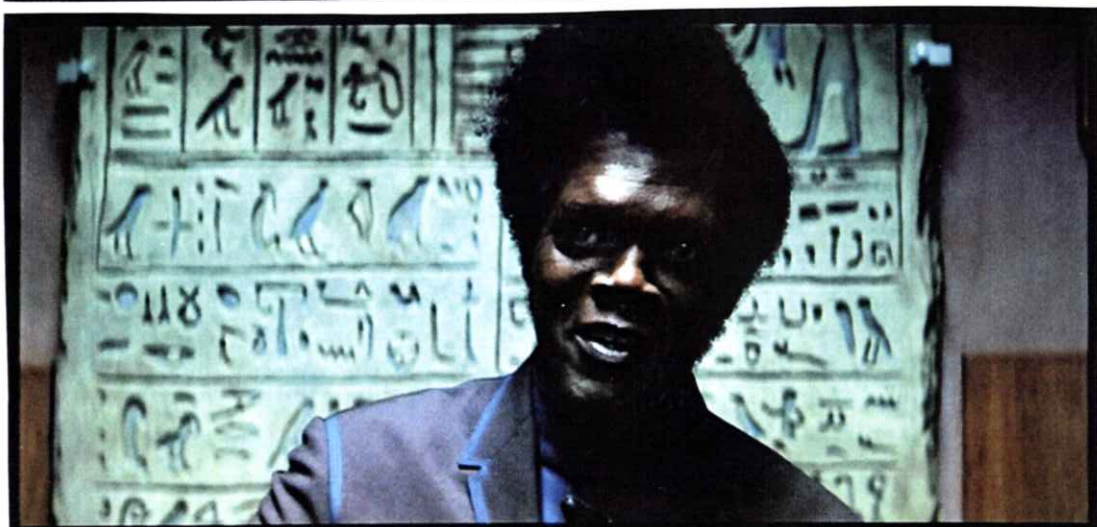
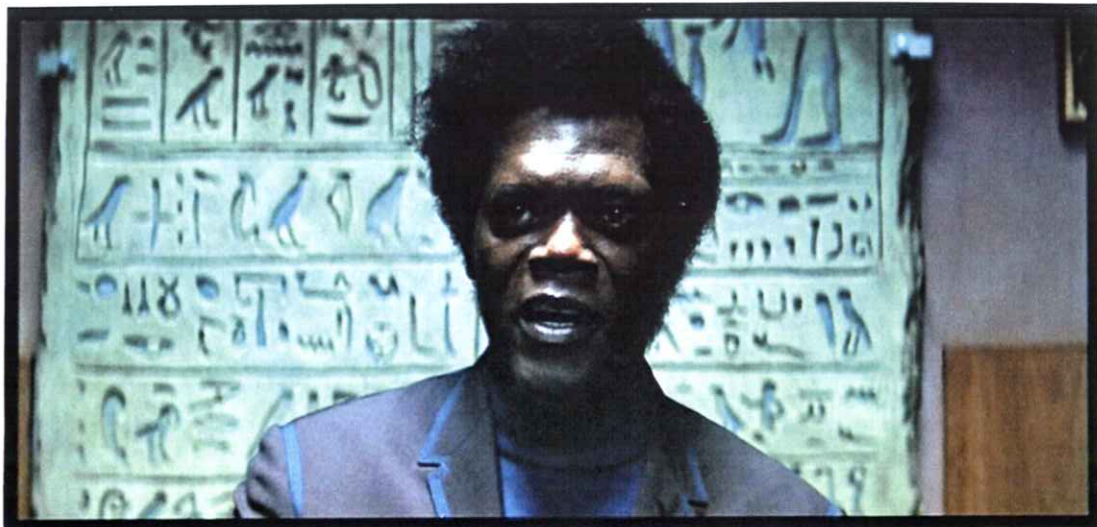






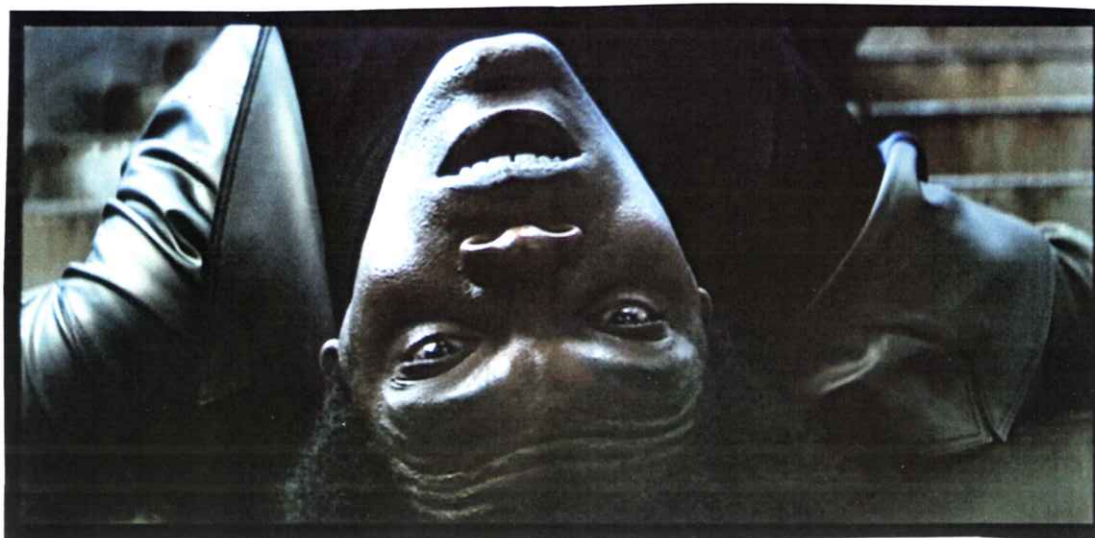




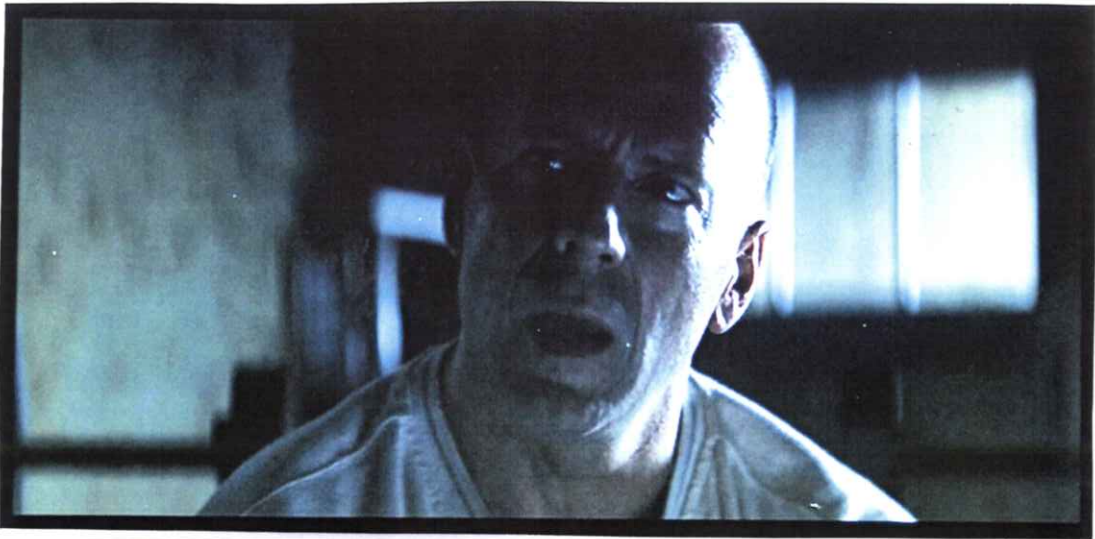










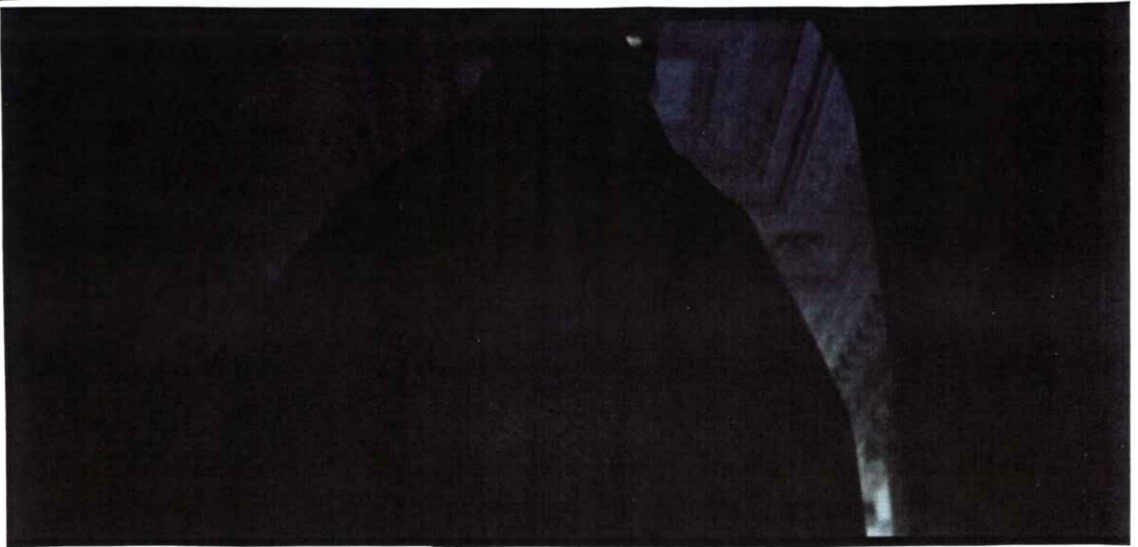




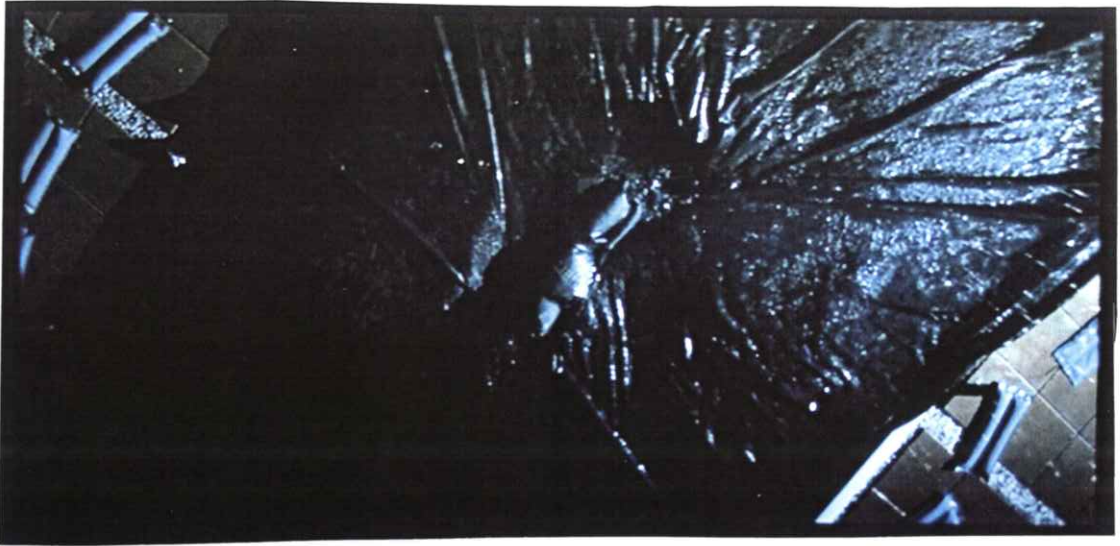




















### III

## The multifaceted approach to thematic integrity

### in *Unbreakable*

#### 1 - Introduction

1.1 In the following I will discuss in analytical terms the interplay of the sound and image of selected key moments, and in so doing investigate the implications of using one modality to shed light on another. In the use of language to describe and analyze the multimodal situation we may sense a concern for the need not to transgress certain borders that we see as existing between the modalities, and we may impose restrictions on the way we behave. We may for example remind ourselves that it is usually not advisable to attempt a complete linguistic description of an image, and I suppose the image could in the particular situation be seen as less precise, or less to the point than language.

1.2 What exactly is the role of language in the analysis of the logico-semantic relations of the visual modality? Is the analytical use of language in itself a potential problem, or is the problem sometimes the way our understanding is restrained by the limitations imposed by other paradigms - or other theories? This section will focus on the relationship between sound in general and the visual discourse, as well as on music in particular in relation to the thematic integrity of the multimodal narrative.

1.3 I will touch on the relationship between indexical and iconic references, in particular with respect to the semantic specificity and the thematic integrity of two key segments in the multimodal narrative *Unbreakable*, with focus on the visual processing of the logico-semantic relations of the 'moment'. In so doing I will attempt to undertake a situation analysis that will involve what I call 'linguistic re-enactments', where I may try to challenge the borderline between language and the image - although with a firm intent that it should be limited to such exercises that can be seen to be beneficial to the analysis from the point of view of efficiency and conceptual particularity. I have, for example, found it useful to extend certain grammatical concepts into the multimodal situation

of key moments in *Unbreakable*.

1.4 Through the course of the following discussions I will address two issues that I see as problematic, issues regarding the current treatment of certain essential concepts within the functional grammar. But first of all to the use of music in *Unbreakable*:

## 2 - Musical themes

2.1 The recurring of musical segments and their contribution to the meaning-production and to the thematics constitute an extraordinarily important resource in this particular film. Of the twentyseven musical segments a total of sixteen are repetitions of preceding segments, or fragments of preceding segments, which means there are eleven distinct segments, each with different musical patterns. Of the eleven distinct segments six have patterns that are repeated in another segment at one time or another. In the following analysis only pitch (number of vibrations per unit of time) and rhythmic patterning will be used to define and identify a 'distinct' segment, phrase or fragment. Hence the segments will not be considered 'distinct' if they only differ in the number of repetitions of one or more musical phrases or fragments of phrases, and/or in their sequence or instrumentation.

2.2 Only three segments have parts that are repeated more than once. The most frequent part, phrase *A*, is introduced in the very first scene, in the first musical segment (0:02:36), which is made up almost entirely of the recurring of phrase *A*. The slow to median paced stretch of eight beats are played six times in this segment, starting with the piano. The second cycle is on a synthetic violin. From here we have a gradual compounding with respect to the instrumentation. For the third cycle a rich rhythmic section is added, and for the fourth and the fifth strong synthetic elements join in marking the culmination of the expansion. The segment ends with a slow sixth cycle played solo on the piano.

2.3 The first half of the eight beat long phrase *A* is a descending group consisting of a note extending through a beat and a half, preceding a note lasting half a beat, which again is followed by two notes lasting a beat each. I label the group *A-x1*, the *x* referring to the rhythmic pattern and

the 1 to the 'layout' of x in the pitch dimension. The rhythmic pattern A-x is 'laid out' in the pitch dimension, and the number 1 is meant as a numeral of sequence, rather than a signifier of a pitch pattern. Hence in the label A-y1 the number 1 would not refer to a similarity with the pitch pattern of the 'core theme' A-x1, and neither would the 'x' in A-x refer to any similarity with the rhythmic pattern 'x' in B-x.

2.4 In A-x1 each beat lowers the pitch to the next lower level on the chosen scale. The first step is a so-called 'half-step', the term referring to a measured relation between the pitch-levels that are in mutual agreement and therefore can form chords. It is followed by a so-called 'full' step in each of the succeeding two intervals, a change in frequency that is twice the one of the 'half' step.

2.5 In the second half of phrase A the first note fills the exact space of one beat, which is defined in the current context by its relative length within the 'four-count'. We have two succeeding 'eighth'-notes filling the space of the second beat, and a 'half'-note extending through the third and the fourth beat.

2.6 We are in the second 'four-count', or 'bar', of A. The pitch of the first beat is one step higher than A-x1 ended, and moves back down the same step on the scale from the first beat to the second, and one and a half step down within the second beat. The pitch then returns and comes to rest on the level of the first beat, two full and one half step above the lowest point within A and one and a half step below the highest point.

2.7 Since the purpose of this analysis is the study of the cohesion and the thematics contributed by music in relation to the visual, rather than a study of the music per se, I will focus on the study of the recurring and continuity of a few musical elements, as well as on the identification and the contribution of the most significant musical themes. For this reason I only assign labels for the parts, fragments and themes that I choose to include in this brief discussion. Hence I give no separate label for the second half of the musical phrase A. The assigning of the status marked by A-x is due to the recurring and the resulting cohesive property of the rhythmic pattern that extends through the first four beats of A.

3 - The grammar of visual discourse (plates 18-20)

3.1 At 14:30 we are at the parking lot outside the church where a memorial service for the train victims has been held, and we see David Dunn apparently leaving long after the service has ended. The narrative has just construed what I choose to label a 'conjunct transfer' from the inside to the outside of the church building, realized as a fading into and out of a brief double exposure combining the two realms (14:28-30). Inside the church the camera moved out from a close-up of the priest (13:55, **plate 18**) and pulled back along a photographic collage of the victims, on an eye-level curved track that partly resembles that of an inconspicuous observer (cf. H, J & L, p. 284 for their description of 'conjuncts' as "text-structuring elements" with a function "similar to that of conjunctions in that they connect sentences and ideas"; and van Leeuwen's article *Conjunctions in Visual Text*).

3.2 Without pausing the retreat becomes a minutely slanted linear flight into the rows of seats (14:08-28) towards the eye-level of a person seated in the mid- or aft sections of the assembly hall. I interpret this as a simulation of David Dunn's attention being redirected from the priest to himself and his own intent.

3.3 The shot may well be seen to function as a reference to David Dunn's detachment from the entire situation as the camera retreats and momentarily conjoins the two spheres through the double exposure. My purpose with the label 'conjunct transfer' is to indicate a functional similarity. I see it as the realization of the equivalent to a conjunct-type adverbial (cf. H,J&L p.285), an element that conjoins, similar to the type: [*skipping forward now*] in "[*Skipping forward now*] we see David Dunn walking away wondering what's next"; or [*moving to the outside then*] in "[*Moving to the outside then*] we have David Dunn opening up to new perspectives as he meditates on his own place in relation to the flow of events surrounding him". This type of linguistic re-enactment of multi-modal constituents is an analytical resource I have found useful. It isn't meant as a transcript, nor does it aspire to capture the flow of time. It is only a way of describing details and perspectives.

3.4 David Dunn's reaction to the message on the card left on the

windshield of his pick-up truck (**plate 19**) includes an added awareness of the significance of new perspectives; or perhaps a heightened sensitivity, rather, towards the unexpected; an openness to new possibilities. The vertically ascending dolly-shot as David Dunn contemplates the significance of the card indexes this aspect beautifully. The card is from Elijah Price and the message is the rather unusual question - "How many times in your life have you been sick?".

3.5 The camera lens initially relays the human perspective (14:30), horizontally through the inside of the truck, looking sideways across the seats towards the left as David Dunn approaches and discovers the card on the windshield (14:37). And as he reads the card the camera shares the message with the viewer, momentarily placing the viewer in the position of a Co-Participant in the narrative, realizing the role of Co-Actor in what I see as a narratively relevant mental process (reading the card). The viewer occupies the point of observation, behind David Dunn and reading over his shoulder, contributing to an aspect of the discourse-meaning that deals with the self in relation to outside forces - as well as in relation to concepts like 'destiny' and 'potential'. The viewer infringes on David Dunn's private space. The viewer and the camera then proceed to move vertically into the domain of the more super-human perspectives to take in the vast emptiness of the parking lot and David Dunn's place within the emptiness (15:07-17, **plate 20**).

3.6 At the same time (15:09) we have another three cycles of the musical phrase A. After two cycles on the synthetic violin the piano joins it for two more cycles at a gradually slower pace. A certain semiotic dimension, a consistency of sense, is becoming established within the horizon of experience of the viewer. And I expect the presence of this semiotic dimension will increase the tendency to opt for certain key features in the process of disambiguating the resources and the relationships between them. Phrase A may already be seen to carry with it aspects of the meaning produced by what I see as a reference to David Dunn's detachment inside the church, and to his internal void at the parking lot.

3.7 Perspective and consistency of iconic sense are two elements that present themselves as inherently explicit elements in the medium of the

multi-modal narrative. A question that arises, then, is: if we have consistency, do we not also have grammar? The term visual grammar is apparently sometimes seen to carry the connotation of '- as in written language', which is where I think it is mistakenly perceived as within range of what I see as a 'prescriptive'- prosody, i.e. as opposed to 'descriptive'. The label visual grammar is a convenient and efficient one, albeit also potentially misleading when too stringent criteria are set for its use. Hence, although I do think there are obvious problems with the use of this term, I think it is a term too good to simply be left in the margins along otherwise exciting multimodal analyses.

#### 4 - The visual discourse and its audible ambience (plate 27)

4.1 Sixteen musical segments later we see David Dunn the security guard walking along the line-up at the entrance to the stadium before a game of the U.S. type of rugby that within the U.S.A. is referred to as *football* (34:58). His left shoulder brushes lightly against a young man waiting to get in (35:10), whereafter David "sees" the man's motivation, as well as his conscious thoughts of the concealed weapon he's trying to bring with him into the stadium, a silver-coated pistol. The mere contact causes pictures to flash before David Dunn's mind. The viewer hears the experience of David Dunn as a temporary muffling of the audible ambience (35:11-18) and sees the ocular transitivity produced by David Dunn's gaze vector, aimed in the direction of a man in a camouflage coat.

4.2 The audible change functions as the audible aspect of an implicit mental projection of the metaphenomenon at work, which is [*the sensing of the man's conscious mind*] (cf. Halliday, P.206); an abstract reference to a part of David Dunn's consciousness. The projection is not a specification of his intuition though, but rather an index to his mode of perception. The content of the associated metaphenomenon is then specified linguistically by David Dunn when he explains the situation to Elijah (37:02), who minutes before has been stopped at the gate as he tried to enter with a bogus ticket. Elijah has never been much of a sports fan, but the fact that David is a security guard has intrigued him so much that he decided to pay a visit.

4.3 Halliday describes the term 'metaphenomenon' as "a second-order

phenomenon, something that is itself a representation" (H., p.447). My use of the term in the multimodal context will first of all be in accordance with the following defining criterion, based on etymology: A *metaphenomenon* is a phenomenon beyond the immediate and the directly observable processes (meta- or met- [Gk = among, with, after] *comb form 1* after, behind, beyond; and phenomenon [from Gk appearing ...3 any physically observable fact or event (cf.S-B).

4.4 The supernatural mental process, which I suggest might be glossed [*sensing the man's meditation upon a concealed silver-coated pistol*] involves a circumstance; an adjunct modality of perceiving - i.e. a 'joined' (S-B) or 'connected' modality, joined to the process of perceiving as a circumstance of modality, one that metaphorically describes an essential aspect of David Dunn's experience of perceiving - represented to the viewer as a muffling of the ambience. On a slightly more general level of delicacy the Metaphenomenon [*sensing the content of the man's consciousness*] can be inferred from the projecting SDU, the Semiotically Dynamic Unit (see part I: concepts and premises), i.e from the co-deployment of the muffling and one or more key narratively relevant properties, mainly of the visual image - like camera angle, camera movement, gaze vector, and possibly also the rate of Participants' movement, etc.

4.5 The adjunct modality, which to David Dunn is an overwhelming sensation, is represented in the narrative as a muffling of the sound. To summarize then, I believe it would be useful to describe this as an implicitly projected Metaphenomenon [*sensing the content of the man's consciousness*] implicated by what I see as prototypical cohesive tendencies present both during the recording and the viewing of the text. I see these tendencies as operating reciprocally in the social situation (see part I), constituting a mutual set of criteria of relevancy and completion. The implicitly projected mental process is conjoined to what I perceive to be an explicitly projected modality of perceiving, a modality that I hence refer to as 'adjunct'.

4.6 The same situation construed linguistically, but from the analyst's perspective, could take the shape of a projected representation that deals with what David Dunn is doing, e.g. [(*that*) *David Dunn focuses on the...*] either with the status of 'fact', 'idea' or 'locution', depending on

whether it is perceived, thought or said - and realized either as quoted or reported. The representation above becomes a 'fact' when combined with a process of perception, e.g. [*The viewer can hear*]. If combined with [*The viewer realizes*], on the other hand, it turns into an 'idea'. And combined with a verbal clause like [*The muffling announces*] it's a 'locution', or 'wording', which is the projected report or quote of something said, although in this case an abstract such (cf.H., p.205 & 443).

4.7 A linguistic re-enactment of the same multimodal fragment (1:12:22), if construed as a proposition from the perspective of the analyst, may need to realize the projecting clause as the non-finite [*the muffling announce*], leaving the whole issue of tense and aspect to what I choose to describe as the 'root'-clause of the Event, which could be [*The viewer hears*], as in re-enactment 1) below.

4.8 Contained within the super-ordinate Event based on the verbal phrase 'to hear...announce/ing' in the structure [*to hear [x announce/ing [Y ]]*], the sub-clause [*the muffling announce...*] serves as Phenomenon in the main clause and is not considered to be 'projected'. It does, however, itself project [*Y: how David Dunn focuses...*]:

LINGUISTIC RE-ENACTMENT

expansion                      projection

1) - [*1 The viewer hears [2 the muffling announce [3 how David Dunn focuses on the sensing of the content of the man's consciousness 3]2]1*].

4.9 Or we could construe the following, seen from the viewer's perspective, but in retrospect after hearing David Dunn tell Elijah Price why he started a 'pat-down' of the arriving spectators: (More on this below.)

LINGUISTIC RE-ENACTMENT

projection

2) - *David Dunn 'saw' [how the man in the camouflage army-jacket carried a concealed weapon, a silver-coated pistol, tucked in his pants]*.

4.10 During the ensuing dialogue in the upper section of the stadium, secluded from the crowds (36:30 - 38:29), Elijah investigates what happened and tries to encourage David to develop his supernatural ability, an interesting dialogue that shows how Elijah attempts to maintain a solid



foundation within reality and within the limits of the reasonable and the probable. Having seen the man in the camouflage jacket escape the security-check by getting out of the line, Elijah realizes that David must have sensed something, and asks him what it was. David says: "*I got a picture of a silver gun with a black grip, tucked in his pants. You know - like on TV*", the grin on his face speaking of hopes of agreeing on an interpretation without too many dramatic implications (37:02, **plate 28, photo 1**).

4.11 In the continuation of the dialogue David rejects Elijah's suggestion that he might develop the skill, and prepares to leave (37:28). The subsequent three exchanges underline Elijah's sincerity - transcr. III-1:

1 (37:31) (Elijah Price) - *The characters in comics are often attributed special powers: invisibility, x-ray vision, things of that sort.*

2 ( :38) (David Dunn) - *Okay, I don't wanna play this game anymore.*

3 ( :42) (Elijah Price) - *It's an exaggeration of the truth. /photo 2/  
Maybe it's based on something as simple as instinct. /photo 3/*

4.12 Elijah's intention in 1 seems to be to establish a certain mode of interpretation of the comics - a mode that nonetheless has as one of its premises the authenticity of the experiences that led to the stories told in the comics. His contributions are based on the premise: [The stories are based on real experiences.] The argument of Elijah seems to be the result of the observation that the various attributed 'special powers' in the comic books are just too fantastic for Elijah to even hope he might witness any of them in real life; in combination with the fact that he desperately needs to validate his quest - his life long expedition on the planet earth searching for the one sample that may confirm the theory of a world where he, Elijah Price, plays a role, where he belongs. Elijah must find a real-life specimen within the category of 'super heroes', to confirm his slightly modified version of reality.

4.13 Elijah tries to apply his sense of logic, but happens to hit one of David Dunn's most sensitive spots (2), apparently in part due to the modalization of usuality realized by *often*, which David seems to interpret as suggesting he should get used to the idea that he probably is a real-life version of a comics character, a real super-freak if anything.

4.14 Elijah is quick to offer the correct conclusion (3): It is David Dunn who defines the true category of 'super-heroes', it isn't the characters of the comic books. They aren't the real thing - David is.

#### 5 - Metaphors and imprints - the indexical vs. the iconic

5.1 The next time we hear phrase A is when David Dunn makes his second visit to Elijah Price in his comic book art gallery (1:00:17 - 1:02:00), to confront him - as a reaction to Elijah attempting to influence David's wife, and also to their ten-or-so year old son nearly ending up shooting David because he wanted to prove his father is a super-hero and therefore can't get hurt (**plate 30**). The rhythmic dimension of the theme A-x1 appears as an introduction in the tenor string group as Elijah tells David how he followed the man in the camouflage army-jacket and saw the silver-coated gun with a black grip tucked in the back of his pants (0:40:51-54).

5.2 Elijah is referring to what happened after David had rejected him at the stadium, bidding him farewell with the terse and pithy: "Have a good life, Elijah" - followed by a suggestion he tries to buy his ticket at an authorized sales outlet from now on. Not feeling the urge to stay and enjoy the game, Elijah is in the following shot about to leave the stadium (**plate 28-29**). In the mirror of his car he suddenly recognizes the man with the camouflage jacket. Elijah gets out of his car and tries to catch up, an incident that involves falling in the stairs to the subway, which results in a fractured right hand, multiple fractures in three ribs and a spiral fracture with fourteen brakes in his right leg, mended with pins throughout.

5.3 Sensing the approach of yet another farewell Elijah, now in a wheelchair, challenges David by suggesting he faked the car-injury that supposedly ended his career in the U.S. type of rugby-football, that he faked it - "of all things for a woman". Elijah continues: "...And that little bit of sadness in the mornings you spoke of, I think I know what that is. Perhaps you're not doing what you're supposed to be doing."

5.4 David's response, "Stop! - Stop messing with my life, Elijah" (1:01:06), together with the preceding challenge, constitutes a Rhetorical Formation (see section I, par. 5.6; cf. T. 2) that represents a logically

driven forward movement, in a certain direction. It is, however, followed by five full cycles of phrase A (1:01:08-1:01:41), as if to indicate prosodically, in an almost literal sense of the word, the cosmic momentum - or the manifestation of universal order - that David Dunn is up against. Later, as David one night brakes into the Eastrail Holding Warehouses, where the investigation of the disaster is being conducted and where the wreckage of the train is kept in storage (1:11:10-20), and details of suppressed memories of a car accident during college are recalled, David Dunn realizes Elijah is right (**plate 33**).

5.5 The process of recalling is construed musically as a multiple contrast to the now familiar phrase A, which is played only once (1:11:52-1:12:03) as David Dunn inspects the twisted and crushed fragments of the train that killed all of its passengers but one.

5.6 The first contrast reaching the viewer is the deviating pitch move initiated immediately after completing a cycle through phrase A (1:12:03). Instead of moving up the habitual 1 1/2 step interval to the beginning, for another run through the recurring phrase, an unexpected pitch move announces a transposition (i.e. an equal change in frequency of all the pitch-levels within the scale used in a musical segment). The pitch move is a leap spanning two full steps on the pitch-scale (see transcr. V-1), placing the first beat of the new four-count half a step higher than what is expected. What follows is a contrasting theme: a half step up within the first beat - while the second beat is realized half a step back down. This pattern is then transposed by moving each of its two notes back down half a step (1:12:06), concluding the contrasting phrase (1:12:03-09).

5.7 The minute amplitude of the pitch fluctuation within the contrasting theme, as well as the relatively short duration of the two peaks, i.e. of the minimum and the maximum pitch, could be seen to construe the axiological aspect of 'being undecided', or 'pausing', which becomes relevant in the specific context of correlating ones experiences, recalling and comparing elements within our horizon of experience. The tending towards continuity, most of all an iconically signifying element, can be seen as a metaphor, or as a shadow of the implicit mental processes going on in the mind of David Dunn. The music lets us know he is about to make, or in the process of

making, a connection. The viewer is invited to infer logical relations in combination with the interpretation of the meaning-making within the experiential metafunction: The train-wreckage reminds David Dunn of a car-accident some fifteen years ago.

5.8 The second contrast reaching the viewer is the static property of the rhythm once the extension of the note on the first beat is removed (1:12:03). Instead we have a beat filled with two notes of equal length followed by a longer note filling the entire second beat. This rhythmical pattern is played four times, filling the space of two four-counts, with no changes (1:12:03-14), and then a fifth time during the first half of the following four-count. The note on beat two now extends throughout the four-count - and half way into the next four-count as well, which is final with respect to the phrase - initially causing the impression of a displaced accentuation, soon replaced by the perception of a loss of accentuation; a rhythmic indifference constituting a meditative element.

5.9 Through the viewer's empathy the meditative element becomes what we perhaps may refer to either as an imprint of David Dunn's mind, or as the mental equivalent of a footprint; another manifestation of a predominantly iconic signifier of a circumstance, one that involves a narrowing of the angle of perception. The blurring out of irrelevant details can be seen as an experiential metaphor for the immediate manifestation of a mental process, or for a section of its form.

## 6 - The disambiguation process

6.1 Continuing with the same meditative and contrasting theme (starting at 1:12:03) in the extension of a re-run of A, on beat three of its final four-count (1:12:22) there is a switch from the bow-type note in the violin class of events, having a full sound and constant amplitude, to a single final piano-type note, or 'hammered'-type note, with its somewhat brittle quality, its amplitude decreasing from the onset, combined with a very close shot of David Dunn's face (**plate 33, photo 2**). The clarity and vulnerability of the piano substitutes for the continuous and liquid quality of the synthetic violins at the very moment when David Dunn begins the recollecting of the event long ago - from lying on the dark ground, stunned by the impact, and then getting up; the staggering back

towards the burning gasoline and the upside-down wreckage of the car he was in just a moment before; till the metal frame of the car bends and gives way as he pulls the jammed door open to rescue Audry (1:13:23, **photo 4**); and on to the point where he's squatting by the side of the road, holding her in his arms, and the approaching man asks him twice if he is hurt.

6.2 The intensity of the investigation into his memory of the incident is indicated by another slow motion segment, very closely shot - this time of the face of the young David Dunn as he turns his head from looking down into Audry's eyes, shifting his head and his gaze diagonally up to his left, ending in an introvert horizontal gaze off-screen to the right of the viewer (1:14:34-46, **plate 34**). It is the older David Dunn retracing the amazement felt by the younger David Dunn, focusing on the tiniest of details within his own awareness during that special moment by the roadside. And when he 'thinks' about the feelings he remembers, he 'feels' the feelings he is thinking about. Remembering earlier feelings involves the process of feeling them.

6.3 The question *Are you hurt?* makes the young David Dunn focus on the absurdity of even being alive, and I see this as the content of the mental process indicated by the introvert gaze. Hence I see the use of the resource of the slow motion as an indicator of a modality of the mental processing of the older David Dunn who, having gone through a sequence of recalled events, shifts to a combination of [*replaying and deducing*] as he tries to understand what it all means.

6.4 I would say it is the increased rate of mental processing, or the amount of mental work per unit of time, in the mind of the older David Dunn, that we see indicated by the feature [SLOW MOTION]. It is the older David Dunn referring visually to the experience of getting Audry out of the wrecked car. And the visual reference is modalized as slow motion the moment the shape of the older David Dunn - while standing in the Eastrail Holding warehouse and referring to the amazement indicated by the introvert gaze - deduces that the only explanation to the observed consistency of his survival is the presence of some force within him. This is, by the way, a realization he shared with his son earlier, probably on the same day, during the weight-lifting session in the basement of his house (0:42:39 -

0:47:28), which I will return to in the paragraphs 13.4 - 13.6.

6.5 To sum it up in part, I see the slow motion feature, as applied to the segment of the young David Dunn turning his head, as a modalizing of a reference to the mental process [*realizing the absurdity of even being alive*] - indicated by the introvert gaze. And the reference, of course, is itself the mental process of the older David Dunn - a process I suggest could be referred to linguistically by the glossing [*re-visiting an old memory*], at one specific point re-modalized by the feature (SLOW MOTION), indicating what I see as a modifying of the process [*revisiting an old memory*]. The change I'm referring to is the one constituted by the move from what I see as the relatively simple to the more complex - from something in the neighborhood of [*inquisitively replaying*] to a new combination or configuration of mental operations which I have mentioned above and tentatively gloss [*replaying and deducing*].

6.6 The most fundamental contrast with the slow motion segment of David Dunn in his window seat, turning his head during the split second before the train disintegrates, I would say lies in the source of the component representing the change. The slow motion turning of the head during the train-disaster is what I see as a representation of how David Dunn sees the outside world, including the operation of his own limbs, during that brief period before all goes black. His mental operations speed up and involve steps that aren't synchronized with the rest of his body, resulting in the perception that all observable processes move in slow motion, even his own body.

6.7 The slow motion segment of the younger David Dunn by the roadside, on the other hand, indicates a change in the modality of [*thinking about the events involving the turning of his head a long time ago*]. It is the modalizing, or modifying, of the visual equivalence to a second order process - a mental process 'projected', 'flung forth'/'cast forward' in the etymological sense of the word (S-B), by the older David Dunn standing with a crow-bar in his hand after dark, hooded in his grey rain-coat, looking awesome - but in spite of his looks, the viewer at the same time sees him as reasonably restrained by his social intelligence and his healthy sense of ethics, even though it does seem he has just committed a felony.

6.8 David Dunn is in awe. Not only was he not hurt in the accident. He had powers that humans just do not have - unless they are in a very special category, like the one Elijah speaks of.

6.9 The contrast between the two sounds, that of the violin-type of event and that of the piano-type, is an interesting one. The lexico-semantic dimension along which we see this contrast would depend on our ability to assign it to the relevant intertextual formation (cf Thibault, 1, p.97). The contrast between the violin-type and the piano-type note could conceivably be construed along various lexico-semantic dimensions. The contributing contrast, however, would necessarily have to be one that is considered "specific to the thematics of its text" (T., 1 p. 97). With this in mind I would say the following glossing is as close as I would dare to go, within the modality of lexico-grammar, in my attempt to represent my experience of the contrast as a viewer:

From 1) [continuity / liquidity] to 2) [clarity/vulnerability] (1:12:22)

6.10 As a viewer I relate to the contrasting new sound as to a sonically projected mental process - although, if I broke it down I would probably say the musical segment in a way projects, or 'brings forth' (S.-B.), the contrasting sound; and the contrast then, I would say, first of all combines with the muffling of the ambience. I see the melody-line, consisting of the recurring theme A, as a 'Figure' against the combination of 1: the co-occurring orchestrated events, and 2: the representation of the audible ambience from the traumatic incident in the recent past, mentally superimposed onto the present audible ambience by David Dunn, and simultaneously shared with the viewer - a largely indexical signifier in my opinion; the compound of varying train-sounds, a compound that enters the interpersonal arena when the audible ambience of the present is muffled down.

6.11 Speaking in general terms about the dialogic relations among sound events, and the combination of sounds within the interpersonal arena, in relation to which the salient sound events can be described as 'Figures', one would of course need for them to be lexically defined as distinct relative to the remaining audible events. I refer to Van Leeuwen 1999, as well as Baldry and Thibault 2006, for a more complete account of these

relationships. The properties of the 'Ground' relative to potential 'Figures' having been established, a lower prominence being one key distinguishing quality (cf. B. and T., p. 211-214), there is also a need for a way to maintain a well defined idea of how the remaining group of sound events relates to the whole. The label 'Field' completes the metaphor of an interpersonally active figure standing on an interpersonal stage or ground, within a larger field of events (cf. B. & T. 2006, 1 p. 211-214).

6.12 The intertextual property of the multimodal mobilization of resources guarantees a measure of interpersonal predictability. The prototypical cohesive tendencies (see section I, par. 5.2 - 5.3) can be expected to be present, and are therefore applied as criteria in the communicative process between the narrative and the viewer. I do want to add, however, that although I use the concept 'prototypical' I am not saying none of the cohesive tendencies are cultural-specific.

6.13 The entry of the contrasting 'piano-type' note is a key contribution in the multimodal situation. If one attempted to re-enact linguistically - not transcribe - a mere fragment of this situation, it might take the shape of a macrophenomenal mental clause (cf. Halliday., p.204-205) - as in re-enactment 3) below (par. 8.1), a hypotactically linked nexus where the Phenomenon (defined as that which is "felt, thought, wanted or perceived" (H., p.203) - in this case felt) takes the shape of a clause constituting an 'act'. However, similar to what I have demonstrated for the Event [*to hear the muffling announce*] in re-enactment 1) above (par. 4.8), the act construed by [*the impulse compelling...*] is part of the event [*The viewer feels...*] in re-enactment 3). Hence I conclude that, in a macrophenomenal mental clause the Phenomenon is a continuation of the Event - a point that I do not see to have been made unambiguously enough in Halliday, III ed. 2004. I will discuss this in more detail in the next section.

6.14 What I'm referring to is a problematic combination of a slightly vague description of the concept of using an embedded clause as Postmodifier of a noun, and this description then being related to two other concepts, the first of which is inaccurately exemplified while the other is inaccurately described - all in all resulting in an unnecessarily difficult section. I think it is of critical importance that a clearer account of the concepts



brought up in section 7.4 of Halliday 2004 (p.395-441) is made available, and particularly those discussed in the last sub-section, under the heading "Acts" (7.4.6, from p. 437), but also the first four pages of section 7.5, on projection. And since I believe it might be beneficial to the study of the multimodal situation, at least to the activity of describing the multimodal situation, I will now attempt to deal with the problems I found:

#### 7 - An important distinction

7.1 The difficult passage starts with an explanation of the characteristics that distinguish a metaphenomenon from a macrophenomenon, towards the end of the section on 'expansion' (7.4, p. 395-441) which is one of the two main types of logico-semantic relationship that exist between two clauses in a clause 'nexus' - nexus being a Latin loan meaning "bound", referring to a "1 link, tie; 2 linked series or group" (S.-B.). In this context it refers to a linked series of two clauses: a 'clause complex'. The other type of 'logico'- (p.373) or 'logical'-semantic (p.441) relation linking two clauses is 'projection' (Halliday 2004, section 7.5, p. 441.482).

7.2 One would need to have an excellent understanding of every little detail through the preceding page, having drawn numerous connections between the paragraphs - and at the same time keep everything perfectly organized in plain sight of the 'inner eye' so to speak - to avoid being pushed off track on page 440. The concept of 'projection' is briefly introduced on page 439 as the second of two "close relatives" of the Postmodifier type 'act' clause, which are clauses like [of] + e.g. [cars passing] (my example) in noun phrases like [the noise [of...]]. The paragraph gives no example of the combination of a Head noun and such a postmodifying clause, but says "the Head noun is usually one of sight or sound: *I've heard the noise of..., I had a view of..., etc. (cf. the smell of something burning)*; in this case the clause is always imperfective" (p.439).

7.3 We find the term "close relatives" two lines below - as a reference to two categories similar to the postmodifying version, and the category of "Process nominal groups" is mentioned two lines further down (p.439) as the first of the two "relatives": "**(1) Process nominal groups: we saw the turning of the boats**" - which adds "we saw" by mistake, turning the

example into what I see as a macrophenomenon converted to an Event and a process nominal group, the latter being a nominal phenomenon. "*The turning of the boats*" is by itself an example of a 'process nominal group'.

7.4 The introduction of the two categories, 'Process nominal groups' and 'projections', is being prepared immediately after the brief mention of the use of the embedded clause as Postmodifier, i.e. the "- of something burning" type clause. The preparation reads: "We have now reached a point where we can relate these clauses to their close relatives that lie just beyond the bounds of expansion, on different frontiers."

7.5 The process nominal group [*the turning of the boats*] in other words does not expand the meaning of the process [*we saw*] in [*we saw [the turning of the boats]*]. Neither does the projected clause [*that the boats had been turned*] in [*we saw [that the boats had been turned]*]. They both lie "just beyond the bounds of expansion".

7.6 Contrary to the expanding postmodifying 'of'- clause - e.g. [of the boats turning] - the 'process nominal group' phenomenon [*the boats turning*] continues the construing of the same 'event' that is initiated by [*we saw*] in [*we saw [the boats turning]*]. Here [*we saw*] isn't the entire 'event'. It isn't even necessarily the most important element of the event, even though it comes first within the group. Unless [*saw*] coincides with the 'nuclear accent' - i.e. the main stress within the 'rhythmic group', or within the vocal realization of the 'information unit' (cf. B. & T., p. 216-217) - the semantic 'core' of the event would be more likely to be found in the continuation of the event, 'core' being a label I use for the process that defines what the event is about. I find it more likely that the event would be about [*the boats turning*] than about the 'seeing' in itself, or the fact that we saw it, although I can image all three situations.

7.7 The second 'kin' to the expanding postmodifying 'of'-clause is introduced like this - and once again: the 'kins' are engaged, not in expansion, but on a 'different frontier' (p.440):

"(2) **Projections:** *we saw that the boats had been turned.* If I say *I can see the boats turning* this is an event. A process 'the boats are turning' is being treated as a single complex phenomenon - a **macrophenomenon** as we put

it in Chapter 5, Section 5.3, p. 197. If I say *I can see that the boats are turning*, this is a projection. The process 'the boats are turning' is being treated as the projection or idea of a phenomenon - a **metaphenomenon**, something not just bigger but of a different order of reality."

7.8 There are textual problems with this paragraph, problems that in my view represent obstacles to the cognitive process within the reader. One of the most difficult problems of the subsection (7.4.6 Acts) I think lies in the statement saying that the process '*the boats are turning*' is being treated as "a single complex phenomenon" in the clause [*I can see [the boats turning]*]. As far as I can see it is not! Rather it is treated as part of a single complex phenomenon, as a constituent within the single complex phenomenon. The other process: [*I can see*] constitutes the rest of it. Together the two parts make up a complex or long phenomenon, a **macrophenomenon** - from Greek (S-B: "macro- [Gk] *comb form* 1 long; 2 large"). This fact becomes more easily accessible when the statement is rearranged into: 'A process - *the boats are turning* - is being realized as [**a part of**] a **macrophenomenon** - as [**a part of**] a single complex phenomenon, or of a long phenomenon realized by a compound of processes.'

7.9 It would seem convenient at this point - if one wanted to argue the case that [*the boats turning*] alone constitutes the 'macrophenomenon' in [*I can see [the boats turning]*] - to simply say 'phenomenon' in this context is defined as "that which is felt, thought, wanted or perceived", as put in subsection 5.3.3.2 with the heading 'Phenomenon' on page 203. That would, however, be an extremely flawed argument. The above quote is hardly a 'definition' of the term 'phenomenon', but should rather be seen as a circumstantial 'confining of the application of the term *phenomenon*' to a more restricted set among the referents within the category. At the same time it is a modification that expands the semantic domain of the term to include more ways of processing facts and events.

7.10 The last detail is not the cause of my concern. The problem is of a more subtle kind, a more 'finely woven' or, if you will, a more 'cunning' kind. First of all: the true definition of the term is in one sense less specific than the characterization on page 203, and what's more, in harmony with the etymology: A phenomenon is "any physically observable fact or

event", a word based on the Greek *phatnomenon* - "appearing" (Scribner-Bantam English Dictionary). It is a 'fact or event' capable of 'appearing, 'physically' (my paraphrase) in the general definition of the term - with the eventuality of 'concepts appearing before the mind' having been added in the use of the term as a grammatical category. This would include 'emotive', 'cognitive' and 'desiderative' processing of facts and events - i.e. the 'feel', 'think' and 'want' types of processing.

7.11 Scribner-Bantam includes three meanings that are more specified than the one I extracted. I see them as descriptions of types of referent that in various situations in fact are being referred to by the term 'phenomenon'. They are as follows: "1 something strange or uncommon"; "2 remarkable thing or person"; and "4 that which appears to be real to the senses whether it exists or not". These meanings say things that are true about phenomena - but none of them, in my opinion, is by itself able to define 'phenomenon'. The definition of the term itself would in my view need to be of such a level of delicacy that its sense embodies the other meanings, which I call 'types of referent' or 'member types' within the category. The meanings 1 and 2, and to a degree also 4, are what I see as characterizations of 'types of referent within the category'; i.e. I see them as circumstantially confined classes of situations where the term 'phenomenon' is currently applied. But the meaning "3 any physically observable fact or event" is different. Even if it were omitted from the entry in the dictionary, it could be deduced on the basis of what I see as 'characterizations of type of referent' - listed as meanings 1, 2 and 4.

7.12 Hence it immediately strikes me as unreasonable that the term 'macrophenomenon' in the functional grammar should be defined as 'that which is felt, thought, wanted or perceived', and equally unreasonable that this slightly overreached specification on page 203 should be allowed to rule the premises of the deductions made on page 440 and 441, pushing the logical process askew and resulting in a discrepancy in the grammar, as I now have shown.

7.13 It almost seems as if the words 'that which is felt, thought' etc on page 203 are seen as referring to 'the sense that is being expanded'; i.e. as if [*I can see*], in the context of being a 'process of perceiving' that

is actually being used in the clause that carries the sense expanded upon, should be seen to 'point' towards - and attribute the grammatical sense 'macro-' (or long) to - [*the boats turning*] in a way that excludes [*I can see*] from actually itself being a part of the macrophenomenon, which of course it does not. The clause [*the boats turning*] serving as Phenomenon in the clause [*I can see...*] does not conflict with both clauses at the same time forming one and the same 'macrophenomenon'. And this is the solution I see to the discrepancy on page 440 and 441 in Halliday 2004.

7.14 The application of the term 'macrophenomenon' might at first glance seem to be validated primarily by the fact that it expands the sense construed by the event [*I can see*]. But that is not a reasonable conclusion. The reason for the application of the term 'macrophenomenon' is instead the fact that the expanding feature of the logico-semantic relationship between the Event and the Phenomenon makes the two clauses constituents of a 'larger' or 'longer' phenomenon: a **macrophenomenon**. The 'macrophenomenon' is not formed by being observed - or being felt, thought, wanted or perceived. Rather the macrophenomenon simply constitutes the act of observing - as well as feeling, thinking, wanting or perceiving - a fact or event', without the presence of a third clause outside the macrophenomenon construing it as actually being felt, thought, wanted or perceived.

### 8 - The linguistic re-enactments

8.1 In re-enactment 3) [*the impulse compelling...*] is an 'act-phenomenon' in the context of its local relation with what I see as the 'Event Root': [*The viewer feels*]. The term 'macrophenomenon' I think is a fit label for the realization of the part that begins with what I call the Event 'Root' and includes the Phenomenon - in 3) [*The viewer feels*] and [*the impulse compelling...*] respectively. The Event, in other words, in 3) takes the form of a 'macrophenomenon', a long phenomenon the realization of which begins with the 'Event Root': [*The viewer feels*].

#### LINGUISTIC RE-ENACTMENT:

macrophenomenon (expansion) with embedded projection  
 3) - [*The viewer feels* [*the impulse compelling* [*David Dunn to re-visit an old memory*]]]

8.2 Likewise the 'act'-phenomenon [2 *the muffling announce...*], in linguistic re-enactment 1) above (section VI, par. 4.8), is construed as a part of the event [1 *The viewer hears..*], and therefore belongs to an expanded unit I see as 'macrophenomenon' (cf. H., p.204). But it is not identical to it, as page 441 of Halliday III ed. 2004 easily may be seen to implicate. Hence I describe the clause complex in linguistic re-enactment 1) as being in the form of a 'long' Phenomenon, i.e. of a 'macrophenomenon', and I see [1] and [2] as parts of it. In this particular mental clause the non-finite 'phenomenon'-act [2 *the muffling announce*] - the 'Event Core' as I prefer to label it (cf. III par. 7.6), a component within the superordinate event - projects [3 *how David Dunn focuses...*], adding an extra third layer in the event-structure.

8.3 Moreover, it is worth noting that in re-enactment 1) the relationship between [2] and [3] differs from that between [1] and [2] with respect to the kind of interdependency we're dealing with. While [2] semantically can be described as 'part of' the same Event as [1], i.e. expanding on the process realized as [*hears*], or in this case re-enacted - the way [2] 'combines' with [3] is through the forming of a clause nexus of 'projection', which involves a combination of two units - not by having one unit, or clause, expand the sense of the other - but by one unit being set up as a 'projected representation' of a content (cf. H., p. 441-443). In this case the process in [2] would be interpreted as abstract, and [3] could therefore be analyzed as a 'perceived abstract report'. [3] is set up as the 'linguistic representation' of the sense signified by the muffling of the audible ambience (H., p. 443), which means [2] and [3] together function as integral parts of a constituent that expands the sense of [1] (cf. H., p.437-439).

8.4 The multimodal content of consciousness, represented in part by [*David Dunn to re-visit an old memory*] in linguistic re-enactment 4), becomes credible when inferred as projected with a median to high value implicit modality of subjective modulation - embodied in features not at all represented in full by the provisionally encoded [*how the impulse compels*], in the abstract sense of 'urging irresistibly' (S-B).

LINGUISTIC RE-ENACTMENT:

projection with embedded projection

4) - [ *The viewer senses [how the impulse compels [David Dunn to re-visit an old memory.]] ]*

8.5 The modality in the film at that exact moment is, the way I perceive it, produced mainly by the narrowing of the angle of perception mentioned above (par. 4.1 and 4.4 of section III) - realized by the fading of audible details that might interfere with the focus on the little detail of a contrasting sound on the final beat of the musical phrase A. The muffling is accompanied by other resources, some of which could be seen to relate co-axiologically with the muffling - concurring in the shift towards a narrowing of the angle of attention. For example, the camera being placed at a low observation point results in a slightly upward vertical angle of the closely shot segment, reducing the visual access to the horizontal periphery. Moreover, a relatively large setting of the lens aperture (a low 'f stop' number) could be the cause of the shallow range of the lens' focus, i.e. the notable blurring of the image closer than and beyond the set distance.

8.6 The modulation, I feel, in this instance resists further analysis. It is, after all, David Dunn's internal dialogue that is unfolding. The distinction between 'inclination' and 'obligation' seems more or less irrelevant since the high value 'inclination' he might have in this particular situation probably would function as self-imposed 'obligation' (cf. H. p.146-147). If I were to re-enact this point linguistically I would definitely express it as obligation - something like: [*He just had to find out what the connection is, and now it's all coming back*].

9 - A metaphorical distinction

9.1 The linguistic re-enactments are meant as an analytical tool in the study of the local cohesion within a key multimodal fragment. I use the term 'local cohesion' because I do not see the application of the term 'structure' as necessary. I am not sure how closely one could draw the parallels between lexicogrammar and the visual dynamics, but regardless of how that relationship is defined I do not feel that I have to build on the

assumption that the distinction between 'structure' and 'cohesion' necessarily is a relevant one (cf. Halliday and Hasan, 1976; B. and T. chapter 4).

9.2 One way of distinguishing between the production of coherence within the clause complex and the coherence beyond the clause complex is to base the distinction on the fact that the resources of the two domains differ. 'Coherence' and the verb 'cohere', from the Latin "*cohaerere*": "vi 1 to stick together; 2 to be logically consistent or connected, as an argument" (S.-B.) - as well as 'cohesion', which has the status of grammatical category, but still carries the lexical meaning "n 1 act or state of cohering" (S.-B.); 'cohesive' being the adjective form - are all useful terms when referring to the 'glue-metaphor'. The transferring of sense from the practical situation of [sticking together] - to the imagined situation where attributed sense is thought of as forming patterned relations that act as a glue - is a useful metaphor, and easy enough to understand. What I see as a problem is where grammar says the production of 'texture' is a 'sticking together' above the level of the clause complex, while it is 'structural' within the clause complex, i.e. between the functional constituents of the clause complex.

9.3 I am not at all comfortable with the use of this metaphor to define the contrast. I see a problem with the idea that the texture produced by conjunctions, reference, ellipsis and lexical organization is depicted as a metaphoric [glue] - while the texture produced by 1: the system of 'Theme' and 'Rheme'; and 2: that of 'Given' and 'New' information, is depicted by implicating the metaphoric [nuts and bolts] or [concrete], so to speak, of a 'structure', or wherever the term 'structure' leads the mind. I do not think the association to the above mentioned contrast is inferred by mistake. I see the association implicated by the conjoining of the two terms as labels for the two domains (H. 1, p.579), which strongly implicates their status as signifiers of the most relevant distinguishing features of the two categories and in that way to my understanding contributes to an artificial barrier in the grammar. Hence I see more problems than benefits in the metaphorical distinction construed by the terms 'cohesion' and 'structure'.

9.4 I think separating the two concepts as two distinct basic principles, the way the contrast of 'cohesion' versus 'structure' presents the two



domains of coherence, is a mistake. I do not see any relevant difference between the quality of the binding effect we infer in the two cases. I see the first case as a 'structurally unmarked' binding and the other as a 'structurally marked' binding. I see the 'cohesion'/'structure'-contrast as a slightly exaggerated focus on differences where the focus might have been of better service if put on the similarities instead.

9.5 I tend to see the result of 'cohesion' in written text as a form of structure, only above the level of the clause complex, and I tend to see the 'structural resources' for producing 'texture' as binding cohesively within the confined space of the clause complex. Until convinced otherwise I will therefore not be detained by the potential frames of a conservative view that disallows certain allegories that do not line up perfectly well with the ones already accepted.

#### 10 - The role of the linguistic re-enactments

10.1 A relevant question, I think, is how well the logical relations of the multimodal situation compare with those of the linguistically construed situation. The multiple aspects allow for a great variety. The challenge then is to address as many of the relevant aspects as one needs in order to fulfill the expectations one has to the analysis, the purpose of which isn't to replace the narrative, but to improve the understanding of the multimodal situation across a limited span of time. Like 1) and 2) above (III, par. 4.8 and 4.9), the re-enactments 3) and 4) (III, par. 8.1 and 8.4), as well as 5 and 6) below, are only intended as analytical fragments of an instant.

10.2 In 5) the linguistic re-enactment contains an additional layer in the logical sequence. The process of realizing the presentational metaphor - the [*impulse*] - i.e. the production of the relevant metaphoric element, the one enabling the contrast to function as a representation of the impulse that compels David, a process that is implicit in the previous re-enactment - is here made linguistically explicit by the non-finite [*announcing*] in [*the announcing of the impulse*].

#### LINGUISTIC RE-ENACTMENTS:

macrophenomenon

5) - [*The viewer hears [the 'hammered'-type note announcing [the impulse that compels [David Dunn to re-visit an old memory]]]*]; or, from the

perspective of the reader of the analysis:

- projection
- 6) - [*The analyst hears [how the contrasting quality of the 'hammered'-type note is a representational metaphor signifying [the impulse that strikes David Dunn at that very moment.]]]*]

10.3 While 5) describes the experience of watching the mental processes take place within the segment, i.e. the experience of a participant in the mental and material process of film-watching, 6) describes the viewer's experience of judging the representation of the mental processes taking place within the segment; describing the way they are signified by the multimodal text.

10.4 The projection could also be construed as seen from David Dunn's perspective:

- 7) - [*I was walking along the wreckage of the train [when I suddenly*  
*-bedded projection of an idea-clause (simultaneity)*  
*remembered [that I wasn't hurt at all as I walked towards the*  
*burning gasoline and the upside-down car fifteen years ago] ] ] .*

10.5 The re-enactments 1), 3) and 5) are all what Halliday refers to with the term 'macrophenomenal mental clauses' (H.2004, p. 204), where the Phenomenon of the Event is an 'act', a completion of the Event - as opposed to the 'metaphenomenal mental clause' (H, p.205) in linguistic re-enactments 2), 4), 6) and 7) where the phenomenon is construed as projected (or 'cast forward' - Latin *projicere* 'fling forth', cf. S-B). The perceptive processes ([*saw*], [*senses*], [*hears*] and [*remembered*]) construe a 'fact' through perception (2,4 & 6); or an 'idea' through cognition (7) (H.2004, p. 209-210). Another example of projection would be:

- 8) - [*The situation demanded [that he retraced the relevant facts around*  
*the car-accident in college, and applied them accordingly] ] .*

10.6 The recalled imminence of the train-disaster seems to be a Condition for a successful investigation into the more distant past. Construed

linguistically as a projected abstract proposal the situation might be as follows:

9) - *He senses [how the presence of the recent memory speaks to his subconsciousness and says: ["What happened in college?"].]*

10.7 The corresponding strip of memory, once precipitated, caused to separate out, is immediately played back to his conscious self, and simultaneously projected to the viewer as a running 'memory-strip'.

10.8 The next scene shows Elijah Price (E.P.) being called up by David Dunn (D.D.) from a pay-phone at the train-station (**plate 35**):

TRANSCRIPT III - 2

[CLOSE SHOT OF ELIJAH]

E.P. - (1:14:58) "Hello" [p]

D.D. - (1:15:00) "I wasn't injured in that car-accident." [p]

E.P. - ( :02) "David" [p]

D.D. - ( :05) "I've never been injured, Elijah. [p]

( :09) What am I supposed to do?"

[ :11-18 ZOOM OUT FROM ELIJAH] /**photo 2**/

(continued next page)

[1:15:13 theme A strings]

E.P. - ( :17) "Go to where people are. [p]

( :19) You woun't have to look very long. [ :18 A piano/strings]

/**photo 3-4**/ [ :19 CUT TO DAVID WALKING 'OUT OF' THE CAMERA]

[THE WORDS OF E.P. RESOUNDING IN DAVID'S MIND:]

( :24) It's allright to be afraid, David - /**plate 36, photo 1**/

( :27) - 'cause this part woun't be like a comic-book.

[ :29 A orchestr]

( :30) Real life doesn't fit in little boxes that were drawn for it."

[ :42 A ]

[ :52 A heavy rhythm]

## 11 - The Complication stage

11.1 A bond of trust is established. At 1:15:09 we have the first in a series of ten consecutive instances of theme A, with a step by step development with respect to instrumentation and arrangement. The A-phrase plays as a salient event while Elijah confidently and determined gives David advice on how to put his special abilities to good use, and A continues to play as David Dunn enters the spacious public arena of the train station, prepared to take on whatever may hide among humanity. As the phrase A comes to an end the first time, at 1:15:18, it resumes without pause while David Dunn walks 'out of' the camera - being cut in from a close shot of his dark back. Theme A continues for eight more replays while David spreads his arms in the crowd at the station and exposes his mind to the inputs of the passersby that he happens to touch (**photo 2**).

11.2 It is a humble entry, fit for a super-hero - but it is a triumphant manifestation of David Dunn's original self, a freeing of a restrained potential. And all of these aspects can be inferred from the instantiation of A in the specific segment. The sense contributed by the musical theme A at this point in the text would be the result of a continuous disambiguation through the entire text, a disambiguation based on the identification of certain salient properties within the text, properties that fulfill expectations of relevancy and cohesion. I see it as a dialogic process with reciprocal operation of the before mentioned prototypical cohesive tendencies (cf. III, par. 6.12). The co-deployed resources in other words ought to result in the viewer construing meaning-relations similar to those construed in the mind of the director.

11.3 The musical theme A becomes an index to the determination that drives the story forward. A serves as a connection between suffering and triumph; between the static and the dynamic - two qualities that are prevailing iconic features of the influence of theme A in the multimodal context. Through A Elijah's suffering becomes David's triumph. Theme A develops into a representation of the connection between Elijah and David, a connection David resists at first, but now embraces as a fact.

11.4 The viewer is privy to David becoming a true super-hero as he 'sees' the intentions of whomever he touches - as well as their present processing

of memories - as he moves within the crowd, until he is called upon by the possibility of stopping a mad killer who delights in the suffering of his victims. Next we're about to see how David Dunn stealthily follows the killer, finds the crime-scene and rescues the two remaining members of a family fallen victim to hellish intents even beyond those of the regular criminal minds that plague society:

11.5 After brushing lightly against the madman in the crowd at the station (1:17:59), and 'seeing' his memorized recent past, David Dunn keeps his eyes on him while the A-phrase plays through five more cycles without pause. We now arrive at a major cross-roads in David Dunn's life. A one minute long contrasting musical segment allows the viewer to prepare. David Dunn evaluates the situation, finds the courage he needs, and determined to dedicate his capacity to the service of humanity he sets off in pursuit of the cause he now sees himself destined to serve. Ahead of him, unaware of the future impediment that trails his striding gait down a dead-end street, up the outside stairway that climbs the hill and ends in the suburban walkway, and along the oak-tree lined alley in the densely populated neighborhood, the killer presses on through the rainfull night. Unknowingly he leads David Dunn to the villa he presently occupies, but which doesn't belong to him, and enters (1:20:10).

11.6 The time has come when all remaining doubt needs to be neutralized. David Dunn gives himself a moment. He lowers his head (1:20:21, **plate 36, photo 3**). The camera slowly zooms in from the half body shot to a close shot of his face (1:20:24-28). A final commitment to the pursuit is being negotiated within the person who only a few days earlier, in the kitchen scene immediately following the emergency room scene, was unable to keep the spoon from vibrating and rattling when he held it against the top of the edge of the ceramic bowl, in a failed attempt to gain control over it before proceeding to eat his puffed up wheat flakes with full cream milk (13:20).

11.7 Emerging is a new David Dunn, a remarkable individual who accepts the purpose defined by his potential, the duty defined by his mental and physical capability. To David Dunn the extremely specific intuition - for lack of a better word - comes naturally. This must be what he was 'meant to

do'. At the same time the viewer hears another core theme (1:20:20-29), the second most frequent of the text, a theme I label *B-y1*. It is a core theme in a series of repeated variations over the same central part of the musical segment *B* (transcript III-3), a segment introduced early in the film as the viewer joins David Dunn on a rainy day at the stadium (16:29) - whereafter the extracted *B-y1* is given its due prominence after Elijah Price's elated lecturing on the origin of the cartoon type of story-telling and the subsequent portrayal of his unique bonebraking destiny - during David Dunn's first visit to his art gallery, together with his son (0:28:16).

11.8 David's plan before that first visit had been to perhaps get an explanation of what the card on his windshield was all about. He had hoped Elijah would have some answers that could ease his increasingly growing restlessness, but is turned off by the implication that surviving the train crash means he isn't quite normal, that he in fact could be of the type of individuals that gave rise to the stories that preceded those of the comic books - that he in fact could be a super-hero. Not necessarily a comic-book type super-hero - because Elijah Price does separate fiction and reality - but rather a more realistic type of super-hero, of the original kind, the type the original super-hero stories were about; the stories as they were before the publishers of the printed medium 'chewed them up in the commercial machine', 'jazzed them up', 'made them titillating cartoon for the sale rack' (cf. 27:15-24, showing Elijah in his office as he attempts to convince David).

## 12 - The iconic congruence of a textual metaphor

12.1 The *B*-segment can be analyzed as a central part preceded by an introduction and followed by a variable part having two alternative versions. The rhythmic pattern of the central part has three beats. An extended fourth-note covers the first beat and half of the next, while the note filling the remainder of the second beat is extended until the end of the third beat, which is perceived to be the last beat of a 'three-count' rhythm. This section is preceded by an introductory part having two notes that each have the duration of two beats - as defined by the rhythm of the central part, due to the absence of rhythmic indicators in the introduction. The second of the two introductory notes is tied

together with the beginning of the central part, whose accentuation now is cancelled out and its rhythmic measure concealed, contributing to the rhythmic uncertainty - an important feature of *B-x1*, the first phrase of *B*.

12.2 The introduction has four beats while the central part is perceived to have three. The rhythmic ambiguity starts right after the third beat of the central part. What follows is a beat filled by two notes of equal length, and then a long note filling the following eight beats, with no further indications of rhythm.

12.3 The layout in the pitch-dimension is for the introduction and the central part a one step modest climb followed by a two and a half step leap of faith so to speak. It leaves the viewer expecting more. Next, on what is actually the fourth beat of the second 'four-count', the pitch drops half a step before it bounces right back up, making the beat so prominent that it is easily perceived as the 1st beat of the next 'count', be that a 3- or a 4-count, whereafter the pitch remains unchanged through the long note that follows.

12.4 The rhythmic pattern *B-y* starts off exactly like the first three beats of the central part in *B-x*, but has no introduction part. The note on the third beat is now extended into the first half of beat four, while a rapid succession of two notes fills the second half of the beat before a long note completes the pattern.

12.5 The *B*-segment (0:16:29 - 0:17:07) to some extent appears to iconically produce a result congruent with the expectation and hopeful enthusiasm we sense in Elijah Price as he tries to enlighten a slightly baffled but collected David Dunn during their first meeting, in the office of Elijah's art gallery (26:50 - 29:02). The emotional imprint of *B-x1* (0:16:29-47) on the viewer may be seen to have an outline similar to that of Elijah's undeterred aspiration, and that of *B-y1* similar to his extatic enthusiasm.

12.6 There seems to be a co-dependency on a more fundamental level than what would normally be expected between semantic components produced by indexing the contiguous. The 'iconic' refers to the immediate or instant contribution through the very imprinting of the expression itself, or of the image (cf. *S-B*, which shows "icon" as a Greek loan word meaning 'image')

or 'likeness').

13 - The 'opposite end of the same curve'

13.1 Elijah has studied the form of comics "intimately" (cf. 26:50). Having the inclination to go about things in a methodical manner, deducing reason from the premises of the observable realm, Elijah wouldn't want to produce a representation of reality that isn't based on facts. During their first meeting in his office he talks to David about the engraving of pictorial images by various cultures long ago, implying history validates comics as a member of a basic functional unit, one that fulfills irrefutable communicative needs within any developed social structure. He then declares: *"I believe comics is a form of history that someone somewhere felt or experienced. Then of course those experiences and that history got chewed up in the commercial machine..."* (27:10-24, **plate 25**).

13.2 Elijah refers to three specific disasters that he studied from the perspective of a bystander and says he was "waiting to hear a very specific combination of words". He continues: "But they never came [brief pause]. Then one day I saw a news story about a train accident, and I heard them: *'There is a sole survivor, and he is miraculously unharmed'.*" (27:24-49)

13.3 The next segment of Elijah's speech is about his bone disorder, Osteogenesis Imperfecta, and from here he moves on to the main point, with a gradual unveiling of the contained excitement that drives him on his quest, the core theme *B-yl* being deployed at selected moments:



(28:05) - (Elijah) ...*I've had fiftyfour breaks in my life...*

TIME (28:16) (28:18)  
 VOICE *So that's how it popped into my head:*  
 STRINGS (BOW TYPE) [B-y1] -----(lower pitch register)

( :20) *if there is someone like me in the world,*

( :23) *and I am at one end of the spectrum,*

TIME ( :25) (28:27)  
 VOICE *couldn't there be someone else opposite of me at the other end?*  
 STRINGS [B-y1] -----

( :30)  
*someone who doesn't get sick,*  
 -----(high pitch register)

( :31) *who doesn't get hurt like the rest of us. /photo 1/*

( :34) *And he probably doesn't even know it - /photo 2/*

( :37) *the kind of person these stories are about -*

( :42) *a person put here to protect the rest of us,*

TIME (28:46) ( :47)  
 VOICE *to guard us.*  
 STRINGS [B-y1]----- (lower pitch register)

( :50) - (Joseph) *You think my dad is a real-* [interrupted]

( :51) - (Elijah) - *I don't think anything right now. /photo 3/*

TIME ( :54) ( :55) ( :57)  
 VOICE *It's a possibility - one with many holes.*  
 STRINGS [B-y1]----- (highest pitch register)

13.4 The next time we hear *B-y1* is in the weight-lifting scene in the basement of their home. David is pressing from 'the bench' and Joseph wants to find out how much his father can lift. The following excerpt shows the continuation of what I see as a 'prosodic encoding' of *B-y1*, a storing up of it's semantic 'amplitude' so to speak. Pretending that he wants to help his father in his workout Joseph plays a trick on him, to test him:

(TRANSCRIPT III-4) /plate 31-32/

(42:52) - (David) *How much did you put on there?* [p] [David turns to look]

(43:03) *You put too much. That's 250 lbs (pounds)*

(43:06) - (Joseph) *How much can you lift?* [n]

( :10) - (David) *That's the most I ever lifted.* [p] /plate 31, photo 1/

( :15) *That could've been dangerous, Joseph.* [n]

*Why don't you go upstairs and let me* [n] [interrupted]

( :20) - (Joseph) *I'll take it off !* [n]

[ Joseph distracts him by asking him  
to compare himself to Bruce Lee. ]

( :55 - 44:08) [David lifts twice]

(44:23) - (David) *How much did you take off ?* [n-]

( :28) - (Joseph) *I lied.* [p]

/photo 2/

TIME	( :30)	( :33)	( :36)
VOICE (David)		<i>You added ?</i>	[p]
STRINGS	[B-y1]-----		[B-y1]-----
	(high pitch)		(medium pitch)

TIME	( :42)
VOICE	(Joseph) <i>How much is it ?</i> [n-] /photo 3/
STRINGS	[contrasting descending group of 3 notes, played twice]

( :45) - (David) *270 lbs* [p]

( :50) - (Joseph) *Let's put more.* [p]

( :54) - (David) *Okay* [p]

/photo 4/

TIME	45:05	45:06-12	45:12-20
ACTION		[David lifts]	[David lifts]
TRUMPET	[B-y1]-----		
VIOLINS+ORCHESTRA			[b-Y1]-----
VISUAL SALIENCY		[red face, protruding veins in his head]	

(45:33) - (Josep) *More ?* [n]

TIME	45:41	:44	:45
VOICE (David)		<i>You should never do anything like this.</i>	[p]
TRUMPET	[B-y1]-----	[B-y1]-----	

( :46) - (David) *You know that, right ?* [p]

( :47) - (Joseph) *Yeah* [p]

( :49) (David) *What do you do if something bad happens ?* [p]

TIME	:51	:52	
VOICE (Joseph)		<i>Get mom.</i>	[p]
TRUMPET	[B-y1]-----		

( :54) - (David) *Right* [p]

				<b>/plate 32, photo 1/</b>	
TIME	46:02	:03	:09	:12	:19
ACTION		[David lifts]		[David lifts]	
VISUAL SALIENCY				[protruding veins]	[very red face]
VIOLINS (46:02-18)	[B-y1]	-----	[B-z1]	-----	

(46:28) - (David) *How much did you put on that time ?* [p]

( :34) - (Joseph) *All of it* [pp] **/photo 2/**

( :37) - (David) *What else can we use ?* [pp]

				<b>/photo 3/</b>	
TIME	46:42	:44		:47	
ACTION		[David lifts]		[David lifts]	
TRUMPET			[B-y1]	-----	

(47:05) - (Joseph) *How much is it ?* [pp]

( :15) - *How much is it, Dad ?* [p]

( :20) - (David) *About 350 lbs.* [pp] **/photo 4/**

[n] - normal strength

[p] - quietly

[pp] - very quietly

13.5 The entire scene is acted with tranquility and quiet voices, with moods varying from the [softly overbearing] that is carried over from the previous scene, and still lingers in the mind of the viewer after a proud Joseph by the playground makes a spectacle out of the close relationship he has with his father. The boy publicly announces he's going to 'work out' with his dad, and David allows it. The development is towards [mildly annoyed] at first. Then, with the reinforcement of *B-y1*, the viewer's empathy enhances the experience of [wonder] and [tempered curiosity] (44:30 - 45:20), followed by a [sense of adventure] (44:50 - 46:20) and finally [dreamy awe] (46:28 - 47:28).

13.6 The deployment of musical theme *B-y1* contributes meaning based on the environment of the previous deployments of the theme, at the same time as a certain prosodic 'root' takes form on the discourse level, through the compounding of instantiations, which gradually defines the level of semantic specificity *B-y1* carries at each stage of the narrative. And now *B-y1* to a great extent enhances the viewer's ability to sense David's emotions.

13.7 David Dunn is at a point where he has to accept himself for what he is. He enters the villa, sees the murdered man, and frees the two captive children in their pre-teens. But as he turns around, having been lured out on the balcony by the open door, he is targeted in a surprise attack. A thud - and the rush of adrenalin fills him once again as he tumbles. The acceleration by gravity is confusing to the senses, unless the visual modality is allowed to prevail.

13.8 The tumbling camera and the semi-darkness within the frame of the screen offer little help to the confused viewer, who nonetheless attributes the spatial confusion to the falling hero. By way of the camera substituting for David during the last moment before the push, the viewer's gaze vector is defined as David's gaze vector - which provides the clues necessary to attribute the motion to the right participant, but no more than that. David's confusion becomes the viewer's confusion as well.

13.9 Gravity acting on every molecule of a falling body disables the sensory system's capability of picking up the sensation of accelerating. The canvas covering the swimming-pool isn't secured properly and starts giving the moment he lands on it. Lying on his stomach he looks for clues to his current status (1:24:30-40). But the window of opportunity is long gone when he realizes what is happening (1:24:40-42, **plate 36, photo 4**).

13.10 Strong circumstantial evidence to his mortality has within the past ten or twelve hours resurfaced from the depths of his past: As a young boy David actually had a drowning accident, and was without pulse when he was brought up from the bottom of the swimming pool at school. These are facts David has been suppressing all these years, until earlier today when the incident is brought up by his teacher back then - who now in her older years teach Joseph's class. The two meet again when David is asked to come to discuss a fight Joseph has been involved in at school (54:05 - 56:21, **plate 30, photo 2**).

13.11 The insight gained from this meeting naturally stays with David when he later that day makes his second visit to Elijah's art gallery - after the revolver-episode in the kitchen (cf. par. 5.1) - to tell Elijah to stay away (1:00:15 - 1:01:59). And the new insight must make the present trauma appear before David like a suspended destiny bound to materialize, an irrevokable

link in a prearranged chain of events ending in fatality (**plate 36, photo 4**).

13.12 The Complication stage of this narrative is complex, as well as compact in time. Elijah Price going to David's wife for physiotherapy (48:07), at the clinic where she works; David beginning to develop his special talent at the stadium (51:10) and then being called upon by Joseph's school; the near-shooting incident in the kitchen (57:45 - 59:57); as well as Elijah leaving the taped message while David and Audry are at a restaurant talking about their relationship - all takes place in the space of a day, from within office hours and up until early evening.

13.13 When David and Audry return home and learn that David is being offered the job he interviewed for in New York, they are reminded about the unresolved problems between them. Audrey's "I believe a congratulation is in order" is hardly a congratulation - and having been left to himself David checks the telephone answering machine, plays the message from Elijah (transcribed below), and shows up in the following shot arriving by car, on the same evening, to the fenced-in property of the Eastrail Holding's warehouse (1:10:40, cf. section 5.4). The movement from the warehouse to his next location, at the train station where he calls Elijah, seems to be a matter of a half hour or so - or a movement within the local area or the city. Still, by the time he enters the crime scene it is late at night.

13.14 The struggling hero sinking in the pool (**plate 37, photo 1**) is accompanied by musical theme A. Wrapped in the canvas David is immobilized and in the process of drowning when he sees the end of a pole being lowered in front of his face. He reaches for it and holds on. At the moment of re-entry into the world of the living (1:25:58) *B-y1* - placed in the horns, and joined by a bass drum that rolls rapidly in a brief build-up to the theme and then strikes victoriously on all four beats - deploys all of its accumulated semantic capacity and marks the contrast between two opposite destinies. The opposite polarity forms a tie to part of Elijah's speech to an unimpressed David in the office-scene the first time they meet -

(28:20) - (Elijah in person) "If there is someone like me in the world, and I am at **one end of the spectrum**, couldn't there be someone else opposite of me at **the other end**?" -

a contrast that is rephrased on the telephone answering machine before David and Audry return from the restaurant. Having been informed about the one incident when David actually did get hurt, and having been told to stay away from David's family, Elijah spends the evening in a comic book store where he comes across a comic book paper-back issue that reminds him of something important. The taped message is as follows:

TRANSCRIPT III-3

(Elijah's taped voice)

- (1:09:27) - *David, it's Elijah. It was so obvious. It was this one issue that brought it back to me: Century Comics 1:17. That's where this group called 'the Coalition of Evil' is trying to ascertain **the weakness of every super-hero**. Because they all have one - just like you.*
- ( : :51) - *Your bones don't brake. Mine do. That's clear. Your cells react to bacteria and viruses differently than mine: You don't get sick. I do. That's also clear.*
- (1:10:06) - *But for some reason you and I react the exact same way to water: We swallow it too fast, we choke. We get some of it in our lungs, we drown.*
- ( : :13) - *However unreal it may seem, we are **connected** you and I. We are **on the same curve**, just on **opposite ends**.*
- ( : :25) - *The point of all this is we now know something we didn't: You have a weakness - **water**. It's like your cryptonite.*
- ( : :34) - *Are you hearing me, David ?*

13.15 As David pulls himself out of the pool and onto his knees on the tiled surface the French horns - having completed one cycle through *B-y1* - are without pause substituted by violins for a second cycle (1:26:04-18), which is immediately followed by the final component of the *B*-segment, *B-z1*, while the drum accentuates every beat with a single strike (**plate 37, photo 2**).

13.16 *B-y1* plays one more time while David slowly stands up and looks at the two kids (1:25:18-32). The pouring rain; a majestic and vulnerable hero of some sort; and two kids as wet as he standing right there, looking back

at him - a scene very much unlike most comics material. But it is the unscripted heroic reality that Elijah's dream adapted to. And the imaginary 'real life experiences' of ancient times, that according to Elijah's theory led to the stories of the comic books, couldn't have done it better.

13.17 Rescued by the two children he freed just before the encounter on the balcony, the super-hero lives to bring the deed to its proper closure. After the final battle the viewer is brought directly from the annihilation of the madman to the safety of David's home sphere. The film cuts from David changing his clothes to David lifting Audrey gently up from her bed on the ground floor, she waking up unstartled, to the realization of her hopes. As he approaches the stairs he does a rotating manouver to fit through the limited space without bumping into any of the corners with his precious armful. Audrey swirls gently and clockwise (1:28:21-29, **plate 38**), then up the stairs where David places her gently on the bed they used to share, until their problems began.

13.18 The swirling Audry ties all the way back to the gentle rotation of the newly unwrapped comic book in young Elijah's hands - a precious distraction in his troubled life (22:34-45, **plate 23-24**). That was back in the seventies-something, - seventyfour would make a thirteen-or-so year old Elijah. Having entered life with a not so lucky ticket DNA-wise, he evidently had the best mother of all. And still does some twentyfive years later when David, in the following shot, arrives at the gallery in the middle of an art exhibition. Visibly proud the modestly aged mother exchanges comments with David regarding Elijah's struggle against the odds. "He has spoken of you. He says you are becoming friends", she says with proud gratitude and commendation before she goes to interrupt Elijah, the host of the exhibition, to let him know David is there to see him (1:33:24 - 1:34:08).

13.19 I see the covariate tie (cf. B. and T., 2006) involving the swirling Audry as formed by the shared pattern of movement on the screen, in combination with the shared type of source of the ergative engendering. The frail hands of the boy contrast those of David, but only as an aspect of the contrast between the two destinies. Speaking of the discourse-level I would have to say the relevant relation is a co-engendering of dynamic form, represented intermittently inside a frame that focuses on the ergative

perspective (cf. H. 2004), but with shared emotional and volitional factors that are always prosodically present and strong, in Elijah as a boy as well as in David the man.

13.20 I see the focus on the nucleus of the situation, 'the swirling Audry', (cf H. 2004, p. 289 on *Medium* and *Process*) as a focus on dynamic form. The same type of dynamic form, only seen from within the movement itself, connects the sensory overload experienced by David - during the re-uniting of the family in the hallway by the hospital's emergency room (11:31-55) - to Elijah's introvert focus being redirected onto the world of comics, to the art becoming his new reality.

13.21 Towards the end of the film - before David's newly found purpose crashes to the ground when he responds to the inviting gesture proposing a hand-shake (1:35:00-15), accompanied by the verbal proposal: "I think this is where we shake hands", and he senses segments of Elijah's awareness as audiovisual 'memory-strips' from the terrorist acts he committed; and before signalling silently to Joseph at the breakfast table, outside of Audry's field of vision, that he was right in believing the theory about his father being a real super-hero, David drawing his attention towards the newspaper on the table reporting on a heroic act and showing a small sketch of a hooded hero (1:31:15-43) - before both of these situations there is the realization of a tie that goes back to the beginning of what almost had developed into the breakup of their family:

13.22 It is a tie back to their recent restaurant visit, where Audry goes beyond the assumed scope of their ongoing exchange of personal preference questions. Audry's question, "when was the first time the thought popped into your head we might not make it?" (1:05:37), at first objected to by David, is eventually answered: "I had a nightmare one night, and I didn't wake you up so you could tell me that it was okay. I think that was the first time. Does that count?" "That counts", says Audry (1:06:29). Having saved two young lives and defeated the killer, returning home feels like waking up after a nightmare. David places his precious Audry on the bed upstairs and lies down next to her, resting his head on her shoulder. He then re-enacts the situation he referred to when he answered Audry's difficult question at the restaurant earlier in the evening: "I had a bad dream", he says quietly (1:29:34) - using the metaphorical mode of



expression in order for the episode to serve as a correction of the past, as a re-adjusting of the framework of their relationship. Audry immediately picks up on the reference to their conversation at the restaurant and joins him in the re-enactment. She fully understands the function of what he says, even though she has no knowledge of the semantic content that is represented metaphorically as a "bad dream". She doesn't need to.

"It's over now" says Audry with a soothing voice, holding her hero tenderly.

(1:29:44, **plate 39**)

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