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Representing transition experiences: A multimodal critical discourse analysis of young immigrants in children's literature

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Abstract
Because literature can serve as a mirror for children's self-reflection and a window into humanizing insights on immigrants and immigration, it can be a powerful educational tool to promote understanding of immigrant learner's experiences and needs. However, this has not always been the case. As such, informed by our theoretical framework of critical discourse studies (CDS) and raciolinguistics, this study explores the representations of immigrant children's experiences in children's literature. Employing multimodal critical discourse analysis, the authors analyze the visual and verbal representations of immigrant children (and the ideologies behind them) in 18 picture books with immigration themes. Findings reveal how the children are represented visually and/or verbally in ways that create understanding and empathy for the characters, but other times in more problematic ways. The authors conclude with suggestions for how

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Published in *Linguistics and Education* 71 (2022) 101083
doi:10.1016/j.linged.2022.101083
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Submitted 15 September 2021; revised 27 June 2022; accepted 29 June 2022.

to select (visual and verbal) curricula that avoids problematic ideologies of immigrant children and how to teach children to de-construct these ideologies when they encounter them.

Keywords: Immigration, Children's literature, Multimodal critical discourse analysis

1. Introduction

In 2019, around 18 million immigrant children (who are under age 15) migrated across the world (United Nations, 2019). In the U.S. alone, students with immigrant backgrounds make up around 23% of the student body in U.S. public schools (Center for Immigration Studies, 2017). Since schools are places where these children start their new lives, they should aid them in the transition process as newcomers. Bishop (1990) acknowledges that books can be "windows" for students from dominant social groups to know the world and people from different cultures (p. 11). At the same time, books can be "mirrors" to see our lives and experiences and reaffirm our place in the world and society (Bishop, 1990). Trusted by educators and teachers, multicultural children's literature [1] that recounts immigrant experiences and stories is expected to be one powerful educational tool to reflect newcomers' experiences, support their language development, and create appreciation of social justice issues in their classrooms (Rodriguez & Braden, 2018 ; Sørensen, 2020 ; Yoon et al., 2010). In addition, there is a need for positive representation of immigrants in children's books because "readers' perceptions can directly influence their relationships with people" (Lowery, 2000). However, studies have shown that sometimes the books become more like "fun-house mirrors" which "misrepresent communities and reinforce stereotypes" (Gultekin & May, 2020) and provide superficial or essentialized versions of cultural groups which disregard the multiplicity of their experiences (Braden & Rodriguez,

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1 Gopalakrishnan (2010, p. 5) defined multicultural children's literature as literature that is "about the sociocultural experiences of previously underrepresented groups. It validates these groups' experiences, including those occurring because of differences in language, race, gender, class, ethnicity, identity, and sexual orientation."

2016). Informed by the theoretical framework of critical discourse studies (CDS) and raciolinguistics, the present study examines 18 immigrant-themed picture books published between 2001 and 2018 using tools from multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA, Machin & Mayr, 2012). Our research questions included the following:

1) How are young immigrants and their initial transition experiences portrayed in picture books?

2) How do written text and illustrations work together to communicate ideologies about immigrant children in picture books?

2. Literature review

This section provides an overview of studies that have examined the representations of immigrant youth in children's literature in order to understand why it is important to represent these children as well as how it can be done in ways that inform children about these experiences in positive and authentic ways. We begin by discussing why it is important to represent immigrant experiences in picture books followed by some overall problems that studies have found with the way in which immigrant youth experiences have been represented. We then describe some of these in more detail in our sections on biased/stereotypical representations, and problematic ideologies, and then we present some suggestions from the literature for improvement.

2.1. Why should immigrant children's experiences be represented?

According to Braden and Rodriguez (2016), "when young children are presented with literature that only reflects their background, cultural heritage, and experiences, they may believe that their experience dominates all others". For this reason, it is important to show young children lots of different types of people and ways of seeing the world keeping in mind that the "site where children come to read" should be inclusive (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016). Studies have also shown that there are "significant academic consequences for Children of Color" when they do not see their experiences, backgrounds and cultures in the books they read (Pérez Huber et al., 2020). In addition, Braden and

Rodriguez (2016) note that since xenophobic and racist beliefs continue to plague U.S. schools and society, children's literature needs to be a place where they can dialog about these social problems and help them make sense of and challenge them.

2.2. General problems with representations

Many studies have examined the ways in which children's literature represents immigrant children and their immigrant experiences and found various problems with these representations. Underrepresentation and partial representations of immigrants and their immigrant experiences have been well documented. Overall, research has found a lack of voices from various immigrant and minoritized groups, such as Asian, Latinx, Native American, and Middle Eastern cultures (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016 ; Gultekin & May, 2020 ; Koss, 2015 ; Pérez Huber et al., 2020). Also, studies on the representations of immigrants in children's literature have found that many books overgeneralize, essentialize, avoid specific contexts, and ignore diversity within immigrant groups. For example, Gultekin and May (2020) found that Muslims from the Middle East in picture books were shown as only coming from underdeveloped rural areas and didn't represent a variety of countries of origin, resulting in dehistorized and depoliticized stories.

The complexities of immigration experiences were also only partially represented in children's literature. For example, Lamme et al. (2004) examined the representations of immigrant children in picture books and found that difficulties they faced were seldom represented, producing simplistic narratives that mostly featured smooth and easy transitions. Furthermore, xenophobia and racism (e.g., being told to 'go back to your own country'), experiences related to being undocumented (e.g., discussing terms such as 'illegal'), failures to make adjustments in the new country, childhood depression, and separation of undocumented parents were often missing (or devoid of context) in children's literature compared with real immigrant experiences (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016 ; Rodriguez & Braden 2018 ; Pérez Huber et al, 2020). In addition, several studies pointed out the importance of children's names and making an effort to honor and pronounce correctly children's names. According to Peterson et al.

(2015), naming practices "have the power to exclude, stereotype, or disadvantage students" and for students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds such as immigrant children, their names can be a source of conflict and "a watershed for issues of identity and belonging with the school setting" as well as a focal point for bullying. The authors propose that multicultural literature that engages students in conversations about their multidimensional identities and the importance of names can be an important starting point for helping immigrant children adapt to their new context. Similarly, Montoya et al. (2013) note the way in which names can symbolize family struggles, and how focusing on immigrant character's names and their importance to their identity can be a symbolic move to represent immigrant experiences.

2.3. Biased/Stereotypical representations

Some studies have also found biased and stereotyped representations of immigration/immigrant children. For instance, Rodriguez and Kim (2018) found that children's literature often portrayed Asian immigrants as "unassimilable and exotic" and produced "forever foreigner stereotypes" towards Asian immigrant children (p. 25). Additionally, Wee et al. (2015) used content analysis to explore how Korean cultures were represented in picture books and found some presented insufficient representations of contemporary Korean cultures with a surface-level understanding and appreciation of the culture. Braden and Rodriguez (2016) studied the representation of Latinx children in children's literature and found superficial associations to Latinx cultural heritage, a tendency to portray only traditional gender roles and perspectives, and utopian family situations that often didn't reflect the variety and complexity of Latinx experiences. Others found that the language used in children's literature indicated immigrant children were the reasons for their identity conflicts during their transition processes, and such portrayals reproduced negative bias towards them (Sembiante et al., 2018). Research also showed that immigrant children's homelands were often portrayed as exotic, and their families had many conflicts which led to negative biases toward immigrants and their families (Sung et al., 2016).

2.4. Ideologies behind representations of immigrant children

Studies have also analyzed the ideologies behind the way immigrant children are represented in literature/picture books. Ideologies are systems of beliefs and values that "are essentially evaluative: they provide the basis for judgements about what is good or bad, right or wrong, and thus also provide basic guidelines for social perception and interaction"(van Dijk, 1995). Studies showed that ideologies of assimilation emerged in children's literature by portraying immigrant children going through the transition process as initially resisting, and then treating the new country as a better place with more opportunities compared to their homelands (Chappell & Faltis, 2007 ; Johnson & Gasiewice, 2016 ; Yoon et al., 2010). According to Sung and DeMar (2020), assimilation ideologies further a postcolonial message that the new country is superior. In addition, the assumption of power and privilege lies in the simplified duality of immigrants' homelands and migrated countries (Strekalova-Hughes, 2019). We also found that compared with immigrants' homelands, destination countries are oftentimes described as utopian societies without recognizing the social justice issues and complexities of society and culture in both countries (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016 ; Strekalova-Hughes, 2019). Global migration and immigration, in this sense, are presented as escape and rescue (Durand et al., 2021) and immigrants' agency and power as "bestowed privileges"(Strekalova-Hughes, 2019). Another ideology behind representations of immigrant children is that of privileging English (Braden & Rodriguez, 2016). Such an ideology lies in the linguistically deficient representation of immigrants as if their native languages are not acceptable. This privileging of English (and consequently, English native speakers) is also connected to racial/ethnic stereotypes and leads to Othering. In this way, immigrants are often positioned as illegitimate, peripheral members of the community (Alim, 2016, p. 9) which can result in the isolation of immigrant children in schools (Sung & DeMar, 2020).

2.5. Ways to improve representations of immigrant children in literature

Besides pointing out problems, scholars have also provided insights on how to improve problematic representations. Reese (2018) (in her discussion of books about Native peoples) suggested they should be

tribally specific, and that teachers select books about peoples that are/were residents in your own state. In the context of books about immigrant children, this could be broadened to mean selecting books that talk about students originating from countries represented in your classroom or school and specifically naming these places and the languages they speak there. Reese also suggests that more authors of these books are cultural insiders (see Gultekin & May, 2020, who found this was often not the case). This is because they will portray more *authentic* experiences, meaning they are rich in detail because the authors themselves have an insider perspective which adds to our "knowledge of the character and the cultural group of which he or she is a part"(Bishop, 1990).

Our literature review shows that although many studies in this field have examined children's literature for the representations of immigrant children and their experiences, there is still an inadequate emphasis on how language and illustrations are used (or used together) in children's literature to portray immigrants and reveal ideologies despite the fact that pictures/images might be the only conduit for younger children to negotiate the meanings in children's picture books (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). Hence, the present study builds on previous work in this area but focuses on how meaning is conveyed multimodally in children's picture books.

3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Critical discourse studies and raciolinguistics

Critical discourse studies (CDS) is a theoretical framework and research movement that critiques "how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge"(Rogers et al., 2005). Affirming that "language both shapes and is shaped by society", approaching research from a CDS perspective is helpful in revealing the power relations behind language and discourse (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 4). CDS is also helpful in examining "the role of discourse in racism as a system of social inequality"(van Dijk, 1999). Racism is "about power and dominance, about ethnic or racial inequality, and hence about groups and institutions and more complex social arrangements

of contemporary societies"(1999, p. 147). CDS scholars examine how racism is expressed, reproduced and/or legitimated (van Dijk, 2004) in visual and verbal communication and much CDS work has focused on media discourse. On the other hand, educational scholars such as Rogers and Christian (2007) have used CDS to examine children's books. Their work (and those of other educational researchers that rely on CDS) provides a helpful framework for our own study because they show how CDS can be used to describe and interpret the "construction of race in children's books" but also the ways in which themes from the books connect to themes about race in the larger society (p. 26).

In addition to CDS, we draw from raciolinguistics (e.g., Alim et al., 2016), which is an area of research that examines how issues of race and language work together. Raciolinguistics provides a solid framework to help us understand the racialization of immigrant language and literacy practices as well as intersectionalities that immigrant children face often being not only minoritized for their language but also in terms of ethnicity or race. The work of Patriannn Smith (2021) was especially helpful for our study because of the way in which she approaches literacy and meaning making as "based on the intersectionality of race, language, and culture". In doing so, we consider the way in which immigrant children cross linguistic (and cultural) boundaries in their daily lives but also how this boundary crossing can be (or not be) harnessed in children's books.

3.2. Multimodal critical discourse analysis

Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) — which refers more narrowly to the methodology associated with CDS — incorporates tools from CDS in analysis and highlights the fact that language is not the only semiotic mode (i.e., socially shaped and culturally given resource for meaning making) (Kress, 2009). Other modes such as image, sound, and layout, also contribute to the overall message. Highly influenced by the field of social semiotics and multimodality, MCDA is interested in *intersemiotics,* that is, the way that meaning is passed from one sign system to another (Aktulum, 2017). This is because visual representations never communicate exactly the same things as a text (Unsworth & Cléirigh, 2009) and "images can be used to say

things that we cannot say in language"(Machin & Mayr, 2012). By combining various semiotic modes, the meanings from each mode can be enhanced by each other. MCDA focuses on the way that illustrations and text each portray separate meanings but also how they work together to create meaning. Since images are "polysemous" (i.e., they have multiple related meanings), they can often cause ambiguity or confusion (Lanir, 2019) and hence often times the text is used as an anchor to limit the possibilities of interpretation. Sometimes an image can restate or clarify what was said in the text or vice versa (i.e., *elaboration)* (Unsworth & Cléirigh, 2009). Other times one mode tells us added information that is not included in the other or vice versa (i.e., *extension)*, and sometimes this happens in both modes (Unsworth & Cléirigh, 2009). One type of extension is *contrast,* in which the "content of the text contrasts with that of the image", and vice versa (van Leeuwen, 2005), rather than just providing extra information. Still other times one mode can provide more specific information or details about the other (i.e., *enhancement)* (Martinec & Salway, 2005). In picture books, *enhancement* is often realized through colors and positions of objects or people that weren't central to the message but add an artistic or imaginative perspective to the text. It is important to note that like any sign, written text can have multiple interpretations and can communicate different meanings depending on context (Hall, 2001). But also, because images can say things that text cannot, and like text, they can have multiple interpretations and can profoundly shape children's ideas and influence social actions (Ledin & Machin, 2018 ; Sembiante et al., 2018), it is important to attend to them along with the text. The job of MCDA is to identify which ideologies are communicated through text and image, and through their combination. This can be done using multiple tools of analysis which we introduce in the next section.

3.3. MCDA tools

Some important elements to examine in a multimodal critical analysis include angle, distance, and gaze. Ledin and Machin (2018) note that the angle in which we view subjects in images can communicate experiences of "superiority/inferiority" or "strength/vulnerability" (p. 59), hence when someone is seen in a downward angle,

it metaphorically communicates looking down on them socially and vice versa. Similarly, the distance (close, medium, far) in images indicates how close we feel to the people in the pictures (Ledin & Machin, 2018). Gaze refers to whether the person is looking at the viewers (or other subjects in the book) directly, which influences viewer engagement and acts as a type of symbolic contact between the viewer and subject. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996 /2006), “The gaze of represented participants directly addresses the viewers and so establishes an imaginary relation with them” (p.89). Painter et al. (2013) note that if characters in picture books are presented as facing us ‘front on’, we feel more involved with them and consider them as part of our own world. They also note that the way the viewer is positioned in picture books can make a difference in how we are able to build a relationship with the characters. For example, we can be positioned as an outsider by viewing the character from afar, in order to observe and learn from what goes on in the story. Alternatively, we can be addressed by characters when they gaze out to the reader as if making eye contact with us and thus creating a “visual form of direct address” (Painter et al., 2013). We can also be positioned to see as if through the character’s eyes by depicting just part of the body (like the hands or feet in front of the unseen body). In this case, because we can see just the parts of the body that the character in focus could see herself, we can imagine ourselves vicariously as the children in the picture. In this mediated way of viewing the character, “the reader steps temporarily into the shoes of the character to see the story world” as if they are the character in the story (Painter et al., 2013). In the case of representing immigrant children’s stories, this mediated positioning can create empathy for the characters while avoiding Othering.

4. Methodology

4.1. Researcher positionality

As an international student from China studying at a university in the U.S. (and a teaching assistant in our elementary teacher education program), I (first author) am both a member of a minority group

and an immigrant as defined by the UN Migration Agency (IOM).[2] My experience as an immigrant gives me an insider [3] perspective for this study. Like many immigrants, I went through the transition process as a newcomer. I experienced culture shock and homesickness and have at times been an outsider in the new society, and I have faced discrimination and bias. However, I acknowledge that I have privileges not held by all immigrants due to my education background, jobs, and resources offered by my college. It is my own background as an immigrant that has partly served as motivation for this study, but also because as a teacher educator who works with elementary teachers, I want to be able to provide them with literature that supports immigrant children's transition processes.

I (second author) identify as a (White)[4] Italian American woman. I bring an insider perspective as someone with experience living and working in multiple countries, as a former elementary teacher of emergent multilingual learners, as the wife of an immigrant and a parent of multilingual children. I am currently a language teacher educator living in my country of origin and doing research that advocates for multilingual pedagogies and the development of interculturality. I am also an outsider in the sense that as a White woman in the U.S., I experience privileges that many of the characters in the picture books. (and first author) do not. Moreover, like first author, I have privileges due to my education background and resources held by my university.

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2 According to IOM, "any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement, and (4) what the length of the stay is" (https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/migration/index.html)

3 Insider perspective in qualitative research generally refers to researchers "choose to study a group to which they belong"; while the outsider perspective refers to researchers study a group they do not belong to (Breen, 2007, p. 163).

4 Following scholars such as Nguyên and Pendleton (2020), we capitalize 'White' to clarify that we are referring to people who are racialized as White in the United States, including those who identify with European ethnicities/nationalities. In doing so, we align our work with CDS scholars such as Becky Rogers and June Christian (2007) as well as scholars in raciolinguistics such as Ruthanne Hughes (2020) who notes that the implications of using a lowercase 'white' (and a capitalized 'Black') may serve to normalize Whiteness as the neutral and unmarked standard.

Both of us are also outsiders in the sense that we do not have experience with many of the countries/cultures discussed in the books we analyzed. In order to ensure a more insider perspective, we consulted various sources (see Literature Review) and referred to these when analyzing texts to help navigate this limitation.

4.2. Data collection

4.2.1. Selection criteria

Because there are so many books that look at immigration experiences (which is a good thing), we narrowed our study to one specific part of the immigration experience: initial transitions of children as they moved to a new country. We only selected books that indicate the main immigrant characters have left their homelands and have recently arrived in a new country in the storylines or illustrations. For instance, in *Dear Baobab,* the text says "Maiko [the immigrant child] missed the giant baobab tree in his village in Africa, where he was born ... But Maiko didn't live among the baobabs anymore". In *Chocolate Milk, Por Favor!* the illustration shows the new classmate, Gabe [the immigrant child] migrated from Brazil to the U.S. Books such as *My Name is Celia* and *Dumpling Dream* tell the whole life of the main character and don't focus on their initial transition process specifically were excluded. Narrowing the focus allowed us to examine each book in more depth (since analyzing images and text and the way they work together involves a large amount of data). We also felt that this particular angle would be helpful for elementary teachers and teacher educators since these books tell stories that students in their classes will recognize from their own current experiences, and their classmates (as opposed to only concentrating on why they left or how the journey was).

We chose to include books published between the years 2001 and 2018 in order to ensure they were still relevant in today's world (and hence not too old) but also to see if there were any significant changes in patterns in the literature over time. Our data analysis began in 2019 and so we were not able to include books from 2019 and 2020. Also, considering English is the dominant instructional language in elementary schools in the U.S., and most children will have not had bilingual books read to them regularly in their classes, we excluded bilingual books.

In summary, we selected picture books based on the following six criteria: a) the main character must be a young immigrant child who has left their homeland and started a new life in a new country (e.g., the U.S. or other unspecified countries), b) the book must focus on initial transition experiences for newly arrived immigrant children, c) the literature is suitable for elementary school levels, d) the literature was published between the years 2001 and 2018, e) the book is in English, and f) the book is identified as a picture book as opposed to a novel or other type of book.

4.2.2. Search tools

We used the key words "immigrant children and "picture book" to search on www.google.com as our primary search method. In addition, we used the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (CLCD), School Library Journal, ERIC (ProQuest), and Humanities International Index children's literature database as supplemental search methods since we considered the fact that these databases are not always accessible for elementary teachers, and some charge a fee. These sources also allowed us to find research similar to ours and identify possible books from those studies.

4.2.3. Our data

Our comprehensive search yielded 46 immigrant-themed picture books. We checked out all 46 books from the local public library, read them through to get the main ideas, and found that 28 of them did not meet our criteria.[5] We excluded these 28 books and ultimately included 18 picture books that meet all six criteria. **Table 1** provides a summary of basic information from the 18 picture books. As children's literature serves as a "window"(Bishop, 1990) for children to learn experiences from a particular group, we specifically examined author and illustrator positionality in the books for cultural authenticity (see Table 1). Cultural authenticity refers to "the absence of stereotypes but also the presence of values consistent with a particular culture

5 For example, we excluded books such as *Mango, Abuela, and Me* and *Where Are You From?* since they tell stories of second-generation immigrant children. We also excluded books such as *Lailah's Lunchbox* and *All the Way to America* since they main characters are not young children.

Table 1 Summary of 18 multicultural children's picture books

Picture book	Author/Illustrator	Main Characters (Homelands indicated in the books)	Year	Author Positionality	Illustrator Positionality
The Day You Begin	Jacqueline Woodson/ Rafael López	Angelina (Unspecified) Rigoberto (Venezuela) Unnamed girl (Unspecified but most likely South/North Korea) Unnamed boy (unidentified)	2018	Cultural outsider	Cultural insider/ cultural outsider*
Someone New	Anne Sibley O'Brien/ Anne Sibley O'Brien	Maria (Unspecified but most likely Mexico) Jin (Korea) Fatimah (Somalia)	2018	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
Mustafa	Marie-Louise Gay/ Marie-Louise Gay	Mustafa (Unspecified)	2018	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
From Far Away	Robert Munsch, Saoussan Askar/ Rebecca Green	Saoussan (Lebanon)	2017	Cultural outsider and insider	Cultural outsider
Chocolate Milk, Por Favor!	Maria Dismondy/ Donna Farrell	Gabe (Brazil)	2015	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
I'm New Here	Anne Sibley O'Brien/ Anne Sibley O'Brien	Maria (Unspecified but most likely Mexico) Jin (Korea) Fatimah (Somalia)	2015	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
The Seeds of Friendship	Michael Foreman/ Michael Foreman	Adam (Unspecified but most likely in Africa)	2015	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
My Two Blankets	Irena Kobald/ Freya Blackwood	Unnamed girl (Unspecified)	2014	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
The Quiet Place	Sarah Stewart/ David Small	Isabel (Mexico)	2012	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
Dear Baobab	Cheryl Foggo/ Qin Leng	Maiko (Unspecified country in Africa)	2011	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
My Name Is Sangoel	Karen Lynn Williams, Khadra Mohammed/ Catherine Stock	Sangoel (South Sudan)	2009	Cultural outsider and insider	Cultural outsider
One Green Apple	Eve Bunting/ Ted Lewin	Farah (Unspecified)	2006	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
Hannah Is My Name	Belle Yang/ Belle Yang	Hannah (Taiwan)	2004	Cultural insider	Cultural insider
A Shelter in Our Car	Monica Gunning/ Elaine Pedlar	Zettie (Jamaica)	2004	Cultural insider	Cultural outsider
*My Name Is Yoon***7	Helen Recorvits/ Gabi Swiatkowska	Yoon (Korea)	2003	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
Goodbye, 382 Shin Dang Dong	Frances Park, Park/Yangsook Choi	Ginger Jangmi (Korea)	2002	Cultural insider	Cultural insider
The Colour of Home	Mary Hoffman/ Karin Littlewood	Hassan (Somalia)	2002	Cultural outsider	Cultural outsider
The Name Jar	Yangsook Choi/ Yangsook Choi	Unhei (Korea)	2001	Cultural insider	Cultural insider

* *The Day You Begin* has four main characters from different ethnic groups/nationalities, one of which is Latinx. Since the illustrator is originally from Mexico, we treat the illustrator as a combination of cultural insider and outsider. Similarly, we treat the authors of *From Far Away* and *My Name Is Sangoel* as a combination of cultural insider and outsider.

** *My Name Is Yoon* has been reviewed and received much attention by scholars such as Wee et al., (2015). However, since it came up in our data search and met our criteria, we still included this book in our analysis.

and the accuracy of cultural details in text and illustrations"(Yoo-Lee et al., 2014). Yokota's (1993) definition of cultural authenticity complements Yoo-Lee et al. by noting that it should include "authentic dialogue and relationships, in depth treatment of cultural issues, and the inclusion of minority groups for a purpose". As Rodriguez and Kim (2018) pointed out, author positionality is influential in providing cultural and linguistically authentic text as cultural insiders often created stories based on their experiences and histories. Cultural insiders, in the context of this analysis, are members of particular immigrant groups and have shared experiences with immigrant characters presented in the books; on the other side, cultural outsiders are not members of particular immigrant group and do not have such immigrant experiences (Rodriguez & Kim, 2018).

4.3. Procedures

After selecting the sample literature, each page of the selected picture books was scanned and uploaded to one file. We first read each book to familiarize ourselves with the stories and record the basic information as seen in Table 1 (above). We then read each book again taking notes on frequently found elements or items of interest in the text or images and referring to our CDS theoretical framework that guided us as regards what elements to analyze (e.g., Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 /2006; Ledin & Machin, 2018 ; Unsworth & Cléirigh, 2009). From there, we chose to analyze verb processes (in text) and actions depicted in illustrations (especially who performs them and who is seen as receivers of those actions) in order to expose the expected roles and behaviors of the young immigrants portrayed. We also looked at the relationship between the text and illustrations to see how they worked together (e.g., elaboration, contrast) and we analyzed angle, distance and gaze to look for "Othering" and relationships forged between the viewer and subject. In order to expose the different social and cultural resources of immigrant children vs. the non-immigrant characters in the written text, we also analyzed the use of adjectives used to describe people or places in terms of positive or negative semantic orientations (e.g., clever, famous would be categorized as positive, troublesome, ignorant as negative) following Hatzivassiloglou and McKeown (1997). In addition, we analyzed topics included in the books

(e.g., names, struggles, homeland, getting help) to understand if different stories were represented and if they were detailed enough for students to learn about the ethnic group/nationality of focus in nuanced ways that do not essentialize the characters.

Each picture book was analyzed according to the elements described above (see Table 2 for more details) initially and then we met to discuss any items we were unsure about and came to a consensus on those we disagreed on initially. After counting, the percentages of each element found from all 18 picture books (in regard to both immigrant children characters and other characters that had a role in the books) were calculated to see if there were significant patterns or themes that emerged from the text and illustrations based on the elements of analysis. We then coded our data according to sub-themes found in our analysis of the elements described above and organized those into six larger themes which we present in the next section.

5. Findings

Six major themes were found in our analysis: representing transition experiences, reproducing Othering, lack of agency, decontextualized and backgrounded homelands, shedding one identity for another, and valuing children's names. **Table 2** below identifies these themes along with sub-themes, tools/elements used to analyze the picture books, and percentages which reflect how many of the books contained at least one example from this theme divided by the total number of books. As such, Table 2 identifies not only themes found in the books, but also their frequency in terms of our data set.

5.1. Representing transition experiences

Our findings show that the most common theme was *representing transition experiences.* This was because all of the books in our data depicted real experiences that immigrant children encounter such as feelings of isolation, being overwhelmed, and difficulty in understanding the new language and adapting to new schooling situations, all of which are common for newcomer children and cited in the literature (Suárez-Orozco, 2017). **Figure 1** (from *I'm New Here)* is a good

Table 2 Themes, sub-themes, elements of analysis and percentages

Themes	*Sub-Themes*	*Elements of Analysis* *	%
Representing transition experiences	—Feelings of isolation —Being overwhelmed during transition process	—Topic mentioned in literature as common in young children's immigration experiences	100%
Reproducing Othering	—Distancing of immigrant characters from reader —Lack of interaction between reader and immigrant characters —No mediated interactions —Cultural categorization due to dress combined with other elements	—Distance, angle, and gaze to communicate relationship between reader and character	61%
Lack of agency	—More passive verbal and visual representations of immigrant characters —Mostly non-immigrant (White) characters offering help	—Verbal processes (e.g., verbal and visual representations of what immigrant/non-immigrant characters are shown DOING) —Transitivity analysis (e.g., passive vs. active) of actions	55%
Decontextualized and backgrounded homelands	—Not naming homeland —Vague and/or negative descriptions/images of homelands	—Adjectives that describe homelands and the new country —Visual representations of homelands —Naming/not-naming home languages or including/not-including home language words in illustrations	50%
Shedding one identity for another	—Change of attitude toward the new country (resistance to acceptance) —Exchanging new language/ cultural practices for previous ones	—Adjectives/verb processes that describe changes in attitude —Visual discontinuations/changes of home language/cultural practices	38%
Valuing children's names	—Topics refer to protecting/homing names —Names are shown in home languages —Illustrations depict emotions connected to names	—Topic of names —Visual representation of names in home language scripts —Visual representation of emotions connected to names	33%

* Note that in the case of all themes, the relationship between the text and illustrations (e.g., elaboration, contrast) was considered.

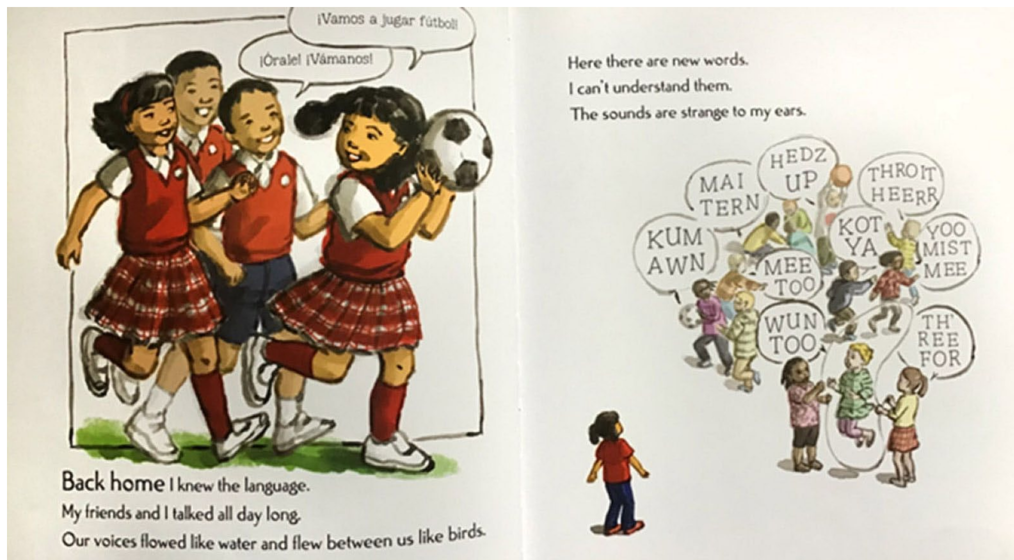


Fig. 1. I'm New Here.

example of how text and image can work together to help readers understand the feelings of being overwhelmed when learning a new language.

Figure 1 shows an example of *extension* in which the text in the cartoon bubbles fills in gaps from the written text and images which help us to understand better where the main character Maria is from through her use of a Mexican variety of Spanish (although it is not clear how many readers would pick up on this if they don't know Spanish as the book does not name Maria's home country). When she says "¡Vamos a jugar fútbol!", she is using authentic language she might use with her friends when playing soccer with them. The image also shows Maria and her friends wearing uniforms, which elaborates on the written text that talks about what she used to do with her friends by showing that she must have worn a uniform at her former school but doesn't now. Conversely, the text provides completely different information than the image by comparing their voices (in her mother tongue) to that of water, or birds. In the illustration on the right, the words in the speech bubbles elaborate the text saying that the sounds are "strange to my ears" by showing the spelling of the words that reflect the way she perceives them. They don't distinguish between sounds and words, which is common when one is at

the beginning stages of language learning and help the reader understand better the way that sounds are perceived when you don't know a language (something that many emergent bilingual learners would be able to relate to). The positioning of the close-up on the left of Maria and her friends and their happy faces with the tiny Maria in a long-distance pose with her back to the viewer visually juxtaposes her feelings between her home country and her new school. Although there is no interaction with Maria and the readers in order for them to engage with her, her gaze does intersect with her friends (she smiles at them and they smile back), which is a positive representation. The image and text also provide a good example of how feelings of newcomer students can be expressed in authentic ways through creative use of the home language in illustrations.

5.2. Reproducing Othering

Although our first theme shows that our data represented typical experiences immigrant children face, our second most frequent theme was *reproducing Othering.* Analysis of angle, distance and gaze between viewers and subjects revealed a systemic lack of interaction of the main characters with the viewer, and no mediated images in which readers are invited to see the stories through the eyes of the character (Painter et al., 2013).

While only 11% of images of immigrant children who were main characters depicted them looking directly at the viewer, 24% of other (non-immigrant) characters gazed at the viewer. This is noteworthy because as the main characters, we would expect them to engage much more with the viewer in order to develop a relationship and establish empathy. For example, in *The Colour of Home* (**Fig. 2**), the illustrator establishes contact with the viewer through direct gaze (and a smile) and provides a close-up of the main character and his mom from Somalia.

One Green Apple (**Fig. 3**) also did a good job establishing contact between the main character and readers through close-up depictions of Farah (the main character whose homeland is not specified) directly gazing at readers as if asking them to look and acknowledge her. However, close-ups like that shown in Figs. 2 and 3 were not common in the data, and our analysis revealed that only 10% of images

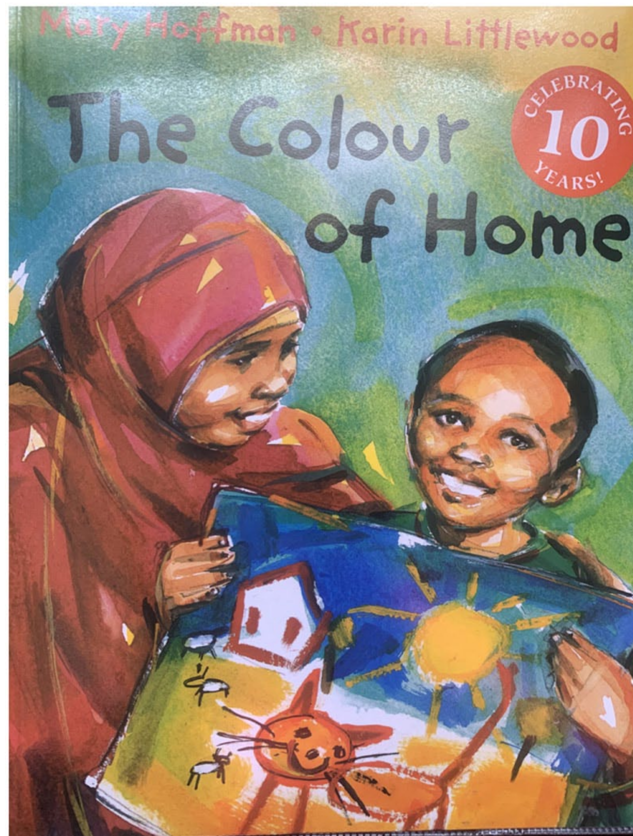


Fig. 2. The Colour of Home.

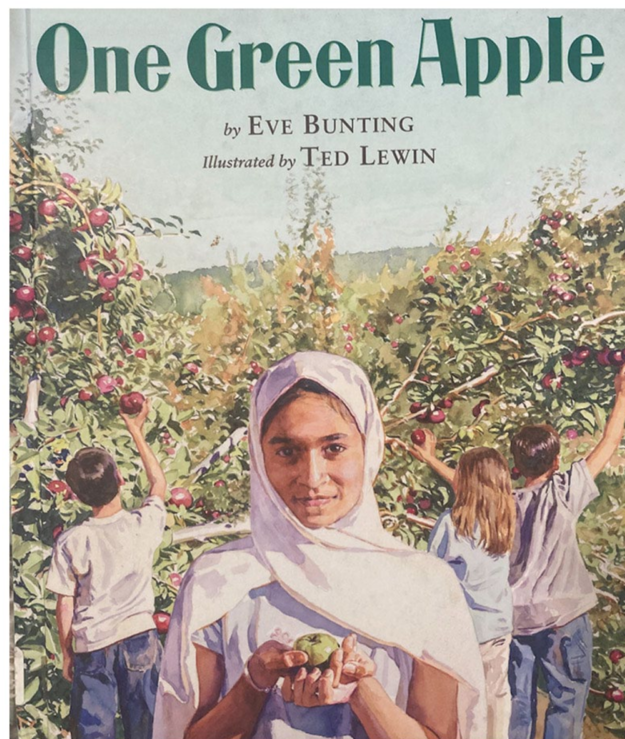


Fig. 3. One Green Apple.

of immigrant children compared to 13% of images of other characters were close-ups. In addition, 75% of the viewer angles were at eye level for the immigrant children depicted (and 19% downward, and 6% upward), while 91.6% of the non-immigrant characters were viewed at eye level and only 8% in downward angles and 0.4% upward. Taken together, all of these findings point to more intimate portrayals of non-immigrant characters. This more humanizing representation of non-immigrant characters is surprising because we would expect close-ups, equal angles and more interactions between the viewer and the subject to be more of a feature for the immigrant characters since they are the ones we need to get to know more. It is possible that they were not represented this way in order to depict their feelings of being isolated or marginalized. However, as we will point out below, there are many cases where there were opportunities for close-ups or direct gazes to illustrate the text, but these were not often capitalized on. For instance, **Figure 4 & Figure 5** below show examples of *contrast,* in which the text contrasts in some way what is found in the image.

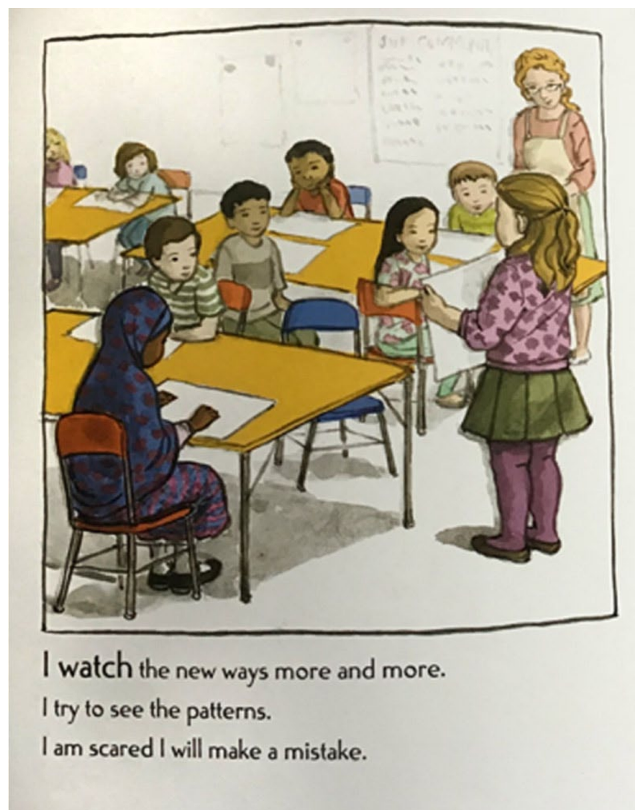


Fig. 4. Someone New.

In Fig. 4, the text features Fatimah (one of the main characters from Somalia) saying “I watch the new ways more and more. I try to see the patterns”. However, in the image, which features her sitting with mostly her back to the viewer (although we can see a small part of the side of her face), she is only staring at her paper. She is not watching for patterns as she says, she is just looking down. On the other hand, the faces of all the other students (except the one presenting in the front) can be seen by the viewer and they are shown as actively watching the presenter. In picturing alternative ways, the illustrator could have depicted this scene, Fatimah could have been looking at the presenter since that is what the verbal text says she is doing. In addition, we could have seen her face at a closer distance or at least seen her face as much as the other students.

In Fig. 5, again we are presented with an angle in which Fatimah’s friend is facing the viewer (and showing how helpful she is), whereas the text points out how Fatimah is also sharing with them, but we cannot see her face or the picture she drew that she is sharing. Instead, we see her back to us and just the figure of her hijab and her hands, which connotes her difference (e.g., clothing, skin

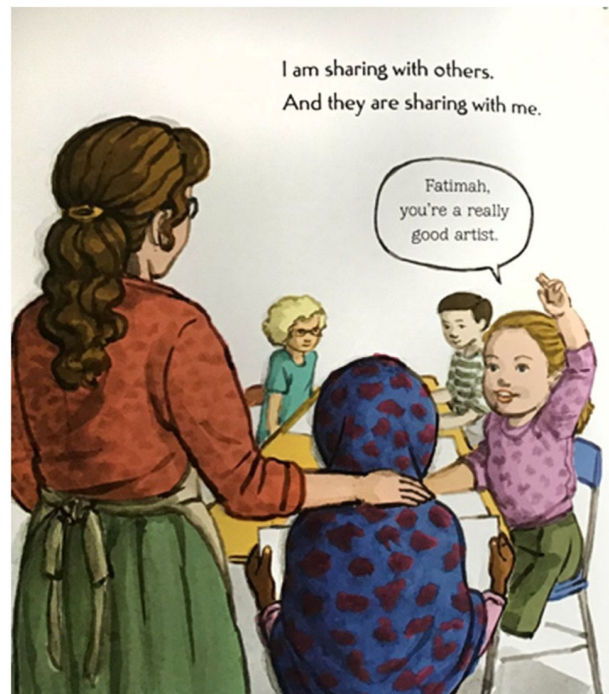


Fig. 5. Someone New.

color) from other students. In both images (and there are others as well), we are reminded of van Leeuwen's (2008) analysis of the portrayal of Muslim women in which he meticulously showed how the camera's downward angle functioned to "look down upon" the women and dress functioned to culturally categorize them as a homogenous group. The cultural categorization due to dress (e.g., Muslim), combined with the lack of any information or explanation that positively represented Islam, and lack of gaze or close distance function to 'Other' her, which is when people differentiate themselves from others largely by showing positive traits of the ingroup and negative traits of the outgroup (Catalano & Fielder, 2018). The author/illustrator could have avoided this problem (while still helping readers understand the challenges Fatimah faced) by featuring Fatimah's hands showing the picture (without the rest of her body) so that readers could put themselves in her place and "see the story world" through Fatimah's eyes, inviting a more "empathetic stance"(Painter et al., 2013). Alternatively, the author/illustrator could have positioned the readers as part of the audience able to see her smiling face (in a close-up) and her drawing.

Interestingly, although the book does feature Fatimah's hijab as part of her identity and does feature a page in which the Somali language is spoken, neither her country of origin nor her home language is ever named in the book (we infer her country of origin based on the home language presented in one of the illustrations), and there is no explanation about why she wears a hijab as part of her religious tradition of being Muslim. In fact, similar to what Gultekin and May (2020) found, only five of the 18 books (*From Far Away, The Colour of Home, One Green Apple, I'm New Here,* and *Someone New)* featured Muslim students, and even when Muslim children were featured, the authors/illustrators missed the opportunity to for the characters to talk about their country, language or religion (e.g., why Fatimah wears a hijab), or let them share with the class information about themselves. This is one reason why researchers such as Bishop (1990) recommend more cultural insiders become authors and illustrators because they might be more likely to include this kind of specific information. Interestingly, in our data set only 30% of authors are cultural insiders and only 21% of illustrators and as **Table 1** shows, this has not improved over time. In fact, more cultural insiders as author/illustrators were shown

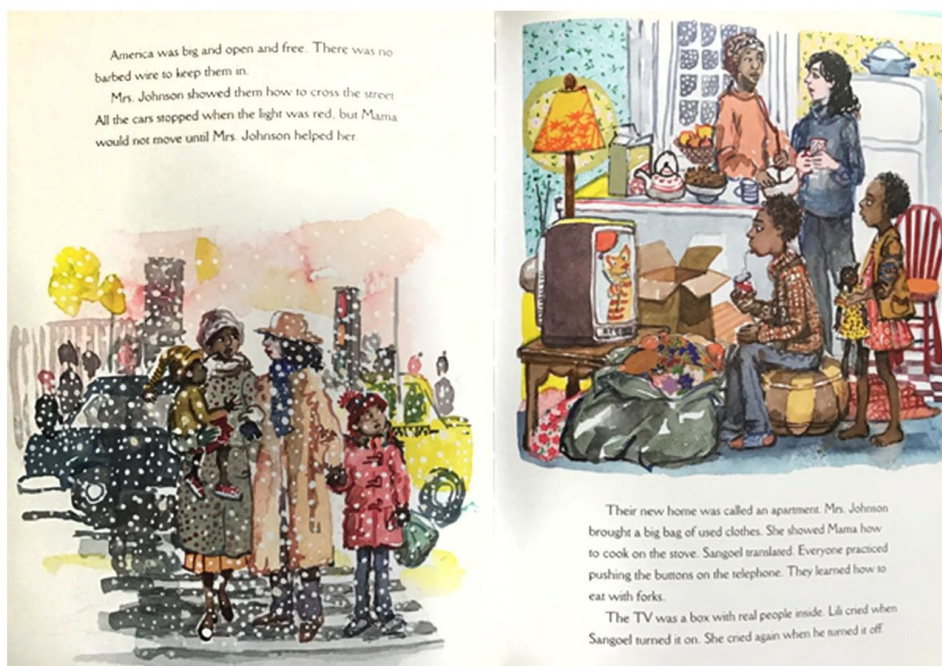
in earlier books than in the more recent ones, although we expect that books published since 2018 (the cut-off period for our analysis) may feature more cultural insiders as authors/illustrators. We would also like to note that in general, we did not find that more recent books were necessarily better in all aspects mentioned than those published earlier, although that was sometimes the case. Rather, books seemed to vary in what they did well and what they could improve on regardless of when they were published, and all books had some things they did well and other things that could have been done better.

5.3. Lack of agency

Another pattern in our data (and our third most common theme) was the tendency to depict immigrant children as lacking agency and power, and hence needing to be empowered by (mostly White) non-immigrant characters. According to Suárez-Orozco (2017), "Immigrant students are remarkably resilient and bring their own agency and assets to their lives" (p. 526). However, our analysis of verbal/visual actions depict young immigrant characters as more passive (e.g., *hide, smile, nod, watch)* than non-immigrant characters who were often portrayed as people who often actively offer help, show that they care, and give support to young immigrants (e.g., *show, help, offer, invite, teach, give)*. For example, in *Someone New,* the teacher says to one student, "Emma, please **help** Fatimah [the character from Somalia] feel at home." Overall, there are 45 main characters that offer help to immigrant children in the sampled literature and only ten of them are the same nationality/ethnic group of the main character (e.g., Unhei's mother and an owner of a Korean shop in *The Name Jar,* Maiko's uncle and aunt in *Dear Baobab)*. This is contrary to our own experiences and literature such as Suárez-Orozco (2017) which note that members of one's own ethnic group/nationality also commonly play a role in helping immigrant families transition along with others. Also, non-immigrant characters are shown as actively asking questions about immigrant children's situations. Along with caring and helping, *smiling* is another common verb (and action in illustrations) that sends the message that supporting characters are friendly people who welcome the children. Yet, this portrayal ignores the discrimination and hostility that is often faced by immigrants, which has been documented

in studies such as Lamme et al. (2004). In fact, none of our data contained explicit text or image that depicted any examples of racism or discrimination experienced by the children (with the exception of children being made fun of for not speaking English, such as in *Chocolate Milk, por favor)* and hence this seems to be something that authors might not be comfortable discussing or dealing with in the literature. However, because of the current anti-immigrant climate (and policies) in the U.S. (not to mention systemic racism), it seems imperative that more stories reflect these experiences in order to help students and educators avoid reproducing them, but also to help immigrant children deal with them (Lamme et al., 2004).

The analysis of actions in illustrations aligns with the text analysis most commonly depicting immigrant children as standing and watching without much emotion, which again reinforces the message that immigrants are taking passive roles. The non-immigrant characters are shown visually as more active than the immigrant children as they offer help and support. **Figure 6** is a good example of how text and images align with the idea that immigrant children and their families are passive in their experience of adapting to life in the U.S.



America was big and open and free. There was no barbed wire to keep them in.

Mrs. Johnson showed them how to cross the street. All the cars stopped when the light was red, but Mama would not move until Mrs. Johnson helped her.

Their new home was called an apartment. Mrs. Johnson brought a big bag of used clothes. She showed Mama how to cook on the stove. Sangoel translated. Everyone practiced pushing the buttons on the telephone. They learned how to eat with forks.

The TV was a box with real people inside. Lili cried when Sangoel turned it on. She cried again when he turned it off.

Fig. 6. My Name is Sangoel.

The text in Figure 6 shows how Mrs. Johnson (presumably someone from a refugee resettlement agency, or another organization) helped the family to "cross the street", "cook on the stove", and "eat with forks". Although this is certainly a common experience that refugees from South Sudan may have, the danger (as Adichie [2009] would add) lies in the single story. Both in text and image the children and their mother are shown as passive (note how Sangoel and his sister are just watching TV and not playing an active role in learning how things function in the new home), and ignorant of things most people in the U.S. might know, such as how to cross the street or cook with electricity. On the contrary, there is no mention of the skills and abilities the family does bring with them, such as being multilingual, having the ability to navigate difficult situations such as living in a refugee camp, and learning a new language and way of life.

5.4. Decontextualized and backgrounded homelands

According to Bishop (1990) children should be able to see reflections of their cultural beliefs and institutions, social relations, languages, customs and general "design for living" in children's books (p. 13). This means that when picture books tell their stories, we need to have details which inform us and paint a picture of the things they talk about. Unfortunately, seven (38%) of books in our data named the homelands of the main characters and 11 (61%) of the books depicted homelands visually. This does show that verbally or visually homelands are being represented to some degree. However, there are some ways in which the representation of homelands could be improved. For instance, among all 22 immigrant children in the 18 books, only eight (36 %) clearly stated the name of their home countries. Often when homelands were depicted visually, the images were vague and lacked details, and in our analysis, we only guessed the country of origin through language or dress. For example, in *One Green Apple,* the character Farah mentions she wears a *dupatta* (a head scarf typically worn in South Asian countries such as Pakistan) but the country is never specified. Overall, 8 of the 18 (44%) books depicted the main character's home language somehow in image or writing, although only five actually named the languages. Also, five books did not have any text to describe the character's homeland. In addition, three books

had main characters from Korea, but never specified South Korea, which is most likely where the characters were from. Three picture books (*Someone New, Mustafa,* and *The Seeds of Friendship)* do show the images of young immigrants' home countries through children's drawings, although in the case of *The Seeds of Friendship* the drawing was of exotic animals supposedly representing Africa (see Fig. 6), but not one particular country, and in *Someone New* and *Mustafa* the pictures are out of focus and hard to make out.

In the books that do mention young immigrants' homelands, there is an unequal representation of immigrants' homelands and the country they moved to with 73% of descriptions relating to the new country while only 27% dealt with the immigrant children's backgrounds. In addition, 44% of descriptions of homelands were positive while 69% of descriptions of the new country were positive and only the remaining 21 % negative.

In addition to the backgrounding of young immigrants' homelands, the data suggests that compared to immigrants' home countries, the new country is pictured as a much more developed country with more opportunities via the use of adjectives such as *"big", "open"*, and *"modern"*. In contrast, immigrants' homelands are portrayed as inadequate and undeveloped places in children's literature by using words to describe them such as *"not safe"*. The illustrations provide more visual evidence of stereotypes toward immigrants' home countries which were often associated with nature, such as mountains, springs, wild animals, rice fields, and grasslands. In contrast, the settings in the new country are modern cities, schools, classrooms, wide streets with fast cars, and tall buildings. These findings align with Gultekin and May (2020) who noted that only rural areas of Morocco were portrayed in books instead of large cities. While this may be the case sometimes, this is not always true. Immigrants do not always come from rural areas or developing countries, and the new country they moved to does not consist only of large urban cities (Gultekin & May, 2020). **Figure 7** provides a good example of how homelands were often depicted vaguely, in stereotypical ways, or as exotic, as found by Sung et al. (2016).

In Fig. 7, Adam is shown drawing pictures of books his parents read him that "brought back memories" of the "faraway place where he used to live," but this place is never named. Instead, by the drawings

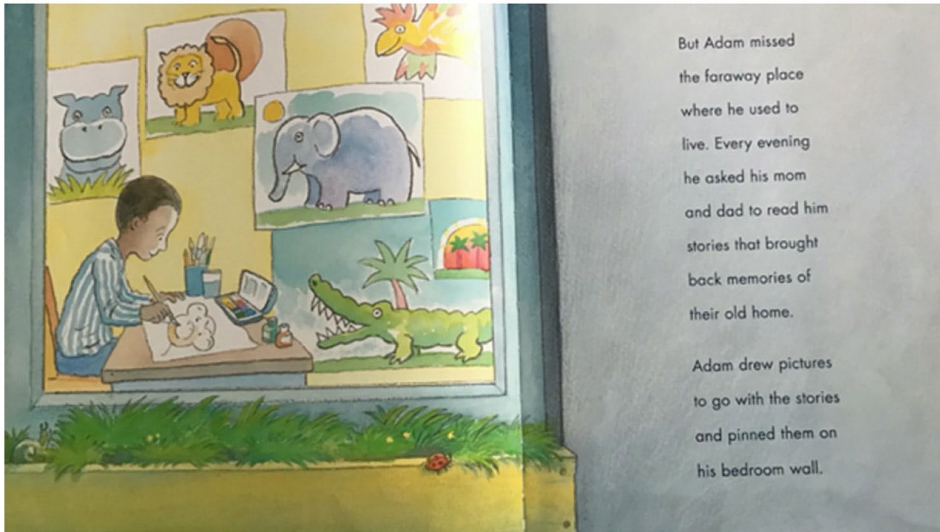


Fig. 7. The Seeds of Friendship.

on the wall, we can imply he is from a tropical place in which animals such as hippos, lions and elephants live (most likely Africa). Thus, this is a stereotypical image of Africa when in fact, most Africans only see these animals in zoos and of course these animals would never be seen in cities, which is where many African migrant children originate from. Here, image and text work together to produce a vague (and stereotypical) idea of where Adam is from. Needless to say, neither Adam's country nor home language was directly named in the book, communicating that it is not important for us to know.

5.5. Shedding one identity for another

Another pattern throughout the books was the portrayal of immigrant children's desire to take on new identities and abandon their old ones. Our analysis of verb processes showed resistance (e.g., *don't like/want to)* to the new country and culture at the beginning of the transition period. However, when approaching the end of the transitions, young immigrants were portrayed as forgetting their initial resistance and desiring to take on the new identity. For example, in *Goodbye, 382 Shin Dang Dong*, Jangmi (from Korea) changes her attitude of adopting an English name from "No, I like my name." to "Maybe someday I

Fig. 8. From Far Away.

would adopt Rose as my American name." In *Hannah Is My Name,* the main character Hannah from Taiwan conveys the message "We want to become Americans more than anything in the world." At the end of *From Far Away*, Saoussan from Lebanon tells readers that she decided that her new country is a nice place, and that she changed her name to Susan, but her mother told her to change it back. On her backpack it shows how her name is crossed out, then Susan is crossed out and replace by Saoussan again (see **Fig. 8**). Although this is an improvement (in that her original name is shown as still being valued), there is no indication that the character agreed with her mother that she should keep this name and there is no sense that she could be both Susan AND Saoussan.

There were some exceptions, such as *My Two Blankets,* in which the character (most likely from South Sudan, but not named in the book) points out at the end "No matter which blanket I use, I will always be me", showing an appreciation and valuing of the home culture while accepting her new life in the new one. However, most of the picture books we analyzed did not show signs of this additive

acculturation but instead featured immigrant children as needing to choose one identity over another. This is similar to Yoon et al. (2010) who found that ideologies of assimilation emerged through portrayals of immigrant children in transition processes.

5.6. Valuing children's names

Despite the lack of details on homelands and assimilation ideologies, we did find that the topic of 'names' and specifically, valuing children's names was featured in 6 out of 18 books (33%), which makes it the most common book topic in our data. This aligns with our literature review which points to the importance of names and the way names connect to identity (Peterson et al., 2015). *My Name is Yoon, The Day You Begin, The Name Jar,* and *My Name is Sangoel* did a particularly good job showing the emotions connected to a child's name visually and verbally. For example, **Figure 9** below from *The Day You Begin* shows how when the main character's teacher says his name and homeland, he perceives the sound as "soft" and "beautiful", comparing the sound of his name metaphorically to the blooming of flowers, which are pictured all around him.

Fig. 9. The Day You Begin.

The flowers are accompanied by musical notes to show the melody that is produced in his mind when he hears his name and country, and in the background the chalkboard and clock anchor the image to his school setting where this occurs. Rigoberto's face is shown smiling and leaning softly to the left (with his eyes lifted toward the musical notes and flowers) revealing the emotions of pleasure and calm he feels when his teacher says his name and homeland (Venezuela).

According to Lehiste (1975), "a person's identity is inextricably linked to their name"(p. 35), and thus in order to preserve one's 10 identity, we should keep our names, protect them from mispronunciation, and keep them sacred. As alluded to in our literature review, research that examines name practices and mispronunciation of immigrant names (and people of color in general) has long held that names carry cultural and family significance and "connect children to their ancestors, country of origin or ethnic group and often have deep meaning or symbolism for parents and families"(Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). When a child's name is mispronounced or deliberately changed or shortened, "it can negate the thought, care and significance of the name, and thus the identity of the child"(Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Hence when teachers and other students and adults in schools react negatively to the names of their students (e.g., laughing at them), it can impact the way that child sees themselves and their culture. Therefore, books that teach children (and simultaneously, educators) the importance of making efforts to pronounce immigrant children's names also instill in immigrant children "a love for their names and their culture"(Kohli & Solórzano, 2012). Another good example of how this was done in image and text comes from *My Name is Yoon* (Fig. 10 below).

In **Figure 10**, on the text side, we see examples of *elaboration* (clarifying or restating the text) to illustrate what Yoon's name looks like. The inclusion of the Hangul characters in the text (as well as the English translation as if handwritten by Yoon) explain the description of the name, but also invite readers to engage with this specific language and its writing system, which makes it more authentic (Bishop, 1990). In addition, the text explains the special meaning of the name for Yoon in Korean (Shining Wisdom) while illustrating a typical experience that children coming from different writing systems must engage in (and the emotions attached to this) when moving to

It was not long after we settled in that my father called me to his side.

"Soon you will go to your new school. You must learn to print your name in English," he said. "Here. This is how it looks."

YOON

I wrinkled my nose. I did not like YOON. Lines. Circles. Each standing alone.

"My name looks happy in Korean," I said. "The symbols dance together."

윤

"And in Korean my name means Shining Wisdom. I like the Korean way better."

"Well, you must learn to write it this way. Remember, even when you write in English, it still means Shining Wisdom."

Fig. 10. My Name is Yoon.

a country that uses a different writing system. By adding "Remember, even when you write in English, it still means Shining Wisdom", the author encourages students to value their names even when they must learn to write it in a different way, and it represents the child's language positively. The corresponding image *enhances* the text by providing the extra information of what Yoon's house looks like, what her father looks like, and his action of helping her (writing her name in English for her while she watches) make this adaptation to life in the U.S. In fact, it is one of the few examples we found in which children are being helped by their own families or members of their own ethnic group/country of origin. In addition, the illustration is interesting and pleasing to look at with its checkered floor and surreal angles and style which is characteristic throughout the book.

6. Discussion

The answers to our research questions of how young immigrant experiences were portrayed in picture books and how text and illustrations work together to communicate ideologies about immigrant children are complex. While there were many examples in the data of "windows" and "mirrors" (Bishop, 1990) that will allow students and teachers to understand (and reflect on) young immigrants'

experiences in a positive way, we also found examples of problematic ideologies found either in text, image, or both, as we described in our findings section.

In terms of what was done well in image and text, all the books described well visually or verbally (or both) typical issues/events/problems that many immigrant children undergo which have been documented in the literature (e.g., Suárez-Orozco, 2017). Images largely extended our understanding of what it means to learn a new language by illustrating what it sounds like when you don't understand what people are saying (e.g., Fig. 3) or the emotional attachment one has for their mother tongue (e.g., Fig. 9). The books also highlighted the importance of names as part of one's identity and modeled how children can advocate for their own names to be pronounced correctly and valued (e.g., *My Name Is Sangoel)*, which put forth multilingual/multicultural ideologies (as opposed to those that privilege English) about how we should value the languages and cultures of all students.

In terms of areas to attend to, Othering occurred more often in image than text by allowing viewers to see immigrant youths' backs and not their faces (and in the case of Fatimah, her hijab), long-distance views, or a lack of interaction between the viewer and the subjects, and there was a complete lack of images which positioned readers in the place of the characters. Without establishing this relationship with the children in the pictures, we become observers of the "Other". Lutz and Collins (1993) note that when people in pictures are looking at another subject and that gaze is not returned, it "articulates the power of the observer over the observed", and in the context of our study which focuses on immigrant children, it allows the Other to be "viewed as an ethnic object"(pp. 189, 204). The consistent pattern of these representations (and general lack of alternative depictions) can dehumanize the children in subtle ways and reproduce biases toward young immigrants and immigration that exist in the wider society about immigrants and different ethnic/racial groups (Sembiante et al., 2018).

We also found a tendency to portray immigrant children as without agency. This pattern in both text and image reveals the ideology of the "White Savior" which promotes the idea of immigrants as vulnerable, weak victims who are passive receivers of aid from others,

usually not cultural insiders. According to Dyches (2020) the "White Savior" narrative is when White characters are presented as heroic based on sacrifices they make for "characters of color"(p. 35). In the sampled literature, the non-immigrant characters who offer help (only nine out of 36 of which are not White) are portrayed as the active "us" who rescue young immigrants, and young immigrants are the passive "them" who are thankful for the rescue. This ideology in the children's literature exposes a power difference between non-immigrant characters and immigrants in the new country and features a "heroic colonizing force" and "paternalistic racism" (Hughey, 2014 ; Maurantonio, 2017).

Similar to Strekalova-Hughes (2019), our findings also show that in multicultural children's literature, the assumption of power and privilege is often present. This was seen in the way that the new countries were depicted as advanced developed countries that create opportunities and are thus better than immigrants' homelands (which explains why homelands were so infrequently named, and largely pictured vaguely without details). The ideology of assimilation, which has been widely discussed in immigrant discourse studies as well as children's literature (Yoon et al., 2010), was present more frequently through text than image and featured multiple examples of children expressing a desire to take a new identity, to the detriment of other identities. Assimilation refers to "the process by which individuals from one minority group 'blend' into a dominant group by losing their own identities."(Yoon et al., 2010). Most of the books in our data (with a few exceptions mentioned earlier) feature young immigrants' resistance to change in identities or cultural practices (e.g., learning the new language, new routines in school) at the beginning of their transitions; however, these problems tend to disappear toward the end of the story when the children show a desire to accept the new culture. This ideology is consistent with Yoon et al.'s (2010) and Johnson and Gasiewicz's (2016) findings that immigrating to a new country means shedding your individual identities and values and embracing the new identity and culture. This ideology has been found to be common in children's literature, and so it is not surprising that this appears in our study as well. This moves us toward our research aim of informing readers of some general tendencies in the representation of children's immigration experiences in picture books in order to

help teachers select books that include more culturally authentic representations and/or critically approach the teaching/reading of these books, which we describe in our next section.

7. Implications/Conclusion

There are several implications from our study which could help continue to guide the portrayal of immigrant youth in children's literature in text and image. First, we encourage authors/illustrators to feature more images of immigrant children in close-up views interacting in a direct gaze with readers or in ways that position the reader as if they can see the world through the character's eyes in order to build empathy for the characters instead of viewing their backs or in long distances. In addition, more detail needs to be given in terms of the homelands of the children, the languages they speak, and the funds of knowledge they already bring to school with them (González et al., 2006). Immigrant youths' own agency in their adaptation process needs to be forefronted visually and verbally so they are shown not only as passive receivers of help, but as actively taking part in their integration into the new school and society, and there is a need for stories that recount discrimination/racism that immigrant youth sometimes encounter in society. Finally, more authors/illustrators from the culture/geographical area from which the main character hails are needed to create these stories as they often are able to provide the detail and nuance that we found to be lacking in some of the books. We would also like to point out that these suggestions could be helpful not just for multicultural children's literature but also for any type of representation of immigrant experiences in any educational setting.

An important significance of our study is that when we select curriculum designed to teach about immigrant experiences, especially for young readers, we must attend to not only the way that migrants are represented verbally but also visually. Hence when teachers select picture books that depict immigrant children's experiences to read their students, they might find it useful to consider the following questions: How does this book represent the children visually? Does the book represent authentic experiences of immigrant children that include rich details and multiple dimensions in written text and illustrations?

These questions are helpful because visual representations can be just as powerful as text in communicating myths, stereotypes, values, and beliefs that reproduce discriminatory ideologies from the wider society. MCDA remains a valuable way for us to detect these ideologies, but also to aid teachers in designing/creating or choosing curricula that humanizes and individualizes migrant experiences. We also encourage teachers and educators to expand their choices of multicultural children's literature to include international contexts with global migration, not just local immigration narratives.

Recognizing that no picture books are perfect, we want to highlight the role that teachers have in helping students learn to read the literature critically. In agreement with Botelho and Rudman (2009), we encourage educators to invite children to be part of the critical analysis of children's literature and serve as critical role models in pointing out biases and reflecting on them. In this way, teachers may help children develop the ability to find dominant ideologies in their own literature choices (as well as those chosen by the teacher), compare their own experiences with the literature, and eventually counter these ideologies with positive social action. In doing so, we empower learners to be critical individuals who reflect on their experiences in the world and participate in equal dialogue in society (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

Our study does have some limitations. First, since we looked for a very specific aspect of the immigration experience, our data is limited and does not include books that were published after our analysis period (2018), which might show more critical awareness on this topic or a tendency for more author/illustrator cultural insiders. We would also like to acknowledge as a limitation that by not selecting bilingual books, we eliminated authors who are insiders that could definitely have impacted the representation in texts and might have yielded different patterns.

Despite these limitations, we are confident that we do provide a way for teachers and educators to examine and reflect on the visual and verbal communication in books they choose to read to students, and we hope that future studies continue our focus on multimodal analysis of picture books expanding this to other topics and including bilingual books as well.

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