

THE ROLE OF PICTURE BOOKS IN DEVELOPING AN EMPATHIC RESPONSE TOWARDS CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

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Abstract

This study investigates how empathic narrative techniques are used in a selection of contemporary Australian ‘multicultural’ picture books to position their readers to take up empathic responses towards cultural difference. Drawing examples from 17 migration-themed Australian picture books, it argues that picture books, through fictional manifestation of migrants’ experiences, encourage readers’ perceptive understanding of the plights of migrants and refugees, and thereby have the potential to nurture tolerance and empathy. In looking at narrative empathy, this thesis reviews current scholarship on cognitive narratology, multiculturalism and multicultural children’s literature to probe the ways in which Australian multicultural picture books have responded to the changing politics of migration, asylum seeker, and refugee issues under the policy of multiculturalism. This extensive enquiry into literature informs the social-cultural ideologies and political imperatives that shape production and reception of children’s picture books within and beyond the Australian context.

Located at a point of intersection between multiculturalism and children’s literature, the research is part of a broad field that draws primarily on literary, narratological and ethical studies. In particular, this study integrates the theory of narrative empathy (Keen, 2006, 2007) and the concept of empathic unsettlement (LaCapra, 2001) with Stephens’s (2011) interpretation of schema and scripts as transformative instruments, to construct an analytical framework that allows for detailed understanding of narrative mediation in shaping implied readers’ responses towards cultural difference. The findings highlight that picture books draw on familiar schemas to challenge, affirm or disrupt preconceptions about migrants and thereby position readers to take up an empathic position towards cultural difference.

This thesis makes a significant contribution to the emerging field of cognitive criticism of children’s literature, and, in particular, to the study of empathy in picture books. While the moral possibility of fiction has been well documented, only a few recent studies have investigated similar topics in the context of children’s literature and none of them has drawn on the theory of narrative empathy and empathic unsettlement to explore migrant experiences in picture books as a means of affective response to cultural difference. This research will be a significant contribution to the

field of Australian children's literature criticism through its examination of how picture books respond to complex issues of migration and asylum seeking: issues that have a high political profile. Further to that, it approaches Australian multicultural picture books as a domain to explore intricate emotions and prosocial morality. The research is also significant from a methodological perspective as it draws upon a combination of cognitive narratology, narrative empathy and semiotics to construct a multifaceted method of textual analysis.

List of Relevant Publications

- Dissanayake Mudiyansele, K. (2014). *Australian Picture Books' Response to the Changing Politics and Policies of Multiculturalism*. Paper presented at the Postgraduate Research in Education: Annual Higher Degree Student-led Conference, The University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia.
- Dissanayake Mudiyansele, K. (2014). Encouraging Empathy through Picture Books about Migration. In K. Mallan (Ed.), *Picture Books and Beyond* (pp. 75-91). Australia: Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA).

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Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: QUT Verified Signature

Kumarasinghe Dissanayake Mudiyansele

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Multiculturalism and migration-related issues are central to this study, which is concerned with the empathic potential of children's fiction, specifically picture books that deal with complex issues of cultural difference. In the globalised world, especially in the latter half of the 20th century and early 21st century, there has been an increase in contact between cultures through migration and other movements across the world, with the result that many societies have become more linguistically and culturally diverse than they were previously. Addressing the question, 'How can this diversity be accommodated in legal and political terms?', gave rise to the ideological phenomenon of 'multiculturalism' and its political presence as a philosophy in the Western world (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 1). Multiculturalism is associated with liberal egalitarian values of autonomy and equality. However, toleration of and respect for group differences are difficult to achieve if individuals do not have rapport with one another. This is evident in the prevalence of racism, prejudice and discrimination in almost every officially-proclaimed multicultural society, for instance, Australia, Canada, the UK and the USA (Dunn & Nelson, 2011; Hall, 1996; Naidoo, 1992; Uslaner, 2012; Vasta & Castles, 1996). Therefore, both multiculturalists (Barry, 2001; Parekh, 1999; Raz, 1998) and moral philosophers (Avenanti, Sirigu, & Aglioti, 2010; Does, Derks, & Ellemers, 2011) emphasise the importance of 'empathy' for social harmony in a multicultural society. Works of literature, among other cultural resources, are believed to have the potential to promote empathy and thereby contribute to intergroup tolerance.

The potential of literature to promote prosocial emotions, such as empathy, has long been posited. However, it was not until recently that children's literature scholars began to attend to empathy as an element in children's literature (see: (Mallan, 2013; Nikolajeva, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). One major aspect of what has been termed the 'empathy debate' in contemporary scholarship is whether or not fiction elevates a reader's empathy. While studies from psychology (Baron-Cohen, 1995; Oatley, 2004, 2011c) and moral philosophy (Currie, 2010; Nussbaum, 1990, 1997) have examined empathy in terms of biological and moral standpoints, the study of literature's potential to develop empathy in readers is only emerging now in

educational research. Recent research in literature studies, fiction in general (Davis, 2010) and children's literature in particular (Mallan, 2013) debates whether fiction can encourage readers to revisit their viewpoint on the subject of cultural difference with a view to developing empathy towards characters who are marginalised or isolated. This study is significant as it further investigates narrative empathy in the context of Australian children's literature. In particular, it analyses a corpus of 17 migration-themed picture books to elaborate how picture books provide readers with accessible narratives to investigate the complex issues of migration and thereby position them to take up an empathic position towards cultural difference.

The key question for the corpus analysis in this study is: How do contemporary Australian multicultural picture books draw on empathic narrative techniques to encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference and adversity? Picture books are a sophisticated yet accessible form of literature that use both words and illustrations in their narrative constructions. To date, no study has undertaken sustained and systematic research of the potential of picture books to elicit empathic responses to the issues of cultural difference and multiculturalism. Many studies repeatedly claim that literature contributes to children's socialisation, but for Nikolajeva (2012b) there is a lack of such research on "readers' affective engagement with fiction" (Nikolajeva, p. 275). While this study does not investigate readers' affective engagement, it nevertheless focuses on the empathic potential of Australian 'multicultural' picture books for eliciting both cognitive and affective engagement.

Those who believe empathy is a motivational factor that incites prosocial behaviours in individuals contribute to what is known as the 'empathy-altruism debate.' As advocates of the empathy-altruism hypothesis, Richard Rorty (1989, 2007) and Martha Nussbaum (1997, 2001), believe empathic reading experiences may result in a series of responses chain reaction that can induce sympathy and encourage altruistic behaviour. Suzanne Keen (2006) does not completely agree with this 'sympathy-altruism' hypothesis, and argues for narrative empathy as an affective transaction (p. xxv) which transcends temporal, spatial and cultural boundaries to "extend readers' sense of shared humanity beyond the predictable limitations" (p. 214). For her, this is an intrinsic power of fiction. Keen's interest is in adult novels, whereas this study focuses on Australian 'multicultural' picture books that address

many aspects of experiences of migration (both forced and voluntary), providing a rich source for research on narrative emotions. By drawing on recent studies on empathy in fiction (Hogan, 2011; Keen, 2007, 2010), this research will contribute to Australian picture book research and to the field of children's literature research more globally.

Studying the empathic potential of narratives has become a major interest of the emerging field of cognitive narratology (or cognitive poetics), a field that, as John Stephens (2011) notes, offers: "some powerful approaches to literature as a form of human cognition and communication with a specific potential for responding to social reality" (p. 12). The cognitive instruments of schema and script can greatly contribute to our understanding of how texts represent cultural diversity and in how readers are positioned to respond positively or negatively to these representations. Cognitive narratology has contributed to the field of narrative studies by advancing the systematic study of narratives to explore the nexus between narratives and the mind. An influential study by Suzanne Keen (2007) considers how fiction writers use 'empathic narrative techniques' to evoke empathic emotions in readers. This study applies cognitive narratological concepts of script and schema and empathic narrative techniques described by Keen as analytic tools to examine the empathic potential of a selection of Australian picture books that engage with issues of multiculturalism and migration.

While multiculturalism is practised by many immigration nations such as Australia, Canada, UK and the USA, its future success or failure seems to rest largely on public empathy: the public's ability to understand others and willingness to share (shared humanity). Multicultural experts such as Joseph Raz (1998) and Brian Barry (2001) posit that no political democracy will be meaningful without public empathy. The role of empathy becomes pivotal in any address of diversity. Therefore Serena Does and others (Does et al., 2011) argue that emphasising moral ideals such as empathy in the place of obligation motivates the public to support social equality. However, it is contentious to claim that political ideologies such as multiculturalism, with a lack of moral intent/ethics of compassion on the public's part, achieve less success, though there are instances that overturn public attitudes towards certain cultural groups and lead to generalisations. For example, the anti-Muslim sentiment in the world and 'Islamophobia' in Australia (Dunn, Klocker, & Salabay, 2007)

following events such as the 9/11 attack and 7/7 London bombing made the public sceptical about multicultural harmony. Migration and multicultural policy shifts in Australia are extensively investigated in this research, together with political responses to the refugee/asylum seeker situation, which have always been at odds with multiculturalism. With this focused attention on multiculturalism, this study elaborates how picture books provide young readers with accessible means to investigate the complex issues of migration and stimulate their interest and empathy with respect to the human impact of (implied) policies and politics. In understanding the ways that advocacy for empathy occurs through multicultural children's literature, this research further examines how themes or concepts such as belonging, inclusion, tolerance, diversity, and freedom or othering, exclusion, prejudice, and paranoia are appropriated by national and trans-national Australian authors for young readers through a highly mediated literary genre – Australian children's picture books. Therefore, in a time in which migration and asylum seeker issues remain of significance for many countries, studying empathy in the realm of multicultural literature is timely. As Mallan (2013) proclaims, “a renewed focus on empathy – and the ways in which it is understood by adults and promoted to young people – can provide us with significant insight into some of our assumptions about how we ‘do’ understanding, how we breach (or don't) cultural differences” (p. 113).

I begin here with an introduction that looks at the ideological background of children's literature with particular attention to its relationship with politics (or political ideologies) and move then to define what is understood as ‘Australian multicultural picture books’ in this study. On this basis I then state the central aim and associated questions that inform the conceptual framework of the research. I define a number of key concepts as relevant to my study, which is followed by the multifaceted methodological approach to analysing the selection of picture books.

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

The general context of this study is ‘children's literature.’ Children's literature can be simply defined as the literature written for children or having children in mind as its main audience. However, many complications arise about the accuracy of children's literature's naming, authorship, objectives and audience. For instance, Kenneth Kidd (2004) questions the whole notion of ‘children's literature’ based on the fact that it is mostly written by adults. Considering this adult mediation in creating children's

texts, Bette Goldstone and Linda Labbo (2004) define children's fiction as stories written by adults for children. Katharine Jones (2006) observes the "fundamental definitional problems" (p. 305) associated with the existing term 'children's literature' for the texts that are produced almost entirely by adults "with child readers usually being the target of the book." In order to avoid the difficulties that it creates for researchers, she offers 'child literature' as more appropriate terminology. However, Cherie Allan (2012) notes the difficulty of shifting to a new term while the existing use of 'children's literature' is so deeply embedded in both the scholarly field and informal circles.

In terms of its objectives, many scholars (for instance Bradford, 1996; Goldstone & Labbo, 2004; Stephens, 1992) agree that children's literature aims to foster socio-cultural values that shape the subjectivity of maturing children. Clare Bradford (1996), for instance, posits that: "children's texts function as agents of socialization, inscribing ideologies concerning social and cultural norms" (p. 92). However, this raises the question: Do the texts produced for children have a single audience? For Temple, Martinez, Yokota, and Freeman (2011) there is an implied adult reader alongside the child: "children's literature is the collection of books that are read to and by children...from birth to about age fifteen" (p. 6). It is a commonplace to assume that sophisticated children's texts comprise themes that transcend age. For instance, children's literature's scholars assume that picture books are produced with both young and adult audiences in mind (Nikolajeva, 1998, 2012b; Nodelman, 2005; Stephens, 2011). Apart from the text's production, the mediating role that adults (for instance parents and teachers) play with children's books in general, in terms of selecting, reading, and using them for social, cultural and literacy purposes, should not be underestimated.

While children's literature has evolved to "a distinct and definable genre of literature" (Nodelman, 2008, p. 242), picture books have developed into a new form of literature that tells stories through pictures only or through the equal partnership of both pictures and words. That means some picture books appear to be visual texts while others present themselves as visual-verbal texts. Various described as a verbal-visual art form, hybrid texts and cultural product, picture books address manifold subject areas that suit a diverse readership ranging from toddlers to adults (Mallan, 2014). Picture books, particularly in the Western world, have evolved from

bimodal (verbal-visual) texts to a digitised multi-model art form that challenges conventions which govern their format, substance and the audience. This evolution is ongoing, and innovative experiments of picture book creators will decide the parameters of this transformation in the future. Considering their complex nature, Panaou and Michaelides (2010) identify picture books as texts that “break conventions, resist categorisation, subvert reading expectations, and yet are highly successful in communicating powerful and engaging stories” (p. 12). Acceptance of such an assumption necessitates the appropriation of some new trends and developments in literary criticism to children’s literature, especially with respect to narrative empathy. This thesis makes a significant contribution to this task by undertaking the first substantive study of narrative empathy in picture books.

Politics and Children’s Literature

Children’s literature is both a cultural and an ideological production. In terms of culture, it is a long held and widely accepted idea that books for children function as vehicles that both embody and transmit the culture of a society (Nodelman, 2008; Stephens, 1990, 1992; Sutherland, 1985). For instance, the French scholar of comparative literature, Paul Hazard (1983), regards children’s literature as a means in which “a national soul is formed and sustained” (p. 111). For John Stephens (1992) the use of stories as agents of socialisation is a “conscious and deliberate process” (p. 9). As such, children’s fictions are not free from ideologies. Robert B. Sutherland (1985) observes that, like any other type of literature, children’s books are also “informed and shaped” by the author’s perceived value systems regarding the notion of how the world “*is or ought to be*” (pp. 143, italics in original). This ideological influence is not limited to fictional literature for young adults, as Mickenberg and Nel (2008) find “even literature for the youngest children is ideological” (p. 7). Even if these texts intend to foster a positive apperception of a particular society’s world view and moral assumptions in children, Stephens (1990, 1992) suggests that such values and supporting ideologies are not always obtrusive in the literature for children. While most of these values are bound with social, cultural and religious ideologies, others represent political ideologies.

Charles Sarland (2005) observes the temporal and spatial partiality of literature’s perspective, noting that “literature is a product of the particular historical and social formations that prevail at the time of its production” (p. 41). Among other

factors, the politics, or as Stephens (1992) terms it, ‘ruling ideologies’ (p.9) of the time of composition play a dominant and influential role in literature for both adults and children. However, on the surface, politics and children’s literature seem to be at odds. One reason for this assumed separation is the common belief that children’s literature is ‘innocent’ and hence politically neutral. There is also a view that ascribes didacticism and moral intent to children’s literature (Nodelman, 2003). However, in introduction to *Tales for Little Rebels: A Collection of Radical Children's Literature* (2008), Mickenberg and Nel assert that the children’s literature necessarily involves both morality and politics. While morality is overtly and explicitly expressed, political perspectives are conveyed implicitly, “masked or submerged beneath a distracting surface” (Sutherland, 1985, p. 144). Peter Hunt (1991) finds this dual function – the insistence of moral intent while political intent is being suggested – to be a fascinating aspect of children’s literature.

Robert Sutherland (1985) classifies this silent politics in children’s literature into three categories: politics of advocacy, politics of attack and politics of assent. The politics of advocacy entails “pleading for and promoting a specific cause, or upholding a particular point of view or course of action as being valid and right” (1985, p. 144). The perceived overt didacticism and optimism (Nodelman, 2003) of children’s books correlates with the politics of advocacy. Children’s books also accommodate nationalism, patriotism, and cultural idealism. For instance, Strahan (1979) considers Mary Grant Bruce’s famous Billabong series (1910-1942) was influential in the formation of Australian national identity based on the visions of ‘the bush¹.’ By contrast, a politics of attack runs conversely to a particular ideology, philosophy, or practice. It is generated by an author’s “sense of amusement, outrage or contempt” (Sutherland, 1985, p. 146) when things are in contradiction with their perceived value systems, world views and truth conditions. For example, children’s stories such as *Don’t Kiss the Frog* (Waters & Claybourne, 2008) and *The Paper Bag Princess* (Munsch & Martchenko, 2012) contest the conception of femininity created by Cinderella stories as graceful, charming princesses dancing and waiting for a prince’s kiss. Jo Lampert (2009) describes such stories as “counter-narratives” (p. 109). In contrast, the politics of assent neither advocates nor attacks, but simply

¹ Although bush can literally mean a shrub or vegetation, in Australia it means wilderness, sparsely inhibited land or outback. Romanticised through poems, paintings and fiction, the bush has become iconic in Australian national identity.

affirms (consciously or unconsciously) and thereby reinforces a conception prevalent in a society. Many children's stories fall under this category. One example is *The Little Refugee* (2011) by Anh Do and Suzanne Do. The picture book affirms Australia's treatment of refugees during the 1980s. But the very fact of the contrast between what is in the book and the current reality for many refugees requires attention. Ostensibly, the subjects that children's fiction addresses implicitly are not limited to nationalism, gender politics or refugee affairs, but encircle many different 'heavy handed' (Stephens, 1990) political ideologies such as multiculturalism.

MULTICULTURALISM AND MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

In general terms, 'multicultural' and 'multiculturalism' respectively refer to societies that are culturally diverse and the ideologies and policies that address the fact of diversity. In defining these terms, Joseph Raz (1994) writes: "'Multicultural' refers to the empirical fact of diversity, 'multiculturalism' to a normative political response to that fact. Multiculturalism is a policy based on a philosophy of saying 'yes' to the fact of diversity" (p.173). The demographic diversity brought about by migrant influxes into Western societies such as Canada, the USA, the UK and Australia following World War II created the challenge of accommodating diverse minority cultures in one land together with the historically dominant mainstream culture. When the socio-political systems prevalent at the time, such as liberalism, were not capable of accommodating diversity successfully, Western governments adopted multiculturalism in order to accommodate diverse cultures in an inclusive way. Theoretically, it became a means of asserting equity and social justice for every citizen, while politically it had other motives (Raz, 1994).

The Australian government made a move from its former policy of assimilation towards the ideology of multiculturalism in the early 1970s. According to Stephens (1990), Australian children's literature also "shifted with it" (p. 180). This shift was greatly influenced by the multicultural education programs that included, for instance, inter-cultural studies, ethnic studies and social communication as recommended in the Kaldor Report (Kaldor, 1981) and the Zubrzycki Report (Zubrzycki, 1982a). While educational authorities, syllabus committees and teachers pursued such programs with "considerable enthusiasm and vigour" (Stephens, 1990, p. 80), writers of children's fiction began to appropriate multiculturalism in their

writings. Thereby, multiculturalism “was strongly advocated as a desirable social value and one to be inculcated in child readers” (Stephens, 1990, p. 80) through Australian children’s fiction. Further development of this advocacy gave rise to ‘multicultural children's literature’:

Multicultural children's literature 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. (Gopalakrishnan & Persiani-Becker, 2011, p. 5)

Development of multicultural children’s literature in Australia, however, is not straightforward. With the introduction of multiculturalism as an official policy and the initiation of multicultural education programs, a multicultural influence began to occur in educational publications. Authors started changing the composition of story books by placing minority figures in their stories. Stephens (1990), Bradford and Hui Ling (2007) find this loosely conceived aspect of multiculturalism common to Australian multicultural literature and describe it as ‘acceptance of difference’ or ‘celebrating diversity’. In addition, Stephens (1990) finds that the appearance of marginalised figures – that is, migrant characters – as alternative subjects in Anglo-Australian historical fiction occurred as part of the process of Anglo-Australian writers attempting to represent other cultures.

In an attempt to identify what is meant by multicultural children’s literature, Debra Dudek (2011b) finds some books “represent multicultural themes without engaging with more meaningful ideological tensions,” while others attempt to “reflect cultural diversity in natural, authentic or truthful ways” (p. 159). This ideological stand defines the aspects of multiculturalism the text promotes: tokenistic or committed. Dudek also identifies that the relationship between government policies and the publication of children’s literature is contradictory: whereas government policies such as multicultural education initiatives create a ready market for multicultural children’s books, “these books may be read as oppositional texts” according to Dudek (2011b, p. 157). Accordingly, going back to Sutherland’s classification discussed above, most of the children’s literature addressing politics of multiculturalism can be categorised under the politics of attack, in other words, as questioning the fairness of ruling ideology. While questioning the political

adaptations of multiculturalism on the one hand, such texts on the other hand advocate empathy by way of familiarising readers with the experiences of marginalised characters. Australian multicultural picture books provide a corpus to investigate this potential for readerly empathy. Australian multicultural picture books form a specific sub-genre of the overall genre that is known as ‘picture books.’

Picture Books

Picture books may contain only illustrations, as is the case, for instance, in *The Arrival* (Tan, 2006). However, the majority contains both words and pictures. It is the interplay of words and images that attends to the discourses (such as multiculturalism, cultural diversity) that inform the text, as well as the discourses that the text produces through its visual and/or verbal narratives (discourses such as tolerance and integration). However, unlike illustrated books that contain more verbal information than pictures, pictures in picture books take all or most of the ‘burden’ in conveying the message, as Nodelman (1988) notes:

The pictures in picture books are literally “illustrations” – images that explain or clarify words and each other. But unlike other illustrations... the pictures in picture books take up most of the space and bear the burden of conveying most of the information. (p. iii)

Bette Goldstone (2001) partly agrees with Nodelman’s emphasis on pictures in picture books. For Goldstone, both pictures and verbal content in picture book narratives are equally important in conveying the story: “picture books are categorised not by content but by format, which is an interdependence of the illustration and the text” (2001, p. 363). While Goldstone’s idea has merit, such an assumption, however, overlooks wordless picture books. Marantz and Marantz (2005) offer a more complete definition, considering the picture book as one that “tells a story either in pictures alone or in almost equal partnership with some text” (p. vii). Further complications to the definition occur in texts like *The Arrival*, which contains no words (though it has numbered sections), is much longer than the usual picture book, and can be described as a graphic novel. These contending views in the field and ongoing evolution of the picture book itself make it difficult to define picture books.

As is evident in many picture books, the most significant structuring characteristic is the dual narration, verbal and visual, through which the narrative is

presented. According to Allan (2010), “this juxtaposition of pictures and texts results in a sophisticated, multifaceted art form” which requires “a complex reading process or framework” (p. 9) that is different from such processes involved in other children’s fiction, for instance, novels. Allan’s suggestion of picture books as an art form of juxtaposed pictorial and verbal narration is further explicated in Nikolajeva and Scott’s (2013) system of categories that details how words and illustration may function. They identify four ways the reciprocity of pictures and verbal depictions contribute to the narrative, namely by being: consonant and symmetrical (they tell the same story); complementary (they fill each other’s gap); enhancing (they provide alternative stories); counterpointing (they contradict each other and tell different stories). Nikolajeva and Scott’s (2013) also probe into how these categories work together with other literary elements such as characters, setting and point of view in forming the narrative. While it is a commonplace to identify the visual-verbal integration in many picture books as symmetrical or complementary, some post-modern picture books tend to present the picture-word interaction as counterpointing. The oft-quoted picture book *Gorilla* by Anthony Browne (2007, (first published in 1983)) is one example for this category (Bradford, 1998; Doonan, 1999; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013).

Evolved from such products as chap books, toy books and comics (Lewis, 2001), picture books have developed over time and are recognised as a distinct genre (Allan, 2012). Moving beyond the primary goal of enculturation, which is general to children’s literature, picture books that respond to demographic diversity and cultural intermixture in the Western world have given rise to the sub-genre of ‘multicultural picture books.’ According to Marantz and Marantz (2005), the primary purpose of these books is to support children’s cross-cultural learning in classrooms and perception of intercultural understanding in general; hence, multicultural picture books serve as a place of discussion for deep cross-cultural issues. However, these books serve a wider purpose beyond the classroom. Addressing such topics as identity, inclusion, and tolerance, these texts foster a sense of shared humanity promoted by ideologies such as liberalism and multiculturalism. While children’s literature crosses social and cultural boundaries (Nilan, 2004), Lampert (2009) suggests that picture books comprise texts that provide a “common ground” (p. 105) for discussions of topics such as diversity. This research investigates the role of

multicultural picture books in terms of addressing diversity to encourage or foster empathy for cultural difference. This aspect will be comprehensively examined in chapters 4 and 5.

AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL PICTURE BOOKS

In political terms, multiculturalism is perceived as the “legal and political accommodation of cultural diversity” (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 1). However, its public perception is two-fold: in general, multiculturalism is characterised as a “feel-good celebration of ethnocultural diversity” (Kymlicka, 2012, p. 4) that encourages people to recognise and accept elements such as customs, costumes and cuisine that exist in a multiethnic society; comprehensively, multiculturalism means the acceptance of cultural difference as central to human identity. Based on these loosely conceived perceptions of multiculturalism as ‘celebrating diversity’ and committed ‘respect for diversity,’ Stanley Fish (1997) proposes two versions of multiculturalism – boutique and strong – as common in multicultural societies, including Australia. Whereas the boutique version is characterised by its relationship to “superficial or cosmetic” (p. 56) elements such as food, festivals and dance, the strong version values difference.

As discussed earlier, multiculturalism became one of the main interests of Australian children’s literature following the Australian government’s initiative to advocate multicultural ideals through education policies. The response of children’s literature to multiculturalism, however, was shaped by both the above-mentioned aspects of multiculturalism and public concerns for the currency of multiculturalism in an Australian context. Accordingly, Stephens asserts that some Australian children’s books, especially picture books, comprise implicit expressions of nostalgia, while others explicitly evoke multicultural themes (Stephens, 1996). Mallan (2013) points out how Australian children’s literature engages with multicultural themes such as cultural diversity, social inclusion and social justice, “predominantly as a means to affirm positive models of cultural harmony and tolerance,” thereby “serving as exemplars of human rights and social justice” (p. 107). Further to Mallan’s point, multiculturalism’s development as a political philosophy under different socio-economic conditions and its transformative effect on the literary representation of migrants and refugees in the Australian context is investigated in chapter 3.

Themes of belonging, inclusion, tolerance, diversity, and freedom that are key to a “vision of ideal multiculturalism” (Dudek, 2011b, p. 160) are featured in many picture books published in Australia since multiculturalism was introduced into the education system following the Australian government’s shift of official policy in 1972. While promoting such ideals of multiculturalism on the one hand, some picture books criticise the opposites of those themes, for instance, discrimination, prejudice, nationalism, xenophobia and colonial paranoia or nostalgia, on the other. Other picture books go as far as to question the discordance between multicultural initiatives and government policies, such as mandatory detention of refugees, which affect or contradict multiculturalism. Dudek (2011b) finds this “engagement with and, often, criticism of government policy” (p. 157) to be a recurring feature of multicultural children’s books in Australia and other multicultural countries.

Recalling Sutherland’s (1985) classification discussed above – the politics of advocating, politics of attack, and politics of assent – it can be argued that Australian picture books express ideologies of multiculturalism that fall into one of those three classifications. On the basis of the level of their engagement, the multiculturalism advocated in Australian picture books can also be recognised as tokenism/boutique or committed. Tokenism in multicultural picture books can be easily recognised through romanticised ethnic characters appearing in stories that are “emptied of all specific social, cultural, and historical content” (Paul, 2000, p. 340). Boutique multiculturalism comprises, as Stanley Fish (1997) puts it, “the multiculturalism of ethnic restaurants, weekend festivals” (p. 378), costumes and music. In contrast, committed (or strong) multiculturalism is evident in picture books that effectively promote social justice and equality of all races and address diversity by telling the stories of suppressed or marginalised people “whose voices are not always heard” (Dudek, 2011b). According to Fish (1997), this type of multiculturalism is ‘strong’ because “it values difference in and for itself rather than as a manifestation of something more basically constitutive” (p. 382). While some picture books foster celebratory aspects, others engage readers with critical multiculturalism. However, there is no clear-cut division between these two types because many multicultural picture books entail a mixture of both boutique and critical aspects (Dudek, 2011b). In this study, the denomination ‘multicultural Australian picture books’ encapsulates all picture books that advocate, attack or assent to multiculturalism and may

therefore express a boutique or committed viewpoint in relation to the Australian socio-political context. While this research is firmly anchored in Australian multicultural picture books, it is important to define ‘readers’ in the context of this study.

Readers

As noted above, a significant aspect of this study investigates the capacity of multicultural picture books to affect readers in terms of fostering empathic emotions towards the migrant characters and their situations. Although the proposed methodology, textual analysis, does not draw any empirical evidence from real readers, it nevertheless considers how the text attempts to address and position the implied or ‘ideal’ reader. The ‘real reader’ is the person who actually reads a particular text at a particular time, whereas the implied reader is the hypothetical reader or the implied author’s image of the (ideal) “recipient that is fixed and objectified in the text by specific indexical signs” (Schmid, 2014, p. 301).

Defining picture book readers always starts with children. In *Pleasures of Children’s Literature*, Nodelman (1992) identifies the implied readership for children’s books as children. However, Shaun Tan, as a writer/illustrator of children’s books, takes the stance that any art does not “set out to appeal to a predefined audience but rather build one for itself” (2004, unpagged). The inherent simplicity and also the perceived enculturating function or effect attributed to children’s literature including picture books might seem to suggest that it is indeed ideally suited to a young readership. However, as an art form “exploring relationships between words, pictures and the world we experience every day” (Tan, 2004, unpagged), picture books do not necessarily limit their audience to a child readership.

Many children’s literature scholars (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013; Nodelman, 1988; Sipe, 1998a; Stephens, 2011) assert that picture books target a dual audience: children and adults. Nodelman (1988), for instance, in discussing the implied audience for picture books, asserts that the “viewer they [picture books] imply is both very learned and very ingenuous” (p. 21). Ostensibly, it is evident from many postmodern picture books that “the levels of parody and irony” (Allan, 2012, p. 19) employed in the text, along with their graphical complexity and ideological depth, certainly invite adult readers and literary critics for different and sophisticated

interpretations. Dudek (2005) observes the complexity of Shaun Tan's picture book *The Lost Thing* (2000) noting that it "contains three texts, which can be read separately and in conjunction with each other" (p.58), while another critic understands Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007) as a "deeply political book" (Hillel, 2010, p. 101). It is arguable, then, whether implied young readers capture these textual or ideological subtleties or not. Children (or adults) seeking "a simple delight" as Alderson (1990, p. 114) puts it, may not; although delight does not preclude a deeper sense of understanding. An adult reader often mediates a text with young readers, assisting or shaping their comprehension of the text and, perhaps, the embedded ideologies. Therefore, when using the term "reader" in this study, I consider the implied child readers as well as the mediating adult audience.

Empathy, Narrative Empathy and Empathic Unsettlement

Does reading fiction make readers more empathic, or encourage certain moral behaviours? This is the question being discussed in the contemporary debates on 'narrative empathy' (Keen, 2006). Narrative empathy, which is a part of what is known as cognitive poetics, informs the conceptual framework of this study.

As Suzanne Keen (2006) observes, empathy is a human's cognitive ability to feel with others: "in empathy, sometimes described as emotion in its own right, we feel what we believe to be the emotions of others" (p. 5). While empathy is understood as 'feeling with' another individual, narrative empathy, in short, means 'feeling with fiction': "narrative empathy features in accounts both of emotional triggers in imaginative experiences of reading and of empirical studies of shifts in readers' feelings while encountering literary texts" (Keen, 2011, p. 296). More clearly, it is feeling with fictional characters. As Keen (2006) further explicates, understanding narrative empathy involves distinct areas of narratology: the study of readers' empathic responsiveness, theorizing of authors' strategic empathising, an inventory of what empirical research on empathic textual devices verifies or confutes, and investigations of the impact of different modes of narrative. This study does not undertake the first of these concerns. However, empathy and narrative empathy will be comprehensively discussed in chapter 2, and the analysis chapters will undertake a close textual analysis of the empathic narrative and visual strategies.

Studying children's fiction from the perspective of narrative empathy is relatively new to children's literary criticism as distinct from studying emotions in

the context of adult fiction (Mallan, 2013). Australian multicultural picture books address many aspects of self-other encounter from different perspectives providing a rich source for research on narrative empathy. My aim in this research is to investigate the use of empathic textual devices in picture books and to assess their effectiveness for creating readerly empathy with respect to cultural difference. Readerly empathy can be viewed as readers' feeling with fictional characters, triggered by strong character identification, especially identification with the emotional plight of a particular literary persona. For Keen (2007), readerly empathy is an experience brought about by reading "novels that will allow imaginative identification with characters and immersion in vividly rendered fictional worlds" (p. 99).

Further to Keen's theorisation of empathic identification with fictional characters, this discussion will also incorporate Dominick LaCapra's (2001) idea of 'empathic unsettlement' that entails "being responsive to the traumatic experience of others" while resisting the "full identification with, and appropriation of, the experience of the other" (p. 41). Contrary to Keen's suggestion to identify with fictional personas, LaCapra emphasises the necessity of maintaining a critical distance between readers/viewers and fictional characters. Fictions present aestheticised representations of real-world experiences. Readers will receive only texts and artefacts with which they reconstruct these experiences through schematic processing of the given information. According to LaCapra, by reading or viewing the fictional reconstruction of others' circumstances through memory and other narrative devices, readers become secondary witnesses of their plights and predicaments and thereby develop empathic responses towards them. However, narratives make it easier for readers to feel empathy or sympathy for fictional others different from real people they meet in their day to day lives (Keen, 2010) and thereby provide an escape from real-world ethical responsibilities. Therefore, rather than immersion in the fictional world triggered by the subjective engagement, LaCapra suggests an objective reconstruction of the past while maintaining a critical distance. Empathic engagement with fictional characters while maintaining critical distance (through disruption of extreme identification) helps secondary witnesses to manipulate imagination beyond the fictional manifestation to understand the problems and resultant sufferings of real people. This "tense relation between

procedures of objective reconstruction of the past and empathic response” (LaCapra 2001, p.87) will be examined in relation to analysis of picture books that manifest traumatic experiences of refugees in chapter 5.

AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION

The broad aim of this study is to understand how contemporary Australian ‘multicultural’ picture books attempt to create narrative empathy. The research objective is to investigate how empathic narrative techniques are used in a selection of Australian picture books to support or inhibit empathic awareness towards cultural difference. Having that objective in mind, I address the following key research question:

How do contemporary Australian picture books draw on empathic narrative techniques to encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference and adversity?

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The research involves an analysis of narrative empathy in Australian children’s picture books. The focus texts, 17 picture books published over the past 42 years, address different aspects of Australian multiculturalism: ethnic diversity, migrants and migration, refugees and asylum seekers. This study of children’s picture books considers the narrative treatment of empathy and how a text’s implicit ideological and political discourses reflect Australia’s changing notions of multiculturalism broadly, and its attitudes and policies towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers specifically. My position aligns with that expressed by John Stephens (1992), that all texts regardless of their implied audience are informed by ideologies, which may often be implicit and invisible to authors and illustrators. Ideology is carried through narrative representation, so examining how this occurs is a critical component of the analysis.

Representations of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Scholars approach representation in different ways – as a reflection of the real world (people and things); as intentional (controlled by the author); as constructionist (the social nature of the construction of meaning) (Hall, 1997). The underlying feature across the three approaches is the ideological work that texts carry out. Children’s

books seek to position child readers in particular ways, as moral, ethical, empathic, tolerant, cooperative subjects that reinforce particular humanist and liberal ideologies. In the context of this study, the issues of multiculturalism and migration in picture books are sometimes caught between opposing imperatives: the humane response to the plight of others and the protectionist policies of immigration; the celebratory tenor of harmonious cultural diversity and the discrimination and intergenerational tensions that come with living in a culturally diverse society. These are some of the key tensions that are examined in the analysis chapters of this thesis, and the contexts in which they have arisen in Australian society provide a further example of how ‘representation’ works in the secondary literature that frames these issues surrounding migrants.

Migrants, voluntary or forced, have become the centre of issues surrounding multiculturalism in Australia since 1984, a time when prominent historian Professor Geoffrey Blainey criticised migration, in particular, the perceived high scale and pace of Asian migration, for being a threat to Australian social cohesion (Jakubowicz, 1985b). Although Blainey’s argument was repudiated by many, including academics and politicians, the same concerns were reflected in the Liberal National Party’s policy paper *One Australia*, released in 1988, and were echoed by the then opposition leader John Howard and later by Member of Parliament Pauline Hanson in her maiden speech to the House of Representatives in 1996 (Jupp, 2002). This anxiety over migrants took a different turn when growing concern over asylum seekers and border protection escalated during the federal election in 2001 following the incidents later known as the Tampa affair, the ‘children overboard’ affair and the sinking of the boat identified as SIEV-X (Neumann, 2015). Since then, various polemics in public and polity reflect resistance towards migrants and contempt for asylum seekers. While some public attitudes are shaped by long held “xenophobic, racist and insular” traditions, migration policy itself is reflective of ideologies such as “imperialism, racism, utilitarianism, economic rationalism and humanitarianism” (Jupp, 2002, p. 6). Prominent among these debates is the criticism of the policy of multiculturalism that was said to disrupt the social cohesion in Australia.

These same issues inform many fictions written for children about migrants, refugees and migration. Australian multicultural picture books became one of the sites to negotiate differently situated others, especially those who are disadvantaged

based on choices and life plans they make or under conditions and circumstances that are forced upon them. Given that, picture book representations of migrants are two-fold, including both voluntary migrants and forced migrants. Those texts containing representations of voluntary migrants (as focalising characters or others) feature narratives of transnational and transcultural subjects who encounter hardships in the process of transition to and domestication in a new country whereby they come to terms with their sense of difference and (be)longing (Lamme, Fu, & Lowery, 2004). People who are forced to flee persecution or seek asylum and therefore are subject to rejection or hostility form some of the fictional representations of forced migrants. These varied narrative representations encourage readers to imagine and understand different people and their plight by recognising the state of distress they experience. Such an emotional engagement is called ‘empathic imagination’ (Smith, 2011). While examining the selected narratives, this discussion will consider how the focus texts engage with concepts such as belonging, identity, and difference relating to various aspects of the discourse of multiculturalism.

While it is not possible to speak of a single migrant experience as representative of all migrants, the picture books in this study nevertheless draw on issues that are ‘real’ subjective experiences of migrants’ relocation and journeying to a safer place to live. Picture books, like any other narratives, capture some aspects of human experiences through verbal and visual representations that provide sophisticated ‘life-like’ experiences and thereby can “stir us emotionally, heighten our awareness, or help us understand something in a new way” (Mallan, 2014, pp. 42-43). Picture books about migration are remarkable in this sense as they thematise cultural diversity and issues of cultural difference in ways that affirm positive models of cultural harmony and tolerance, and ideological positions regarding human rights and social justice.

The nature of this study requires close textual analysis that attends to both the aesthetics of the text and its meanings, which are not fixed or unlocked by analysis but negotiated as part of the dialogic relationship between reader and text (Stephens 1992). Allan McKee (2001) suggests that textual analysis enables the analyst to “make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of the text” (p. 140). Textual analysis is, however, more than an ‘educated guess’ as it provides a disciplined means for the analysis of discourses that narratives

call on and make implicit and explicit in a text. In this study, textual analysis involves at one level a formalist approach² to understanding how a text works. It also involves drawing on a methodological and theoretical repertoire that is pertinent to the concerns of the study: cognitive narratology (narrative empathy), semiotics (illustrations) and multiculturalism (ideology). Therefore, the multifaceted nature of this study involves a composite methodology that utilises cognitive narratology, semiotics and multicultural discourses to inform the textual analysis.

Textual Analysis

As noted above this study is not about ‘real’ readers – how they read picture books or how they respond to them. Rather, it is a study of texts (picture books) from the perspective of narrative empathy. For John Stephens (1992), reading even a very simple picture book is “quite a complex cognitive process” (p. 161). Therefore, Stephens emphasises that understanding a picture book involves construing verbal text (its grammar, syntax and semantic structures) and decoding its pictures “in terms of the conventions by which it operates” (p. 161). Stephens’s emphasis also indicates the need for a systematic method of analysing picture books. While the process of textual analysis in this study is informed by literary theorists, such as David Herman (2009, 2013), Luc Herman and Bart Vervaeck (2005), Terry Eagleton (2003) and Kathleen Carley (1993, 1994), the guidelines of analysing picture books provided by children’s literature scholars (Mallan, 2013; Nikolajeva, 2010, 2012b; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013; Nodelman, 1988, 2005; Sipe, 1998a, 1998b; Stephens, 1989, 1992, 2011b) are closely followed. However, my reading and analysis of a selection of picture books are fundamentally guided by the central question of this research. That is: How do contemporary Australian multicultural picture books encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference and adversity?

Textual analysis requires close critical reading of texts. Eagleton (2003, p. 93) suggests an appropriate distance between the analyst and the text as a necessary component in textual analysis. As he asserts, this distance allows the analyst to change focus, swoop in and pull back and to look for particular detail without diverting readers’ attention from the overall text. In the case of picture books, attentive reading becomes pivotal. Dudek (2006a) observes how careful the analyst

² Formalist criticism emphasises a close reading of a text’s form or structure, thereby examining elements such as theme, plot, plotline, conflict, characterization, character types, setting, point of view, tone and style.

has to be in reading picture books as a quick or cursory reading may miss important details. Therefore, Sipe (1998a) suggests that picture books “demand rereading” (p. 101). Picture books, in this sense, are not meant to be puzzles, but complex texts full of subtle, acute details related to and nourishing the central idea.

No textual analysis seeks a single ‘correct’ or ‘true’ explanation (McKee, 2001). Textual analysis guidelines are concerned with some measures of validity and reliability. These measures, however, do not comply with similar measures in quantitative or even qualitative research common to the social sciences. Further, they do not require the analyst to provide definitive answers. As McKee (2001) further points out, texts may have multiple readings but an infinite number of possible interpretations. Among these multiple readings some are ‘likely interpretations’, which are characterised by the ‘context’ (p. 145). Any reading of a text is subjective and influenced by socio-cultural and ideological factors. Therefore, I am aware that my reading of the texts is influenced by subjective factors pertinent to me as an international student from South Asia. Also my reading/interpretation of selected picture books in this research represents one possible reading, and ‘likely interpretation.’

Narratives position the reader to perceive the world from a particular perspective. This positioning of readers encourages them to take up particular stances with regard to the issue addressed in the narratives. For instance, Shaun Tan’s *The Arrival* (2006) calls upon readers to empathise with migrants, who are dehumanised and depersonalised in bureaucratic processes of documentation and scrutiny (Bradford, 2011) before they are allowed into the country where they seek asylum or residence. Texts also deliberately enable some meanings to be made over other possible interpretations. For instance, in Armin Greder’s picture book *The Island* (2007), the stranger is stereotyped to be a savage, which works as a metaphor of vulnerability: he is the target of Islanders’ fear, prejudice, rejection and inhumanity which put him back in fatal danger (Hillel, 2010). Interestingly, this savageness is not meant to create an aversion in readers’ minds, but to encourage empathy as the unfolding story reveals the man’s fate at the hands of the Islanders who have the power of life and death over him. Textual analysis enables identification of these subtle strategies of reader positioning and meaning making in picture book narratives.

Both texts and pictures in picture books are ideologically laden. According to Margot Hillel (2010), picture books, like other narratives, attempt to “inculcate particular ideological positions in their readers” (p. 102). These stands are not always overtly presented, however. Analysis of picture books needs to uncover such approaches in order to understand how the books construct ideas about the world and promote particular viewpoints, values and moral dispositions. John Stephens (1992) argues that picture books “can never be said to exist [...] without a specific orientation towards the reality constructed by the society that produces them” (p. 158). These realities, as Stephens further points out, are presented verbally as well as graphically through conventional codes, such as dress and gestures. Textual analysis encourages a close reading to look for hidden motivations and susceptibilities other than the overtly expressed matters (Culler, 1992). In analysing multicultural themes related to political discourses, such as migration and refugee/asylum seeking, both visible and invisible ideological representations and motivations are of vital importance. While it is important to identify these ideologies bound with the text, I am also aware that it is not the task of the textual analyst to evaluate them against reality or truth (McKee, 2001).

Cognitive Narratology

Cognitive narratology is regarded as a sub-domain (Herman, 1999) of post-classical narratology, which draws upon the wide field of narratology, but paradoxically resists it in the process of development (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005). David Herman (2009) defines cognitive narratology as “the study of mind-relevant aspects of storytelling practices” (p. 30). Studying ‘mind relevance,’ according to Herman, involves multiple factors, including “story-producing activities of tellers, the processes by means of which interpreters make sense of the narrative worlds (or ‘storyworlds’) evoked by narrative representations or artefacts, and the cognitive states and dispositions of characters in those storyworlds” (p. 30). One aspect of cognitive narratology is narrative empathy (Keen, 2006). Narrative empathy, which examines narratives’ (perceived) relationship with ethics of compassion, is gaining ground in what is termed as the ‘empathy-altruism debate’ in recent literary criticism. Drawing upon cognitive narratology, studies of the relationship between narrative and emotions constitute narrative empathy (Keen, 2011d, p. 296).

However, it is not easy to explicate the relationship between emotions such as empathy and texts (verbal and/or visual in the case of picture books). One way to understand this relationship is to look for particular techniques authors and illustrators use in the process of text creation in order to evoke certain emotions in readers' minds and how those techniques operate within a narrative text in terms of carrying the goal into effect. While some cognitive narratologists, such as Keith Oatley (1995, 1999, 2011a, 2011b), believe strong characterisation on the author's part and acute character identification on the reader's part are essential components in narrative empathy, others such as Patrick Hogan (2001, 2011) contend that such identification relies on characters matching the reader's group identity or reader's memory of a comparable experience. Cohn (1978) argues that speech representation (direct discourse, indirect discourse and free indirect discourse) is the basis for the reader's engagement with fictional minds. In comparison, Palmer (2002) believes that the whole notion of narrative representations of consciousness is vital for identifying with fictional characters rather than Cohn's speech category, which, for Palmer, is only a part of it. For narratologist Franz Stanzel (1986) narrative empathy has a strong connection with the narrative situation: first-person narrative, authorial narrative and figural narrative.

Drawing on the above research, Suzanne Keen (2007) postulates what she calls 'empathetic narrative techniques': "devices supporting character identification, contributing to empathetic experiences, opening reader's mind to others, changing attitudes and even predisposing readers to altruism" (p. 9). These techniques are two-fold: techniques of characterisation, for instance character types that support the reader's character identification, and techniques associated with narrative situation, such as point of view and internal perspective, that reveal character consciousness. These techniques are comprehensively discussed in chapter 2 with regard to their possible application in picture book analysis. As narrative empathy constitutes a central part of the theoretical and methodological framework of this study, the nature of picture books requires that the semiotic elements are examined as an integral component of the text's empathic techniques.

Semiotics: The Visual Grammar

Pictures are iconic representations as distinct from words which are symbolic. From a semiotic perspective, pictures constitute 'signs': a sign is "something [which]

stands to somebody for something else in some respect or capacity” (C. S. Peirce quoted in Eco, 1977, p. 110). Signs are filled with ‘signifiers’ – physical forms that moderate signs such as colour, perspective and line – and these features are organised in myriad ways to convey meanings, which are understood as ‘signifieds’ (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). Nodelman (2005) considers an affective response to signs in claiming the delight that readers experience in picture books depends on “what pictures do and how viewers should respond to them” (p. 130); that is, how effectively the signifieds are conveyed in pictures and how acutely viewers perceive them. As Nodelman further acknowledges, readers perceive or make sense of pictures through “sensuous engagement with the colours, shapes and textures” (p.130). Stephens (2009) argues for a more socially-informed approach in saying that any interpretation of pictures should consider how “images of society are represented or reflected” and “how audiences relate to and interrogate” (p. 97) such representations of the world. These complex meaning-making processes are negotiated through the reciprocal relationship between signifier-signified.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) suggest that like verbal representations, visual designs fulfil a number of major functions: an ideational function that represents “the world around and inside us”; an interpersonal function that enacts “social interactions as social relations”; and a textual function that presents “a coherent world of text” (p. 15). Describing the interaction between the producer and the viewer, Kress and van Leeuwen suggest that the participants involved in an image are of two kind: represented participants (the peoples, places and things depicted in images) and interactive participants (the people, both producer and viewer, who communicate to each other through images). Images also contain a number of representational and interactive relations: between the people, places and the things represented in the image; between those (represented) participants and the viewer; and between the viewer and the producer of the image (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 114). In terms of how the producer positions the reader in order to make certain meanings, there are a number of aspects integral to the viewer-image interaction: mood, perspective, social distance, lighting, colour and modality. Mood, for instance, can be understood through offers and demands. While in some images represented participants are offered to viewers “as items of information, objects of contemplation, impersonally as though they were specimens in a display case”

(Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 119), in others, the represented participants are depicted in a way that ‘demands’ the viewer in some way “enter into some kind of imaginary relation” (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 118) with them. In analysing the picture books in this study, such semiotic elements are important. While pictures in picture books sometimes may be informative, in many cases their represented participants’ gazes and gestures demand specific emotional responses from the viewers.

While the importance of semiotics in decoding images is understood, in this study I am not going to break pictures into semiotic elements and conduct a thorough visual grammar analysis. My focus is to understand how some specific semiotic elements, such as mood, perspective and social distance, and modality contribute to eliciting empathic emotions in picture book readers (readerly empathy). In short, semiotic analysis in this study will be mainly related to the primary purpose of the study, that is, eliciting narrative/readerly empathy.

SELECTION OF PICTURE BOOKS

This study’s focus is on a selection of Australian multicultural picture books published from 1995 to 2014. The final selection was made after reading a large number of picture books which engaged with themes of various degrees of relevance to the focus of my study. My selection therefore attempted to include a range across the key issues (identity, belonging, cross-cultural and cross-generational relations) and, more importantly, to focus on how they variously treated notions of empathy and empathic unsettlement. Given that, the inclusion of picture books for the close textual analysis in this study was influenced by their potential to promote or enhance affective or cognitive components of empathy towards cultural difference. This focus on empathy, however, does not deny that the picture book narratives in question can stimulate other emotions, such as sympathy and compassion, towards the plights of migrant subjects.

While many picture books may present ethnically diverse characters, not all address multiculturalism itself or multicultural issues such as diversity, identity, and belonging. In general, the use of the adjective ‘multicultural’ in relation to children’s literature can be confusing. Sometimes it refers to the ideology of multiculturalism, while other times it denotes inter-mixture of people from different ethnicities –

‘multi-cultural’ or ‘cross-cultural.’ For instance, North American writers Lowery and Sabis-Burns’s (2007) use of the term ‘multicultural literature’ with reference to “trade books that have a main character who is a member of a racial, religious, or language micro-culture” (p. 51) other than the dominant culture of a country. Ostensibly the meaning of the adjective ‘multicultural’ stays close to ‘cross-cultural’ or ‘inter-cultural.’ However, this is not the way the adjective is used in this study; here the adjective refers to picture books that are influenced by, or based on, the ideology of multiculturalism. As stated earlier, multicultural picture books variously advocate, attack or affirm boutique or committed aspects of multiculturalism. However, by including in my selection those texts that treat the subject of migration (both forced and voluntary) as a complex social and political issue, I am extending these particular positions. My analysis considers how the original push for multicultural picture books in Australia in the 1970s has somewhat shifted away from a celebration of diversity to a more humanitarian focus on the plight of refugees and asylum seekers as well as the realistic challenges of cross-cultural and cross-generational societies such as Australia.

There is a multiplicity of multicultural picture books that would serve the interests of this study. The need to select symptomatic texts for close analysis necessarily involved selection of some picture books while others were excluded. Another consideration was to include picture books which had not received significant analysis by other scholars. Thus, I chose not to include any detailed analysis of books, such as *Dancing the Boom Cha-Cha Boogie* (Oliver, 2005), *The Lost Thing* (Tan, 2000), *The Island* (Greder, 2007) and *No One Like Me* (Pham & Wong, 1998), as these have already received considerable attention (see Dudek (2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2007, 2011a, 2011b)). While these and other writings informed the analysis, there is minimal duplication of books in this study with those that have received substantial discussion by other scholars. However, empathy, the perspective on which I am focussing, has not been their concern; thus, this study offers additional insights to the analysis of some of these previously discussed texts. Nevertheless, these studies by Dudek and many others (Bradford, 2011; Hillel, 2010; Mallan, 1999, 2013; Ommundsen, 2006; Singh, 1981; Stephens, 2011) offer insights into aspects of Australian multiculturalism that these books address and provide important input into my analysis.

It is also evident from the picture books themselves and above-mentioned criticisms that picture books often thematically limit themselves to certain aspects of issues pertinent to multiculturalism, for instance, immigration, asylum seekers, or refugees. Some picture books, such as Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (2006), address many aspects of exile and immigration, while others, for example Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007) and Liz Lofthouse and Robert Ingpen's *Ziba Came on a Boat* (2007), delineate the issues of refugees and asylum seekers. In addition, some picture books go beyond temporal and spatial boundaries emphasising harmonious living as a necessary part of humanity and thereby attempt to see similarity across difference. While addressing particular issues, these picture books also contribute to wider debates on human rights, multiculturalism, trauma and anxiety that have escalated over the past two decades. Picture books relating to the thematic categories of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees are the main focus of the discussion in chapters 4 and 5. In addition, memory as a narrative device that supports readerly empathy is a further element behind the selection of several picture books. Mementoes and stories that characters share encourage readers to ponder migrants' inseparable attachment to their cultural past or to realise the kinds of haunting memories of traumatic experiences that they may carry from the past into the present.

The 17 picture books published in Australia between 1995 and 2014 selected for this study are:

Experiences of Migration (Chapter 4)

- Loh, Morag & Mo, Xiangyi (1995) *Grandpa and Ah Gong*.
- Cummings, Phil, & Smith, Craig (1996) *Marty and Mei-Ling*.
- Baillie, Allan, & Wu, Di (1996) *Old Magic*.
- Rippin, Sally (1996) *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!*.
- Guo, Jing Jing, & Wu, Di (2001) *Grandpa's Mask*.
- Hathorn, Libby & Stanley, Elizabeth (2002) *The Wishing Cupboard*.
- Grant, Joan & Curtis, Neil (2003) *Cat and Fish*.
- Heinrich, Sally (2007) *The Most Beautiful Lantern*.
- Thompson, Michael (2010) *The Other Bears*.
- Kobald, Irina & Blackwood, Freya (2014) *My Two Blankets*.

Refugees or Asylum Seekers (Chapter 5)

- Caswell, Brian & Ottley, Matt (2003) *Hiram and B*.

- Lofthouse, Liz & Ingpen, Robert (2007) *Ziba Came on a Boat*.
- Cavouras, Czenya (2007) *Rainbow Bird*.
- Marsden, John & Ottley, Matt (2008) *Home and Away*.
- Do, Anh and Do, Suzanne & Whatley, Bruce (2011) *The Little Refugee*
- Gervay, Susan & Pignataro, Ann (2012) *Ships in the Field*.
- Walker, Bic (2011) *A Safe Place to Live*

These texts represent a small sample of a burgeoning number of multicultural picturebooks that are increasingly dealing with migration-related experiences. However, the selected picture books are pertinent for this study as they offer an empathic viewpoint on issues surrounding migration and multiculturalism in Australia, whereas ‘migrants’ other than mainstream Europeans enjoyed less or no privileged representations in Australia’s literary tradition for the most part of the 20th century. Evolution of the representation of cultural otherness in Australian children’s literature, including picture books, will be further discussed in chapter 3.

Asian migrants play an important role in the discussion due to two reasons: first as a matter of concern in Australian political and public debates that made “immigration and multicultural policies of the government rather more controversial than in the past” (Jupp, 1997, p. 30); second as an increasing interest of the children’s books published in Australia since 1990 (Bradford, 2007; Bradford & Hui-Ling, 2007; Ommundsen, 2012). In fact, 8 out of 15 picture books in the corpus include migrant characters of Asian origin. Therefore, more space has been dedicated to discuss some aspects of the socio-cultural background of Asian migrants where necessary.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This Introduction has presented the central purpose of the research and the questions that guide subsequent chapters. A key significance of this research is that it brings narrative empathy into the field of children’s literature criticism through an analysis of Australian multicultural picture books. The multifaceted method draws together empathy, cognitive narratology and semiotics to inform the textual analysis. Australian multicultural picture books have evolved as a sophisticated genre that captures contemporary socio-political issues, and their ideological depths are a considerable feature that this thesis examines. Investigation of such texts needs to

begin with a fuller understanding of empathy and the changing Australian political context, especially the development of multiculturalism as both an ideology and a political policy. These concerns are the focus of the following chapters that form the conceptual framework for the study and subsequent analysis.

In reviewing the literature on empathy and narrative empathy, chapter 2 provides the theoretical underpinning for this study. While empathic narrative techniques are discussed in this Introduction, I enquire into their applicability in analysing children's literature, especially picture books, in chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides a context for the analysis chapters by examining the changing political nature of Australian government policy towards multiculturalism, and in more recent decades, to issues of refugees, asylum seekers and detention. In chapter 2 I also examine the persuasive factors that led Australia to move from a former assimilationist position to multiculturalism, and discuss the development of Australian multiculturalism from 1972 to date. The Australian government's decision to use education to advocate for multiculturalism is also discussed. The chapter concludes with an overview of the evolution of the concept of the cultural other in Australian children's literature over the 20th century and beyond, and changing political ideologies' impact on it. It therefore provides an account as to how Australian children's literature has responded to the nation's changing policies towards immigration, asylum seekers, and refugees.

Chapters 4 and 5 undertake analyses of a selection of 17 Australian multicultural picture books addressing the research question: *How do contemporary Australian multicultural picture books draw on empathic narrative techniques to encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference?* In looking at narrative empathy, chapter 4 comprises a comprehensive analysis of seven Australian multicultural picture books that take migrants as the main focus in their narratives. It delves into how spatial dominance and power operate in relation to the cultural other, and the narrative configuration of cross-cultural and cross-generational tensions in picture books.

Chapter 5 extends the focus to include the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers along with migrants, and analyses 10 picture books that thematise memory and trauma across cultures. These narratives of migration and escape embody memories of transcultural subjects as nostalgic reminiscence or traumatic

recollections and thereby appeal to readers to engage and empathise with fictional characters. Further to its discussions of narrative empathy, this chapter will attest to the applicability of empathic unsettlement in analysing the traumatic experiences in refugee/asylum narratives.

Chapter 6 concludes the discussion by outlining the factors emerging from this study. Further to these concluding remarks, this chapter offers directions for future research that could go beyond the limits of this study.

Chapter 2: Empathy: Competing Perspectives and Narrative Techniques

Empathy is a familiar term that was introduced to English in the early twentieth century by experimental psychologist E. B. Tichner as a translation of the German term *Einfühling*, meaning “the process of ‘feeling one’s way into’ an art object or another person” (Keen, 2007, p. 64). In 1913, English novelist Vernon Lee brought *Einfühling* and empathy to the field of literature, amalgamating empathy with aesthetic perception. Since then, empathy has been studied across many disciplines. Empathy’s relationship to the reading process and its importance in moral development is widely emphasised in different fields, including moral philosophy (Nussbaum, 1990); philosophy (Currie, 2010; Rorty, 2007), education and pedagogy (Gordon, 2005; Greene, 1995); literature and cognitive psychology (Hogan, 2011; Oatley, 2011c); aesthetics (Feagin, 2007); and narrative studies (Berger, 1997). The arguments and the counterarguments of these researchers are reviewed in this chapter, leading to an understanding of narrative empathy and the narrative techniques that are used to encourage readers’ empathy, or what is commonly referred to as ‘readerly empathy’ (Keen, 2011a, 2011b). These two aspects inform the theoretical framework of this study.

Empathy has been widely discussed and accepted as an essential virtue for human society. Psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen (2004) explains that empathy is “the drive to identify another person’s emotions and thoughts, and to respond to them with an appropriate emotion” (p. 2). If it is not innate, then for Hoffman (1981, p. 130), humans develop this capacity of sharing feelings from the first few days of birth. Empathy encompasses “partly dissociable neuro-cognitive processes” (Reniers, Corcoran, Drake, Shryane, & Völlm, 2011, p. 84) that suggest a distinction between its two components: cognitive and affective empathy. The cognitive component of empathy is the ability to perceive the internal mental state of another individual, whereas the affective component involves the actual emotional reaction (Spinella, 2005). Both the affective and cognitive components of empathy are generated “from the observer’s cognitive sense of the other” (Hoffman, 1982, p. 290). Empathy

gained its neuro-scientific currency with the discovery of “mirror neurons” (Gallese, Keysers, & Rizzolatti, 2004) that reportedly fire in an onlooker’s brain when certain actions are executed or when witnessing another individual performing a similar action (Pineda, 2009).

The cognitive and affective capacities of empathy are vital for prosocial morality and social solidarity. Discussing the gulf between ‘us’ and ‘them’, psychologist Daniel Goleman (2006) notes that “it is the silencing of empathy” (p. 299) that generates this gulf. Accordingly, the chasm between ‘us’ and ‘them’ entail the gap between egotism and altruism. Hoffman (1981) argues that empathy alone can bridge this gap, as it has the capacity to transform another person’s pain into one’s own emotional distress (p. 133). From an educational perspective, Maxine Greene (1995) looks beyond the ‘us and them’ issue by considering how empathy is a necessary element for a moral and just society. She believes in empathy’s “capacity to invent visions” (p. 5) of morality in today’s ethically deficient society. Similarly, Gordon (2005), who sees empathy’s integrity in solving conflicts in numerous social institutions, regards empathy as the panacea for many social ills and conflicts: “The ability to take the perspective of another person, to identify commonalities through our shared feelings, is the best peace pill we have” (pp. xvi-xvii). While Gordon looks to the peace-making potential of empathy, there are other factors that influence the capacity for empathy towards another. These include familiarity bias and perspective-taking.

Human beings have the peculiar cognitive capacity to understand fellow humans as cognisant beings with intellectual ability, who share some common sensations and emotions (Baars & Gage, 2007, p. 391). While this idea encapsulates empathy’s capacity, many psychological studies reveal empathy’s partiality towards in-groups (Gallagher, 2012). That means the degree of our empathic feelings declines as the proximity of the other to the self declines, but increases when the proximity increases – a situation which is variously termed the ‘similarity bias’, ‘familiarity bias’ (Hoffman, 2000, pp. 206-213), ‘correspondence bias’ (Moskowitz, 2005) or ‘empathy bias’ (Harrison, 2011). In other words, our emotional responses to others are mostly “shaped by racial, ethnic, religious, national, gender and other affiliates” (Hogan, 2010, p. 188). Indeed, numerous researchers have documented the existence of familiarity bias (Avenanti et al., 2010; Cikara, Bruneau and Saxe, 2011;

Gallagher, 2012; Hoffman, 1982). The notion of familiarity bias raises the question of whether or not empathy can be expanded beyond in-groups (i.e., people who share similar characteristics). This question can be answered by further clarifying the affective and cognitive components of empathy.

Affective empathy occurs when a person shares or mirrors another's emotions in what is called a "shared emotional response" (Feshbach, 1990, p. 271). This component of empathy is often confused with 'sympathy' which means "feeling *for* another" (Keen, 2006, p. 208). What psychologists refer to as 'cognitive empathy' is also called 'perspective-taking' (Krznicaric, 2008). The history of perspective-taking can be traced back as far as Adam Smith (1759-1853), David Hume (1751-1957) and Jean Piaget (1896-1980), and to the pioneering works of philosophers who investigated empathy as a necessary social bond (Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Hoffman, 2000). The argument is that this aspect of empathy enables people to experience the world from someone else's perspective (Frith & Singer, 2008). In popular terms, it is the ability to *step into the shoes of another person*. This view is contestably idealistic, but proponents take the view that cognitive empathy is the best way to "diminish not just the expression of stereotypes but their accessibility" (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000, p. 722). Goleman (1996) and Hoffman (2000) consider perspective-taking as a necessary foundation for individual moral development that can lead to social solidarity. Nevertheless, social psychologists Batson and Ahmed (2009) emphasise how both affective and cognitive empathy can be drawn on in developing 'intergroup empathy.'

Intergroup empathy, which is a major aspect of psychological studies of empathy, encompasses the role of empathy in promoting prosocial behaviours within and beyond groups (Cikara & Fiske, 2011; Mealy & Stephan, 2010). Psychologist Kohn Alfie refers to perspective-taking as the capacity that enables one to perceive the world from a "vantage point" other than his/her own (1992, p. 99) and explains how perspective-taking makes intergroup empathy possible. This capacity for intergroup empathy vitalises the social impact that the ideology of multiculturalism can create.

Mealy and Stephan (2010, p. 2) contend that intergroup empathy can be acquired gradually over time because environmental factors can have a bigger impact than genetic factors in shaping the individual's attitudes towards others or developing

social relationships with outgroup members. This approach has been probed in many studies over the past two decades (Roth-Hanania, Davidov, & Zahn-Waxler, 2011). In other studies (Batson & Ahmad, 2009; de Waal, 2010; Decety & Ickes, 2009), empathy is regarded as an *intentional* cognitive capacity, rather than being a merely spontaneous, unconscious and automatic simulation of the subjectivity of others. On this ground, empathy is seen as a flexible human capacity which can be cultivated and developed “through training and enhancement programs” (Decety & Jackson, 2004, p. 94). One method Batson & Ahmad (2009) suggest as a strategy for improving intergroup empathy is the use of media, including fiction. This point is supported by Nussbaum (1990), who concludes that “works of literature frequently cross-cultural boundaries far more easily than works of religion and philosophy” (p. 391). This idea is contentious and hence needs to be discussed further.

EMPATHY AND FICTION

While the study of emotions in relation to aesthetic perception goes as far back as Aristotle (384-322 BC) in the West and Bharatha (200 BCE and 200 CE) in the East, the mediating role of fiction in self-other mutual perception also has long been proposed. According to George Eliot (1856), art “is the nearest thing to life: it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow men beyond the bounds of our personal lot” (in Pinnye, 1963, p. 270). Following the introduction of the term ‘empathy’ to English as a translation of the German word *Einfühling* in 1909 (Keen, 2007, p. 64), English novelist Vernon Lee (1913) theorised its relationship with aesthetic perception. Lee’s understanding of empathy in relation to her theory of the ‘psychological aesthetic’ not only differentiated empathy (*feeling with*) from sympathy (*feeling for*), but also shifted from *Einfühling*’s motor mimicry (bodily sensations and muscular adjustments) to a broadly construed sense of empathy; that is, the aesthete’s use of schematic disposition, emotional engagement and collaborative responsiveness to art (Keen, 2011a). Empathy, as Lee describes, is “that inference from our own inner experience which has shaped all our conceptions of an outer world” (1913, p. 68). Keen (2008, 2011a) and Harrison (2011) argue that this awareness of empathy is reflected in literature, for instance Thomas Hardy’s late novels and other more contemporary literature of post WWII. However, regardless of empathy’s wider reception, Bertolt Brecht’s derisive criticism of empathy and the dominance of New Criticism that

opposed affective fallacy at the time of Lee's writing hindered empathy's further development towards an aesthetic theory (Keen, 2006, p. 210).

Despite these setbacks, scholarly interest in empathy and literature continued. Keen (2006, 2007, 2011c) finds that Frank Luther Mott's articulation of *Rewards of Reading* (Mott, 1926) and I. A. Richards's (1926) understanding of emotions and attitudes correspond to empathic critiques of narrative emotions.³ Mott regarded fiction as an egalitarian ground where readers meet characters across cultures: "all classes, and more than that, all races, meet us in fiction's pages" (p. 23). He asserted that fiction invites empathic identification, subduing the cultural and racial boundaries,⁴ although he was not certain about the ethical return of narrative appreciation (Keen, 2006). Wayne Booth reinvigorated the empathy debate during the 1960s, though he used the term 'sympathy' in the place of 'empathy.' As he wrote: "What we call 'involvement' or 'sympathy' or 'identification,' is usually made up of many reactions to author, narrators, observers, and other characters" (Booth, 1961, p. 158). A decade later, Colin Radford (1975, p. 67) probed into the matter, asking: 'How can we be moved?' (1975, p. 67), specifically by fictional characters. This query encouraged people to revisit the potential of fiction beyond its primary use to entertain, and fuelled the concern for narrative empathy in recent decades (Saint, 2010). Academics and researchers since then have argued whether reading literature makes people more empathic or not. Today the topic is heard even in general political talk and in media talk shows (Jurecic, 2011).

In *Cultivating Humanity* (1997), philosopher Martha Nussbaum asserts that the narrative imagination can contribute to real-world ethical demands by advancing people's moral interaction, asserting that: "Habits of empathy and conjecture conduce to a certain type of citizenship and a certain form of community" (p. 90). Ann Jurecic (2011) notes that empathy, as Nussbaum further proclaims, is not a spontaneous reaction but a habitual practice, cultivated and elevated to the service of

³ Suzanne Keen (2011c) observes how empathy in relation to narrative emotions developed from the early 20th century. I. A. Richards's (1926) understanding of emotions as "signs of attitudes" (p. 101), for instance, and his description of attitudes as "imaginal and incipient activities or tendencies to action" (86), furthered empathic understanding of narrative emotions (Keen, 2011c, pp. 2-7).

⁴ "We dramatize the events of the novels in our own persons. . . . we are there; we are caught up into the whirl of things; the whole aggregate mass of emotions, social conditions, characters, influences, environment, takes hold of us and becomes personal to us; and we emerge from it, when we close the book, bigger, stronger, richer in personality, because we have experienced these phases of life, however vicariously" (Mott, 1926, p. 28).

citizenship and community. Richard Rorty (1989) too supports this stance, emphasising the potency of literature to train our imagination to better understand others despite the differences. This ‘other’ in his account specifically concerns those who are linguistically and culturally different. Rorty emphasises that such concepts as solidarity and empathy are best understood not through philosophical works, but through literary ones: “it is to be achieved not by inquiry but by imagination, the imaginative ability to see strange people as fellow sufferers” (p. xvi).

Maxine Greene asserts the importance of empathy in education. In most of her works from 1967 to 1995, Greene articulates the importance of reading literature and its potential to assist people to become more visible to each other. In her view, pedagogy, together with empathy, has a vital role in expanding democracy. She believes in the power of literature “to heighten perceptiveness and sensitivity” (Greene, 1973, p. 291). Her emphasis on fictional emotions leads to strong ethics of compassion in the service of a coherent society. As she writes: “imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible” (1995, p. 3). In comparison, novelist and psychologist Keith Oatley (2002) says the “impact of fictions occurs mainly via emotions” (p. 65). Emotions, in his view, occur as the reader constructs or enacts his or her own version of the story using the schematic capacities, that is, the reader’s calibre of knowledge about the world order (2011c, p. 60). Readers’ concordance with fictional characters in the reading process is termed ‘identification’ (Oatley, 1995). This concept is central to Oatley’s argument: “our propensity to identify with characters is actually a remarkable demonstration of our ability to empathise with others” (2010, p. 150). In other words, our propensity to feel with fictional people during the act of reading substantiates our potential for affective engagement with fellow humans. These ideas have been well established in Oatley’s book *Such Stuff as Dreams*⁵ (2011c), in which he emphasises the importance of reading groups for discussing fiction in order to develop empathic feelings.

Interpersonal simulation between fictional characters and readers has been much debated in relation to readers’ empathic engagement. Philosopher Gregory Currie (1995) argues for the centrality of simulation in narrative engagement. He articulates how we engage with the trajectory of fictional characters and why readers

⁵ “Empathetic identification occurs when we insert the character’s goals, plans, or actions, into our own planning processor, and we come to feel in ourselves the emotions that occur with the results of actions that we perform mentally as if in the place of character” (Oatley, 2011c, p. 116).

affectively respond to those experiences of the characters (pp. 153-154). His emphasis on character representation in relation to enhancement of empathic emotions is seen throughout his investigations (see 2010, p. 215). In comparison, philosopher and aesthetician Susan L. Feagin (1996) argues that empathy for both real people and fictional characters is generated through simulation, regardless of the significant differences between the two processes: real life and fiction. In the process of reading, people do not simulate real people, but fictional characters. In that process, Feagin suggests, the source of the empathy is the ‘text’ that generates “unasserted thoughts” (p. 79) about the characters and accordingly initiates “affective responses” (p. 141) to the fiction as a work of art. For Feagin, it is the aesthetic appreciation that widens readers’ global vision and leads to empathic behaviours. A desire to appreciate a literary work is a desire to “get the good out of the work” (1996, p. 57).

Although many researchers see the possibility of learning things of ethical importance from reading fiction, the problem, as Horton (1992) claims, is about “how this is effected – about possibilities and limits” (p. 492) of reading novels in terms of ethical engagement or reaction. The most investigated and criticised aspect of the idea that fiction fosters empathy relates to fiction’s questionable power in translating emotions into actions. Accordingly, Mallan (2013) notes that “fiction that engages a reader with the emotional plight of a character does not necessarily translate into actions in the real world towards people who are similarly suffering, marginalized, or victimized” (p. 106). While many researchers (Mar, Oatley, & Djikic, 2008; Mar, Oatley, & Peterson, 2009; Oatley, 2011c, 2012) assert the greatness of the impact of literature on people’s prosocial behaviour, others, for instance Keen (2007, 2010, 2011a), conclude that there is not enough empirical evidence to prove such impact beyond the reading experience exists. So empathy may not be the source of prosocial behaviours; furthermore, empathy, narrative or otherwise, may not necessarily lead to altruism.

From other perspectives, narrative empathy in some cases is so “romanticized” (Taylor, 2007, p. 300) that its function remains only self-indulgent: “we may think that when we empathize we see and feel through the eyes of the other, but in fact what we are doing is reducing their Otherness to what can be misrecognized as their sameness to our imagined selves” (Davis, 2005, p. unpagged). Harrison (2008), who

also argues in favour of this self-serving aspect of narrative empathy, asserts that narrative empathy diminishes altruistic behaviour rather than promoting it. In her terms, narrative empathy sometimes enables people to escape from real-life ethical demands, “allowing readers to congratulate themselves for feeling with fictional characters while simultaneously doing nothing for people in need” (p. 259). Philosopher Noel Carroll (2003) also argues strongly against the so-called ‘simulation’ in readers’ engagement with fictional characters. He rejects perspective-taking and claims that “our point of view is that of an observer of a situation and not [...] that of the participant in the situation” (pp. 311-312). Therefore, from Carroll’s perspective, character identification is not a central feature in readers’ engagement with fiction. This idea of the reader’s positioning as an active observer rather than a passive counterfeiter will be further discussed later in relation to empathic unsettlement.

Despite Keen’s (2007) reservations about narrative empathy, she nevertheless sees empathy as a “precious quality of our social natures” (p. viii), and does not disdain narrative empathy or regard it as a “cheat or a fake” (p. 146). She neither praises the ambitious presupposition that narrative empathy leads to altruistic behaviour, nor rejects it as simply unrealistic, but instead speculates that fictionally stimulated empathy may be weaker than that generated by witnessing real sufferers. Accordingly, Keen suggests that “[F]iction may evoke empathy” but “it cannot make direct demands for action” (p. 106). Reviewing the evidence, she also concludes that reading itself cannot conquer similarity bias and therefore is incapable of expanding the empathic circle beyond in-groups such as family, community, and tribe (p. 108). In fact, fiction reading itself does not accomplish the real-world ethical demands or create ‘good world citizens’ (p. 22), but this does not make narrative empathy a less important concept. It is the readers who bring empathy and other emotions to the novel and bear the capacity to transform those emotions into actions for the benefit of real people: “That they rarely decide to do so should not be taken as a sign of fiction’s failing” (p. 168). In turn, Keen approaches the so-called ‘empathy-altruism’ debate from a different perspective. That is, she probes into the relationship between narrative experience and an ethics of compassion by examining narrative techniques employed in fiction in order to invoke/evoke readerly empathy.

EMPATHIC NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES

While readers' cognitive and affective responses to fictional characters do not necessarily result in altruistic actions towards others in the real world, Keen (2007) contends that fiction may contribute towards readers' ethical development: "fiction does disarm readers of some of the protective layers of cautious reasoning that may inhibit empathy in the real world" (p. 213). While it may be possible for fiction writers to propagate even negative attitudes such as prejudice or hatred towards others through narratives (Keen, 2007, p. 72), the question that Keen asks is: How is it that "fiction deactivates readers' suspicions and opens the way to empathy?" (2007, p. 29). One answer lies in the 'empathic narrative techniques' used in fiction (Keen, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2011a). However, if readers are not open to these techniques, then it is doubtful if they will respond in the desired way – that is, with affective engagement with the plight of the character. This (narrative) empathy-reader dynamic is taken up by Keen, who avows the lack of studies about emotionally evocative narrative techniques (2007, pp. 92-99). However, she is also sceptical about the possibility of developing a taxonomy that reliably evokes narrative empathy. The reason is that the narrative strategies used in a fiction can have diverse effects on readers while readers' temperaments can contribute unpredictably to their engagement or disengagement with the narrative (Keen, 2011).

While there is no taxonomy called 'empathic narrative techniques' in the field of narratology, or in the more recent development of cognitive narratology, researchers in narrative theory and literature studies have considered a range of narrative techniques or devices which are intended to create reader identification with characters and their plight, and which contribute to empathic responses. Keen (2007) too considers the use of first-person narration and the representation of character consciousness and internal emotional states as devices that can open up empathic awareness, "opening readers' minds to others, changing attitudes, and even predisposing readers to altruism" (p. x). However, she cautions that there are no narrative techniques that can overrule an individual's "resistance to empathizing" (Keen, 2007, p. x) with another who is perceived as different in terms of their race, gender, age and so forth.

Despite her view that narratives alone cannot provoke empathic emotions in readers, Keen (2006 & 2007) deduces some techniques used in fiction writing that

seem to contribute to readers' empathy. They include character identification, narrative situation, the repetitions of works in series, the length of novels, genre expectations, vivid use of settings, metanarrative commentary, and aspects of the discourse that slow readers' pace. While all of these and other elements contribute to narrative empathy in one way or another, Keen (2006, 2007, 2010) asserts that two of these elements are of paramount importance in association with narrative empathy: character identification and narrative situation.

Character Identification

The fictional character is the main component of narrative empathy (Keen, 2006). Readers' identification with characters when reading fiction is essential for their emotional engagement with the story. Explanations of how identification with fictional characters takes place are diverse. Oatley (1999) radically observes character identification as empathy and a merging between reader and character: "The meeting of identification is a species of empathy, in which we do not merely sympathize with a person, we become that person" (p. 446). However, character identification, according to Chismar (1988) is not a compulsory condition of empathising with others. For him, empathy refers to the feeling of being "stimulated, disturbed, or even moved" (p. 258) by the victim of trauma without necessarily adopting their subject positions: "[E]mpathy may occur in situations where there exists no prior attachment to the recipient and no prospect of individual utility gain" (p. 263). It is therefore possible to empathise with a victim of trauma regardless of a person's opinion about that victim. In empathy, which Chismar further understands as an inherent pattern of reaction to another's plight which derives from humans' evolutionary past, the connection between victim and empathiser is based on the realm of physical and emotional discomfort experienced by the victim. Our differences with other people in terms of culture, background beliefs and the like may make us have a different validation, understanding and experience of pain. However, the fact that we are all mortal and fragile human beings who can experience pain makes us fundamentally similar. Therefore, provided the situation is not misread due to either ignorance or prejudice, empathy allows people to feel with victims of trauma or suffering even if they are not fond of them, do not know them, or do not identify with them.

On the contrary, Cohen (2001) defines identifying with characters as a mechanism through which readers receive and interpret the text from an insider perspective, “as if the events were happening to them” (p. 245). Cohen, who asserts how character identification leads to empathic engagement, postulates four dimensions that are central in the process: emotional empathy, cognitive empathy, sharing or internalising the character’s goal, and absorption:

The first is empathy or sharing the feelings of the character i.e., being happy; sad; or scared (not for the character, but with the character). The second is a cognitive aspect that is manifest in sharing the perspective of the character. Operationally this can be measured by the degree to which an audience member feels he or she understands the character and the motivations for his or her behaviour. The third indicator of identification is motivational, and this addresses the degree to which the audience member internalises and shares the goals of the character. Finally, the fourth component of identification is absorption or the degree to which self-awareness is lost during exposure to the text. (2001, p. 256)

Whereas Cohen explicates what he sees as the steps of readers’ empathic engagement, scholars in contemporary narratology doubt whether such identification with narrative characters and immersion in the fictive world of fantasy encourages sophisticated interpretations of the story as the process denies readers’ agency and willpower. For instance, Nikolajeva (2011) finds this identification compulsion in narrative reading a “perplexing phenomenon” and calls it “identification fallacy” (p. 188). Stephens (1992) finds the identification with focalisers as one of the primary means that a text engages its readers with the story world (p. 81); however, he stresses the importance of readers’ emancipation from losing their own selfhood to become a subject within the text. According to Stephens, ‘distancing or estranging’ (p. 81) techniques in a text help reading selves to liberate themselves from adopting the fictive character’s subject position, thereby enabling readers to critically engage with the story and evaluate the ideological or aesthetic perceptions it tries to impart. Further discussions of what Stephens understands as subjective engagement with, and objective distancing from, fictional characters are found in Dominick LaCapra’s theorisation of empathic unsettlement in *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2001). Whereas some writers, such as Oatley and Cohen, emphasise character identification as pivotal to narrative perception, LaCapra sees both over-identification with

fictional characters as well as the complete withdrawal of the self from the story world as two extreme reactions that hinder a sophisticated narrative comprehension. Instead, he argues for a middle-ground: a “cognitively and ethically responsible” (p. 42) approach that permits a more desirable form of empathy which “involves not full identification,” but what he terms “empathic unsettlement” (LaCapra, 2001, p. 102).

Empathic unsettlement

According to LaCapra (2001), our responses to others’ trauma should not result in claiming their experience, but achieve empathic unsettlement, which involves affectivity. Therefore, in empathic unsettlement, readers (or viewers) are regarded as ‘attentive secondary witnesses’ of the victim’s plights and predicaments and thereby develop empathic responses towards them without claiming their voice or subjectivity. By reading a narrative of trauma that validates one’s (first hand) experience of victimisation, readers bear ‘secondary’ witness to that incident/chain of events that occurred in the past. It is emphasised that this narrative representation should be construed as a virtual reconstruction of the past that enables the ethical reader to feel with fictional characters, but not to lose his/her subjectivity to the point of self-victimisation. As LaCapra writes:

It is dubious to identify with the victim to the point of making oneself a surrogate victim who has a right to the victim’s voice or subject position. The role of empathy and empathic unsettlement in the alternative secondary witness does not entail this identity: it involves a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other’s position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other’s place. (LaCapra, 2001, p. 78)

According to La Capra (2001), expression of a particular traumatic experience in the form of writing should involve two processes: ‘acting out’ as well as ‘working through’ (p. 22). Whereas acting out refers to the re-enactment of the victim’s past experience, inducing unchecked identification that results in “a confusion of self and other” (p. 28), working through privileges a secondary witness to acquire a critical distance that allows “less self-deceptive” (p. 85) confrontation with fictional figures. LaCapra contends that when writing tries to stay faithful to the acting out perspective of trauma, it leads to over-identification with the victim as there is no clear distinction between the victim of the trauma, the one writing about the woes of the

victim, and the one reading about quandaries of the victim. On the contrary, narratives that work through trauma counteract this reenactment by avoiding “facile uplift, harmonization, or closure” (p. 78), but demand disciplined empathy with the traumatised subject, which implies an “affective relationship, rapport, or bond with the other recognized as other” (p. 213). That is, the person (or reader) who observes the victim’s quandary responds emotionally with respect but does not conflate the other’s experience with one’s own.

While traumatic narratives prompt the reader to engage with (fictional) victims and empathically respond to their suffering, LaCapra suggests the need for using disruptive techniques in such narratives to avoid or mitigate potential danger of readers’ over-identification with fictional victims. The use of distortion and disruption is regarded as important in this regard as these techniques can incite readers to “challenge normative ways of thinking and being” (Koopman, 2011, p. 308) and thereby critically engage with the narrative while maintaining self-awareness. There should, however, be a balance between disruption and engagement. If the readers are not able to relate to the characters at all, it is impossible for them to develop empathy for the victim of suffering or trauma (Koopman, 2011; Stephens, 1992). La Capra’s concept of ‘empathic unsettlement’ can be helpful in creating a balance between disruption and engagement through objectivity “that requires checks and resistance to full identification” (p.40).

Narrative techniques to support reader identification with characters

Whereas LaCapra’s theorisation of empathic unsettlement denies identification compulsion in narrative comprehension, Keen (2006) suggests a list of techniques that contribute to the reader’s identification with characters:

Specific aspects of characterization, such as naming, description, indirect implication of traits, reliance on types, relative flatness or roundness, depicted actions, roles in plot trajectories, quality of attributed speech, and mode of representation of consciousness may be assumed to contribute to the potential for character identification and thus for empathy. (p. 216).

Keen here postulates characterisation devices wielded by fiction writers to attribute human conditions of *hexis* (moral virtue) or *habitus* (disposition) to narrative characters. Portrayed with subtle nuances of human nature, characterisation can bring fictional figures to life in ways that the narrative reader can associate (or

dissociate) with on a very personal level. This may encourage those who encounter these characters in the act of reading to identify with them, care about them, explore their manoeuvres with vigour and enter into an empathic bond with them. Each of these characterisation tools can, more or less, contribute to psychic or physical formation of character depictions.

Naming a character not only prevents depersonalisation, it also gives an identity and thereby an initial recognition to that character. Therefore, Pizarro et al. assert that “a person without a name becomes less than a person” (2006, p. 90). A piece of shapeless object can be anthropomorphised by giving it a name, encouraging the reader to identify it as such. Names can be proper names, abbreviations, nicknames⁶, role titles ('boss'), or allegorical or symbolic names. In the case of picture books, naming and character descriptions are not always preferred. For instance, in Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007) the protagonist ('the man') is anonymous, an intentional strategy to reinforce his alterity. In some picture books these verbal depictions may be replaced by more detailed illustrations. In the picture book *Sunday Chutney* (2008), Aaron Blabey simulates a photograph or postcard as the introductory image of the eponymous character. The purpose here is to connote her nomadic nature (see Figure 2.1).

⁶ A character of S. E. Hinton's 1971 young adult novel, *That was Then, This is Now*, was named as M&M. The character is said to have got this nickname from his habit of eating too much of the candy with the same name.

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copyright reasons

Figure 2.1. *Sunday Chutney*, (Blabey, 2008), opening 1

Sometimes describing a character involves depicting their traits and temperament or attitudes in response to other characters' behaviour and happenings in the story (indirect characterisation). Indirect characterisation operates in *The Lost Thing* (2000), when a boy finds a huge red 'thing' alone on a crowded beach. He notes that "nobody else seemed to notice it" and "As the hours slouched by, it seemed less and less likely that anybody was coming to take the thing home. There was no denying the unhappy truth of the situation. It was lost" (Tan, unpagged). Later in the story the text includes direct characterisation: "The lost thing made a small, sad noise" (unpagged). Both direct and indirect descriptions contribute to character identification, leading to readerly empathy. Keen (2007) considers both techniques effective strategies: "direct description of a character's emotional states or circumstances by a third-person narrator may produce empathy in readers just as effectively as indirect implication of emotional states through actions and context" (p. 75).

Types of characters – static, dynamic, round, flat, and so forth – also play a vital role in character identification. For instance, round characters are more complex compared to flat types with one kind of personality trait or characteristic, and are assumed to express psychological depth more convincingly (Forster, 2002). By

contrast, Keen (2006) observes that flat characters who are relatively less complicated “play a greater role in readers’ engagement in novels” (p. 218) than is usually speculated. This observation also applies to picture books, even though there is little narrative space for fully developed characters. For Hogan (2001), however, intergroup empathy (in his terms, categorical empathy) is readily available as a character matches the reader’s group identity, whereas out-group empathy (or situational empathy) depends upon the reader’s “situational mapping” (p. 137): a memory of a comparable experience. Therefore, lack of such experience may hinder character identification and in turn an ethics of compassion: the desired outcome of situational empathy. Hence, the relationship between character types and reader identification and empathy remains controversial. Comparatively then, how much do actions contribute to characterisation and character identification? As Fludernik (2012) argues, actions indirectly characterise literary personas. For her, what matters is how a character does or say something, “how s/he behaves or speaks” (p. 46). Sometimes avoidance of particular actions may indicate characteristics such as shyness or phobia. This is evident in Figure 2.1 above from *Sunday Chutney* in which the character is pictured with an enigmatic expression that could connote a state of shyness or uncertainty.

Formulaic plot trajectories facilitate empathy as they comprise predictable events and stereotyped characters (Keen, 2007). While the predictable plot events in formulaic fiction help the reader’s schema building/activation, intimate character types may invite genuine empathic reactions, as Keen (2006) suggests: “readers’ reactions to familiar situations and formulaic plot trajectories may underlie their genuinely empathetic reactions to predictable plot events and to the stereotyped figures that enact them” (p. 218). In addition to the use of formulaic plots, a fashion of speech that reveals a character’s thoughts and feelings also assists readers in character identification. While the way someone speaks characterises his/her personality, fictional dialogues that include choice of words, syntax, tone and diction portray characters’ temperaments. Fludernik’s (2012) assertion “no language, no characters” (p. 64) does not take account of the way children’s literature is able to encourage empathy towards characters that do not have language. For instance, Shaun Tan’s depiction of ‘the lost thing’ is able to elicit empathy from another character (the boy who looks after it) and in the implied reader, despite it being a

character that does not speak. Furthermore, wordless picture books are able to develop empathic characters or characters that engender empathy through illustration only.

Narrative Situation

The second element of fiction closely associated with empathy, as Keen suggests, is narrative situation. It includes “the nature of the mediation between author and reader, including the person of the narration, the implicit location of the narrator, the relation of the narrator to the characters, and the internal or external perspective on characters, including in some cases the style of representation of characters’ consciousness” (Keen, 2007, p. 75). This constitutes two parts: narrative mediation and achieving perspective.

Narrative Mediation

Stanzel (1986) identifies three types of narrative situations: first-person narrative, authorial narrative and figural narrative. Various aspects of narrative are combined with these types of narrative situations in different ways. A first-person narrator can take a part in the story, either as the protagonist or as a minor character, in contrast to an authorial narrator, who often diverges from the world of the characters. Due to these circumstances, an authorial narrator has an external perspective on the events of the story whereas first-person and figural narrators bear internal perspectives. Internal perspective prevails when the main character’s perception dominates in the fiction or the point of view is located within the centre of events. On the contrary, external perspective prevails when the point of view is “located outside the main character or at the periphery of events” (Stanzel, 1986, p. 112).

G rard Genette (Genette & Lewin, 1983) criticised Stanzel’s work, pointing out its failure to distinguish between mood and voice: “that is to say, between the question *who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective* and *...who is the narrator*” (p. 10, italics in original). Thus the relationship between the focaliser (*who sees*) and the narrator (*who speaks*) is not the point of view (or, in Stanzel’s, terms ‘person’), but a question of voice. The category of voice, which is distinguished from mood in terms of the opposition between speaking and seeing, concerns the status of the ‘person’ of the narrator in relation to the story he/she is telling. While the debate remains active, it is clear from both Stanzel’s and Genette’s

approaches that the internal perspective or character's consciousness can be achieved in different ways. Narrative mediation and the narrator's position in the story clear these ways. Achieving this internal perspective best facilitates character identification and potentially readers' empathy.

As is evident from Stanzel's first-person self-narration or Genette's internal focalisation, a narrator shares his/her own experience with readers throughout the story. In this method the ideal reader⁷ develops an intimate relationship with the narrator, entering into an intersubjective bond. Further, Stanzel's typology reveals that the panoramic perspective provided through authorial or third-person narration also clears a path for readers to closely roam (feel) with fictional characters. This perspective leads Miall to suggest that omniscient narration invokes empathy providing "privileged information about a character's mind" (2006, p. 21). While both first-person and third-person narration involve representation of consciousness, providing opportunity for readers to unveil the inner mind of the personas, focalisation (versus narration), as Genette posits it, situates readers in the place of the characters, inviting them to see through the perceptions of literary personas. Mieke Bal (2009) takes the same stance, claiming that internal focalisation (where readers have access to a character's viewpoints, thoughts, and feelings) results in a more sympathetic response to the character. Unlike in dramas that prompt self-ruminations (monologue), narratives' use of thought representation through focalisation facilitates character identification more effectively than external representation of character types. As Keen (2006) writes, narrative mediation has "a particularly strong effect on readers" (p. 220). This 'strong effect' that Keen proposes leads to empathic perspective-taking calling upon situational self-experience of readers. However, Andringa et al. (2001) suggest that this view is empirically doubtful.

Stephens (1992) finds that "encouraging readers to adopt a stance which is identical with that of either the narrator or the principal focaliser" (p. 68) is a common technique in children's literature, where the main function is presumably the enculturation and socialization of the young. Identification with focalisers, as Stephens asserts, is one of its chief methods by which the child readers' "own

⁷ The ideal reader is defined based on the ability of 'envisionment' of a text. The concept is also defined in terms of a particular text and the particular (ideal) interpretation intended for the text. Therefore, the ideal reader is the one who exactly understands what the text presupposes and who is competent in unveiling what the text is designed to convey (Kay, 1982). The concept hints at the uncertainty of every reader developing an intimate relationship with the narrator.

selfhood is effaced” and by which readers are encouraged to internalise “the perceptions and attitudes of the focaliser” (p. 68). Jo Lampert (2009) explicates Stephens’s argument when she observes that even the *Bob the Builder* series positions young readers to learn that “they should value certain skills, certain versions of masculinities, and work ethics” (p. 108) through identification with the main focaliser, Bob.

Character Consciousness

The second part of narrative situation constitutes character consciousness. In reality people cannot look into other people’s minds, but narratives allow readers to look into a character’s head as they depict a character’s mental state and emotions without having that character speak themselves (Lethbridge & Mildorf, 2003). This narrative technique is called representation of consciousness. The power of representation of consciousness in relation to narrative characterisation and character identification has long been emphasised. As early as 1957, Kate Hamburger (1957/1993) emphasised fiction as the only means that can successfully adduce a person’s inner world. Since then, Erwin R. Steinberg (1969, 1979), Gunter Steinberg (1971) and Dorrit Cohn (1978) have probed into different aspects of the representation of consciousness. Whereas in the real world we are only able to speculate about how fellow humans think or feel, literature provides us with cross-sections of fictional characters hearts and minds. Fludernik (2012) finds that literary texts do this through representation of consciousness, inviting readers to share characters’ point of view that leads to perspective-taking and empathy:

Literary texts offer us glimpses into other people’s psyche: thus characters become as familiar to us as we are to ourselves. The sympathy we feel towards the protagonists in novels is, to a large extent, the result of this magical ability of narrative discourse to grant us insight into characters’ inner world (p. 78)

First-person narration in fiction often includes direct speech. For Meir Sternberg (1982) direct speech, in its capacity of mimetic discourse, signifies empathy, spatiality, realism, stylistic distinctiveness and reproductiveness. Cohn (1978) further identifies three methods of thought representation: psycho-narration, quoted monologues and narrated monologue or free indirect discourse in the third-person narrative context. In psycho-narration, a heterodiegetic narrator presents the

character's consciousness, whereas the quoted/interior monologue directly presents the thoughts of the persona as in direct speech. Similarly, narrated monologues consist of both psycho-narration and interior monologue. While researchers (Booth, 1961; Cohn, 1978) suggest different ways these methods can contribute to revelation of a character's psyche and in turn invoke character identification, narrated monologue is frequently mentioned for its capacity to produce empathy (Adamson, 2001; Keen, 2007; Miall, 2006). For instance, in the picture book *Little Pip and the Rainbow Wish* (Baguley & Pedler, 2008), narrated monologues are used to disclose Little Pip's feelings when he fails to catch the rainbow, which he thought would be a lovely present for his friends Milly and Spike. While the illustration depicts dejected Little Pip sitting on the ground wiping his eye with his right hand, the accompanying text describes his emotional state of disappointment: "Pip was very, very down" (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 2.2. *Little Pip and the Rainbow Wish* (Baguley and Pedler, 2008), opening 7

Representation of consciousness, as Fludernik (1993) writes, can be either “empathetic or ironic” (p. 306). Silvia Adamson (2001) reductively regards narrated monologue as “empathetic narrative” (p. 84). Picture books sometimes have monologues but they also include dialogues of varying length and frequency. While some picture books, such as John Birmingham’s *Granpa* (2003), use extensive dialogue that helps complex characterisation (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013), others use very little dialogue, relying heavily on external focalisation (for instance *Nasreen’s Secret School* by Winter, 2009) or no dialogue, as for instance in the allegorical picture book *Refugee* (Miller, 2003). It can be concluded, therefore, that the use of dialogue for the purpose of characterisation in picture books is not always the most effective or necessary technique.

This discussion of narrative techniques proceeds in the next section to explain how it works in the triangular communication between author, text and reader.

Authors and Strategic Narrative Empathising

Keen identifies three distinct areas that are of paramount importance in communicating narrative empathy. These are “the authorial empathy of writers in the act of creation; the readers’ empathy on the receiving end; and the textual evidence that bears the traces of strategic empathizing in narrative techniques, formal choices, and the component representations of fictional worlds” (Keen, 2011b, p. 143). These resources of rhetoric, as Keen (2008) writes, appropriately match the critical needs of a theory of narrative empathy. The following discussion describes these areas and their relationship to narrative empathy.

It would be wrong to claim that fiction writers take control over the emotions that their fictions stimulate in readers’ minds. However, it is arguably true that fiction writers consciously attempt to evoke particular feelings and therefore employ germane strategies to instigate relevant emotions. As Keen (2007) writes, readers’ feelings are regulated by the author’s intention: “much of what we feel while reading depends upon responding to differences between a character’s reaction and what we believe to be the narrator’s or implied author’s point about a situation” (p. 73). This is the case for empathy as well. Some authors strategically invite readers’ empathy, while others eschew narrative empathy, “going instead for effects of estrangement, shock or disgust” (Keen, 2008, p. 480). Strategic empathising relates to the former

category of authors who employ empathy in the creation of fictional work, especially, “in service of a ‘scrupulously visible political interest’” (2008, p. 479).

Strategic empathy understands how authors attempt to control emotional responses to a fictional work aimed at a particular readership; this readership does not necessarily include all the readers who happens to read the text. For Keen: “*Strategic narrative empathy*, on the part of authors, indicates their manipulation of potential target audiences through deliberate representational choices designed to sway the feelings of their readers, though actual readers’ responses vary” (2011b, p. 136, emphasis in original). Strategic empathy varies depending on the implied readership authors have in mind when writing a fiction: immediate in-group readers, a distant specified audience or a totally remote unpredictable readership. While nearness/distance here stands for spatial and/or temporal proximity, it also correlates with familiarity/strangeness and sameness/otherness (Keen, 2008). For Keen (2011a), strategic empathizing:

may call upon similarity with the reader or familiarity of character types or circumstances; it may attempt to transcend differences and move beyond predictably biased reactions to characters representing outgroups or stigmatised behaviour; or it may involve a broad call upon universal human experiences as the basis of its efforts to connect through shared feelings and emotional fusion. (p. 370)

Accordingly, three forms of authorial empathy – bounded strategic empathy, ambassadorial strategic empathy and broadcast strategic empathy – occur, respective to the above mentioned audience types.

Bounded strategic empathy “*occurs within an in-group, stemming from experiences of mutuality, and leading to feeling with familiar others*” (Keen, 2008, p. 481, emphasis in original). This form of empathy is often invoked by writers/texts within the dominant culture. Bounded strategic empathy addresses similar others and invites (in-group) readers to feel with the familiar subject. Therefore, it may not allow for outsiders to join the empathic circle, characterising itself with what Hoffman (2000) calls the ‘similarity bias’ (pp. 206-2013) Though bounded strategic empathy is other-directed, according to Keen, she also notes a temporal dimension in that it “may be marked by signs of both ‘similarity’ and ‘here-and-now’ bias, with limiting effect to match” (2011a, p. 370). By contrast ambassadorial empathy

counteracts both similarity and here-and now bias as it “addresses chosen others with the aim of cultivating their empathy for the in-group, often to a specific end” (Keen, 2008, p. 483, emphasis in original). Ambassadorial strategic empathy addresses a distant but specific readership calling up empathy for targeted others, who are familiar to the author, and whose suffering is related to social injustice such as marginalisation, contempt or prejudice. Therefore, this form of empathy pleads for justice, recognition, and assistance, transcending empathy towards altruistic activism. An example of ambassadorial empathy is Jeanette Winter’s picture book *Nasreen’s Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan* (2009), which addresses discrimination against girls receiving an education under Taliban rule in parts of Afghanistan.

Ambassadorial empathy is of importance with regard to the picture books that are discussed in this study because these narratives seemingly reflect characteristics of the type. As Keen (2008) writes, three factors affecting ambassadorial empathy are temporality, spatiality and issue/point of contention:

ambassadorial empathy is most marked by the relationship between the time of reading and the historical moment of publication, when the text gets sent out in the world to perform its ambassadorial duty by recruiting particular readers to a present cause through emotional fusion. That is, ambassadorial strategic empathy is time sensitive, context and issue dependant... (p. 486)

Picture books that will be later discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 provide ample evidence for these characteristics of ambassadorial empathy. For instance, picture books such as Narelle Oliver’s *Dancing the Boom-Cha-Cha Boogie* (2005), Armin Greder’s *The Island* (2007) and Liz Lofthouse’s *Ziba Came on a Boat* (2007) delineate the contemporary issue of asylum seekers or ‘boat people’ that is relevant to many developed nations, including Australia. *Ziba Came on a Boat* intensifies this temporal issue of boat people by using the spatial affairs pertinent to recent/contemporary Australian political contexts, such as refugee policy, offshore processing and indefinite detention. While temporality, spatiality and the issue of asylum seeking evident in these picture books characterise ambassadorial empathy, “para-textual statements of intention on the part of writers and organizations” (Keen, 2008, p. 486) make ambassadorial empathy more recognisable. For example, the back cover of *Nasreen’s Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan* provides

details of Winter's commission to write this book from The Global Fund for Children. Highlighting the title with the phrase 'a true story from Afghanistan' also proffers a kind of authenticity to the story, thereby increasing readers' trust and compelling them to read it (Mallan, 2013). However, realism, as Keen (2007, 2008) asserts, is not a pre-requisite for readerly empathy.

Compared to bounded and ambassadorial empathy, broadcast strategic empathy, the third form of empathy, employs universals to reach everyone, including distant others and later readers (Keen, 2011a). This form of empathy, "*calls upon every reader to feel with members of a group, by emphasizing our common human experiences, feelings, hopes, and vulnerabilities*" (Keen, 2008, p. 488, emphasis in original). Like the ambassadorial form, broadcast strategic empathy also counteracts both the similarity and here-and-now biases, but it does so by emphasizing commonalities that persist across time, distance, and cultural barriers. In that, broadcast empathy is not time sensitive or context bounded; instead, its influence remains timeless and universal. Reaching universal readership, however, does not require writing in the "global *lingua franca*" (Keen, 2008, p. 490, italics in original). Broadcast empathy takes a humanist standpoint that accompanies universal themed fiction – that is, a work of fiction that implies ideas about the nature of all people or about the relationship of human beings to each other or to the universe.

Readers' Empathy

An author's intention to evoke particular emotion in readers' minds through a fiction or any other literary media and the degree of its effect on the target readership both lie beyond empirical evidence. As Keen (2011b) writes, "[T]he chain of transmission of affective purpose that runs from author to audience cannot be so confidently scripted" (p. 136). However, it has long been suggested that it is necessary that many readers realise and comply with the artist's feelings in the process of aesthetic appreciation. According to the Eastern literary critic Bharatha (200 BCE and 200 CE), "for an art to reach its culmination, which takes place in the mind of the *sahrdaya*, the heart and mind of the *Sahrdaya* should stay attuned to the innate feelings and emotions represented in the work of art, by the artist" (quoted & translated in Sunil, 2005, p. unpagged). The word '*Sahrdaya*' stands here as an overarching term that encapsulates various 'connoisseurs' including literary readers. A *Sahrdaya*, who possess an intuition of aesthetic appreciation and a disposition

comprising living experience and aesthetic pursuit, has the potential to in-take the basic emotions embedded in the work of art. These ideas merge well with some contemporary Western ideologies of literary appreciation, in particular, cognitive poetics (Feagin, 1987, 1988, 1996) and narrative rhetoric (Booth, 1961; Keen, 2007; Phelan, 1996). This relationship between the reader and the text has drawn the attention of some recent researchers: for instance, Keen's (2011d) idea of readers' temperaments, Stephens's (2011) reading of schema and scripts, Stanzel's (2004) theorizing of 'complementary story,' and Fludernik's (1993) argument concerning 'natural narratology.' As all these researchers base their arguments on 'schema theory,' this discussion will be furthered with attention to schema and scripts.

Schema and scripts

A schema is an abstract or a generic knowledge structure about some aspect of the world, learned or innately given, and as such provides a framework for understanding (Stephens, 2011). Jean Matter Mandler, who distinguishes between stories, scripts and scenes, understands cognitive schemata as "structures that organise our spatial and/or temporal knowledge about objects, events and places" (Mandler, 1984, p. 4). Schemata may consist of attributes such as skills, competencies, values of other individuals (person schema), role expectations (role schema), behaviourally-oriented information (event schema), generalisations achieved based on self-experience (self schema), and attributes of groups (group schema) (Michener, DeLamater, & Myers, 2004). Self-schemata are verbal self-portraits of more familiar, complex and stable memories about the self. In contrast, schemata for others are less familiar, less effective, simpler portraits that can be stored in image form. According to Lee and Tsai (2004), schemata are useful as they help us interpret and predict situations as they occur in the environment.

While a schema is understood as a "static element within our experiential repertoire", Stephens (2011) considers, "a script is a dynamic element, which expresses how a sequence of events or actions is expected to unfold" (p. 14). Narratives provide scripts for schemata to work on. These scripts do not contain all the details or events that constitute a story. Instead, they provide a chain of events. When reading, readers use schemata to link events; find their causal, spatial and temporal relationships; and in turn build the story by providing default background information for comprehension. Mark Turner (1996) terms this process "narrative

imagining” (p. 20). This imagining involves four schematic functions: prediction, evaluation, planning and explanation that leads to story understanding through gap-filling. The ‘gap-filling’ function is the most important role played by ‘schema’ in terms of narrative understanding (Fludernik, 1993; Mandler, 1984; Stanzel, 2004; Stephens, 2011). Stanzel (2004), for instance, argues that authors only write a limited (finite) number of sentences and words in order to define an infinite number of details. It is the reader who works out the “authentic picture of the reality portrayed in the story,” adding his/her own ‘complementary story’ to the plot presented in a novel or a short story (p. 203). Narrative instances, narrators, and narratees, for Fludernik (1993), “can therefore be regarded as a product of the reader’s interpretative strategies, which are in turn determined by general frames and schemata of human agency (for the plot level) and communication scripts (for narratorial discourse)” (p. 61, emphasis and parentheses in original). However, schemata not only have this gap-filling function in reading, it also contributes to a reader’s knowledge of the overall structure of stories, which Mandler (1984) termed “story schemata.” Thus, Fludernik (1996) suggests that schemata play a unique role in making a story a story. In her model, “there can therefore be narratives without plot, but there cannot be any narratives without a human (anthropomorphic) experiencer” (p.13). While Fludernik’s claim has its merits, those who argue in favour of a non-anthropocentric perspective, Donna Haraway (2008) for instance, rejects the overemphasis of anthropomorphism in subjective storytelling.

While Turner’s narrative imagining makes sense of how a schema works in readers’ engagement with a story, Stephens (2011) suggests how a schema can be modified towards empathic imagination:

Sustained mapping of a schema throughout a text is a key element in drawing out the significance from the story world, because once readers recognise and mentally instantiate the schema, the recurrence or addition of further components enables the schema to be modified for socially transformative purposes. (p. 15).

For instance, it is not only stories, but also a well-mapped self-schema of a suffering individual in a newspaper that can be thought provoking. For Pizarro et al. (2006), the creative use of language, the creative use of images and the use of stories, songs and films often confront, challenge and sometimes change our moral beliefs.

Use of techniques such as first-person self-narration, self-reflection, and the expression of inner thoughts and memories in a story help reflect a narrative character's psyche, open ways to character identification and, in turn, invite perspective-taking. Describing schema-scripts as 'vital cognitive instruments' and their function as 'transformative instruments,' Stephens (2011) points out how schema and scripts contribute to evoking empathic emotion that leads to altruistic behaviour: "scripts and schema function as transformative instruments, enhancing understanding of relationships between selfhood and otherness and informing social action designed to foster equity and social justice" (p. 34)

Schema theory suggests three different reactions on the readers' part – accretion, tuning, and restructuring – through which learners acquire knowledge. In accretion, learners assimilate new knowledge into existing cognitive structures without changing their overall schema. In tuning, as learners come across a situation whereby their existing schema is incapable of handling the new knowledge, so they make modifications to their existing schema accordingly. Lastly, learners restructure and create a new schema when there is inconsistency between the old schema and the newly acquired knowledge (Lee, 2004, pp. 407-408). This is very much applicable to story reading because stories may enhance the quality of schemata through the above process. For instance, adults mostly re-enact stories in terms of tuning and by modifying their existing schemata in the mental disposition – their state of mind regarding something. Children, however, do not possess such a powerful schema repertoire due to their young age and relatively limited experiences. Children's literature, which is intended to affect how the young mind understands and structures the world (Stephens, 2011), helps readers to build or shape the schemata that are not fixed in their memory. Lee and Tsai (2004) assert that stories can improve the quality of children's schemata and, reciprocally, schemata enhance their capacity to interpret, predict, and understand the stories.

According to schema theory, readers bring and contribute knowledge structures (schemata) in comprehending stories. Keen (2011d), however, suggests that readers do far more than that:

Even though readers know perfectly well that fictional characters are make-believe, they go on caring about them, lending them the bodies that they do not possess, feeling with them in emotional fusion that paradoxically calls

into embodiment a psychic corporeality vouched for in readers' own bodily responses. (p. 309)

To re-state, authorial empathy is at work in the place of text creation and in readers' contribution to perceive empathic emotions embedded in the text through the use of knowledge structures in reading. The next section discusses the text's contribution to readers' engagement with fictional characters.

Text: Words and Illustrations

In *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (1988), Genette claims that, "When I open a book, whether it is a narrative or not, I do so to have the author *speak to me*. And since I am not yet either deaf or dumb, sometimes I even happen to answer him" (pp. 101-102, italics in original). Genette here postulates the relationship that builds up between implied author and the actual reader through textual communication, because it is not the historical author that the reader meets at last, but the text (his/her production). At a glance this remark seems to be somewhat of an exaggeration. But, as for Fludernik, it makes explicit what the narrative voice ultimately reflects. That is, "the voice of the author, the actual transmitter of the narrative qua message" (2001, p. 622).

Keen (2006) contends that it is widely assumed that "empathy can be transacted accurately from author to reader by way of a literary text" (p. 221). But how does a text do this? The narrative techniques discussed above provide suggestions from a narratological perspective. At the 'text' level, that may require some analysis from a linguistic perspective: syntactic or pragmatic analysis. Both narrative theorists and linguists have attempted to analyse narrative representation linguistically. For instance, in the model proposed by narrative theorist Genette, analysing the relationship between narrative discourse and the narrated story requires three linguistic elements: tense, voice and mood. This point is elaborated by Fludernik (2001):

The narrative text, in terms of this metaphor, can be conceptualised as a verb whose grammatical inflections indicate the relationship of discourse to story, as those of the verb in a clause signify the relation between the action denoted by the verb and the speaker's and/or agent's stance and where this relation is temporal (tense), attitudinal (mood), or diathetical (voice) (p. 619).

From another perspective, the theory of foregrounding (see Hakemulder, 2004, p. 197) distinguishes three levels whereby literature deviates from the norms of everyday language: the phonetic level, the grammatical level and the semantic level. It would be important to see how each linguistic elements such as rhyme, inversion and metaphors, metonymy and irony attached to these levels relate to emotions, but that requires extensive research that is outside the scope of this study; however, the analysis chapters do consider the empathy evoked through metaphor and irony in some texts. In comparison, linguists, such as Susume Kuno (1976, 1987) and Kazuo Kato (1979) analyse syntactic representation of empathy. In Kuno's (1987) empathy perspective, propositions encoded in syntactic structures are ego-centric. In other words, the speaker's subjective knowledge grammatically represented through the syntax of a language. Therefore, systematic linguistic analysis can reveal speakers' perspective/point of view in relation to others. Nevertheless, as this study is situated in children's literature, specifically picture books, the text analysis will be drawn from narratology, rather than probe in detail the linguistic structures of text.

In *Understanding Others: Imitation, Language, Empathy* (2005), Marco Iacoboni provides a neuro-scientific investigation into the relationship between language and empathy. As he suggests, "we come to understand others via imitation, and imitation shares functional mechanisms with language and empathy" (Iacoboni, 2005, pp. 77-78). In an earlier discussion, Keith Oatley has claimed that it is not only witnessing others' actions that fires mirror neurons, but even imagining those actions while reading a thought-provoking text evokes empathic feelings (Oatley, 1995, 1999). That probably does not mean that reading a statement such as "he is happy/sad" makes us experience the same emotions to the same degree that another subject feels. The problem here is representing emotions that are non-verbal and ineffable by means of verbal media. Consideration is therefore given to the figurative nature of literary language. As Fludernik hints, the creative use of language and the 'warping' that it creates can modify the order of human cognition. In her terms, "inventive and creative language use intentionally or unintentionally warps the available formulas in the interest of greater precision, entertainment or aesthetic effect" (Fludernik, 1993, pp. 427-428). Nikolajeva (2012b) finds metaphors within this creative use of language a powerful device to circumvent the difficulty of conveying emotions verbally. This view affirms Hakemulder's (2004) suggestion

that literary quality enhanced by textual features such as metaphor and irony has a greater effect on reader emotions. Pizarro et al. (2006) also explicate the empathic potential of the creative use of language, but they conversely suggest that the language of disgust has been used throughout history for opposite purposes, such as attacks on women and homosexuals, and we can add other epithets for migrants, refugees, or others who are different from mainstream notions of the ‘norm.’ Illustrations, particularly in children’s literature, compared to verbal depictions featured by devices such as metaphors, “carry a stronger potential still” (Nikolajeva, 2012b, p. 277).

Illustrations

Picture books, compared to novels, are shorter in length and simple in terms of both plot (narrative structure) and characterisation. They are generally plot and/or action-oriented rather than character-oriented (Nodelman, 2003). Nodelman asserts that “the texts are characteristically succinct and undetailed” and appear themselves as “plot summaries” (1988, p. viii). This point is supported by Nikolajeva and Scott (2013), who observe that

picture books allow little room for thorough characterization in the conventional sense. We may generally observe that picturebooks tend to be plot-oriented rather than character-oriented. Further, the plot itself is often too limited to allow much development, which means that most characters are static rather than dynamic, and flat rather than round. (p. 82)

Nevertheless, despite these views on the limitations of picture books, often their surface simplicity can disguise complex and sophisticated ideas, as the analysis chapters in this study demonstrate.

Picture books may contain only illustrations, for instance *Mirror* (Baker, 2010), a story that attempts to show cultural difference and sameness by mirroring a day in the lives of two very different families, one from Sydney, Australia, the other from a village in North Africa. However, picture books predominantly contain both words and pictures. In most picture books it is the interplay of words and images that comprises the dual narration. Seeing a character’s facial expressions or bodily postures “purportedly sends a stronger signal to the brain” (Nikolajeva, 2012b, p. 274) than reading or listening to a verbal statement of suffering or excitement. Emotions, by nature, are ineffable. In graphic-only narratives such as *The Arrival*

(Tan, 2006), verbal description of emotional states “can be replaced by drawings of bodily postures and facial expressions that readily communicate feelings to readers” (Keen, 2011b, p. 146). As discussed above, non-graphic fiction employs metaphors and other such figurative devices to circumvent the issue. Arguably, illustrations in picture books seem more effective as “images can substantially enhance the meaning expressed by words approximating the vague and indefinable emotion” (Nikolajeva, 2012b, p. 277). While illustrations work as *emotion ekphrasis*, a device that describes an emotion (Nikolajeva, 2012b), they also function as devices that can evoke readerly emotions.

Several researchers take the view that images are more effective than words in eliciting emotions (Keen, 2011b; Nikolajeva, 2012b; Nikolajeva & Scott, 2006; Nodelman, 1988, 2005). Their point is that this is due to the fact that “images transcend language and geographical region, and they are often able to strike instantly at the very heart of the viewer” (Pizarro et al., 2006, p. 91). Further to this assumption, Keen asserts the power of illustrations in positing empathy. In her study on graphic novels Keen (2011b) contends that though some readers argue for the power of verbal text in eliciting empathy, “the illustrations participate in the texts’ humanitarian endeavour by calling upon readers’ innate capacity to recognise and internally rehearse the feelings of others from facial cues” (p. 146). However, for Susan Midalia both visual and linguistic representations inform and influence our schemata of world and society as both these representations “are never innocent or neutral reflections of reality. As the word itself suggests, they re-present reality for us: that is, they offer not a mirror of the world but an interpretation of it” (quoted in Hurrell, 2001, p. 50). Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (2006) take the view that both verbal and visual dialogue can be used to realise the “same fundamental systems of meaning that constitute our cultures” (p.19). Nodelman (1988) agrees with Kress and van Leeuwen, though he finds that pictures sometimes contradict the text, adding more to our knowledge of the situation.

In *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (2006), Kress and van Leeuwen argue that visual images can also be read as “text,” and the visual images can be understood through the metaphor of “grammar.” In this sense, “grammar” is “not a set of rules for the correct use of language, but rather a set of socially constructed resources for the construction of meaning”. This “grammar,” Kress and

van Leeuwen argue, “can be used by individuals to shape the subjectivities of others” through what they call ‘cognitive semiotic processes’ (2006, p. 36). Such processes “are constantly transformative and transductive [... and] have effects on ‘inner resources’, which constantly reshape the subjectivity” of the reader (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 39).

Pictures are iconic representations compared to words, which are symbolic. From a semiotic perspective, pictures constitute ‘signs.’ These signs are “conjunctions of signifiers (forms) and signifieds (meanings) (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 8). Kress and Leeuwen (2006) argue that visual grammar “makes a range of resources available: different compositional arrangements to allow the realisation of different textual meanings” (p. 43). Within this grammar model, the authors suggest that “interpersonal meaning in visual texts may be identified through the representation of relations between viewer and image content” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 114). Viewer-image interaction is described through the following aspects of interactive meaning: mood, perspective, social distance, lighting, colour and modality. Other than these elements, “visual weight” of elements in an image which is determined by its size, focus, colour and distance, and centricity (centre and margin) also regulate a reader’s interaction with the image.

These elements are important in terms of understanding the reader/viewer’s emotional engagement with pictures. Social distance, for instance, can explain empathy as it posits a different level of character identification. In social distance, represented participants in an image are positioned at varying distances in relation to the readers/viewers. Based on this spatial distance, readers respond to represented figures with varying degrees of familiarity (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006). The effect of distance is created by the different types of (camera) shots. For instance, a close shot captures head and shoulder of a figure representing a ‘close personal distance.’ Similarly, a long shot that frames a figure with space around encodes a ‘far social distance’ (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 131). Accordingly, framing of represented figures in an image allows the reader to imaginatively enter into a close relationship with them or view them as strangers or “others.” That means, the degree of the represented figures distance to the reader/viewer determines the level of relationship between them: close-up shots visually represent personal relations; medium shots constitute social relations, and long shots typify public relations.

Pictures, through figural representation, become more powerful in inviting readers to identify with fictional personas (El Refaie, 2012) and hence make empathy possible. Semiotic tools drawn from Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) and Nodelman's (1988, 2005) applications of such tools in analysing picture books are used in this study, together with Nikolajeva's (2010, 2012b) and Nikolajeva and Scott's (2006) narratological approaches to children's picture books.

Illustrations have a considerable contribution towards readerly empathy. Keen emphasises illustrations' power of characterization to elicit readers' emotions by providing facial expressions and bodily postures: "illustrations of faces and bodily postures may capitalize on the availability of visual coding for human emotions, eliciting readers' feelings before they even read the accompanying text" (2011b, p. 135). However, they have limitations too. For instance, while pictures can portray the gender, ethnicity and some personal attributes of a character, they cannot provide details such as exact age or name, or identify inter-subjective relationships, such as mother-daughter or brother-sister relationships. Nikolajeva (2010) concludes, "pictures are extremely suitable for external descriptions" (p. 34) that give the reader an immediate portrait of the fictional character. Naming, demographic details or familial relationships are often provided by the accompanying text.

As Nikolajeva and Scott (2006) observe, picture book characters, in terms of types, are more often than not simple and flat characters. This relative flatness of characters is, on the one hand, necessary for young readers to identify with characters in the absence of details. On the other hand, the use of flat characters makes picture books a unique piece of literature that invites readers' emotional engagement with characters. Other than the use of flat character type, picture books often employ animal characters or toys as a way of conveying an emotive content that may be too distressing if it were represented as occurring to a child character. According to Nikolajeva (2012b), readers naturally tend to anthropomorphise these animal characters.

While Keen (2011b) identifies how the use of anthropomorphised characters "evokes culturally scripted responses to familiar schemas of sympathetic and antipathetic animals" (p. 137), Nikolajeva (2012) finds that some such characters visually represent human feelings. Although not often used, strategies such as dehumanization (Keen, 2011b), disguise of human characters, or use of inanimate

objects as protagonist (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013) in picture books bring different dimensions to characterization that can impact on the story's empathic potential.

As noted earlier, narrative situation is a narrative technique that contributes to readerly empathy (Keen, 2007). Narrative situation comprises: the person of the narration, the implicit location of the narrator, the relation of the narrator to the characters, and the internal or external perspective on characters. Although Keen notes that first-person narration is an important narrative device in terms of characterization and leads to the reader's empathic identification with the characters, picture books rarely employ this device. Rather, it is commonplace that they use third-person narration "because their limited length does not enable developed characterization" (Mallan, 2013, p. 112). Some picture books – for instance, *Eric* (Tan, 2010) – are focalised through a first-person narrator whose role appears to be that of a complementary third-person observer.

Whether it is a first-person narration or third-person narration, what matters most in terms of readerly empathy is achieving the fictional characters' inner perspective or consciousness. Again, because redundancy of words in picture books is unconventional, pictures have to play the greater part in conveying characters' inner worlds. While images can, to a considerable extent, portray the characters' mood or state of mind, such as joy, anger, or worry, "they have limited possibilities of representing complex mental conditions" (Nikolajeva, 2010, p. 36).

From a semiotic perspective, pictures can circumvent this issue with the support of 'visual symbols' (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Nikolajeva, 2010; Nodelman, 1988). Attributes such as dark clouds, gloomy sky, and rain convey negative emotions whereas sight to the horizon symbolises hope. Many picture books use symbols or visual metaphors that require very sophisticated reading in order to decode them. For Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), such symbolic representation takes two forms: attributive and suggestive. In the attributive symbolic process, one figure of an image is foregrounded or highlighted against another participant to make meaning, whereas in the suggestive symbolic process, there is only one represented participant whose meaning is conveyed by itself or other means such as colour. Other than the symbols, such techniques as foregrounding, centricity and modality may express characters' emotional states, for instance, self-esteem, loneliness or abandonment.

There is an emerging trend in modern picture books to address complex social issues such as multiculturalism, “informing social action designed to foster equity and social justice” (Stephens, 2011, p. 34). While some picture books target only emergent literate children, many others are clearly designed for a dual audience: learning children and learned adults (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2013). In terms of emotions such as empathy, Stephens (2011) points out that picture books have the potential to inform young readers about social morality and regulate their social cognitions while inviting sophisticated adult readers to empathically feel with suffering others and respond altruistically. Mallan (2013) further asserts the empathic potential of picture books for regulating young children’s pro-social emotions. For her, children’s literature, especially picture books, can contribute to children’s understanding of moral values and such notions as identity and belonging that may cause them “to act in certain ways both individually and collectively” (p. 113).

CONCLUSION

In discussing the different perspectives on empathy and literature’s capacity to evoke empathy in readers as part of the reading process, the discussion has demonstrated that empathy remains a controversial topic, there are few systematic empirical studies available, and much of the secondary literature offers only partial judgements. Despite arguing about fiction’s potential for an ethics of compassion, Keen’s study *Empathy and the Novel* (2007) has provided an extensive investigation into narrative techniques that authors use in order to evoke an empathic emotion in readers’ minds towards fictional characters. Studies of empathy are only emergent in the field of children’s literature studies, especially picture books. Appropriation of empathic narrative techniques in children’s picture books, as distinct from the novel, is not straightforward.

In Keen’s (2007) discussion of empathic narrative techniques, character identification is pivotal as it said to contribute to readerly empathy or the empathic feelings of readers. While Nikolajeva (2011) finds identification compulsion in aesthetic appreciation perplexing, LaCapra (2001) contends that over-identification with narrative characters empathically settles the reader to adopt the character’s subject position and thereby hinders critical engagement with the story. Therefore, LaCapra suggests the importance of empathic unsettlement, which can be achieved by positioning the reader as a critical observer, one who witnesses trauma and strives

to comprehend the indiscernible agony, but does not feel subjectively involved, or objectively deny the extremity of such experiences. When it comes to characterisation, on the author's part, picture books do not give much freedom for characters' description or indirect implication of traits that help readers to identify with characters. Limited space in picture books does not support extensive use of these techniques, especially in terms of plot and characterisation. However, the illustrations in picture books are powerful techniques that have the capacity for contributing to empathy.

Analysis of Australian multicultural picture books in chapters 4 and 5 will further reveal how the empathic narrative techniques discussed in this chapter are used (or not) in picture books and how such techniques may or may not inhibit readerly empathy for cultural difference. Before moving to the discussion and a way of providing a context for this study of Australian multicultural picture books, the next chapter provides an overview of multiculturalism in general and a review of the development of Australian multiculturalism as a political ideology with particular attention to its effect on migrants and refugees.

Chapter 3: Competing Perspectives on Multiculturalism

This chapter begins with an overview of multiculturalism and examines its development in Australia from 1973 to 2015. As a way to contextualise policy reforms leading to multiculturalism, the discussion offers a historical background of Australian politics of social policy. The shift from assimilationism to multiculturalism was necessitated by the global trend to accept pluralism on the one hand and local socio-economic concerns that required a non-discriminatory immigration policy, on the other. At the present time, an increasingly significant issue in Australia is the politics of border protection, which intersects with the refugee/asylum seeker debate. This discussion will argue that Australia's policies of multiculturalism and its refugee policy are often at odds. The chapter also investigates how Australia's choice of education as a means of promoting multiculturalism created the literary climate for multicultural children's literature to burgeon. The chapter concludes with an overview of how the conception of the cultural "other" has been treated in early and more recent Australian children's literature, particularly, multicultural picture books.

MULTICULTURALISM

Globalisation and global mobility have contributed to the multicultural and poly-ethnic composition of many societies in the world today (Rigoni & Saitta, 2012). Gregory Jay (2002) asserts that the evolution of 'globalisation' following the Second World War transformed "previously homogeneous cities or regions into complex meeting grounds for different ethnic, racial, religious and national groups" (p. 1). The effects of globalisation, specifically changes in demography, transportation, communication and market deregulation, brought about a complex cultural and population intermixture in the Western world (Lewis & Jungman, Krznaric, 2008; 1986). According to Marshall McLuhan (2001), this cultural mix, created by the "utmost proximity" (pp. 38-39) of people, became "the norm of ordinary daily life" (p. 31) in the post-modern world. As the issues of diversity become more complex in globalised Western societies, traditional socio-political and cultural institutions seem

to have lost the capacity to accommodate the new trends of cultural diversity and social complexity (Rigoni & Saitta, 2012; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). In search for a new ideology that conceptualises diversity, many Western governments adopted ‘multiculturalism’ as a political policy that best addressed the fact of diversity (Raz, 1994, p. 173). However, multiculturalism is more than ‘cultural mix’ or ‘diversity.’ As Will Kymlicka (2012) observes with respect to the West, multiculturalism entails “the legal and political accommodation of ethnic diversity” replacing “older forms of ethnic and racial hierarchy with new relations of democratic citizenship” (p. 1).

In initial general discussions, ‘multicultural’ or ‘multiculturalism’ seems to have referred to the demographic fact of ethnic diversity (see, for instance, Cole & Cole, 1954), whereas its later development in academic discussions (Song, 2010) mainly refers to the policy and political philosophy of cultural pluralism. From a sociological perspective, multiculturalism is perceived as “a technique for society building” (Elliot & Fleras, 1992, p. 400) by which it is meant that conflicts are managed between the majority and minority and in turn foster harmony in a diverse society. A similar understanding emerges within political philosophy, where multiculturalism is interpreted as an egalitarian strategy of democracy for social cohesion in an ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse multitude (Murphy, Hage & Couch, 1999; Kymlicka, 2012; Loobuyck, 2005; 2011). However, multiculturalism as a political philosophy does not just refer, or is not only limited, to the ethno-cultural intermixture of migrant societies. For some political philosophers, it includes the socio-political discourses of aboriginal, indigenous groups and national minorities (Kymlicka, 1996, pp. 27-30). But there is no consensus among multicultural critics (for instance Singh, 2000) about this inclusion. Crucially in the Australian context, Aboriginal peoples reject the treatment of indigenous affairs under the umbrella of multiculturalism (Koleth, 2010, p. 12). Under the policy of multiculturalism they would be recognised as merely another ethnic group; this would obliterate their indigenous status (Van den Berg, 2002, p. 160).

Multiculturalism is a pervasive term as it also appears in contemporary literary, social, political and educational discussions. As one recent critic points out, “it is a classic floating signifier, attached to different sets of ideological baggage by its critics and defenders” (Marangozov, 2011, p. 163). The origin of the term ‘multicultural’ and other related terms such as cultural pluralism, race and ethnicity, dates

back to the early decades of the twentieth century. However, appearance of the term ‘multiculturalism’ in the Canadian *Preliminary Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* published in 1965 indicates the advancement of its meaning with regard to its political representation today (Dudek, 2011b; Raz, 1998). The coining of ‘Canadian mosaic’ as a way of capturing ethnic diversity synonymous with multiculturalism was another addition in this report:

What image of Canada would do justice to the presence of these varied ethnic groups? This question preoccupied Western participants especially, and the answer they often gave was ‘multiculturalism’, or, more elaborately, ‘the Canadian mosaic.’ (*A preliminary report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, 1965, p. 51)

In the above extract, multiculturalism is regarded as a specific means of sustaining justice in a diverse community and this inclusion marks its currency in policy initiatives. Not only that, it is with the recommendation of this report in 1965 that ‘multiculturalism’ replaced the bicultural policy, which had been in place for over a century in Canada (Raz, 1998). Following this recommendation, Canada became the first state to adopt multiculturalism as its official policy in 1971. Sweden followed in 1975, and Australia in 1978 (Inglis, 1996).⁸ Multiculturalism led political reforms in many states where ethnic diversity is of primary concern, such as Holland, New Zealand and the UK (Murphy, 2011, p. 30). However, the policies adopted in different countries vary with each country’s primary concerns with respect to migrants, refugees, indigenous people, national minorities, historic minorities, religious minorities, linguistic minorities, or other disadvantaged communities (Murphy, 2011, p. 30). According to Michael Murphy’s (2011) typology, these policies can be categorised under one or more of the following types: voice (inclusion of minority voices in decision making); symbolic recognition (measures such as accepting distinctive cultures as worthy of recognition and respect, official apologies for past injustice); redistribution (provision of more resources for disadvantaged minorities); protection (measures that prevent conduct such as racism and help preserve distinctive language and cultures); exceptions (exempting minorities from the application of certain laws and regulations); assistance (measures

⁸ Multiculturalism was introduced to Australian politics in 1973, by the then Whitlam Labor government, but its enactment as an official policy was marked by the acceptance of the *Report of the Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants*, which is known as the Galbally Report, in 1978 by the Fraser Liberal Government.

such as affirmative action); and autonomy (self-determination and self-government rights) (p. 31).

As discussed above, multiculturalism as a policy initiative was adopted as a more productive means than assimilation or integration to accommodate different identities, values and practices of both majority and minority groups in a diverse society. This adaptation also gave rise to the ideological discourse of multicultural political philosophy on the necessity to offer “moral justifications for these policies, to assess which kind of policies are most appropriate for which kind of groups, and to assess which kind of limitations on these policies are required on both moral and political grounds” (Murphy, 2011, p. 6). Interpretations are not easy to come by for ideological-normative usage of ‘multiculturalism’ because there are different theories which show no consensus in their understanding of multiculturalism. According to some critics, there are three main defences of, or justifications for, multiculturalism, namely liberalism, communitarian critique of liberalism, and post-colonial perspectives (Alexandru, 2011; Song, 2010). While these three justifications are based on liberal-humanistic values and attempt to address diversity on a common ground, they give primacy to different aspects of classical liberalism. For instance, while liberal multiculturalism promotes liberal values of autonomy and equality, the communitarian critique of liberalism gives primacy to individual rights and freedom over community life and collective goods, and post-colonial perspectives argue that constitutional models and political dialogues are needed to address tribal sovereignty and multicultural accommodation (Song, 2010).

SHIFTING IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES: CLASSICAL LIBERALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

Discussions of multiculturalism often begin with some reference to classical liberalism, which was an enduring, prevalent political philosophy in the Western world. Classical liberalism sees the individual as the most important social/political/economic unit (Alexandru, 2011). It treats the individual as “sovereign” (Mill, 2011, p. 10), and commits to “individual rights and the moral equality of all human beings” (Murphy, 2011, p. 3). Tradition, uniformity and heterogeneity are not required for the functioning and mobility of the classical liberal society. This concept that everyone is treated the same, regardless of any feature specific to them, is regarded as difference-blind liberalism (Kukathas, 2002;

Loobuyck, 2005; Taylor, 1994). For some, this form of liberalism seems self-defeating, in that to treat everyone identically would have an unequal impact on different cultures and groups, thus negating its purpose. By treating everyone the same, some are inevitably favoured while others are neglected or marginalised (Young, 2005, p. 273). John Stuart Mill (2011) uses the term the “tyranny of the majority” (p. 4) to describe such an institutional order built on majority rule which entails political oppression of individuals and minorities. This inadequacy of classical liberal ideology to address contemporary questions of justice in response to identity, difference and recognition, stimulated a need for more inclusive ways to accommodate racial and ethnic diversity (Song, 2010). Though liberalism values impartiality, its ‘difference-blindness’ or inability as a political ideology to give recognition to individual and group differences means that it stands “accused of failing to live up to its own egalitarian ideals” (Loobuyck, 2005, p. 109).

Criticism of classical liberalism gave rise to the new ideology of multiculturalism, advancing policy initiatives implemented under the term. Different liberal ideologies emerged from these critiques of classical liberalism. One argument was that liberalism should remediate itself from within (Kymlicka, 1989, 1996; Tamir, 1995; Tully, 1995) in order to address the diversity problem more precisely. Another argument that attempts to understand multiculturalism from a critical liberal perspective contends that it is necessary to go ‘beyond liberalism’ in order to negotiate diversity as a value rather than as a fact (Parekh, 2000). According to Charles Taylor (1994), the weakness of an egalitarian liberal position is that it is “inhospitable to difference” (p. 118). Though liberalism values egalitarianism, its principle of equal treatment is bound up with “the ideal of assimilation” (Young, 2006, pp. 62-66). According to critics, the aim of liberalism is to exclude or homogenise difference (Taylor, 1994, pp. 116-117; Tully, 1995, pp. 58-62). For instance, Taylor asserts that people do not simply demand equal treatment; rather, and more importantly, they demand ‘recognition’ of their distinct identities as members of particular cultural communities: “Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need” (Taylor, 1994, p. 99). Classical liberalism is criticised for not giving sufficient attention to this phenomenon of ‘recognition’ (Taylor, 1994; Tully, 1995; Young, 1990). However, egalitarian critic Brian Barry (2001) defends liberalism, asserting its sufficiency as a political ideology to

accommodate social and ethnic heterogeneity within the scope of egalitarianism. Barry argues against multiculturalist critiques of liberalism, referring to them as “anti-universalistic” (p. 5). In his view, the “pursuit of the multiculturalist agenda makes the achievement of broadly based egalitarian policies more difficult” by “diverting political effort away from universalistic goals” (p. 325). For Barry, multiculturalism was doomed due to its “intellectual weaknesses” (p. 6). While multiculturalism’s ideals can be seen as sustaining it as a political ideology capable of accommodating diversity on the democratic ground, there is the contrasting view that sees it as fracturing society, which is made up of a diverse and competing cultural and ethnic allegiances. Nevertheless, strong multiculturalism bears structural elements that sustain its currency as a social ideology.

Multiculturalism is closely associated with three different but interrelated political phenomena, namely identity politics, the politics of difference, and the politics of recognition (Song, 2010). Identity politics means to give political importance to identities that matter to people (Modood, 2007, p. 2; 2010, p. 244) and, therefore, that should not be disregarded in the name of integration, assimilation or citizenship (Taylor, Parekh, 1991; 1994; Young, 1990). The politics of difference fundamentally concerned with equality between individuals and groups. It is associated with politically relevant social differences: culture in part and others such as, division of labour, sexuality, age, ability, ethnicity, nationality and so on. Equality here does not mean difference-blindness; on the contrary, it requires attending to and respecting such differences (Young, 1990, 2000). The aim of the politics of recognition, as Nancy Fraser (2008) terms it, “is a difference-friendly world, where assimilation to majority or dominant cultural norms is no longer the price of equal respect” (p. 72). In this sense, cultural groups are not expected to shed their different ethno-cultural markers and become virtually invisible. Instead, they are encouraged to fit in while distinctive cultural identities are preserved and respected (Parekh, 2000, p. 150). These three phenomena (identity politics, politics of difference, and politics of recognition) are the denominators of the concept of multiculturalism, taken as an ideology or a political philosophy, because they set the core values/principles of different multicultural policies around the world (see Frederik, 2012; Kymlicka, 2012; Marangozov, 2011). The objective of multiculturalism, on its highest moral ground, is a cohesive human society, free from apartheid,

communalism and racism. Proponents envision the truly multicultural society as one where the “shared culture” (Raz, 1998) or “flexible, porous, and open-ended national culture” (Stratton & Ang, 1994, pp. 155-156) can be practically experienced. The question is whether multiculturalism alone can create a cohesive human society.

The answer, according to multicultural theorists such as Joseph Raz (1998), Bhikhu Parekh (1999) and Brian Barry (2001), is ‘no’. According to them, no political democracy will be meaningful without public empathy. From this perspective, empathy’s role is pivotal in any address of diversity. The importance of empathy with regard to its relation to a cohesive society will be discussed later in this chapter.

Different nations/countries adopt the mechanism of multiculturalism to match their rhetoric of having a cohesive human society. The reality of the mechanism, however, is to mediate between ‘us and them’ (Mina Cikara, Emile G Bruneau, & Rebecca R Saxe, 2011; Rifkin, 2009), where in most cases local is equivalent with “us” and foreign is equivalent with “them” (Norris, 2005, pp. 166-188). This mediating role is one that Fazal Rizvi and Bob Lingard (2009) observe with regard to the political reading of multiculturalism in Canada, the UK and Australia. For them, multiculturalism was implemented to serve two major purposes:

multiculturalism emerged as a compromise formation designed to pacify increasingly volatile ethnic communities and their supporters on the one hand and to allay the fears of the dominant cultural groups, alarmed by the changing demography of their cities, on the other. (p. 163)

In this respect, Australia is regarded as one of the countries that adopted multiculturalism to govern and manage its problem of diversity and multiplicity (Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011). Hence, Australian multiculturalism, which relates to the main concerns of this research, is the focus of the following section.

AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURALISM

Australia has a history of over two centuries of migration, though multiculturalism is relatively new to Australian politics, having been introduced in 1972. Before going into detail, it is necessary to answer a question that is often raised in discussions relating to Australian multiculturalism: “What made Australia move from former

migration policies to multiculturalism?” The reason for this enquiry lies in Australia’s historical movements made in pursuit of a racially pure, White nation. The most prominent among these movements was the national policy of migration implemented in 1901, *The Immigration Restriction Act*, popularly known as the “White Australia Policy” (Evans, 2001, pp. 44-49). Partly, the policy was enacted as an advancement of the state-level immigration restriction caused by White miners’ and factory workers’ resentment towards migrant labourers and partly as a defensive measure against Japanese aggression and the fear of invasion. With this policy of migration, Australia became the first colour-barred and racially segregated country in the world:

Not only had the Australian colonies been the first in the world to enforce a blanket restriction against all non-white peoples, but the new Australian nation had also, in 1901, limited migration along racial lines more rigorously than any other country on earth. (Evans, 2001, p. 49)

The so-called White Australia Policy was active for more than 70 years until it was officially abolished in 1973; however, it was not static during the seven decades’ spell. Its viability was challenged by different historical factors, mainly the demographic variation created by the huge migrant influx after the Second World War (Rizvi, 1988, p. 337; van Krieken, 2012, p. 507). Efforts to keep Australia ‘White’ became no longer possible. The post-Second World War period of the White Australian Policy was amended with successive policy orientations towards assimilation (1947-1966) and then integration (1966-1972). The ultimate effort was to preserve Anglo conformity in Australia instead of keeping it ‘White.’ Therefore, the premise of the ‘assimilation/integration’ movements became social and cultural congeniality: complete jettisoning of migrants’ socio-cultural backgrounds and invisibility in Australian society (Jupp & Clyne, 2011, p. 45). This forced ‘assimilation’ was not practically easy for many migrants who arrived between 1950s and 1970s. Greeks and Italians, for instance, tended to retain their cultural heritages and resisted assimilation. Gradually the “assimilative efforts began to collapse” (Jupp, 2008, p. 155) with the erosion of the White Australian Policy. As Jakubovicz (1981) avows, assimilationism collapsed on both moral and political grounds. On moral grounds it collapsed due to its denial of humans’ right to retain their own cultural forms. On political grounds it collapsed due to its failure to realise the

objectives it was meant to achieve: “those of cultural, normative and economic integration of migrants into a unitary Australian society” (Jakubowicz, 1981, p. 7).

A number of other socio-political pressures cumulatively pushed the Australian nation to transform from the ‘White Australia’ mentality to a multicultural ideology. For instance, as John Stephens (1990) observes, the pressures that developed from both “within” (locally) and “without” (globally) led Australia towards this rapid transformation (p. 180). These local pressures included: the sizable increment of migrants from countries other than Britain, including South-East Asia; their progression through education and other social institutions; significant inclination of their voting in elections; improvement of their education levels; a heightening sensitivity to racial discrimination; a changed conception of culture; a more pluralistic conception of social norms; values and ways of life; and gradually improved organisation (van Krieken, 2012, p. 508). Although these impulses were not clearly listed, the *Report of the Review of Post Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants* (1978), which is known as the Galbally Report, reflects these socio-political developments or ‘changes’ that necessitated Australia to address diversity in an egalitarian way:

We believe Australia is at a critical stage in the development of a cohesive, united, multicultural nation. This has come about because of a number of significant changes in recent years – changes in the pattern of migration and in the structure of our population, changes in attitudes to migration and to our responsibilities for international refugees, changes in the needs of the large and growing numbers of ethnic groups in our community, and changes in the roles of governments and the community generally in responding to those needs. (Galbally, 1978, p. para. 1.1)

Global pressures came in two ways. On the one hand, attitudes towards minority groups changed within the international community (Stephens, 1990). Canada, for instance, launched multiculturalism as its national policy in 1971 in response to ethnic heterogeneity in its population, including native Canadians (First Nation Peoples). ‘Diversity’ became accepted and in turn ‘ethnocentrism’ was no longer a viable project. Measures were initiated in order to cast aside racial discrimination and cultural prejudices. On this ground, “Australia’s image in the post-colonial globalizing world” (van Krieken, 2012, p. 507) became polemical with

its “white ethnocentrism” (Hage, 2012). In fact, academics, such as Jean I. Martin (1971), understood and emphasised the urgency for Australia to recognise the country as a culturally pluralist society as early as 1971. However, Australia’s propensity to maintain its ‘Britishness’ or European ties derogated its commitment for regional solidarity (Turner, 1994, Ch 10). If, as former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser observed, Australia’s destiny is geography, then “the idea of a European enclave at the edge of Asia is unrealistic and offensive” (Quoted in Ang, 1999, p. 200). Therefore, Australia’s role in the Asia-Pacific region demands something other than a nostalgic desire for cultural homogeneity. Jakubovicz (1981) sees ‘the problems of migrants as a dual issue: the difficulties experienced by migrants in their conformation to Australian socio-political and economic systems, and ‘the migrant problem,’ which means the impact of migrant issues on Australian institutions. Realisation of this impact and the concurrent determination of Australia’s geographic position in the ‘Asia and Pacific’ region is documented by Zubrzycki (1982a), who emphasised the necessity of dynamism in what is perceived as ‘Australian national identity,’ the need for productive measures to build and maintain the relationships amongst diverse communities, and an urgent need for provisions to safeguard minority rights so that minorities do not feel excluded or neglected.

It was with this realisation of the necessity of a constructive policy framework that would sustain its volatile diversity that Australia initiated multiculturalism as its national social ideology in 1973. In 1972, when the Australian Labor Party led by Gough Whitlam was elected, multiculturalism was introduced as a part of the new government’s policy reforms (Boese & Phillips, 2011; Koleth, 2010; West & Murphy, 2010). However, it was first declared as an official policy by the Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, in the succeeding Liberal government, with the acceptance of the 1978 Galbally Report (Jupp, 2002; Koleth, 2010). As a result, two major changes occurred in Australian politics: the formal removal of the White Australia Policy and the replacement of the former ideology of assimilationism with that of multiculturalism (Jupp, 2002; Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011).

The Australian Ethnic Affairs Council’s submission to the Australian Parliament describes the Australian version of multiculturalism as an evolving perception of a country’s social change, through ethnocentrism, Anglo-conformity (assimilation) and ‘melting pot’ (integration) policies (Martin, 1978). Accordingly,

multiculturalism is interpreted as: “not a oneness, but a unity, not a similarity, but a composite, not a melting pot, but a voluntary bond of dissimilar people sharing a common political and institutional structure” (Australian Ethnic Affairs Council & Australian Population and Immigration Council, 1977, p. 18). The main concern of the initiative was to address diversity. The question at hand was ‘how best to integrate the growing minorities in order to preserve social cohesion and continuity in a national sense in the long term and in a reasonable liberal way’ (Zubrzycki, 1982b, p. 1). Accordingly, the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council projected three principles in the 1977 multicultural agenda: national cohesion; recognition of cultural diversity; and promotion of social equality (1977, p. 3). As the heterogeneity of the Australian community was being accepted, so it was conceded that the culture was hybrid: an intermixture of Anglo-Celtic values, Indigenous heritage, and the traditions of non-English speaking communities. Plans were put in place to pursue equality of opportunity and equal access for all Australians and to affirm the right to maintain cultural heritages. These principles were reflected in the *First Annual Report* of the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs as follows:

Multiculturalism recognises the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of Australian society and actively pursues equality of opportunity for all Australians to participate in the life of the nation and the right to maintain ethnic and cultural heritages within the law and the political framework (Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs., 1980, p. 4).

It is clear from these assumptions that the model of multiculturalism in Australia developed on the basis of liberal ideology (Rizvi, 1992). A further assumption is that multiculturalism means “the coexistence within the same political society of a number of sizeable cultural groups wishing and in principle able to maintain their distinct identity” (Raz, 1998, p. 197). The Australian policy of multiculturalism implemented comprehensive measures typical of a liberal multicultural policy (Murphy, 2011). These included the acceptance of distinctive cultures as worthy of recognition and respect, provision of resources for disadvantaged minorities, arrangement for media representation of migrants’ voices, action against racism, and provision of special assistance such as translator services for non-English speaking migrants (Levey, 2008; Markus, 2001). These values did not include any measures or reforms for the redistribution of power, inclusion of

minority voices in decision making, exemptions for minorities from abiding with certain laws and regulations, or self-determination or self-government rights (Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011).

The development of Australian multiculturalism to date has taken place through different policy initiatives under different governments. In the 1970s, with the introduction of *Making Multicultural Australia* (1972), the Whitlam Labor government “liberalised Australia’s immigration laws” (Whitlam, 1985, p. 501). The subsequent Fraser Liberal government continued the agenda under *Multicultural Australia*, implementing the proposals of the 1978 Galbally Report with focused attention to ‘social cohesion’ (Castles, 1992; Koleth, 2010). While this report insisted on the importance of multiculturalism as a means of accommodating diversity, it emphasised how this cultural diversity nourishes Australian society:

[E]thnic identity is not expressed at the expense of society at large, but is interwoven into the fabric of our nationhood by the process of multicultural interaction, then the community as a whole will benefit substantially and its democratic nature will be reinforced (Galbally, 1978, p. 25).

The government’s commitment to assist minority settlement was notable. In particular, the services provided to migrants were “increased in quantity and quality” (Hage, 1998, pp. 83-84). According to James Jupp (2002), the “Fraser government is best remembered for its humane approach to refugees and its creation of the institutions of multiculturalism” (p. 39). With increased numbers of migrant entrants, the Fraser government welcomed 56,000 Vietnamese refugees and a few thousand Lebanese Muslims fleeing the civil war in their country (West & Murphy, 2010, p. 176).

After the initial phase, there was growing uncertainty about multiculturalism for Australian society (Koleth, 2010), mainly because it seemed to be focusing on migrant settlement and welfare at considerable cost. In response, the Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs published a policy paper entitled *Multiculturalism for all Australians* in 1982. This paper can be regarded as addressing public anxiety about the effect of multiculturalism on Australian social institutions. While migrants were supported in their settlement and economic advancement through the projects initiated under multicultural policy, it

demonstrated how beneficial these initiatives were for Australian society at large. As Elsa Koleth (2010) observes,

[t]he paper attempted to counter doubts about the relevance of multiculturalism to the nation as a whole by framing multiculturalism as ‘much more than the provision of special services to minority ethnic groups’, as a ‘way of looking at Australian society’ that ‘involves living together with an awareness of cultural diversity. (p.8)

The policy paper was also amended with a new principle emphasising the need for all Australians to participate in society for the success of multiculturalism (Koleth, 2010).

The decade 1986-1996 was a remarkable period in Australian multiculturalism given bureaucrats’ attempts to expand multicultural programs and assert the currency of multiculturalism in the nationalist narrative (Tavan, 2007). During this period, another revision of multicultural policy was released in 1989 under the *National Agenda for Multicultural Australia* by the Hawke Labor government. This took place in response to the report *Immigration: A Commitment to Australia*, released by the Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies in 1988 (Jupp, 2002; Koleth, 2010). The report re-affirmed that there was “confusion and mistrust of multiculturalism” (Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies, 1988, p. 2) and recommended the strong affirmation of Australian identity in order to “render multiculturalism less threatening or divisive to the community” (Koleth, 2010, p. 10). This was a landmark report, that changed the direction of multiculturalism with its recommendations on the need for a much stronger emphasis on skilled migration and the economic contribution migrants could make to Australia (Koleth, 2010; 2011). According to the committee chairman, Stephen Fitzgerald, “[s]election methods need a sharper economic focus, for the public to be convinced that the program is in Australia’s interest” (Committee to Advise on Australia’s Immigration Policies, 1988, p. xi). The committee’s suggestion to focus on the economic gains of migration has its roots in some contemporary economists’ approaches to the migration crisis affecting some nations. For instance, Phillip Martin (2004) points out that growing demographic, economic and security disparities cause increasing migration pressures on developed countries. According to Martin, fears of migration in rich countries can be reduced by active selection

systems that pick professionals and skilled workers, which in turn mutually benefits both individual migrants and nation states. In this event, economic efficiency became one of the fundamental principles of multiculturalism (National Multicultural Advisory Council, 1999, p. 35). It is with this growing economic concern that Australia became interested in its “integration with Asia” (Ang, 1999; Kolet, 2010; West & Murphy, 2010) which later became a matter of priority in Australian politics. The progress of multicultural policy in Australia, however, took a different turn with the change of the government in 1996.

Before coming to power, former Liberal Prime Minister, John Howard had long been a “vocal critic of multiculturalism” (Jupp, 2002, p. 94). His criticism was influenced by his perception of multiculturalism as a mechanism that encourages divisiveness and undermines common values (Johnson, 2007a, 2007b). Howard’s election as the Prime Minister of a Liberal and National Party Coalition government in 1996 ended the ‘bipartisan support’ for multiculturalism in Australia. This was evident in his government’s public policy reforms: the abolition of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research (BIMPR); unemployment benefit restrictions for migrants; limitation of the Adult Migrant English Program to new migrants; and reductions in funding to, and consultation with, ethnic organisations (Tavan, 2007). As Graham Hugo (2012) observes, abolition of the OMA and the BIMPR resulted in the discontinuation or reduction of policy-related research on migration and migrant settlement in Australia (p. unpagged). Parallel to these unfavourable reforms for multiculturalism, the independent Member of Parliament Pauline Hanson staged her “politics of anti-migrant and anti-Aboriginal populism” (Hage, 1998, p. 25) with her maiden speech before Federal Parliament in 1996. Amongst her major demands was the abolition of multiculturalism (Hanson, 1996).

It was under these circumstances that the National Multicultural Advisory Council tabled its report, *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness* in May 1999. In the face of public criticism of multiculturalism, and regardless of the government’s reluctance to use the term ‘multiculturalism,’ this report recommended the retention of the term because the Council found “no alternative noun that would work better” (National Multicultural Advisory Council, 1999, p. 42). It found no contrast between multiculturalism and the government’s

interest in citizenship. Instead, the Council observed that “multiculturalism has been built on the evolving values of Australian democracy and ‘citizenship’” (National Multicultural Advisory Council, 1999, p. 17). Following the recommendations of this report, the Howard Government’s multicultural policy statement, *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*, was launched in December 1999. The new principles – civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity – were regarded as the essentials for an Australian democracy that promoted heterogeneity (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 1999, p. 19). The government’s lukewarm attitude towards multiculturalism became evident again in its failure to implement the Council’s recommendations, for instance, to provide greater funding for multicultural advocacy, and to increase diversity on public boards and agencies (Jupp, 2002; Koleth, 2010). However, the government established the Council for Multicultural Affairs to promote community harmony and the benefits of diversity.

The Howard Government launched another multicultural policy statement in 2003, *Multicultural Australia – United in Diversity: Updating the 1999 New Agenda for Multicultural Australia: Strategic Directions for 2003-2006*. As the Prime Minister clearly stated in its foreword, this document focussed on community relations in Australia, shaken by the 9/11 attacks in the USA and the Bali bombing in October 2002 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003, pp. 1, 7). It claimed “the key to success of Australian multiculturalism is inclusiveness” (p. 5) and supporting principles included: responsibilities of all; respect for each person; fairness for each person; and benefits for all (p. 6). Multicultural initiatives at this time in Australia were concerned with both national security and pacifying growing public anxiety about the Muslim community, caused by world terrorism and Islamic radicalism (Johnson, 2007a, 2007b; Koleth, 2010). It was the government’s vision that immigration should lead to citizenship, and its lack of trust in multiculturalism in that endeavour, underpinned the dismantling of multicultural policy during the Howard era (Johnson, 2007b; Knight, 2008; West & Murphy, 2010). Overall, Augie Fleras (2011) concludes that multiculturalism diminished as a national narrative during the Howard era.

The Labor Government, elected in 2007, expressed positive sentiments towards the re-establishment of multiculturalism, accepting the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission’s (HREOC) position paper on multiculturalism (Koleth,

2010). This paper recognised multiculturalism as “sound policy framework consistent with HREOC’s legislative mandate to promote understanding, respect and friendship among racial and ethnic groups in Australia and to combat prejudices that lead to racial discrimination” (Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner, 2007, p. 2). Labor’s vision of multiculturalism had two objectives: “to promote social cohesion and to overcome racism and intolerance through positive engagement with diversity” (Koleth, 2010). With these objectives at hand, the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council prepared the statement, *The People of Australia: The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council’s Statement on Cultural Diversity and Recommendations to Government*, in 2010. It assigned government the responsibility for maintaining a just, inclusive and cohesive society, consistent with the foundation principles of Australian democracy (AMAC, 2010, p. 15). Accepting this report, the then Immigration Minister Gareth Evans proclaimed his government’s future direction towards strengthening multiculturalism by implementing the council’s advice. In his words, “today marks a new chapter in the history of multicultural policy” (Evans, 2010, p. 1). The leadership of the party as well as the country shifted from Prime Minister Kevin Rudd to Julia Gillard on the 24th of June 2010, opening space for more policy reforms. Overall, the short-lived Rudd Labor government did not do much to reinvigorate multiculturalism after it had been left to die in the course of the Howard Government. Considering Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s apathy regarding re-establishing the multicultural provisions and institutions abolished by the previous government and his willing retention of the altered title of the Department of Immigration, Tavan suggests that “the government believed Muslim and migrant integration issues remained sensitive” (Tavan, 2012, p. 554).

Rudd’s successor, Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who publicly declared her family’s experience as ‘Welsh migrants’ on a number of occasions (see for instance Commonwealth of Australia, 2011, p. 4), acknowledged Australia as an immigration nation and a multicultural society. Under her leadership, the Labor government expressed its support for multiculturalism with its *Response to the Recommendations of the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council in the People of Australia* (Evans & Lundy, 2011) published on 16th April 2011. Government commitment to multiculturalism was further declared by the newly appointed Immigration Minister, Chris Bowen, in his speech ‘*What Makes Multiculturalism Great is Mutual Respect*’

(Bowen, 2011), delivered at the Sydney Institute the following day. For Tavan, this speech “was an intelligent and articulate affirmation of key multicultural principles” (Tavan, 2012). It was intelligent as Bowen carefully articulated the limits of cultural freedom migrants enjoy in Australia within the multicultural scope: “[the] Australian Government does not defend cultural practices and ideas that are inconsistent with our values and ideals of democracy, justice, equality and tolerance” (Bowen, 2011, p. 4). The speech also encapsulated multicultural principles into liberal values: “A truly robust liberal society *is* a multicultural society” (p. 5, italics in original). This speech is also remarkable as the Minister used the term ‘multiculturalism,’ long banished from Australian government political discourse. Not only that, but Bowen also asserted that Australian multiculturalism was a well-rooted ideology that was different from its counterpart in Europe, where multiculturalism was ‘incidental’ and ultimately ‘failed’ due to the narrow economic ambitions and the promotion of segregation rather than integration.

For Bowen, Australian multiculturalism is built upon traditional Australian values, is citizenship based, and is politically bi-partisan (2011, p.11). A *Public Inquiry into Migration and Multiculturalism in Australia*, which was announced in Bowen’s speech, but released in early 2013, is one of the most exhaustive studies undertaken so far on Australian multiculturalism (see Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2013). This report, which contains an in-depth analysis of racism, reveals how migrants, including humanitarian entrants, are still vulnerable to discrimination and prejudice in Australian social and economic institutions, for instance, in acquiring a property and getting a job (see chapters 3-5). However, Labor’s multicultural policy is prominent in acknowledging discrimination, prejudice and racism, implementing measures such as the National Anti-Racism Partnership to combat racism and discrimination (see Evans & Lundy, 2011, p. 2). This was necessitated by the long denial of racism in Australia (Kalantzis, Cope, Lane, & Tenney, 1986), especially by the Howard Coalition government during 1996-2007 (Dunn & Nelson, 2011). While this positive official response marks the Gillard Labor government’s support for multiculturalism, it indicates no remarkable commitment to reverse the diminishing effort of multiculturalism initiated by the Howard government (Johnson, 2011). Notably, it did not make any attempts to reinstate the term ‘multiculturalism,’ which was replaced with ‘citizenship’ under the

Howard government, into the title of the Department of Immigration. Instead, it created a new ‘ministry’ position in early 2012 and a ‘parliamentary secretary’ position in early 2013 for ‘multicultural affairs,’ highlighting the government’s “commitment to multicultural affairs” (O’Connor & Lundy, 2013).

Tavan (2012) observes that there is “nothing original” in Bowen’s speech about multiculturalism, other than the “affirmations of earlier models” (p. 556) of Australian multiculturalism. In that, as Tavan further observes, the Gillard government’s policy reforms do not go far enough to overturn the policy regressions that occurred during the Howard government, but the programs help “keep multiculturalism alive” (Tavan, 2012, p. 556) in Australia. Nevertheless, these attempts to reinvigorate multiculturalism in Australia, while European nations such as the UK, Germany and France declare its failure, are significant (Ozdowski, 2012). Even so, Jakubowicz and Ho (2013) claim that although Australia has introduced substantial reforms to the migration policies since multiculturalism was first introduced in 1972, the challenge was to address racism, given that “the size of the problem and the pervasiveness of prejudice requires a ... major campaign over a long period of time” (p. 285).

The change of power from the Labor Party to the Liberal-National Coalition in 2013 considerably weakened multicultural policy. Though the Prime Minister Tony Abbott identified himself as a ‘convert to multiculturalism’ (Castles, Ozkul, & Cubas, 2015), his understanding of multiculturalism constituted an integrationist approach. As he noted in a speech to the UN Security Council in 2014: “I’ve shifted from being a critic to a supporter of multiculturalism, because it eventually dawned on me that migrants were coming to Australia not to change us but to join us” (Steketee, 2014, unpagged). Abbott not only reiterated his predecessor John Howard’s expression in relation to migrants’ integration, his actions also reinstated the Liberal Party’s resistance to multiculturalism. This was evident in his decision to abolish the Ministerial position for Multicultural Affairs established by the Rudd Labor government. Instead, he appointed a parliamentary secretary for social services with special responsibility for multicultural affairs and settlement services. With this appointment, multicultural affairs and settlement services are managed under the control of a newly created Department of Social Services (Fischer, 2015).

One of the basic underpinnings of a multicultural society is that migration is one of personal choice for the voluntary migrant and of economic value for the host country. Although there are occasions when refugees or asylum seekers are welcomed by Australia and some other countries under certain humanitarian conditions, forced migrants have been the focus of a discourse of ‘illegal migrants.’ The discussion now turns to look briefly at Australia’s attitudes to refugees and asylum seekers and the politics of border protection as a phenomenon that is in tension with multiculturalism. Such an understanding is a pre-requisite to interpret narratives about refugees, asylum seekers and those who are known as boat people.

MULTICULTURALISM AND THE POLITICS OF BORDER PROTECTION

A border can be understood as a territorial boundary of a country. Border protection may prevent trans-national crimes, from people-smuggling to fish-poaching in foreign territorial waters. However, if there is anything in Australia that is frequently mentioned together with border protection, it is ‘the refugee/asylum seeker problem.’ Devetak observes that government immigration policies led Australians to accept that the “asylum seekers pose an existential threat to the nation” (Devetak, 2004, p. 107). With this imposed ‘fear’ or “perhaps paranoia” (ibid), borders and asylum seekers became inseparable concepts: “For Australia the refuge seeker is no longer a ‘border concept’: he is the definition of the border...” (Dickie, 2013, p. no). That is, the concept of the border in Australia has overwhelmingly referred to various aspects of asylum seeking, including illegal migrants, boat people, people smuggling and so on. This short overview summarises the Australian government’s border protection politics in relation to the refugee/asylum seeker problem as a polarising factor that coexists as a seemingly contradictory/contesting phenomenon to multiculturalism.

Border protection initially came under Australia’s *Migration Act 1958*. However, it took a different turn in response to refugee and asylum-seeker issues, which became a highly contentious matter in Australian politics during the 1977 election campaign; that is, when the first boat arrival of Indo-Chinese refugees fleeing the Vietnam War reached Australia. By introducing mandatory detention in 1992,⁹ the Keating Labor government (1991-1996) helped construct the current ‘border policing apparatus’ (Grewcock, 2013, p. 25), which includes detention,

⁹ Mandatory detention is the compulsory imprisonment of all unlawful non-citizen arrivals in Australian shores seeking political asylum in camps.

forced removal and externalisation. By the late 1990s, this new border protection policy had been amended by several Bills. These amendments were initiated in accordance with the recommendations of the *Prime Minister's Coastal Surveillance Task Force Report*¹⁰ (Coastal Surveillance Task Force, 1999), the task force established in response to 'asylum seeker' activities. The Report noted that "[c]urrent maritime enforcement legislation does not implement fully the powers available under international law" (Recommendation 16) and recommended that "comprehensive legislative amendments be introduced to further strengthen maritime investigatory and enforcement powers against both Australian and foreign flag vessels" (Recommendation 17). Following this process, the *Migration Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 1999* and the *Border Protection Legislation Amendment Act 1999* (and also the *Crimes at Sea Act 1999*) emerged. While the former was passed to counter people-smuggling and related offences, approval of the latter strengthened Australia's ability to chase, board, search and detain foreign ships and aircrafts and to detain people on-board. Further to this, the *Migration Legislation Amendment Act (No. 1) 1999* identified carrying foreigners to Australia without proper documentation as a legal offence. According to the then Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, Phillip Ruddock, there is a strong correlation between refugees and human trafficking which, for him, requires strong legislative measures of prevention:

The fact is that if we are not at the forefront in dealing with these issues through legislation of the sort that I am proposing, and other measures, we will be seen as a more attractive destination to the people smugglers who are arranging this sort of trafficking. (quoted in "Border Protection Bill 2001," 2001)

Whilst these initiatives were well underway, the *Tampa* and SIEV X incidents occurred on 28 August and 19 October 2001, respectively (Ommundsen, 2006, p. 21). The Norwegian freighter MV *Tampa* rescued 438 asylum seekers enroute to Australia and, after their boat began sinking, brought them to the Australian shore on 28 September 2001. This became a national and an international issue. SIEV X was an Indonesian fishing boat with 400 asylum seekers aboard, which sank in

¹⁰ The Prime Minister established the Coastal Surveillance Task Force on 12 April 1999, chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Max Moore-Wilton, in response to the undetected landing near Nambucca Heads on 10th April of a vessel carrying illegal migrants.

international waters on 19 October 2001, killing 353 people. (Dudek, 2011a; Ommundsen, 2006). Referring to these incidents, Prime Minister Howard declared in his election campaign policy launch in 2001 that it was Australia's privilege to deny illegal entrants: "we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come" ("John Howard's 2001 election campaign policy launch speech," 2001).

Border protection and national security became one major theme in Australian political discourse. Based on the 'Tampa crisis' (Marr & Wilkinson, 2001), the Howard government construed and legitimised asylum seekers as a security problem (see Devetak, 2004). In turn, the above mentioned legislation was further strengthened by the *Migration Amendment (Excision from Migration Zone) Act 2001*: "An Act to excise certain Australian territory from the migration zone under the *Migration Act 1958*, for purposes related to unauthorised arrivals, and for related purposes" (House of Representatives, 2001, p. 1). Regardless of its imposed power to "expel refugee boats" (Marr & Wilkinson, 2001) from Australia, this Act, however, contradicts Australia's own national law as it excises the country's own territory for the purpose of migration¹¹ (Mountz, 2010). The practice of sending asylum seekers to countries in the Pacific region for processing was also introduced by the Howard Government in 2001 – this policy later became known as the 'Pacific Solution' (Phillips, 2012). The Pacific Solution included proposals to stop and divert asylum boats from Australian territorial sea baseline. Accordingly, people on board are sent to 'offshore' processing centres (which are located in territory excised from Australia's migration zone) or to countries such as New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Nauru for processing (Briskman, Goddard, & Latham, 2008; Ommundsen, 2006; Penovic, 2009). Other border protection measures affecting refugees/asylum seekers were the introduction of the temporary protection visa,¹² the restriction of 'family

¹¹ "This means that asylum seekers landing on Australian territory do not have the rights accorded to an asylum seeker by law because Australia has excised its sovereign territory for the purposes of its own migration law" (Mountz, 2010, p. 128).

¹² Temporary protection visas limited refugee protection for a maximum three year period. During this period, recognised refugees were denied travel and family reunion rights. And after the three years they were required to establish their continuing refugee status or go back to their home countries (Briskman et al., 2008; Ommundsen, 2006; Penovic, 2009).

reunion,¹³ an increased number of detention centres, and a ‘tow back the boat policy’¹⁴ (Dickie, 2013).

Kevin Rudd, the Prime Minister of the Labor Government elected in 2007, declared his position as being “tough on border protection” and “humane for asylum seekers” (quoted in Murphy, 2009, p. 25). By 2008 he had effectively dismantled the previous government’s border protection system (Dickie, 2013; Grewcock, 2013; Phillips, 2012). As a result, offshore detention centres in Nauru and Manus Island, created under the Pacific Solution, were closed and temporary visas removed, but excision of territories and onshore detention remained (Dickie, 2013; Grewcock, 2013). Delivering a speech at the Australian National University on 29 July 2008, the then Immigration Minister announced the government’s ‘new direction’ in immigration detention that consists of ‘seven key immigration values’ (see Evans, 2008). These included a pledge not to detain children in immigration detention centres and to use detention (in detention centres) “as a last resort and for the shortest practicable time” (unpaged). Detainees were to be released following health, identity and security checks, unless deemed to be a risk to the community (Grewcock, 2013, p. 12).

Public and political opinion against boat arrivals began to ferment again in December 2010, following the drowning of many of the 90 people on board as their boat, code-named *SIEV 221*, foundered against the rocks at Christmas Island (Grewcock, 2013). The Gillard government was pushed to find ways to stop people risking their lives to seek asylum in Australia. The Prime Minister proposed a bilateral solution made with the Malaysian government to send 800 asylum seekers to Malaysia for processing in exchange for approving 4000 people awaiting settlement in a third country as refugees (*The Economist*, 2011). Central to this policy, again, is the concept of deterrence, sending a message to those who seek to come to Australia. The policy involves preventing asylum seekers from reaching

¹³ “Unaccompanied minors will have no right to family reunion; and adults will only be allowed family reunion through the normal migration program” (Grewcock, 2013, p. 26).

¹⁴ “The Australian government has expressly pursued a border protection regime which has the goal of sending a message to those who seek to come to Australia in this manner (by boats). Central to this policy is the concept of deterrence. The policy involves preventing asylum seekers from reaching Australia, through the disruption of people smuggling plans or by towing boats back to international waters. Asylum seekers are denied entry and sent to a declared country where they are detained indefinitely” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002, p. 450). At first, no boats were successfully returned. But by late 2001, the navy had managed to force six boats back to Indonesia with a total of about 650 asylum seekers on board.

Australia through the disruption of people smuggling plans. In August 2011 the Australian High Court ruled this transfer arrangement invalid, highlighting the Malaysian government's incapacity to accept asylum seekers as the country is not a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention. In the event, the Prime Minister appointed an Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers, which released its report on 13 August 2012, carrying suggestions and recommendations to the Government on matters relating to asylum seeker issues and the best possible solutions in the short, medium and long term (Australian Government, 2012; Phillips, 2012). Recommendations encouraged the Government to return to many of the measures introduced under the Pacific Solution and abandoned in 2008 (Dickie, 2013). In turn, the amended Bill, the *Migration Legislation Amendment (Regional Processing and Other Measures) Bill 2012*, was passed by the House of Representatives in August 2012, permitting the Government to re-establish the asylum processing facilities, both offshore and in the Pacific, and transfer all asylum seekers arriving on excised territory to these regional detention centres. The Expert Panel also recommended that Australian policies include "disincentives to irregular maritime voyages to Australia by establishing a clear 'no advantage' principle whereby asylum seekers gain no benefit by choosing not to seek protection through established mechanisms" (Australian Government, 2012, p. 8). The 'no advantage principle' would apply only to asylum seekers who arrived without a visa.

Marianne Dickie argues that this proposition goes "further than the border arrangements of previous excision legislation and makes it impossible for asylum seekers who arrive by boat to apply for protection on the mainland" (Dickie, 2013, unpagged). Further to the 'no advantage principle,' the Abbott Coalition Government elected in 2013 implemented a policy called 'Operation Sovereign Borders' – a military-led response to illegal maritime arrivals, which, according to the policy paper, are led by people smugglers or unauthorised travel agents (*The Coalition's Operation Sovereign Borders Policy*, 2013). This policy was simultaneously instigated by the 'NO WAY' campaign on the website of the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, which provided counter people smuggling communication in 19 different languages (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015). The sole purpose of the initiative was to evade Australia's responsibility as a signatory to the CRC, the ICCPR and the Refugee Convention to

accept, process and resettle would-be asylum seekers arriving on Australian shores (Grewcock, 2014; G. Martin, 2015). However, the government rationalised this initiative on the high humanitarian ground that the ‘Stop the Boats’ policy was designed to stop asylum seekers risking their lives at sea in perilous boat voyages in search of asylum in Australia.

In conclusion, Australian border protection measures were legitimised under the 1958 Migration Act and later amended in 2001 and 2011 with a few Acts and Bills. Vilification of refugees by referring to their situation in terms of people smuggling, queue jumping or economic opportunity seeking, continues accordingly. For the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “the number of asylum seeker claims received across all industrialised countries is still smaller than the population of Dadaab, a single refugee camp in north-east Kenya” (UNHCR, 2012, p. no). While Australia is not among those countries that receive the highest number of asylum claims,¹⁵ the debate over its hard-line refugee policy has been getting increasingly toxic over the last two decades. Academics and activists continuously compel governments to address refugee problems with a more humanistic approach (see Hugo, 2012; Hugo et al., 2011; UNHCR, 2012). Grewcock focuses on the policy implications of this human rights issue, contending that “the Australian political establishment devotes almost all of its energy and a staggering quantity of state resources to ‘border protection’ programs designed to prevent the unauthorised movement of refugees into Australia” (Grewcock, 2013, p. 11).

Multiculturalism and border protection in Australia are at odds, as they have been from the early 1990s. While having on the one hand a so-called ‘unique multicultural policy’ (Bowen, 2011), Australia, as James Jupp (2002) points out, is throwing away “its international reputation and credibility” (p. 199) for the sake of border protection. This tension results in fostering an ongoing xenophobia and spatial anxiety (Ang, 1999), which has long been promoted by nationalistic political agendas. Nevertheless, Australia’s current attempt to shift towards Bowen’s ‘unique’ multicultural policy may require viewing refugee/asylum seeking from a humanistic perspective. Empathy becomes a crucial element in such an approach as the

¹⁵ According to the UNHCR website (UNHCR, 2012) the leading 10 countries receiving asylum seeker claims by 2011 were the USA, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, the UK, Canada, Switzerland and Turkey, respectively.

following section argues. Based on such social morality, this study further examines advancement (or cessation) of empathy in narratives of migration.

PUBLIC EMPATHY AND MULTICULTURALISM

The public sphere plays an important role in how a multicultural and empathic society functions. A necessary component in social cohesion is morality, which for Habermas nourishes the principle of multiculturalism. According to him, the principles of justice postulate “equal respect and equal rights for the individual,” while principles of solidarity posit “empathy and concern for the well-being of one’s neighbour” (Habermas, 1993, pp. 324.). While Habermas appraises empathy’s role in the public sphere, multicultural theorists emphasise the necessity of public empathy if multiculturalism is to be functional. For instance, Brian Barry (2001) argues the urgency of public empathy if democratic politics are to be just in a multicultural society: “we cannot expect the outcomes of democratic politics to be just in a society that contains large numbers of people who feel no sense of empathy for their fellow citizens, and do not have any identification with their lot” (p. 79). Joseph Raz (1998) understands multiculturalism in relation to ‘willingness to share’ which, in his terms, “depends on capacity for empathy” (pp. 202-203). In this respect, Bhikhu Parekh (1999) argues that multiculturalism should not be understood as a mere political doctrine or a philosophical school but “as a perspective on or a way of viewing human life” (p. 238). Nancy Eisenberg (1992) emphasises the necessity of international cooperation and mutual aid and assistance among diverse communities in the globalised world. Her argument is that “[I]f people do not learn to live together in harmony, the consequences promise to be disastrous” for all (pp. 148-149). These views uphold the necessary relationship between the political democracy and public empathy on the theoretical ground.

Empathy, therefore, has much to offer in terms of sustaining ethno-cultural conciliation among individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds living in a multicultural society. The bridging of differences through the perspective of understanding of others remediates many problems associated with racism and xenophobia within a globalised context of diverse human communications (Rifkin, 2009, p. 2). In other words, empathy mitigates intergroup bias or people’s propensity to stereotype, be prejudiced, and discriminate against people from other cultural backgrounds and, in turn, develop positive intergroup reactions and interaction

experience (Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Tadmor, Hong, Chao, Wiruchnipawan, & Wang, 2012). Empathy and perspective taking are central elements of this study. Education is often considered to be an important element in developing or enhancing children's capacity for empathy. However, as the following section demonstrates, this is not a straight-forward or unproblematic solution in a multicultural society such as Australia.

AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURALISM AND THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

Australia's move from its former social policies to multiculturalism required changes in both political and communal spheres. In terms of policy changes, the Australian government abolished the Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (formerly known as the White Australia Policy), the first constitutional act of Commonwealth Australia, to accommodate the new policy. However, it needed other initiatives to convince the public that multiculturalism was a timely necessity and address public resistance. As observed by Ien Ang, "Australia's transformation into a multiracial (and not just multicultural) society was an unintended consequence of developments beyond the nation's own control; it was not something actively willed by the Australian community itself" (Ang, 2001, p. 132). In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that Australia has continuously attempted to implement multiculturalism within a nationalistic framework, or, in other words, that it has "remained trapped within a set of nation-centric assumptions" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009, p. 164). Accordingly, multiculturalism in Australia was treated as a program designed to manage inter-ethnic relations in the country (Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011). Therefore, Australian multiculturalism is viewed by some as a "disciplinary mechanism" (Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011, p. 149) that controls "unruly ethnics" in the interest of "ruling elites" (Fleras, 2011, p. 120).

A further viewpoint is posed by Fazal Rizvi and Bob Lingard (2009) who argue, "multiculturalism needs to interpret the local and the national within the wider global context" (p. 164), for it to be useful in dealing with trans-cultural and transnational relations, which are central in the understanding of cosmopolitan futures. Failure to realise this necessity and the lack of commitment on the part of policy makers to develop multiculturalism further than a management model has impeded Australia in achieving the goal of productive diversity – that is, the

significant cultural, social and economic benefits resulted by the demographic diversity of a country, that Cope and Kalantzis (1997) proposed. The management model also entails the recurrence of ideologies such as assimilation or integration to steer migrants' adaptation to the best interest of national ethos. Nevertheless, Australia has managed to rebuild its international reputation from exclusive White nationalism to inclusive multicultural citizenry through multiculturalism (Noicolacopoulos & Vassilacopoulos, 2011).

When Australia initiated multiculturalism as national policy in 1973 the goals were clear, and the agreement of the opposition Liberal Coalition marked its 'national urgency' as a bi-partisan project. However, the project had to be launched not only at the additional cost of millions of extra dollars, but also with great endeavours to combat racism, intolerance and prejudice. According to Rizvi, nationalism and prejudice are historically developed and structurally promoted in Australia (1988, p. 344). Turner affirms this idea when he argues that "the dominant versions of Australian nationalism over the last century could hardly be said to have promoted tolerance of cultural or political difference" (Turner, 1994, p. 120). The policy shift from assimilation/integration to multiculturalism alone did not bring about the attitudinal transformation of the public. There was plenty of overt and covert resistance to multiculturalism from parts of the public that were still motivated by the long-held impression that 'Australia should be White and for Whites.' This sentiment pits intolerance, racism and prejudice against the more inclusive ideals of multiculturalism. Jock Collins (1993) revealed this conflict in comparison with Canada: "The Australian and Canadian experience suggests that prejudice co-exists with tolerance, as does racism with social harmony and multiculturalism with ethnic inequality" (p. ii). Australia is not alone in this experience; according to Glenn Worthington (2009), Western European countries commonly faced xenophobia and problems of racial refusal when they initiated migration programs:

Public hostility to apparently unregulated (and apparently unstoppable) inflows into Western European countries has made it difficult for governments to gain public acceptance for the sorts of managed migration programs they now want to introduce to fill skills shortages. (p. 8)¹⁶

¹⁶ This situation has since been rendered more complex by the migrant crisis in Europe, which has seen a large influx of asylum-seekers from North Africa.

Facing this type of backlash of racism and prejudice was the biggest challenge for the Australian government with the introduction of multiculturalism. The challenge, as Zubrzicki highlights in his 1982 report, is that “it is not possible to change attitudes and minimise prejudice if the structural conditions which encourage them are maintained” (1982b, p. 4). Therefore the government had to work on initiatives to counter racial antagonism parallel to the promotion of multiculturalism. The Racial Discrimination Act, based on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which was proposed in 1972 but passed in 1975, marked one of the initial legislative acts to combat racism (Jakubowicz, 1985a; Kirby, 1993). With the enactment of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act in 1986, Australia recognised the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention 1958 (Kirby, 1993). Other than these legislative measures, it is worth mentioning the series of amendments made to remove the discriminatory elements from the Immigration Act and Citizenship Act (Jakubowicz, 1985a, p. 7). These included campaigns such as federal government funded TV advertisements for ‘racial tolerance’ (Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, 1982) and public seminars and debates at state level.

Legislative measures alone cannot battle against racism. Attenuation of racial prejudice needs long-term programs leading to attitudinal transformation. The Australian Government chose education, in part, as a means of promoting multiculturalism with the belief of diminishing racial discrimination and in turn promoting social harmony (Hancock, 1989, p. 74; Rizvi, 1988; Sikes, Rizvi, & Troyna, 1997). Al Grassby, the Labor Minister for Immigration in the Whitlam government (1972-1974), considered the school classroom as the first place to cultivate tolerance. His intention, as revealed later, was to “turn the classrooms of the nation into crucibles of tolerance” (Grassby, 1984, p. 64). Although he was unable to implement his intention with the government’s defeat in 1974, the 1980 report of the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, *Review of Multicultural and Migrant Education*, demonstrated his strong belief in education in the development of multiculturalism in Australia. Accordingly, the report required the education system to increase public awareness of ethnic diversity in Australian society, provide opportunities for cultural groups to study their own history and cultures, provide appropriate courses, and promote intercultural understanding amongst mainstream

Australians in a way that would impede any sort of exclusion or discrimination (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1980, p. 7). Later, intercultural understanding that involved all students learning about and engaging with diverse cultures became a major component of curriculum under the General capability (ACARA, 2013).

With the recognition that “education is fundamental” (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1980, p. v) in promotion of a cohesive Australian society, the report further emphasised that “education in Australia should embrace the teaching of English as a second language, the teaching of community languages and studies of ethnic and cultural diversity in Australia” (p. 7). In the following years, both the Kaldor (1981) and Zubrzycki (1982a) Reports emphasised the importance of educational programs in the achievement of the goals of intercultural harmony and tolerance. More specifically, the Zubrzycki Report recommended well planned “educational programs that promote intercultural tolerance of and respect for cultural patterns other than one’s own” (Zubrzycki, 1982a, p. 17) as the only means of overcoming wide-spread prejudice. Although policy consultants presumed that education programs themselves can solve the problem of racism, academics were sceptical about their overall contribution in achieving this goal. For instance, Rizvi considered education programs to have a “limited impact” (Rizvi, 1988, p. 344) in removing prejudice. De Lapervanche (1984) also expressed her doubts of education’s potential in the project: “education will not lead to the removal of prejudice and discrimination or to the institution of equal opportunity” (p. 194).

While education became part of multicultural promotion in Australia, education itself needed reform in order to justly represent diverse identities. One reason was the ethnocentric nature of existing education curricula, especially following the assimilationist movement (Martin, 1978; 1988). In her research papers, *Racism in Australian Children’s Books* (1980) and *Cultural Bias in Primary Text Books* (1982), Lorna Lipmann observed how Aborigines and migrants were invisible, under-represented, misrepresented or stereotyped in Australian children’s fiction and primary school textbooks. As a result of multicultural initiatives, Australian school curricula were reviewed to determine culturally biased materials. According to Lipmann, nearly eighty percent of textbooks reviewed were “inaccurate as to fact, ethnocentric in tone, lacked respect for the culture discussed, or [were]

inadequate in their coverage” (Lipmann, 1982, p. 56). As the old books (both fiction and nonfiction) may have been removed, the 1980s saw the publication of many new titles that specifically attempted to offer positive images of ethnic diversity as well as show up the negative impact of discrimination and stereotyping. As Debra Dudek (2011b) observes:

Government policies of multiculturalism create a ready market for multicultural children’s books. School curricula must include books that represent cultural diversity in order to foster an environment hospitable to multiculturalism. (p. 157)

In turn, some of the previous texts underwent revisions¹⁷ while others were retold¹⁸ and reframed with the new ideology of multiculturalism (McCallum, 1997; Stephens, 2012; Stephens & McCallum, 2013). New literature for children began to emerge. The proportion of picture books to other children's publications increased dramatically in Australia. Together, these publications for children addressed various multicultural themes, including cultural diversity, migrants promoting tolerance and acceptance of difference.

CULTURAL OTHERNESS IN AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

Migration is a common topic or theme in contemporary Australian children’s literature. However, it took a long time for positive representations of migrants to emerge in Australian literature, including literature for children (Lipmann, 1980, 1982). Due to socio-political factors dictating the acceptance of heterogeneity, migrants have not been represented as an integral part of society or were underrepresented in early 20th century publications. Prior to the 1960s, characters who were not European or European Australian were virtually invisible in children's literature. In many instances they were stereotyped or represented as inferior to Anglo-Australian characters. According to Aitken and Macintyre (1982), such depictions were full of stereotypical and submissive expressions of ethnic or racial affiliations (p. 79): “she is only a poor German” (*John of Daunt*, 1910), “happy careless island boys” (*Little Mother Meg*, 1902), “a greasy little Italian,” “Old chow”

¹⁷ For instance, the two picture books by Lydia Pender: *Dan McDougall and the Bulldozer* (1963) and *Sharpur the Carpet Snake* (1967), were revised and republished with new illustrations in 1987 and 1982, respectively (McCallum, 1997).

¹⁸ Nan Chauncy’s *Devil’s Hill* (1958) was reworked as a spin-off novel by David Phillips under the same designation in 1988 (Stephens, 2012).

(*Billabong Riders*, 1942) (Aitken & Macintyre, 1982; Lipmann, 1982). In some texts, different nationalities were humiliated with some reference to their appearance and geographical or socio-cultural characteristics. For example, Indo-Chinese were referred to as “a pyjama-clad people,” Turks as “not highly civilized people,” Moroccans as “a dirty disease-ridden people...occupying a land made inhospitable by the actions of their forefathers” (quoted in Lipmann, 1982, pp. 26-41).

Early 20th century Australian children’s literature affirms a viewpoint that White-Anglo Australians are superior and others, particularly Asian migrants, are inferior. Researchers such as Lippmann (1980, 1982), Aitken & Macintyre (1982), Peter Pierce (1992) and Clare Bradford (2001) have shown how these texts position their readers in regard to otherness. In her research article “Discourse of Otherness: Migrants in Literature” (1982), Sneja Gunew observes how migrants have long functioned thematically in Australian literature “as boundary markers to the territory of ‘kindred’” (p. 49). In this conception, Gunew elaborates how “race and ethnicity work with and relate to each other as markers of inclusion and exclusion” (p. 49). Migrants do not occupy the position of speaking subject. So they are voiceless, and have become the target of humiliation. However, it needs to be emphasised that migrants are characterised by ethnic diversity. Gunew’s observation aims at migrants particularly from non-English speaking backgrounds. While Gunew observes the lack of migrants’ voices as a cause of the denigrating depiction of otherness, John Stephens (1990) explains that mainstream Australian children’s fiction is usually focalised through a subject of Anglo majority background and “the privilege of narrative subjectivity is rarely bestowed upon minority groups” (p. 181), in which case the members of non-British migrant minorities inevitably become subordinates, narrative objects or aliens.

This trend of perpetuating the superiority of Anglo-Australian Whiteness, however, began to change in post-Second World War Australian literature. Marginalised figures, especially migrant characters, began to appear less ridiculous but as alternative subjects that colourise the Anglo-Australian romantic history (Stephens, 2003). Juliana Bayfield professes that the occasional presence of Greek, Italian or Aboriginal characters in Australian children’s fiction, outback romance and bush ballads in particular, were “self-conscious attempts at presenting an antidote to the plethora of Outbackiana” (Bayfield, 1982, p. 294). With more attention put on

literary quality, which in turn dramatically increased after the 1950s (Aitken & Macintyre, 1982), writers began to explore marginalised characters with informed perspectives. Peter Pierce (1992) observes that from the 1950s Australian historical fiction generally moved away from expressing “unconstrained and idealistic affirmations about Australia's future” (p. 307). Instead, the past became a source of guilt and the stories confessional. As he further writes, this trend led to the “reinstatement of a roll call of ‘marginalised’ figures in the historical landscape; attempts at empathy with the victims of imperialism, patriarchy, racism, capitalism” (1992, p. 307). While Pierce’s observation is reasonable for Australian historical fiction in general, Stephens (2003) finds that it is “particularly applicable” (p. xii) to the literature written for younger readers. This transition of Australian literature’s delineation of the ‘other’ from marginalisation to confessional restatements further developed with the introduction of multiculturalism to national socio-political discourses towards the end of the 1960s, acknowledging the acceptance of heterogeneity.

Positive themes of migrants and ethnicity in Australian children’s fiction emerged with the introduction of multiculturalism. According to Stephens (2003) “children’s literature was quick to embrace the ideal of multiculturalism” (p. vii). Some of the derogatory views about cultural difference that dominated early publishing began to change to a more positive vision of cultural exchange and celebration. Sociocultural changes that occurred with the introduction of multiculturalism manifested in literature for adults and children that reflected the diverse traditions, histories, values, life experiences, and perspectives of the diverse cultural groups. And this new trend set up the foundation of multicultural literature in Australia. However, as Stephens (1990) further points out, “only a small number of books published in Australia by the late 1980s had dealt with multicultural issues in any radical way” (p. 3). The majority of the other books published during the 1970s and 1980s represented multiculturalism superficially. Lack of migrant voices and exclusion of minority characters from focalising roles or their experiences being always mediated by the narrative subjects of the majority culture resulted in what Stephens (1996) regards as “partial, and hence false, representation of the Australian experience of multiculturalism” (p. 4).

Shifts in positionality and greater representation of cultural minority persons as protagonists or focalisers became features of a limited number of texts that overtly promoted the ideology of multiculturalism in Australia. Stephens draws examples from two historical fictions, *So far from Skye* (O'Neill, 1992) and *Mavis Road Medley* (Alexander, 1991), and two realist fictions that explore personal histories, *Looking for Alibrandi* (Marchetta, 2014) and *The China Coin* (Baillie, 1992), that overtly promote multiculturalism (Stephens, 1996).

Picture books, a genre that had predominantly presented Anglo-Celtic perspectives, hitherto began to thematise cultural diversity. Discussing the discourse of Australian multiculturalism in relation to picture books, Robyn McCullum (1997) identifies three main shifts that occurred in Australian children's picture books from the 1970s onward, namely: the shift from the illustrated book to the "picture book," that gives equal weight to both visual and verbal texts; the move towards texts which ideologically represent Australian nationalism; and the move towards publishing books that represent Australian society as multicultural. McCullum's reading of *The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek* (1973) shows how subjectivity was beginning to form in relation to the other. However, with the other in this case being 'self-like,' that conception complies with the former ideology of conformity which is at odds with the ideology of multiculturalism that promotes heterogeneity. Nevertheless, Maurice Saxby (1993) claims that many picture books published from the 1970s to 1990 under the 'multicultural' label did not go beyond White Australian writers' experience of other cultures or stories that were based on folk tales from non-Australian (European) traditions. However, publication of the picture book narrative *My Place* by Nadia Wheatley and Donna Rawlins in 1987 marks the shift away from Anglo-Celtic perspectives about Australian national history, migrants and Aboriginal people that dominated picture book narratives until 1980s. *My Place* is a landmark publication that appeared at the dawn of the Bicentennial year. The story does not say who owns Australia, but reminds readers who "belonged to this place" (Wheatley & Rawlins, 2008, p. no page numbering). The opening and closing illustrations in *My Place* show Aboriginal families living in a place. The reverse chronological order (beginning in the present and progressing to the past) of these illustrations, thus subtly unsettles the myth that no one lived in Australia until Captain Cook

discovered it. The point it makes is that Aboriginal people lived here and they owned the land before the British settlers occupied it.

The establishment of the multicultural children's literature award in 1991 by the Office of Multicultural Affairs directly encouraged books that contain "positive representations of diversity" and encouraged publications that depicted multiculturalism as "just a fact of life" (Austin, 1993, p. 203). In response, some picture books published during the 1990s attempted to address multiculturalism in relation to migrants. As a possible aftereffect of the wide-spread debate over comments made by prominent historian Geoffrey Blainey (1984) on the potential threats of Asian migration to Australian society, the representation of Asian migrant characters increased in Australian picture books from this period. Increased representation of Asian migrant characters as protagonists is evident in picture books such as *Big Dog* (Gleeson & Greder, 1991), *Mr. Plunket's Pool* (Rubinstein & Denton, 1992), *Marty and Mei Ling* (Cummings & Smith, 1996) *Grand Pa and Ah Gong* (Cummings & Smith, 1996), and *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996). Diversity is promoted in these narratives through positive accounts of multicultural values such as unity, friendship, sharing and empathy, and cultural traditions are celebrated. The first two of these have won the Australian Multicultural Children's Literature Award. These texts and others published during the 1990s depicted "everyday" multiculturalism (2007, p. 37), and introduced new dimensions to the social and cultural interactions necessary for growing children in a diversifying world.

Towards the end of the decade, multiculturalism began to attract more criticism for many perceived problems in social and cultural relations. The noticeable growth of the Asian migrant population caused by migration and the recruitment of Asian students escalated public unrest towards the policy. Misunderstood and misinterpreted, multiculturalism was blamed for failing to contribute to social cohesion (Jupp, 1997), a point which Blainey made strongly in his argument against Asian migration (1984). Blainey's views were repudiated by many but remained part of the public debate that gained momentum from the beginning of the 1990s. In two influential essays published in 2000 and 2003, John Stephens analyses subsequent multicultural publications and claims how ambivalent attitudes about multiculturalism and migrants begin to inform Australian children's literature. This tendency was directly influenced by the re-emergence of nationalistic movements

that revitalised the nostalgic sentiment of a monolithic past and the emphasis of Australian identity by the then Howard Coalition Government (Stephens, 2000, 2003). Alongside the political antagonism of the government, media sensationalism, the perceived fear of terrorism and anti-Muslim sentiment in the wake of 9/11 created overwhelming tensions in the public. The resurgence of racism threatened realisation of the supposed benefits of multiculturalism. Diversity was perceived as a threat and many people, particularly of Middle-Eastern appearance, were treated with hostility and prejudice.

In response to this political antagonism and public unrest towards multiculturalism, picture books published in Australia since 2000 clearly indicate a shift from promoting the government's multicultural policies to criticising them. Dudek identifies this shift as a move from propositional to "oppositional texts" (2011b, p. 157) or texts that take a critical stance against government policies. The oft-quoted example *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan (2006) and picture books such as *Cat and Fish* (Grant & Curtis, 2003) and *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010b) (discussed in subsequent chapters) are among the growing number of migration-themed picture books that present a positive and empathic perspective on the issues of diversity, marginalisation and belonging. While *The Arrival* attempts to magnify those who are excluded from strict policies – the oppressed – *Cat and Fish* talks back to the familiar claims as to the necessity of conformity for Australia to flourish. *The Other Bears* allegorically negates the unfounded fear and prejudice towards migrants. Rather than celebrating the type of diversity featured in early multicultural publications, these texts attempt to draw readers' attention to "processes and rhetorics which marginalise those regarded as different" (Bradford & Hui-Ling, 2007, p. 11).

These 'processes and rhetorics' can also be seen as linked to policy initiatives governing and managing migrants' movement to Australia. Many policy initiatives, reforms and amendments to former policies made under multiculturalism resulted in highly contentious attitudes towards migration (discussed earlier in this chapter). With the Coalition Government's shifted interest from social cohesion to security politics, national security has now become the basis for social justice policy development in Australia (Forrest, 2014). With the resurgence of the tension between freedom and security, which has been an enduring aspect in Australian politics,

picture books continue to reassure the importance of liberal multicultural values such as autonomy, equality, and freedom as maintained in the recent picture book narratives *A Bus Called Heaven* (Graham, 2011), *Herman and Rosie* (Gordon, 2012) and *My Two Blankets* (Kobald & Blackwood, 2014). *A Bus Called Heaven* offers readers a powerful message about hope, acceptance and belonging. *Herman and Rosie* takes a more allegorical approach about a crocodile and a deer – that is, a predator versus prey – who live as neighbouring strangers, until one day they come to an abrupt realisation that they both love music and are lonesome in a cityscape they call home but never quite feel embraced by it. *My Two Blankets* emphasises the importance of empathic engagement from mainstream individuals in helping migrants to cope with the pain of loss and isolation while adjusting to living in a host country.

From the early 20th century children’s books that embodied migrants as mimes and clowns and handicapped characters “whom it is safe to laugh at or, at the very least, to patronize” (Gunew, 1982, p. 49), representation of migrants in Australian children’s stories has evolved towards more positive portrayals. This transition of the subject of ‘otherness’ from an object of ridicule to an empathic subject is a major characteristic of what could be termed ‘post-multicultural’ Australian children’s picture books, which the following analysis chapters will discuss.

CONCLUSION

This chapter enquired into how multiculturalism in Australia has progressed through the last few decades. As explicated above, multiculturalism in Australia did not have a linear progression through different government policies because the propositions of those policies were not consistent. Power shifts between the Coalition Party and the Labor Party led to many policy reforms while global incidents, such as the 9/11 attacks, affected public attitudes towards multicultural living. In the meantime, the Australian policy of border protection that drastically acted upon boat people, preventing them arriving on Australian shores, has always been at odds with multiculturalism. Among other things, an important decision made on the part of the Australian Government is to introduce educational reforms so as to promote the multicultural agenda. This initiative, which soon became central in the Australian education system, not only transformed the nationalistic curriculum to suit multiculturalism, but also gave rise to Australian multicultural children’s literature.

This new literature, including picture books, produced different dimensions of multiculturalism and its social reading in Australia. One major aspect of Australian children's literature that shifted from the discourse of nationalism to the ideology of multiculturalism is the transformation of the way it portrayed the cultural other. The following two analysis chapters will probe how a selection of Australian children's picture books represents migrants in a way that promotes (or inhibits) readerly empathy.

Chapter 4: Encountering Otherness: Cross-Cultural Experiences and Empathic Engagement in Multicultural Picture Books

The purpose of this first chapter of textual analysis is to examine seven migration-themed multicultural picture books featuring narratives of surrogate migrants of various ethnic and cultural heritages, who are either newly arrived or have been residents for most of their lives. This chapter, along with chapter 5, draws on the theoretical and methodological frameworks established in previous chapters to support close textual and semiotic analysis. A thematic feature that is common to the texts is the way in which cultural difference shapes a sense of belonging or disengagement from the host country. In coming to terms with a new country the migrant characters also tend to experience the pain of separation from their home country and a sense of personal longing for what they have left behind. This interplay of affinity to the host country and nostalgic longing for the home is taken up in the picture book narratives to discuss complex issues of migration and thereby engender readerly empathy. The research question that guides the analysis in this chapter and the next is: *How do contemporary Australian multicultural picture books draw on empathic narrative techniques to encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference and adversity?*

The picture books discussed in this chapter represent migrant experiences and cross-cultural interactions that embody a social and cultural consciousness required for a multicultural society. In looking at narrative empathy, the discussion examines the ways in which empathic engagement is generated in the focus texts, and explores the links between empathy and other narrative strategies of engagement such as the construction of alignment/alienation with characters and their plights through reader positioning. Analysis of these strategies will demonstrate the ways in which the texts position readers to think and feel about the migrant characters.

Narrative empathy concerns the affective and cognitive processes that support readers' empathising with fictional characters through character identification. While

narrative empathy provides the parameters within which the narrative manifestation of empathy can be evaluated, the cognitive instrument of the 'script' (the dynamic structure stored in memory) helps readers' construction and comprehension of the story through textual encounters of familiar experiences (Stephens, 2011). However, varied mapping of the scripts may create an infinite number of story lines. According to David Herman (2002), one aspect of cognitive narratology is to "investigate how narratives, through their forms as well as their themes, work to privilege some world models over others" (2002, p. 113). Through examination of the scripts employed in the focus texts, this analysis will be considering how these texts offer new ways of understanding multiculturalism and migrants' experiences through the modification or disruption of existing scripts.

The first part of the discussion considers how four picture books in the corpus engage with concepts of space, place and belonging that are pertinent to discourses of the politics of difference, a major component of the ideology of multiculturalism. The picture books are *Marty and Mei-Ling* by Phil Cummings and Craig Smith (1996), *Cat and Fish* by Neil Curtis and Joan Grant (2003), *The Other Bears* by Michael Thompson (2010) and *My Two Blankets* by Irina Kobald and Freya Blackwood (2014). The discussion will approach the conception of space as a contested phenomenon within a transnational framework where the tyranny of dominant cultural perspectives affects migrants' transformations of the idea of home and sense of belonging. As Alston (2005) claims, construction of space, even within a confined space like a family home, "is heavily invested with issues of power and control" (p.15). Given that, the discussion further examines narrative configurations of power whereby insiders or the dominant group perceive migrants as outsiders or the other, and from whom they distinguish themselves as being different.

Moving from inter-cultural contention to intra-cultural context, the second part of the discussion focusses on narrative representations of migrant children's subjectivity formation as 'Third Culture Kids' (TCK) and its effect on their intersubjective relationships within families. According to Pollock and Van Reken (2001), TCKs are those children who move between cultures in their formative years and grow up in a host country to develop a 'third culture' or an 'interstitial culture,' which in turn greatly affects their sense of identity and belonging. Three picture books selected for the discussion – *Grandpa and Ah Gong* by Morag Loh and

Xiangyi Mo (1995), *Old Magic* by Allan Baillie and Di Wu (1996), and *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* by Sally Rippin (1996) – depict surrogate TCKs who are caught up in what Stephens (1990) terms ‘cross-cultural pull’ (p. 183) or the conflict between developing new identities and descending cultural heritage. The first two of these picture books depict ethnic grandparents as cultural elders who are not acquiescent to the inevitable socio-cultural changes that accompany migration. These grandparents attempt to retain the past and thereby shape their grandchildren’s cultural and ethnic identities; however, their eagerness to sustain the home culture creates cross-cultural tension with the younger generation growing up in a host country. This same pressure or cross-cultural pull can sometimes come from second-generation migrant parents, as in the case of *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!*. These three texts are examined in order to see how these narrative scripts manifest cross-generational identities and relationships within a transcultural framework.

OWNERSHIP OF SPACE

This section contextualises the social and cultural aspects of identity and interpersonal relationships, locating them within spatial and power relations. My aim is to consider the different ways in which new scripts about migrants are produced for child readers which go beyond neat categorisations, yet offer narrative empathy for implied readers.

Recognition of one group inclusive of self as “us” and of outgroups as others or “them” creates the division between two groups: “one that embodies the norm and whose identity is valued and another that is defined by its faults, devalued and susceptible to discrimination” (Staszak, 2009, p. 43). Migration and mobility also produce categories of otherness. Migrants as representatives of others or outgroups who differ from the dominant Australian subject in terms of language and culture or who are territorial outsiders are represented in picture books as victims of societal marginality (by demography, religion, culture, social, economics and politics) or spatial marginality (by physical location). In this spatial politics and societal dominance over migrants, dominated outgroups are often perceived as ‘different’ to dominant in-groups. Thereby, “difference and otherness” become linked phenomena in the “silent geo-politics of belonging” (Kuusisto-Arponen, 2014, p. 435). This section scrutinises difference, both difference-induced prejudice and respect for

difference, in four picture books: *Marty and Mei-Ling*, *The Other Bears*, *Cat and Fish* and *My Two Blankets*.

Narrative manifestation of spatial ownership and a sense of otherness in these picture books suggest the similarity bias as hindering effects of empathy. Similarity bias means humans' partiality towards in-groups or people more like 'ourselves' and resultant unwillingness or inability to relate ourselves to outgroup individuals who are 'not like us' (Hoffman, 2000). The point is that similarity bias indicates that empathy is fundamentally reduced in encounters with people who are different from ourselves, sociologically, culturally or linguistically. Furthermore, there can be a moral dimension to the similarity bias whereby "empathic morality may be ideal in homogenous groups" and powerful constraints on outgroup empathy can "intensify conflicts" (Hoffman, 2000, p. 215) between social groups in multicultural societies. In the four texts discussed in this section the similarity bias is played out in different ways to support or inhibit empathy towards others who are different from the mainstream or dominant group. For readers, these fictional manifestations of the similarity bias may offer an opportunity to reflect on their own feelings towards cultural difference in the extra-fictional world.

Spatial ownership involves an imbalance of power which becomes an often contested or central element to the development of otherness. It is the dominant group that takes the privilege of setting the boundary of inclusiveness or exclusiveness and thereby imposing corresponding discriminatory measures. Discussing the process of othering in Australia, Henry-Waring (2008) emphasises "whiteness as the norm, from which others are constructed, defined, scrutinised and controlled" (p. 7). As he further argues, even under multiculturalism, marginality of visible migrants and refugees in Australia is inevitable. Visibility, as Henry-Waring points out, is linked to migrants being recognised as foreigners and being classified as others, reducing them to various cultural or ethnic affiliations. The picture books *Marty and Mei-Ling* and *The Other Bears* consider migrants' physical presence in their attempt to thematise empathy across difference. *Marty and Mei-Ling* (1996) conceptualises how difference, when perceived as such, can lead to a character's sense of being excluded and feeling isolated or marginalised.

Who Belongs Here?

In *Marty and Mei-Ling*, Mei-Ling is new to the school and as a child of Chinese appearance looks different from other students in the class, who are mainly Anglo in appearance. Her classmate Marty is inquisitive about her ‘difference’: the Chinese writings on her T-shirt, her different eyes, shiny, black hair and unusual food (that includes crab claws). These pointers of difference accord with what Kroll (1999) sees as the “perennial benchmarks for understanding ethnicity in the schoolyard” (pp. 34-35). Marty not only notices these different features about Mei-Ling, but also shares his observations with other classmates, unaware of how his words are hurtful to Mei-Ling. Marty does not realise how sad Mei-Ling feels until one day he too experiences what it is like to be different from the group. In his visit to a Chinese kite festival he finds himself lost in a crowd of people who laugh around him, speaking in a language unknown to him. He is lonely and feels as if they are making fun out of him. His feelings of marginalisation and fear heighten when he realises that he has become separated from his parents. The text repeats the emotional state that Mei-Ling had felt in the playground, but this time these are the emotions that Marty experiences: “Marty felt sad and lonely. He nearly cried” (unpaged). However, Mei-Ling comes out from the crowd and helps Marty to find his way to his parents. Towards the end of the story, Marty and Mei-Ling become friends and fly kites together.

In *Race: the Floating Signifier* (1996), Stuart Hall considers one’s biological presence – the physical body – as “the ultimate transcendent signifier beyond language and culture” (p. 15). Thus Hall regards the human body as a biological descriptor of race and an object of racism. However, there is a tendency to assume that children are ‘colour-blind’ and therefore unaware of the racial differences of peers. Part of this ideology is the assumption that children only learn about ‘racial prejudice’ from adults, and in the absence of such would grow up to be non-prejudiced citizens. Idealistically, in this assumption, denial and avoidance seem to be the principal strategies for dealing with ‘racial prejudice’: one of the most pervasive issues affecting modern pluralistic societies today (Feagin, 2014). In contrast, Derman-Sparks and others (Derman-Sparks, Higa, & Sparks, 1980; Derman-Sparks, Ramsey, & Edwards, 2006) contend that children are not colour-blind and they never have been. Children easily note differences in skin colour, food

habits and clothing, the phenomena that are given fictional treatment in *Marty and Mei-Ling*. Children are more inclined to follow important adults in their lives and learn biases from them, otherwise from external sources such as the media, the books, and peers. Therefore, instead of denial and avoidance, ideally awareness of diversity and respect for difference should be inculcated and enhanced through various texts and lived experiences. This awareness may help individuals to develop an understanding and appreciation of each other's distinctive difference. Marty is an observer. He not only observes Mei-Ling's physical appearance as a child of Asian origin and her food and writing but he also observes how "one ant is different from the others" (unpaged). However, his observations appear to lack sensitivity and his noting of difference regarding ants and Mei-Ling show his inability to distinguish between differences with respect to ethnicity and cultural characteristics.

As the story progresses, it further reveals that Marty has no developed sense of cultural others and their feelings, lacking the capacity for perspective taking. Clearly, Marty is a subject without empathy as he fails to realise the impact of his words on Mei-Ling. His lack of perspective-taking is even more marked when he fails to recognise how his own sense of isolation at the Chinese kite festival resembles Mei-Ling's feelings of marginalisation in the playground. Marty is boisterous and his unthinking actions are passed off as "just being Marty" (unpaged). Marty's solipsism is not that unusual, for young children can be egocentric beings whose strongest feelings will be about themselves. Through their interaction, activities and confrontation with peers, children begin to learn that others have feelings and those feelings are not different to their own emotional states (Beatty, 1997). For some children, coming into contact with others who are different from themselves may induce fear. Such fear or dislike can then lead to scrutiny and ridicule. But this is not the case for Marty. He is boisterous, candid and vocally unguarded, but circumspection is not one of his virtues. He is an observer and this ability to notice differences in the world around him becomes clear to the reader through the narrator's account. However, Mei-Ling feels that his observations are only directed at her, which is why she feels self-conscious and considers that Marty is "being mean to her" (unpaged). Marty is oblivious to Mei-Ling's discomfiture although it is obvious to the readers. Her emotional state of being made to feel new and different from the other students in the class is stated in the verbal text and depicted visually in

the image. In one scene, she is depicted standing ill-at-ease, feet together, holding her school bag with both hands, head down with eyes barely looking at Marty. However, in another image in the playground, her emotional anguish is both verbally and visually depicted (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.1. *Marty and Mei-Ling* (Cummings & Smith, 1995), Opening 6

In the above image, readers see Mei-Ling is standing in the playground with students around her. While she is visually placed in the centre, her position is clearly on the margins socially. Her solitary, silent, watchful stance is in direct contrast to the clusters of children who move and interact with one another. In this scene the pictures and words work together to provide an insight into Mei-Ling's inner feelings. While the illustration depicts Mei-Ling standing alone dejected in the middle of the happy, interacting groups of children, the accompanying text describes her emotional states of isolation and unhappiness: Mei-Ling began to feel "sad and lonely" and "nearly cried" because she feels everyone else is "making fun of her" (unpaged). This focalisation is from Mei-Ling's point of view and helps evoke reader

empathy by providing what Miall (2006) calls “privileged information” (p. 21) about Mei-Ling’s inner feelings.

Hurting Mei-Ling is not intentional on Marty’s part, though his words have emotional impact. The story delicately shows readers how acts of indiscretion or ignorance can be hurtful to others and thereby positions readers to feel empathy towards Mei-Ling. The Chinese kite festival provides the narrative space whereby Marty is placed as the object of readers’ empathy as his feelings of being different and lonely resemble Mei-Ling’s. However, it is Mei-Ling who extends friendship to a distraught Marty, consoling him and thereby acting as an empathic subject. Mei-Ling is therefore the one who is able to empathise with Marty as his situation mirrors her own. This self-reflecting perspective is also a means by which the text complicates the similarity bias: Marty and Mei-Ling are culturally and socially different but Mei-Ling’s recognition of a shared emotional state shows that they are not different in their experience of abandonment and loneliness.

The nexus of space and power is also manifested in the story with its depiction of shifting power positions of the main characters between metaphorical centre and margin. According to Alston, “space is always governed by those who exercise control” (2005, p. 19). The text constructs Marty and Mei-Ling as opposites: Marty – a boy who is inherently boisterous and self-regarding; Mei-Ling – a girl, who is new, timid and shy, and other-regarding. But they are also different in terms of their assumed access to power: Marty represents the dominant (White) majority and Mei-Ling the minority or other. Marty exercises this spatialised power when he gains the authority to notice and declare Mei-Ling’s difference, which is not only attributed to her physicality (different eyes and shiny black hair), but also is extended to her transcultural manifestation and subsequent cultural displacement. According to Stephens and Lee (2006), cultural displacement results in a “production of difference” (p. 3) that challenges subjective experience of indefinite becoming and spatial belonging. Mei-Ling’s implied desire for acceptance and a sense of belonging in the classroom setting is disrupted by Marty’s frequent, outspoken comments about her being different. Positions of centre and periphery interplay: Mei-Ling is positioned at the front of the class when she is introduced to the other children and at the centre of playground during the play time. These normally dominant ‘front’ and ‘centre’ positions, however, are inverted and deny her status. Her alterity and implied

otherness relegate Mei-Ling to a position similar to what Kuusisto-Arponen (2014) calls “ambiguously marginal,” which is characteristic of the silent spatial politics of belonging that forms “the asymmetry of power relations and subordinate mode of representation” (p. 435).

However, this spatial power shifts as Marty is relocated from a closed school space to an open public space. Away from his comfort, he begins to feel lost and lonely. Yet, for Mei-Ling the space is familiar. In fact, the kite festival is a niche that dominates Chinese artistry and the kites stand as an extension of territory/space. This move metaphorically indicates a shift between centre and margin. There is a reversal in terms of feelings, too: Marty’s unrestrained behaviour and ebullient feelings turn to discomfiture and fear amidst the unfamiliar crowd. He is at the centre of the crowd, but experiences the same feelings Mei-Ling experienced, “sad and lonely” – the feelings of the periphery. However, Mei-Ling’s exercise of spatial power, which is different from the one that Marty exerts, assuages his desolation and trepidation.

While *Marty and Mei-Ling* concludes by demonstrating how metaphorical space can create landscapes of power, this spatial aspect and power extend to the idea of ownership of space in *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010b) as a privileged position upon which the boundary of inclusiveness or exclusiveness is set. The inquisitive remarks about differences limned in *Marty and Mei-Ling* are extended to exclusionary practices, such as avoiding, ridiculing, or fearing specific differences, in *The Other Bears*. The title and cover illustration of a collection of cuddly bears may evoke a familiarity and affection for readers through an implied association between children and teddy bears. However, Thompson presents an insight into something deeper and more universal than a soft and cuddly toy: the notion of how differences and acceptance can produce contrasting emotions. The text depicts contrasting perceptions between adults and children (anthropomorphised as animals) with respect to spatial politics and ideas about exclusion and inclusion, fanaticism and friendship.

The Koala family is having a good time at the beach when the ‘*other*’ (italics in the original) bears and their children arrive. These other bears look different and act differently. For example: the panda bear family come in a rickshaw, indicating they are from China; then there is the polar bear family decked out in Inuit gear and the black bear family arrive with North American parade regalia. The Koala parents are

agitated by these other bears' different physical features, strange clothes, and various artefacts, such as drums, takraws (woven balls), umbrellas and prams. The children, however, are delighted to meet new friends. Finally, mother and father Koala see how happy their children are and come to an abrupt realisation that they too ought to be happy with their new neighbours. Through careful selection of bear types as narrative characters together with food, music, jokes, games, and stories that children easily come to enjoy, *The Other Bears* presents a story fostering the value of diversity and the harmony that is hoped for in a positive multicultural society.

The Koala family fancy themselves as bears and 'LOVE' (unpaged) to be called 'koala bears'. This misrecognition of their species resembles how early Europeans to Australia misconceived koalas as some kind of bears, naming them 'koala bears'. Thompson uses this ambiguous term at the beginning of the story to create an allusion. The space the Koalas inhabit is encoded as 'Australian': the gum tree, picnic gear, football and national colours of green and yellow. Such overt nationalistic coding establishes the grounds for the challenge to the 'ownership' of the space, authority and belonging. The story allegorically idealises constructions of White 'Australianness' that deny Indigenous sovereignty and imposes the White ownership theme, thereby inserting a historical perspective (Thompson, 2010a). In part, this perspective consists of how cultural diversity or multiculturalism from a mainstream Australian perspective affects an imagined 'Australian way of life.' However, there is an issue in this configuration. While the text is trying to show demographic changes and diversity, the use of native animals such as the koala implicitly and unintentionally suggests that the Indigenous owners are not welcoming of newcomers whereas the reality since the early days of Australian settlement is that mainstream White Australians practice such spatial powers.

In a 1992 report, 'Multicultural Australia in the Media: A Report to the Office of Multicultural Affairs', Phillip Bell observed how Australian media articulates and inscribes the power to Anglo-Australians to describe themselves as "us" and refer to the country as "ours" (Bell, 1992, p. 68). Later Pauline Hanson in 1996 and Prime Minister John Howard in 2001 asserted White Australians' privilege to say 'yes' or 'no' to migrants coming to Australia. This idea of spatial ownership re-emerged in relation to what later was called the 'Cronulla Riots,' a series of riots which began on 11 December 2005 at Cronulla beach in New South Wales and spread over the

following days to other suburbs of Sydney. In the riots, White Australians protested against Lebanese migrants, chanting many exclusionary slogans. One slogan, which was printed on T-shirts, was “we grew here, you flew here” (Due & Riggs, 2008), a postulate used to emphasise territorial dominance. This reiteration of spatial dominance over migrants advances the problem from racism to a spatial-national one in which the dominant in-group perceives migrants (or the other) as inferior and not belonging to the national space (Hage, 2012, p. 37). Beneath the surface of the bear story in *The Other Bears* lies this complex issue of cultural clash that goes beyond stereotyping, which is reinforced by the story’s setting.

The physical landscape on which the story takes place is the beach. This selection of the setting serves two purposes in the story. One is that the beach has become an integral part of mainstream Australian lives and therefore indicative of “disparities in acceptance, power, and class” (Ellison, 2011). ‘Beach Culture’ that is deeply embedded in the mainstream psyche is foregrounded at the outset of the story. Conflict in the story occurs as the other bears’ presence challenges this normative freehold. However, the narrative closure consolidates the normative assumption of the beach as an egalitarian space where diverse people “democratically interact” (Ellison, 2011). Beach space is also seen as a liminal border between “host and migrant” (Dudek, 2006a, p. 12). The second purpose of selecting the beach as the setting is to highlight this conflicting correlation between Australian self and cultural other. According to Avtar Brah (1997), borders can be defined as “arbitrary dividing lines” which operate on a social, cultural and psychic level and “places where claims to ownership ... are staked out, contested, defended and fought over” (p. 195). While the Cronulla Riots characterised the potentially contentious nature of spatial ownership, Thompson later declared *The Other Bears*’s provenance as having a direct relationship to the riot:

In 2005, I was quite affected by the news reports of rioting in New South Wales. There was a lot of discussion following this about relationships between different cultural groups in Australia and the story had its genesis in thinking about these issues. (2010a, p. 19)

Given Thompson’s motivation to write the story, he attempts to create a new script based on the schema of ‘racial conflict’ that the Cronulla Riots came to stand for and which was heavily reported through the media. Whereas the riots exhibited a denial

of Lebanese migrants' legitimacy to occupy the national space by a demographic Australian group, *The Other Bears* proffers an acceptance of difference and actively promotes multicultural harmony and thereby attempts to offer a different script.

While the narrative engenders antagonism and fear towards territorial outsiders, the Koala parents in *The Other Bears* act as managers of the space: those who hold the power and domination over the space and its late arrivals. According to Kevin Dunn (2001), spatial managers are empowered to speak on the direction of 'our' country and voice opinions on who should be allowed into it or be excluded, and "how difference should be managed and tolerated" (p. 292). From this understanding of spatial ownership, Hage (2012) argues, notions of "undesirability" rather than "inferiority" become important. That is, certain racial groups may not necessarily be considered as inferior but the dominant group may regard them as undesirable. As part of this undesirability, cultural elements associated with personal outfits (such as headscarves) are seen as a "harmful presence that affects their own wellbeing" (Hage, 2012, p. 37). Accordingly, Due and Riggs (2008) consider that "discourses about the undesirability of certain racial groups position the White Australian as a worried national manager who is concerned with national spatial control" (p. 216). The Koala parents in the story seem to act as worried national managers by making bothersome queries about the other bears' presence (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.2. *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010), Opening 6

Every single family offends Mother and Father Koala for one reason or another. For instance, the panda bears' ears and shoes visually assault them as much as the polar bears' claws and coats (see Figure 4.2 for instance). As the Koala parents voice their criticisms of the newcomers: 'I don't like their ears' or 'shoes' or 'coats' or 'claws,' readers are drawn to points of difference to find that there is nothing visibly wrong as these features are accurate representations of each animal's natural attributes. Thereby, the readers are positioned to see how the Koala parents' objections are irrational and absurd. Their inability to have positive feelings and their lack of cognitive capacity for empathy is associated with their aversive expressions and aggression. The outward expressions of prejudice are induced by their similarity bias. Similarity bias can result in what psychologists called empathic disorder. The ethical outcomes of these empathic disorders suggest that, without the cognitive capacity or propensity to envision ourselves in someone else's place and feel with his or her feelings, our feeling of moral obligation to others is seriously diminished (Mary-Catherine Harrison, 2011). The Koala adults exhibit similar empathic and moral deficiencies.

By contrast, the Koala children enjoy interacting with their new neighbours: sharing food, hearing stories, and otherwise playing games with the other bears, quickly becoming friends. The expressiveness of their bodily postures in naturalistic drawings with high modality affirms the contentment they experience. These

postures are in contrast to the Koala parents' worried demeanour and negative observations about the other bears. Whereas the Koala parents only focus on the superficial reasons for what they dislike about the other bears, the narrative presents various elements that attract the bear children's attention. These transcultural elements are foregrounded as aspects that can nourish the host culture and thereby imply that child readers are encouraged to recognise them as such.

However, it does not seem that the Koala parents' preconceptions about the other bears lead them to bigotry as the text does not indicate if their fear and prejudice stem from preconceived information about bear stereotypes. In fact, the text seems to imply that it is their lack of such understanding that irritates them. For instance, while noticing the superficial differences, the Koala parents overlook or ignore the importance of the distinct cultural artefacts such as the food, jokes, songs, stories and games that the other bears have brought. So the story manifests ignorance as a hindering effect of empathy. Species difference of other bears (coded as cultural and ethnic difference) is only evident in the illustrations that showcase the bears' physicality alongside the costumes, food and artefacts from their home countries, while the accompanying text names the bear types as black, brown, panda and so on. It is through these illustrations that readers infer stereotypes.

The narrative also demonstrates how schemas shape knowledge about identity and perceived rights of ownership of space. *The Other Bears* demonstrates stereotypes about cultural or social difference and beliefs about 'us' and 'them' that fuel mistrust, aversion and fear. Responses like the Koala parents' agitation are built from schemas that shape their knowledge of the world. Such consolidated schemas can result in stereotypes and contribute to prejudice, making it difficult to retain new information that does not conform to one's established ideas about the world. According to Hayakawa (1950), "The danger of stereotypes lies not in their existence, but in the fact that they become for all people some of the time, and for some people all of the time, *substitutes for observation*" (p. 209, italics in the original). However, stereotypes, in part, can be standardised mental constructs that help children to make primary sense out of the world. Children are expected to accommodate new information into their expanding mental schema in the process of acculturation. For instance, stereotyping of bear types in the illustrations may help young readers to interrogate various aspects of other cultures and ethnicities with

adults' guidance and thereby develop recognition and respect towards difference. There is no evidence of the child koalas having negative reactions to difference. Rather, they curiously observe and enjoy the different things. This story valorises difference through the child characters' curiosity and friendship. By focusing on the positive aspects of engagement amongst the child koalas the text has the potential to help expand readers' capacity for empathic response and see the folly of exclusion based on superficial reasons.

Just as Mei-Ling modelled to readers the virtues of empathic engagement, *The Other Bears* shows character empathy through the Koala children who are represented as empathic subjects who develop a sense of value and respect towards bears of different species and origins. Illustrations depict the children's willing involvement in activities that make positive connections regardless of differences. Tasting food with appreciation, enjoying the jokes and music with fascination, showing compassion, sharing stories, playing and developing friendships are some of the positive signs of empathy highlighted in the story. The child koalas accept the new bear friends and all get along happily and as such embody the idealism of multiculturalism. A similar account is given in Narelle Oliver's picture book *Dancing the Boom Cha-Cha Boogie* (2005), a story of little sea creatures named Murmels who are washed up on the shore of an island inhabited by Snigs who attempt to force the Murmels to leave. However, a young female snig acts with compassion. While the focused attention is on children – three little murmels and the little snig in *Dancing the Boom Cha-Cha Boogie* and the koala children in *The Other Bears* – both picture books offer the impression that childhood is the foundation of a cohesive, multicultural society (Dudek, 2006b). Readers who align or empathise with these fictional children are presented with a chance to consider their own understanding of an ideal multicultural childhood.

Figure 4.3 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.3. *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010), Opening 16

As the Koala parents watch the children playing together with the other bears, they realise how “grumpy” they were in their dislike of the other bears. With this realisation, the parents come to terms with the new neighbours. The text alludes to a change or transformation of their attitudes facilitated by the children’s open acceptance of one another: “All their grumpiness melted away, watching the little koalas play” (unpaged). The text does not further this sudden realisation to a strong understanding, acceptance of difference or tolerance; nor does it promulgate any empathic understanding on the parents’ part. However, the illustrations depict the happy faces of the Koala parents helping their children play among different bears, suggesting a positive interaction with them.

The illustrations play an important role in suggesting negative and positive emotions and reactions from the parents’ exclusionary demeanours at the outset and multicultural harmony at the closure. The coloured pen illustrations and realistic shadings capture the particularities of the bears and their different personalities. The aversive facial expressions of the Koala parents are captured with intensity: frowning eyes, gaze aversion, lip compression and open mouth postures are accompanied by other gestures such as arm-crossing, head tilting and refusing with palms. Accompanying words to express the parents’ dismay are rhythmically alliterative with the opposite terms used to denote children’s pleasure. In the following trios, the first two words are uttered by the adults whereas the third is said by the children:

“grumbled, griped and grinned; growled, groaned and giggled; wailed, whined and whooped; snapped, sniffed and said; huffed, puffed and laughed”. The message here suggests that it is perhaps through the young that the fear of differences can be overcome. In the last opening of *The Other Bears*, all the bear families are represented in the framing of all the figures from a long shot view. This framing positions readers to adopt what is termed a “public distance” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006): one that recites social affinity. The different colours of the clothes of the different bears adds vibrancy to this image, and symbolises multicultural harmony. This final image carries an implied ideology of social harmony or collectiveness which aligns with what Amanda Wise (2007) has termed in another context as “propinquity in shared multicultural spaces” (p. 21). The accompanying text concludes the narrative and emphasises a point of view that a multicultural society can bring personal happiness: “For each was a happier little bear, now that the other bears were there” (Thompson, 2010b, p. unpagged).

The Other Bears works as a counter-narrative to a negative schema of the ‘outsider’ with the familiar migrant-as-threat script by countering negative reactions evident in multicultural societies like Australia towards increasing demographic diversity and wide spread racism and prejudice based on assumptions. The narrative underscores the simplistic assumption that the variety and vibrancy of other cultures can enrich a host culture and is enough for multiculturalism to flourish. While multiculturalism can possibly support the acknowledgment of cultural diversity valuing some celebratory aspects of other cultures (such as food, music and games), there is a risk that while commending such celebratory practices, we might mask deeply ingrained fear and prejudice. Although it interrogates this shallow acceptance, *The Other Bears* reinforces the view that acceptance of diversity and respect for difference are central to the multicultural future in Australia and these can be achieved through children who share similar traits that transcend the difference.

Crossing Boundaries of Difference

Cat and Fish offers a different starting point of view from *The Other Bears* by showing how spatial proprietary and dominance over others does not necessarily result in intolerance and exclusionary behaviours. The text illustrates that when difference is not perceived as a derogatory factor and friendship replaces xenophobia, the resultant solidarity becomes the basis of harmonious coexistence.

Grant and Curtis's *Cat and Fish* shows how the similarity bias can be overcome through affective engagement. Empathy is modelled in the narrative as a means through which difference and different needs can be negotiated to maintain friendship.

Cat and Fish is another allegory: one that focuses on an unlikely friendship between two animals, one from the land, the other from the sea. When they meet one night at a park, cat and fish develop a friendship and decide to discover each other's worlds. While cat takes fish on an adventurous expedition on the land, fish finds she misses the sea. So cat helps fish get back home. In the sea, fish shows how joyful sea-life can be, but cat does not like water very much. When they realise each other's different needs and dispositions that cannot be met in one another's world, they decide on a compromise: to live 'where the sea and the land meet' (Grant & Curtis, 2003, unpagged).

There is a recurring element in many picture book narratives that feature predators and prey as protagonists that develop unusual friendships. Garry Sato and Susan Guevara's *Chato's Kitchen* (1995), and the sequel *Chato and the Party Animals* (2000), Walton and Lisa McCue's *The Remarkable Friendship of Mr. Cat and Mr. Rat* (2006) and Gus Gordon's *Herman and Rosie* (2012) are such examples. In both Chato stories, stereotypical rivals in the animal world – cats, mice and a dog – meet in a neighbourhood and maintain a friendship therein. *The Remarkable Friendship of Mr. Cat and Mr. Rat* features an account of a quirky friendship and exchange of gifts between a cat and a rat. *Herman and Rosie* depicts a growing friendship between two lonesome neighbours – a crocodile and a deer. In this section, the focus is on another unusual friendship that crosses boundaries of difference.

Cat and Fish and its sequel *Cat and Fish Go to Sea* feature radical opponents or killer and victim that develop affection and solidarity. These manifestations are incongruent without perceptions about these creatures and the world order, and knowledge based on the existing schema about animal rivalry. By bringing these rivals into the story world, and showing how they develop friendship, children's narratives challenge deeply ingrained stereotypes and their resultant prejudicial effects – Dudek's (2011) point noted above. The script of the cat and fish rivals is modified in the story to privilege other familiar scripts common to children's

literature, namely, ‘harmony over conflict’ and ‘boundary crossing over boundary protection.’ As with *The Other Bears*, the story also uses anthropomorphism of animals as a narrative device to encourage children’s prosocial emotions.

The narrative technique of anthropomorphism has been a long-standing one deployed in children’s literature to enable young readers some distance in viewing characters and their actions, which may resemble their own experiences, and this anthropomorphism may transform their existing knowledge of schema and scripts of the world. Keen’s (2011b) exploration into the “relationship between the emotional responses evoked by visual artists’ strategies of anthropomorphising” (p. 135) animal faces and the invitations thereby to narrative empathy in graphic storytelling is very much applicable to these children’s picture books and others of the sort. For Keen, this technique is used “in the service” of what she terms “ambassadorial strategic empathy” (p. 135). The deployment of anthropomorphised animal characters evokes culturally scripted responses to familiar schemas of sympathetic and antipathetic animals. Keen (2011b) sees anthropomorphism achieving both literary and cognitive effects:

In literary terms this means that animal character types associated with specific genres and modes generate expectations of their own. Second, the depiction of facial expressions and bodily postures to convey emotional states (that may or may not be glossed verbally) calls upon readers’ neural systems for recognition of basic emotions (p. 137).

Cat and Fish introduces readers to a fantasy story world right from the front cover of the picture book. Engraving-style artwork is used to narrate a somewhat surreal story of an unlikely friendship of animal rivals. In order to depict the contrasting worlds of cat and fish, Neil Curtis uses black and white illustrations. His drawing technique of thick black lines on white paper works well in reflecting the opposites of the story that highlight the contrast between worlds and inhabitants: terrestrial cat and aquatic fish. The illustrations are additionally enhanced using a suitable text layout and design that extend information about the different environments. The correlation between the illustrations and verbal text is significant as some of the text lines are arranged into curved lines in order to emphasise the subtext of perceiving things from a different point of view. This also prompts the

reader to move past their stereotypical assumptions and develop a new way of thinking.

In the first opening where cat and fish first meet, cat is depicted leaning forward from an arching bridge to see the fish rising up from the water. Aligned in the vertical axis, cat sees fish from a high vertical angle, affording a position of power. The cat assumes salience in the image through this dominating positioning against the fish whose head only is shown rising from water, a possible indication of fear and scepticism attached to encounters of strangers or hostile environments. The cat in fact dominates in his earthly habitat, ‘the woods,’ to which he invites the fish. Cat’s gaze forms an eye-line vector, which extends straight down to the onlooking fish creating a friendship relation through what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) term a ‘reactional’ process. Readers are encouraged to adopt a subjective viewpoint that is enforced through the text, which states, “they came from different worlds but they liked each other” (unpaged), clarifying for readers any possible confusion about the unlikely friendship. Through alteration and moderation of a normative schema of an animal rivalry, the narrative suggests how empathy can transcend difference, yet differences need not be erased to support harmony.

Space can function not only as a point of disjuncture, as in the case of *The Other Bears*, but can also function as a point of affinity where diverse people get together and “negotiate the ‘accident’ of propinquity” (Wise, 2007, p. 2), as illustrated in *Cat and Fish*. Mary Louise Pratt (1992) calls such a space a ‘contact zone’ in which “peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations” (p. 6). In contrast to the unwelcoming Koala parents in *The Other Bears*, who condemn various aspects of other bears’ physical and cultural presence with uninformed speculations, cat and fish “get to know each other” by sharing information about life in the water and in the woods. The illustration imaginatively captures the emotional states of cat and fish, who embrace each other in a posture similar to that of humans caressing one another. Cat’s closed eyes emanate benevolence while fish, looking up to the sky, symbolises her feelings of security (see Figure 4.4). Such bodily postures and facial expressions, along with the vectors aligning the bodies of the animals in the image, seem to signify strong emotional expressions of affection. Together, text and illustration position readers to see the value of propinquity that transcends difference

and similarity bias. The long shot view of the image further encourages the reader to enter into a state of social affinity with the represented participants. The two characters' lateral positioning and conspicuous expressions of affability further advance reader/viewer acquaintance with them.

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to copyright reasons

Figure 4.4. *Cat and Fish* (Grant and Curtis, 2003), Opening 4

The spatial dominance here works to enable hospitality and not to incite hostility. Through a series of frames from hereon, readers see how cat shows fish his world and teaches her how to climb, how to take shelter from the rain, and how to stay warm – all activities do not match with the existing schema of a fish. Although cat's welcoming attitudes and hospitable conducts are on display through these interactions, he is unaware of fish's needs. Soon the difference strikes, and regardless of how joyful these activities are, fish begins to miss water. Cat's empathic reaction to take fish to the river mistakenly turns out to be an adventure into the sea world, which "cat wasn't sure he liked" very much. A compromise is reached when cat realises that fish misses water very much and fish realises that cat cannot live in the

water. They decide to live “where the sea and the land meet”: the border or liminal space. Whereas the beach in both the real world incident of the Cronulla Riots and in their narrative configuration in *The Other Bears* is shown as a point where claims to ownership are contested, *Cat and Fish* suggests the beach’s potential use as a point of compromise – a democratic multicultural space.

Cat and Fish was published in 2003, in the wake of ‘9/11’: a “highly symbolic turning point” (Bleich, 2009, p. 354) of recent terror attacks that heightened concerns about national security and raised contentious issues of diversity and multiculturalism. Terrorism-related prejudice and derogation of out-groups is increasingly becoming widespread across the world. The Cronulla Riots occurred in the years following the attacks of 9/11, when perceived terrorist threats created an anti-migrant, and especially anti-Muslim, sentiment in media and public discourse in Australia, fuelling cultural tensions, xenophobia and distrust. In addressing these tensions, the policy statement, *Multicultural Australia – United in Diversity* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003), emphasised inclusiveness as the key concern, with four supporting principles. These included civic responsibilities for all, mutual respect, social equality and the benefits of productive diversity for all. *Cat and Fish*, depicting a story of the friendship of two creatures from opposite worlds, reinforces these principles. It emphasises that it is through the empathic engagement with different others that harmonious coexistence in a shared space can be strengthened. The narrative also gives a literal realisation to Stuart Hall’s (1996) point that the most urgent and important task, though most difficult to achieve, is “to live with difference without eating the other” (unpaged). Through analogy, the text shows child readers how to accommodate difference, and accept and respect others for who they are, even when they are ‘not like’ our implied sense of Self. Such a reading adds depth to the story by connecting its basic premise to the ideology of multiculturalism that embodies respect and tolerance instead of exclusion and erasure of difference.

As discussed in relation to *Cat and Fish*, tolerance, the opposite of xenophobia, can help overcome the similarity bias and assert feelings of security. Security is a major aspect of one’s sense of space, place and belonging. To feel at home is to feel a strong sense of safety and belonging. In fact, individual wellbeing is generally reliant on how safe and secure one feels ‘at home.’ Anyone who threatens this security becomes undesirable to occupants of a place, whether it is a family home or

a country at large. Due to this perceived security threat, stemming from a sense of personal wellbeing, economic security or territorial ownership, migrants have become undesirable to those individuals and groups of a host country who object to outsiders taking over their country and jobs, and bringing unwanted change. Narrative manifestation of this fear is evident in other picture books. For instance Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing* (2000), in which a boy finds a lost 'thing' on the beach and tries to find where it belongs. His father worries that the thing can be a carrier - "full of all sorts of diseases" (unpaged), regarding it as a threat to personal wellbeing. Economic security poses as a concern in Narelle Oliver's picture book *Dancing the Boom Cha Cha Boogie* (2005) when the boss snig speculates of the murmels "no doubt you cast your shifty button eyes on our precious sea slugs" (unpaged). Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007) outlines extreme protectionism associated with territorial ownership when the people of an island find a stranger sitting on their shore, and decide to force him into the sea and fortify their island. All three narratives metaphorically illustrate how empathy is hindered by perceived fear of difference that jeopardises a sense of security.

The other side of boundary crossing is that security may become a grave concern for migrants whose relocation can make them feel isolated and insecure as they have shifted from a familiar home to a foreign land. This is what features in the picture book *My Two Blankets*, which uses the object of the blanket as a metaphor for security and warmth that comes with the comfort of the known and familiar and the resultant desolation that occurs when this is stripped away. Kobald and Blackwood engage with the schema of the 'security blanket' in a way that is understandable for young children. They rework this schema to inform young readers how unintelligibility of language can cause isolation and loss of the sense of belonging in children and how a friendship can help dispel the solitude.

My Two Blankets is a story of a young girl called Cartwheel, so named because of her love of doing cartwheels. Cartwheel leaves her home because of war and arrives in a new country for safety. In the first opening, we observe separation of the two cultures, home and host, with the use of colour and shape. For instance, Cartwheel's seemingly African home environment is depicted in warm earthen shades, painted in saturated oils, whereas the image that shows Cartwheel and Aunty in their new land, presumably Western, is pale, grey and drawn in water colours.

Later readers see these colours have extended to the blankets that Cartwheel weaves. While her old blanket has the same earthen colours of home and soft, curved shapes, filled with the symbols of the land, her new blanket contains pale, urban images in compacted square and diamond shapes.

Cartwheel is depicted as an integral part of the hometown and of the blanket under which she finds warmth (openings 4 and 9); however, in the host country she and her aunt are depicted as miniature figures in the new landscapes (openings 2 and 3) separated from others. The two figures are represented as bright, orange, undefined shapes to emphasise that they are visible but have no identity. They travel in a train and this journey metonymically represents migrants' mobility and dislocation. The focalising perspective is Cartwheel's, but the text is in third person and past tense. This narrative strategy enables a more generalised displaced migrants' point of view, disorientation and bewilderment: "Everything was strange. The people were strange. The food was strange... Even the wind felt strange" (unpaged). Repetition of the word 'strange' intensifies the loss of sense of belonging and sensory qualities in an unfamiliar landscape. By focalising from the migrant's viewpoint, 'strangeness' is attributed to the new world in which they now live, and not in terms of how they feel or are observed as being different from everyone else. A blurred depiction of the cityscape (opening 2) which contrasts with the detailed view of Cartwheel's home town (opening 1) gives a visual clue of the unfamiliarity of the place.

Strangeness is extended to the next opening wherein Cartwheel finds that the words of the new place feel like a waterfall of sounds. The use of pictographs of scrawls and fragments falling over Cartwheel and her aunt visually symbolises their lack of understanding the language. The metaphor of the 'waterfall' of strange sounds analogically depicts the harshness of the unintelligible language poured over Cartwheel's head. It was cold, intimidating and lonesome and made her feel "I wasn't me anymore" (unpaged). To cope, Cartwheel wraps herself in a blanket. This old blanket is 'soft,' warm and cosy, as it is made of 'words and sounds' of her own language, and memories and thoughts of her home. Sometimes, Cartwheel wants to stay under this 'safe' blanket forever, and never go out again. Two metaphors are in total contrast – the waterfall is sharp and sleety whereas the blanket is soft and cuddly – but each reciprocally works to convey Cartwheel's inner feelings. She has

become entangled in an emotional turmoil of contrasting ends: devotion to homely feelings versus estrangement and sense of otherness. While the words “I wonder if I would ever feel like me again” (unpaged) highlight Cartwheel’s loss of her sense of belonging, the illustration of her cornered within the metaphorical blanket coalesces her isolation. Cartwheel is both visually and verbally represented as an empathic subject and, in turn, readers are positioned to respond empathically to her sad and despondent feelings (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.5. *My Two Blankets* (Kobald and Blackwood, 2014), Opening 7

According to Vijay Mishra (1995), migrants’ physical shift to one place while their sense of belonging lies elsewhere makes the idea of home a ‘damaged’ concept whereby ‘damaged’ means “the scars and fractures, ... the blisters and sores, ... the psychic traumas of bodies on the move” (p. 7). As a means of subjugating the agonising pain, migrants strive to recover the past, memories of home, and thereby create imaginary homes. In search of security and warmth, Cartwheel also creates an imaginary home where she can experience the comfort of familiarity against the estrangement of an alien milieu.

In its attempt to engender empathy, *My Two Blankets* thematises a common problem that severely affects migrant children at the onset of their cultural and social reorientation in a new country: linguistic isolation caused by the language barrier. Transition between cultures and social integration is mostly disrupted or slowed by the language difficulty when the language of the host country is different from that of

the migrant's home country. As a consequence, migrant children begin to feel socially complex issues such as ethnicity, identity and difference at very early ages (Yi, 2014). The narrative reveals the strain migrant children undergo due to the language barrier and the impact it can have on their cognitive and emotional development, establishment of a new identity and building of a sense of belonging in their transplanted life. Cartwheel's unease and embarrassment arise from the difficulty in understanding and reproducing the new language. She feels excluded, isolated and estranged from the world in which she lives. Language becomes a barrier and is a source of complex emotions: social anxiety, fear and feelings of disconcertion.

Throughout the story, readers are encouraged to feel how frustrated one might be when unable to understand a foreign language and express feelings in a way that is intelligible to others. Cartwheel befriends a local girl, whose friendly welcoming gestures make her feel "warm inside." When she takes Cartwheel to the swings, Cartwheel needs to tell the girl how glad she felt that they were friends. Cartwheel's words – "I got on and she pushed me higher and higher" – suggest how the girl's friendly action helps Cartwheel to regain her smile, as she has been emotionally despondent up to this point in the story. However, the White girl's attempt to teach the language causes Cartwheel to feel more alienation. Cartwheel becomes despondent again when she realises her inability to express her feelings. These unspoken emotions are felt and realised by the White girl through emotional cues of sadness and her ability to take another's perspective. Each time they meet she teaches Cartwheel new words. This altruistic behaviour shows the White girl's ability to act as an empathic subject. The friendship grows, and so does Cartwheel's language knowledge. Such mediation from the part of the host is seen as a prerequisite for a productive social interaction in a multicultural society: "The acquisition of such understanding by Australians of English-speaking backgrounds is of considerable significance for those of other origins to feel that they are indeed accepted as equal partners in the multicultural society" (Committee on Multicultural Education, 1980, p. 7). When Cartwheel feels that the new language does not sound so sharp and cold any more, she realises, that she is weaving a new blanket: one of friendship and a renewed sense of belonging. The new sounds, new words and new memories that colour her new blanket symbolise her new life.

Gradual change in the representation of the park in successive openings visually conveys Cartwheel's acceptance to the new place. A gloomy image of the park with ominous smoke stacks that greeted her first visit transforms into a vibrant landscape on the last opening where Cartwheel is represented as an integral part of the illustration. Colours from both the worlds are incorporated into this final opening where Cartwheel feels accepted, as resonates in her words, "I will always be me" (unpaged). As mentioned earlier, colours such as vibrant orange, taupe, and blue-greens are used to encode emotions to different geographical landscapes. Further to this careful use of colours in the illustrations, the endpapers are also coloured in orange at the front and in blue-green at the back, a strategy used to symbolise Cartwheel's successful transition between cultures (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.6. *My Two Blankets* (Kobald and Blackwood, 2014), Opening 16

This section has illustrated that picture books have the potential to offer readers the opportunity to reflect on cultural difference in ways that complicate the similarity bias as well as the ideals of multicultural harmony and celebration of diversity. In

drawing attention to how spaces are imagined as sites of domination, control and power, or as shared spaces of social cohesion, the discussion has demonstrated how picture books produced in a post-multicultural period in Australia's history are reviving and revising old and new arguments, tensions, and desires. Encountering others may result in confrontation and antagonism from the part of dominant in-groups, as shown in *Marty and Mei-Ling* and *The Other Bears*. Whereas such intolerance can arise from stereotypes, lack of knowledge, preconceptions, or misconceptions about people who are different to oneself, *Cat and Fish* and *My Two Blankets* manifest how welcoming attitudes can transcend the difference and overcome similarity bias to propagate empathy across difference.

Difference and otherness discussed above dominate issues pertaining solely to cross-cultural relations. As shown in the above discussion of four picture books, spatial ownership and territorial dominance can work as a hindering effect of empathy and, by contrast, as a means to encourage empathic engagement between host and the migrant. In both cases, perception of difference is regarded as the point of inflection. However, difference as a point of departure is not limited to narrative manifestation of cross-cultural encounters in civic spaces. Differences in age, lifestyles, preference, attitudes and expectations can also create tensions among members within an intramural space like a family home. One such conflict significant in Australian children's picture books is the difference in generations between migrant children growing up in a host culture and their ethnic grandparents. Bradford identifies these stories that thematise the tensions across generational interaction as narratives of "cross-generational negotiations" (Bradford, 2007). The following section will explore how the picture book narratives delineate communication across generations, which is often fraught with tensions of expectations, frustrations, and misunderstandings pertinent to the socio-cultural complexities of diasporic experience.

BETWEEN TWO WORLDS: CROSS-GENERATIONAL IDENTITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS

As a way of contextualising the discussion of the focus texts for this section, I want to briefly explain how the notion of 'in-between' provides a further theoretical lens for considering how schemas can be transformed or challenged. Migrants, as individuals, bear traces of both their original and new locations and languages; these

states have given rise to the idea of ‘in-betweenness’, and what Homi Bhabha (2004) calls ‘hybrid identities’. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha (2004) considers hybridity to be a camouflage. It is how “newness enters the world” (p. 337) and it is bound up with the “process of translating and transvaluing cultural differences” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 361), which he sees as a third space ‘in-between’. This space is of inherent significance to essentialist identity positions as well as to the conceptualisation of ‘original culture’. As a result, the third space refers to an approach of explicating a productive (and not simply reflective) space that brings about new possibilities. According to Bhabha (1994, p. 103), it refers to an “interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative” space that facilitates the exploration of new kinds of cultural meaning thereby alleviating the constraints of existing boundaries and disputing the established classifications of culture and identity. Based on this conception, Bhabha (2004) identifies children of international mobility and adolescents as cultural hybrids living in a third space. Bhabha’s idea of third space is further discussed in relation to the notion of ‘Third Culture Kids’ to provide a significant insight into the identity formation of children growing up in migrant families such as the ones of Mandy, Omar and Fang Fang as depicted in the narratives *Grandpa and Ah Gong*, *Old Magic* and *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* discussed in this section.

Useem, Useem and Donoghue (1963) first coined the term ‘Third Culture Kids’ to refer to children who move between cultures with their parents, as they grow up in a host country for most of their formative years. Further development of this idea is found in recent studies on migration (See for instance Moore & Barker, 2012). According to Pollock and Ruth:

A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background (2009, p. 13).

Pollock and Van Reken (2009) identify Third Culture Kids as those who are moving between societies before they have had the chance to completely add to their individual and social identity. The first culture refers to their parents’ country of

origin, and the second culture refers to the culture of the host country. There is a composite space created by the amalgamation of these two cultures and that interstitial culture experienced by children in migrant families in a new country is called the third culture. This third culture is further reinforced with the encounters and interactions of the others who have been exposed to similar experiences in the migrant community living in the host country.

Existing research shows that Third Culture Kids experience both negative and positive effects. Research on individuals' personality development in multicultural environments indicates that third culture individuals bear the capacity to possess multiple cultural identities rather than a bewildered sense of cultural identity. Additionally, research suggests that while these individuals may lack a clear sense of belonging to, they are proficient intercultural communicators who perceive their cross-cultural experiences more beneficial than detrimental (Berry, 2008; Moore & Barker, 2012). In terms of negative effects they may experience identity crisis, difficulty in acquiring a sense of belonging in the host culture and experience of marginality and rootlessness caused by the loss of the sense of belonging to the home culture (Moore & Barker, 2012; Pollock & Ruth, 2009). Three picture books discussed in this section show how child characters perform differently in their cultural transformation. Mandy, the child protagonist in *Grandpa and Ah Gong* becomes a versatile character living effectively in both cultural environments – home and host. Omar in *Old Magic* displays an assimilation style of acculturation; that is, he adopts host cultural values at the expense of his hereditary culture. Fang Fang in *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* represents those child characters lost in liminality – the in-betweenness of the two cultures involved.

Unlike children and adolescents, first- and second-generation migrant adults have solidified ethnic identities by the time of migration (Berry, 2005). These ethnic identities, which have been predominantly influenced and shaped by familial, endemic and cultural traditions, may prevent older people from adopting cultural values outside their own traditions even after migrating to a new country. These people may act as conduits through which family and cultural traditions, customs, values and languages are conveyed to new generations (Pumariega, Rothe, & Pumariega, 2005). The focus texts for this section – *Old Magic*, *Grandpa and Ah Gong* and *Grandpa's Mask* – engage with some of the tensions and negotiations that

arise within families in which grandfathers as cultural elders interact with their children or grandchildren. Ethnic grandparents represented in these picture books act as people who hold onto traditional cultural values and pass these values to their grandchildren while providing a sense of cultural heritage and family history. Bradford (2007) points out that while books that involve grandparents and children represent intersections between generations they also serve as enabling texts “to propose ideas and values around change, continuity and cultural meaning” (p. 36). These elements provide readers with ways of accommodating new scripts and schemas about migrants and the diversity of the so-called ‘migrant experience’.

A further element to the following discussion is the grandfathers’ subjective experiences as elderly migrants. These texts feature grandfathers who come to characterise what Cline terms as being “caught between two worlds” (Cline, 2008, p. 63). One of the challenges for many older migrants is that they experience both personal and interpersonal disruptions to their identity and sense of self. This inside-outside tension occurs when signifiers of difference (clothing, appearance, rituals, language) are “not assimilated into an Anglo national identity” (Bradford, 2007). The ‘between-ness’ they feel can be more painful and difficult due to their fondness for the country of origin and feeling of dislocation. Allan Say’s picture book *Grandfather’s Journey* (1993) captures the complex psychological struggle caused by disorientation, when the grandfather says: “The funny thing is, the moment I am in one country, I am homesick for the other” (p. 31). This conflicted emotion is experienced by the grandfathers discussed in the next section.

Morag Loh and Xiangyi Mo’s *Grandpa and Ah Gong* (Loh & Mo, 1995) and Allan Bailey and Di Wu’s *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996) are two prominent examples featuring grandfathers who influence their grandchildren’s developing subjectivities and sense of cross-cultural identity. The texts offer stories that are informative and ideological; informative in a sense that they convey information about family history and social milieu, while ideologically they invite implied (migrant) readers to construct belief systems about fading cultural affiliation. In this way, the texts construct specifically the grandfathers as role models and cultural elders for the younger family members.

Grandpa and Ah Gong (Loh & Mo, 1995) is thematically concerned with showing the value of cultural diversity and cross-cultural negotiation with a glimpse

at cross-cultural tension within an ethnically mixed family. The story is focalised through Mandy, whose mother is Anglo-Australian and father is Malaysian-Australian. But the story's focus is not on issues relating to Mandy's exposure to cultures or her parents' relationship as an interracial couple. Rather, the point of tension comes from Mandy's two grandfathers, who struggle to come to terms with each other's unfamiliar customs when they meet in Australia. The text uses cross-cultural tension as a means to disrupt the existing schema of grandfathers as a rewarding resource for grandchildren. However, they resolve the tension and replace the negative schema with a renewed schema of domestic cross-generational harmony. Nevertheless, both stories conform to a more generic family script of tension – resolution – harmony that characterises literature written for young children.

Mandy is represented as a character who easily slips between the two cultures that characterise her family: Australian and Malaysian. She does various activities with both grandfathers, when she stays with one or the other, though some of these activities are different. For instance, Mandy plays ball in the park or goes for a run around the oval after school with her maternal (Australian) grandfather, whereas she goes for a walk around the busy Malaysian market or to a coffee shop for a snack with Ah Gong, her paternal (Malaysian) grandfather. The illustrations visually encode cultural associations of these separate locations. Mandy equally enjoys both outings with no specific preference.

When her paternal grandfather, Ah Gong, first visits Australia, Mandy is both excited and contemplative as to how her two grandfathers will get on with each other. At the beginning the two grandfathers are happy to see each other; they both accompany Mandy to and from school; Grandpa enjoys Ah Gong's cooking. But each has his own preferred way of doing things, for instance Grandpa prefers running for exercise whereas Ah Gong would rather practise Tai Chi. These unfamiliar customs peeve and irritate the other, which first lead to distress and eventually to dissonance. The grandfathers' failure to collaborate makes Mandy feel despair. In the illustration where grandfather and Ah Gong complain to their daughter and son about Tai Chi and going to the park, Mandy stands disappointed and despondent. She is placed as a sole figure looking out at the page. Her feeling of being neglected and resulting desolation is rendered as she holds on to a teddy bear for emotional support.

When the grandfathers finally voice their divergent views on the question ‘which is the better way of doing things,’ readers see an outward expression of tension that has been growing. This is shown in the following exchange:

‘I suppose you think we should do things the Malaysian way!’ Grandpa spoke so sharply, I looked at him instead of the kite.

Ah Gong shrugged and said ‘Maybe.’ (Loh & Mo, 1995, unpagged)

As the dissension between the grandfathers intensifies, so does Mandy’s disappointment. In the illustration that accompanies this exchange, Mandy is looking at the towering figure of Grandpa, whose angry expression is directed sharply at Ah Gong, who looks displeased. Vectors emanating from the eye-line of all three participants do not connect with each other or the viewer, a sign of discomposure. For the most part, these peevish demeanours are visually exposed to readers, but Mandy remains unaware of the growing tension between the two elders. When she is exposed to an open display of conflict, Mandy feels sad. However, the illustration shows her placed between her two grandfathers, each of whom is holding one of her hands. This image suggests that Mandy is still the object of both grandparents’ affection regardless of the emotional unrest caused by their mutual intolerance. The text deepens reader-perception on the importance of intergenerational cohesion by offering contradictory positions: one shows the positive effect of adults’ solidarity on children; the other shows the burden of emotional stress caused by their disharmony. Mandy finally expresses her disappointment over her grandfathers’ stubbornness to her parents, who attempt to ameliorate the situation:

‘You can’t expect them to like everything the same,’ Dad said. ‘They like some of the same things. Most of all they like you.’

‘Don’t they go together to pick you up from school?’ Mum asked.

‘Yes,’ I said. ‘Always.’ I felt a bit better. (Loh & Mo, 1995, unpagged)

But further disappointment occurs when one afternoon only Grandpa comes to pick her from the school, then only Ah Gong the next afternoon, and on the following day, Mrs Pianto, an old lady who lives next to Grandpa’s house, meets her. The reason for this change is concealed from both Mandy and readers. This narrative strategy of withholding information situates readers together with Mandy, inviting them to share her perspective by witnessing her growing distress as she finds herself being the cause of her grandfathers’ conflict. Like so many children who are caught

up in adult family disagreements, Mandy fears that she too will be rejected: “They do not like being with each other, Do they? And now they don't want me” (Loh & Mo, 1995, unpagged).

The anguish caused by Mandy’s limited understanding of adult conflicts positions readers to feel sympathy towards her. The narrative uses first-person self-narration which works to garner empathy on the part of readers as it provides them the opportunity to read, listen and feel character emotions more closely (Keen, 2007). In general, while making the reader privy to the limited point of view of events that are perceptible to the focaliser, the first-person perspective also distances readers from other characters. This limited perceptibility is taken in *Grandpa and Ah Gong* as an advantage to highlight the limitation of Mandy’s perspective as a child narrator who is depicted as unaware of the growing tension between the two grandparents at the beginning. Though readers are able to render some more information through the illustrations than what is reported by Mandy in most of the story, both narrator and audience are left uninformed about what is happening behind the scenes towards the story’s closure, especially during the kite making. The grandfathers become unaccountably busy after the dispute over the kite. Joy begins to flourish when the inexplicable reason is finally revealed. There has been no dispute, but a joint activity of making a kite. The two grandfathers present Mandy with a beautiful kite like a butterfly they had been making together secretly (see Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.7. *Grandpa and Ah Gong* (Morag & Xiangyi, 1995), Opening 14

Both grandfathers take turns to help Mandy to fly the kite at the park. High modality incorporated into the kite through the use of vibrant colours affords salience to it. The kite adds colours to the sky above the park: “It looked beautiful soaring and swooping above the oval”. The butterfly kite, variegated with Malaysian artistry adorning the sky of the park, symbolises the vibrancy other cultures can bring to an Australian landscape. In the double page illustration (Figure 4.7) the intra-diegetic gaze of people in the park is directed at the kite, which is the resultant artefact of two grandfathers’ joint efforts to create something anew for their granddaughter. While Mandy’s grandfathers (and from the background her parents) look at her, the readers’ eyes are drawn to Mandy, whose close-up position in the foreground puts her in an intimate social distance to the viewer. Mandy is presented directly facing the viewers, intently looking at them, in turn drawing them into the story. This extra-diegetic gaze directed at the viewer, what Kress and Van Leeuwen call ‘a demand’ (2006, p. 123), invites the reader/viewer to enter into an imaginary relationship with the represented participants, in this case Mandy. These visual commitments afford a more empathic viewer-orientation providing access to the emotional world of Mandy, who is now joyful. Though the two elders initially had a dispute over different cultural practices, finally they were able to come to a resolution and gift Mandy a product of their joint effort. Furthermore, as a portent of continued harmony, they decide to make more kites “for the fun of doing things together” (unpaged).

Grandpa and Ah Gong offers a positive representation of a child who grows up with the influence of both Australian and Malaysian cultures, and her interest and engagement across the two. She develops a hybrid identity, which is constituted as a “patchwork of discreet cultural elements” (Bradford, 2007, p. 38). Her adaptability in both cultures poses a positive sign of Mandy’s developing sense of bi-cultural identity – which is a necessity for third culture individuals growing up in post-multicultural societies.

The story also suggests that miscommunications and misunderstandings are common to human interactions, but can be exacerbated by one’s refusal to reach a compromise. Multicultural harmony does not preclude misunderstandings. In Stanley Fish’s terms, “no one could possibly be a multiculturalist in any interesting and coherent sense” (1999, p. 63). Mandy’s father’s words, “You can’t expect them to

like everything the same” (unpaged), further suggest that such an agreement is not a necessary condition, but other considerations need to be forthcoming: communication, compromise, rapprochement and reconciliation. As the story concludes, readers comprehend how Mandy’s grandfathers’ love for her transcends difference and difference-induced tensions within the family. It also provides a narrative subscript or caution for implied adult readers of how competition for a child’s affection can be a possible cause of dispute.

Relationships between grandfathers and grandchildren are scrutinised in many picture books providing various insights into cross-generational relationships. *Grandpa and Ah Gong* adds a new dimension to this familiar schema by offering a new narrative script in which an intergenerational relationship is interwoven with cross-cultural communication. Mandy’s presence as a child of an interracial marriage adds depth and further complexity to what can be called a multicultural story. Adults’ conflicting personalities and Mandy’s inability to comprehend their dispute over dissimilar cultural practices are sketched in the story in a way that draws readers’ empathy towards her and many other children alike who are caught up in intercultural conflicts within families. This same cross-cultural difference is manifested in a different way in the next picture book. Whereas the cross-cultural tension in *Grandpa and Ah Gong* creates distress in a grandchild, *Old Magic* shows how a migrant child’s acculturation and adaptation to dominant cultural norms create tension between himself and his grandfather.

Although grandparents can be compensatory resources for maturing migrant children, the grandchildren’s acculturation can have a disruptive effect on the intergenerational relationship because children tend to adapt values of the mainstream culture that clash with the more traditional values of older generations (Silverston & Chen, 1999). However, this disruption can vary regarding the degree to which the acculturation may occur. Berry (1997, 2005) observes four means of acculturation: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation. Individuals who build up solid connections to both host and home societies during their contact with varying social structures show integration. Those who absorb into the host society at the cost of the home culture practice assimilation. Opposite of assimilation is separation; this occurs when migrants hold solid associations with their home culture but not with the host society. Migrants who build no strong relationship to

either host or home culture experience marginalisation. It is anticipated that the younger members of migrant families are more inclined to adopt dominant cultural codes than their elders (Silverston & Chen, 1999). According to Sonderegger et al. (2004), Australian migrant children practise an “assimilation” style of acculturation, thereby rejecting identification with their ethnic heritage. Such an acculturation from children’s part and grandparents’ likelihood of practising separation can aggravate cross-generational tension, as represented in *Old Magic*.

Old Magic deals with the issue that is reflected in many families whereby the grandchildren, and in many cultures, the grandsons, are expected to carry ethnic traditions and customs on into the next generation. However, unlike Mandy who comfortably inhabits her ‘in-between’ space as a ‘third culture kid,’ Omar in *Old Magic* finds it less comfortable. He develops a strong sense of the performing culture of the host country but forgets or does not know his cultural past due to lack of exposure. His failure to maintain Indonesian cultural values initially disappoints Omar’s ‘kakek’ (grandfather). However, the story depicts how a fading relationship can be reconstructed and forgotten cultural affiliations can be re-established by making connections with the past through remembrance. In contrast to the grandfathers who make a kite for their grandchild in *Grandpa and Ah Gong*, Omar comes to remember his past skills so that he can make a kite for his kakek.

Omar shows his resistance to the old ways, when his kakek tells him that he remembers ‘magic’ and spins a ‘painted disc of wood.’ Omar replies that ‘we don’t do that anymore’ because ‘we are in a new place, with new things to do’ and ‘no time’ for old magic. Kakek accuses him of not remembering the old ways, the old magic of spinning tops, lions in the sky and demon shadows – elements of his home culture. After his grandfather walks away, leaving him with the top, Omar visualises Indonesian mythical stories and this prompts him to recall life ‘in the village’ prior to migrating to Australia with his family. He remembers endearing moments attached to geographical and cultural spaces: night markets, fishing with Kakek, shadow puppetry and folk tales. Omar draws inspirations from these good memories of his cultural past to construct a kite for his grandfather.

Figure 4.8 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.8. *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996), Opening 1

In the illustration that shows the opening scene of the kakek and Omar in the backyard of the house (Figure 4.8), the two characters are positioned antagonistically, detached from each other by the middle of the page. This inimical positioning highlights the distance in the relationship between them. This strategy is repeated in three more consecutive openings. Omar is situated within an Australian landscape highlighted by the popular Californian Bungalow style house in the background with an iconic Hills Hoist (clothes line). These cultural details and his outfit (reverse baseball cap, jacket, a skateboard, basketball, backpack and a Walkman) represent the significance of Omar's assimilation to performing culture. In contrast, the kakek's position in an empty void indicates his disassociation from and disengagement with the performing culture. He is dressed in a traditional outfit consisting of a turban, a black top with stars and crescents, a green jacket and short sarong, which signifies maintenance of an ethnic identity not incorporated into the Anglo-Australian culture. Omar is shown looking away from Kakek, who is glancing at him. This visual disengagement suggests Omar's rejection of cultural traditions represented by his kakek. His words – "We don't do that anymore" (unpaged) – reinforce his rejection of the ethnic tradition. Although it is not clear to whom he refers in saying "Nobody does that anymore" (unpaged), this reassurance indicates

his growing confidence in his Australian subjectivity. He has been convinced that the ‘old magic’ – old cultural patterns have no currency in the new landscape.

After launching the spinning top, Kakek commands Omar to sit. Omar does not reject his kakek’s request, but delays the moment, replying, “I have to wash my hands” (unpaged). His initial reluctance to join the play suggests Omar’s distaste for the activity. However, he obeys when the order is given a second time. Kakek voices his resentment over Omar’s transformation from a congenial Indonesian way to what to him is a ludicrous Western lifestyle. In the following excerpt, the kakek’s use of the word “funny” to describe Omar’s appearance and contrastive terms *sing/shout* and *walk/roll* highlight the kakek’s critical perception on his grandson’s behaviour:

‘Look at you!’ the kakek snarled.
‘Funny clothes, funny hair. You don’t sing,
You shout; you don’t walk, you roll,
What has happened to you?’ (unpaged).

On the double-spread illustration Omar and Kakek have been positioned opposite to each other on a diagonal vector. Omar is looking at the spinning top; there is no eye contact with Kakek, whose gaze is directed at him. Omar has been depicted as an Australianised youngster who has embraced the dominant codes of Western cultural conduct. He confines his ancestral culture to the home country, “the old place” he has left behind. He is in “a new place, with new things to do.” Omar’s words confirm his disinclination to engage in old ‘magic.’ A common excuse he uses (“There is no time”) in the following conversation shows his lukewarm attitude towards Kakek’s performance. Exposure to dominant culture not only has weakened Omar’s sense of his home culture, but has also distanced him from his grandfather. Conflict between original and host cultures becomes a conflict between modernity and tradition:

‘Oh, yes’ The kakek snorted.
‘For you there is TV and pizza and computer games.
And no time for the old magic’
Omar opened his hands. ‘There is no time.’ (unpaged)

Both illustration and verbal text show the kakek’s attempt to restore his grandson’s memory of the cultural past and thereby re-establish his sense of affinity to the home culture. According to Bradford (2007), Kakek plays a dual role that

entails portraying the familial and cultural relativities of the correlation between the two characters. In other words, the kakek in this text acts both as a grandfather and as a cultural elder. Kakek is therefore central to the multifaceted cultural identities in the book. Omar's grandfather, his top, and Omar's reminiscent journey back to his cultural heritage render him in a hybrid time-space wherein his Australian and Indonesian cultures blend together (Lunt, 2008).

The spinning top emanates a visual and narrative energy by creating a line of flow uniting the figures and directing them to magical landscapes. Based on the mechanics of the picture book, this can be construed to mean a journeying back in time. Omar gradually recalls "all the fun, all the magic" (unpaged) he had in the village that has been left behind years ago. His comprehensive and profound reminiscence of his village can be construed to mean an absence of cultural significance in his new Australian residence. He attempts to create something reminiscent of home culture from materials, some of which "would never be seen in the jungle village". The kite is also a hybrid product from his original home. Omar initially perplexes his kakek by concealing the "present." However, even after he assembles the kite, Kakek is not sure what it is:

'What is this?'
Shouted the kakek.
'Something I have remembered
from the old country'

Omar shouted back.

'It's like nothing from the old
Country!' shouted kakek (unpaged).

However, as the pattern rises from the sand and flies through the air, Kakek begins to smile. His realisation of the pattern as a 'dragon' is indicated through the mystical, magical cloudy white shades that portray a dragon behind his kite. This perception makes kakek happy and also makes him realise that Omar "has not forgotten anything." Kakek grabs one of the lines and starts playing with the great kite "across the empty sky" with Omar. In this final opening both Omar and the kakek are placed in one page – symbolising their harmony (Figure 4.9). The placement of the kite across the gutter of the page can also be interpreted as it occupying a 'third space.'

Figure 4.9 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 4.9. *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996), Opening 15

In an essay titled “Empathy and Intersubjectivity,” Louis Agosta (1984, p. 43) explores a twofold relationship between empathy and intersubjectivity: one that moves from intersubjectivity to empathy, in which empathy operates as the “functional foundation” of human intersubjectivity; and the other from empathy to intersubjectivity, where “empathy is considered as a means or method of reestablishing or instituting contact with another individual” (p.43). Omar’s characterisation instantiates the return route, that is, empathy to intersubjectivity. Omar’s inspiration to connect with his Chinese-Indonesian culture by creating the kite for his kakek affirms his ability to envisage his grandfather’s mental state. As Bradford (2007) suggests, creation of the kite symbolises Omar’s sense of Kakek’s experience of loss and sadness. Initially Omar is depicted as an ignorant child in the sense that he lacks knowledge of his own cultural heritage and a kinship bond. However, his empathic receptivity to feeling his kakek’s sorrow, isolation and nostalgia fosters his empathic subjectivity. Empathy functions here as a means of re-establishing intersubjectivity between Omar and his kakek. Omar spends all his savings to buy material for the kite. He prioritises the kite making over all his interests: leisure time with friends, playing computer games and watching TV. His efforts translate into altruistic action to create a kite for kakek.

Bradford (2007) recognises the grandparents in *Grandpa and Ah Gong* and *Old Magic*, as “exotic subjects” – bearing “signifiers of difference not assimilated into an Anglo national identity” (p. 37). Both narratives show how grandparents and third generation family members interact in the process of acculturation. The grandfathers – Ah Gong and Kakek – in these stories face difficulty or show reluctance in adapting to Western social norms and cultural ways of being. They hold a clear sense of their ethnic identities and possess a strong sense of where they belong and, thereby, practise what Berry calls ‘separation’ in the host culture. The child characters, by contrast, move between cultures easily, as in the case of Mandy in *Grandpa and Ah Gong*, or develop a sense of identity in the host culture, as Omar does in *Old Magic*. Their socialisation can result in assimilation or integration depending on the influence of the dominant host culture and degree of exposure to the home culture. The intersubjective relationships they develop with individuals in both cultures immensely influence this dynamic. However the same relationships and allegiances of home and host cultural communities can create tensions in children and thereby lead to a confused sense of identity, as is the case of Fang Fang in the following picture book.

Narratives of cross-generational tension are not limited to stories in which grandparents are depicted as conveyers of cultural heritage, traditions and practices to the new generation. The same cultural influence sometimes comes from second generation migrant parents as well. For example, in *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* it is Fang Fang’s mother who persuades her to speak Chinese and cling to Chinese cultural practices. Unlike Mandy or Omar, Fang Fang does not feel comfortable living in Australian society, not because of her inability to adapt to the new culture, but because of her parents’ adherence to the old traditions. Fang Fang feels embarrassed by her ethnicity, a problem often discussed in children’s stories in relation to ethnic-migrant children living in Western societies. Fang Fang is portrayed as being caught in what Stephens (1990, 183p) would call a “cross-cultural pull,” whereby the child is caught between the host country’s ways and the migrant parents’ desire for their child to cherish their cultural heritage.

Speak Chinese, Fang Fang! is more about language than customs. Language is a source of cross-cultural tension as Fang Fang’s mother insists that her daughter speaks Chinese to relatives and people in the community. Fang Fang was born in a

China that she hardly remembers as her parents migrated to Australia when she was young. Having grown up in Australia, Fang Fang has integrated well into Australian life. As the text confirms, “now she is Australian” (unpaged). As a result, she prefers speaking English to Chinese, which irritates her mother, who always reiterates “speak Chinese Fang Fang.” One day on an outing with her mother, Fang Fang meets one of her school mates, Amy. When her own mother cannot speak in English with Amy’s mother, Fang Fang finds it very embarrassing. Her embarrassment is depicted in the illustration where Fang Fang hangs her head between her shoulders with her arms folded across the chest. Her barely open eyes emanate unease. She feels that her mother’s lack of proficiency in English holds her back in front of her school mate. Fang Fang feels humiliated by her own ethnicity and finally articulates her objection to her mother’s relentless requests to speak Chinese by emphatically saying: “I don’t want to speak Chinese! I am Australian” (unpaged). The agitation makes Fang Fang speak English even to Chinese elders at home. However, things began to change when Fang Fang’s cousin Lily came from China to stay with Fang Fang’s family. To Fang Fang’s delight, Lily spoke perfect English and knew the songs and singers that she loves. Fang Fang’s realisation that speaking Chinese has no drawbacks is marked as she speaks Chinese in her first dialogue with Lily.

The second double spread in the story introduces the viewer into a culturally diverse classroom of children while the accompanying text also affirms: “Fang Fang has lots of friends at school. Some of them were also born in other countries” (unpaged). This reiteration in both text and illustrations serves to ensure readers do not overlook the diversity within Australian classrooms. Starting from this text on the left margin of the double-spread, readers’ eyes are directed across the illustration to the text in the far right margin: “Fang Fang and her classmates speak English to each other” (Rippin, 1996, unpaged). This alludes to Fang Fang’s preference to speak English rather than Chinese as stemming from her peers’ influence. This is reinforced in the illustration, wherein Fang Fang is foregrounded among the multi-ethnic students, her gaze is directed at a Caucasian girl with blond hair on her right, a possible indication of Fang Fang’s growing desire to be ‘Australian’ in the iconic sense. She is looking away from the girl of different ethnicity on her left.

In-betweenness in this text is manifested in a way that suggests the negotiation of identity should take place between home and school, two central institutions

affecting children in the early years of their personality development. According to Uptin, Wright and Harwood (2013), schools are frequently the initial interface for the individuals who are resettling in Australia “and play a significant role in establishing meaningful connections to Australian society and a sense of belonging in Australia” (p. 1). These meaningful connections can largely depend on the interactions children make with peers at school and the acceptance they receive. In order to be accepted by peers and feel that they belong and are not separate from the majority culture, Sonderegger, Barrett and Creed (2004) find that migrant children tend to adopt an “assimilation” style of acculturation. In their attempt to perform well in the dominant culture they may possibly deviate from their ethnic heritage, which can cause conflict with ethnic elders at home. These two socialisation systems – one that operates at school and the other at home – interplay in migrant children’s daily lives and can create cross-cultural tensions. This pressure of cultural in-betweenness is reproduced in *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!*. Conflict arises when her mother, who wants Fang Fang to embrace her Chinese cultural heritage, finds that Fang Fang desires to be as Australian as many of her classmates.

Another aspect of in-betweenness occurs when, on an outing with Fang Fang, her mother orders pork dumplings and green tea for a snack. Mother’s choice of these Chinese victuals overrules Fang Fang’s demand for McDonald’s and Coca Cola. However, as the story progresses, readers learn that Fang Fang plays piano and, as the text further implies, it may be the driving influence of her mother, “who used to be a famous pianist in China” (unpaged) before migrating to Australia. Fang Fang’s mother is proud that her daughter can play piano and she requests Fang Fang play for Chinese elders who visit them. Despite becoming a good piano player, Fang Fang has to sacrifice her weekends practising and cannot play with friends. This restriction forces her to declare that she “hates piano” (unpaged) rather than loving it. However, Fang Fang shows repentance (or resignation) for protesting in such a way when she gloomily responds, “I have to practise piano” after Amy asks her to see a film. Fang Fang’s growing unrest escalates when she feels humiliated by her mother, who fails to speak English to Amy’s mother, as noted above.

Migrant children like Fang Fang who live ‘in-between’ two cultures may experience a sense of fragility towards, uncertainty about or even rejection of their ethnic identities. Such feelings and emotions may impact their sense of belonging or

allegiance to their home cultures and ethnic traditions. Uprooted and transplanted, they can experience identity crisis and cross-cultural tension. However, Fang Fang does not seem to suffer from strong feelings of displacement or identity confusion. Her tenuous bond with Chinese culture and the acceptance from her peers in the host culture has solidified Fang Fang's new identity, her sense of Australianness. She speaks English, listens to English music, and prefers Western food (McDonald's) and beverages (Coca Cola) over Chinese pork dumplings and green tea. It is only when she meets her cousin Lily, who enjoys the same popular cultural interests as her, that Fang Fang comes to realise that there are no drawbacks in speaking Chinese. She comes to accept her inbetweenness and feels proud knowing Chinese and being the best in her class at piano. Reciprocity of the elements – Chinese language and piano (an instrument originally from the West) put together in the story allow readers to derive other meanings from the narrative. For instance, individually they have different cultural affiliations. However, when put together, they become part of one's identity and heritage regardless of their origin.

Speak Chinese, Fang Fang! illustrates migrant children's diffidence in exposing their ethnicity, language and distinct cultural habits to their mainstream peers. The text invites readers to see the unique challenge young people from cultural minority groups face as they seek to resolve understandings about their hybrid identity and how various problems such as loyalty issues and intergenerational conflicts can arise from this in-betweenness.

The discussion in this section has focussed on cross-generational relationships between so-called Third Culture Kids and their parents or grandparents. While Mandy (*Grandpa and Ah Gong*) negotiates the cultural interplay with ease, it is the uneasy cross-cultural relationship between her adoring grandfathers that is the source of tension. For Omar (*Old Magic*), his subjectivity is greatly influenced by the host culture and becomes a barrier in communicating with his kakek. However, the text constructs Omar as a character who can draw on his in-betweenness as way to bridge the cultural and generational divides. Fang Fang, whose ambiguous sense of self causes her to come into conflict with her mother, and who feels embarrassment because of her mother's lack of English, is metonymic of the cultural unease that can be experienced more widely by Third Culture Kids who are caught in the cultural pull between home and the wider society. *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* encourages

readers to imagine the psychological burden experienced by Fang Fang and by extension all migrant children in the extra-textual world who may be similarly caught up in a cross-cultural pull. In representing the complexities of cross-cultural and cross-generational relationships and communication within families, the texts also highlight how intersubjective relations across generations and within generations are central to the characters' development of their own hybrid identities.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, children's picture books about migration have been examined through the multifocal lens of cognitive narratology, semiotics and multiculturalism for their treatment of migrants as empathic subjects. While multiculturalism is at the centre of the attention, these narratives thematise complex issues of intercultural encounters between host and migrant, and reveal an ambivalent sense of identity for migrants as trans-cultural subjects caught up in cultural in-betweenness. Whereas some of these texts work to affirm schemata of positive world models such as diversity and tolerance, others function as counter-narratives that interrogate or disrupt formulated schemata based on negative stereotypes to create new scripts.

Narrative configuration of spatial politics, as an aspect of post-multicultural discourses of anti-multiculturalism, comprises ambivalent public opinions regarding migrants, ethnic diversity, national identity and spatial ownership. The texts subtly engage with these politics by showing the tension of spatial ownership that empowers hosts over migrants who seek acceptance and a sense of belonging. Two narratives, *Marty and Mei-Ling* and *The Other Bears*, embody this schema of spatial ownership commonly shared and sometimes openly articulated in such events as the Cronulla Riots. However, this schema of spatial dominance does not operate in the same way in every context. In two narratives, *Cat and Fish* and *My Two Blankets*, the spatial domination schema is modified to bring political perspectives of difference and conformity into the storylines in ways that encourage readers to see through stereotypical assumptions and respect difference. Relocation to a new country may involve feelings of dislocation and a disordered sense of identity for both adults and children. Elderly people who migrate with their extended families can find the acculturation tasks more challenging compared to the children or second generation adults. In *Grandpa and Ah Gong* and *Old Magic*, the representation of grandparent characters constructed as cultural elders positions readers to see how

difficult it can be for migrant elders with solidified ethnic traditions to accept a host country's mores and values. Children who experience unintentional or abrupt relocation may conform or assimilate to community and/or new peers they were introduced. Examples are found in *Marty and Mei-Ling*, *My Two Blankets* and *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!*. While bringing these concerns to the fore, each text more or less formulates empathy through the conscious manipulation or passive utilisation of empathic narrative techniques, along with other narrative devices such as first-person focalisation and evocative illustrations.

Chapter 5 continues to examine intergenerational relationships and narrative empathy, which remain at the core of the discussion. The first part of the next chapter analyses picture books that show how reconstruction of memories through mementos can transcend generational differences, strengthen family ties and reinforce cultural bonds in migrant families. Moving the focus of attention from memory to trauma, the discussion then examines how selected picture books manifest imagined refugee experiences and thereby engender narrative empathy.

Chapter 5: Bringing the Past into the Present: Cultural Memory, Trauma and Empathic Unsettlement

The previous chapter showed the varied mapping of scripts in picture books that challenge schemas about migrant characters with respect to spatial barriers and cross-generational relationships, highlighting the texts' potential to generate empathic readerly responses. This chapter widens the focus to include the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers, along with migrants, to examine narrative strategies deployed in picture books to induce empathy or empathic unsettlement towards the cultural other. The narrative process of deconstruction and reconstruction of mental frameworks or schemas at the service of empathy is further examined in the following discussion of eight picture books that thematise subjects' memories about the past. The picture book narratives draw on the schemas of migration, childhood, and family and embed familiar scripts of escape, war, dislocation, and resettlement. In the temporal coverage of the stories, the past is depicted in two different ways. In some narratives, the protagonists' personal or collective memories are manifested as nostalgic reminiscences of the past; others reflect traumatic effects of a disastrous and torturous past on the individual psyche. These two narrative perspectives of remembering the past through memory (nostalgia) and trauma are discussed in two separate sections in this chapter.

The discussion extends the central narrative device of empathy by addressing the way that empathic unsettlement can provide an additional means for understanding the subjective/objective engagement of readers with the plight of characters. Empathic unsettlement is a middle ground between extreme identification and excessive objectivity. Within the concept of empathic unsettlement, readers are regarded as bystanders who witness the narratives of trauma with empathy but do not become subjectively overwhelmed with, nor do they objectively deny, the experience of the victim. This can be achieved through maintaining what LaCapra (2001) calls a "very delicate" but "at times tense, relationship between empathy and critical

distance” (p.147). The analysis scrutinises the selected picture books for their potential to induce empathy in readers while encouraging them to maintain self-awareness and differentiate between real and story worlds.

Personal, collective and cultural memories play an integral part in the process of constructing migrants’ transcultural identities (see Creet & Kitzmann, 2011; Vickroy, 2002). The first section of this chapter continues the discussion of intergenerational dialogue that the previous chapter introduced, but now turns to analysing three picture books with a particular focus on memory across cultures, namely: *Grandpa’s Mask* by Jing Jing Guo and Di Wu (2001); *The Wishing Cupboard* by Libby Hathorn and Elizabeth Grant (2002); and *The Most Beautiful Lantern* by Sally Heinrich (2007). These texts are concerned with how cultural memory can be forgotten, recalled, and reshaped for the benefit of children, who are assumed (in the textual representation) to possess little or no memory of familial culture of origin. How memory shapes cultural representation and influences historical understanding across generations are examined in the following discussion to see how narrative empathy is generated through these stories of migration.

No memory, personal or collective, is necessarily about positive events. While some memories are endearing, others may be about sorrow or pain and connected with traumatic and harrowing events experienced in the past (Berntsen & Rubin, 2002). Drawing from LaCapra’s (2001) critical concepts of ‘middle voice’ and ‘empathic unsettlement’ (discussed in Chapter 1), the second part of this chapter discusses narrative representation of trauma in refugee-themed picture books. Middle voice is a (linguistic) mode of representing trauma in a way that gives credibility to the victim’s voice while maintaining the crucial difference between the victim and the reader as proxy witness. Middle voice further entails empathic unsettlement, which enables a witness to perceive the emotional suffering of another’s traumatic past without “conflating empathy with identification” and without adopting a position of “surrogate victimage” (LaCapra, 2001, p. 40). The second section of this chapter draws examples from seven picture books: *Ziba Came on a Boat* by Liz Lofthouse and Robert Ingpen (2007); *Hyrax and B.* by Brian Caswell and Matt Ottley (2003); *Rainbow Bird* by Czenya Cavouras (2007); *Home and Away* by John Marsden and Matt Ottley (2008); *Ships in the Field* by Susanne Gervay and Anna Pignataro (2012); *The Little Refugee* by Anh Do, Suzanne Do & Bruce Whatley

(2011); and *A Safe Place to Live* by Bic Walker (2011). It will discuss traumatic memories attached to the migrant characters' experiences as refugees or asylum seekers.

MEMORY AND STORYTELLING

This section investigates how the role of memory can provoke a subject's recall of the past and imagination, which in turn can promote empathic readerly engagement. In order to discuss the narrative reconstruction of memories three picture books will be analysed: *Grandpa's Mask* (2001), *The Wishing Cupboard* (2002) and *The Most Beautiful Lantern* (2007). While (external) effects of socio-political and cultural situations in home and host countries on migrants and their internal sufferings are depicted, the selected picture books for the discussion in this section manifest migrants' memories and feeling of nostalgia as a means of drawing reader empathy.

Mass migration is one of the key triggers to memory and in Lowenthal's (1996) words, it may also 'sharpen nostalgia' (p. 9). For Lowenthal, reminiscence of the past and the invocation of heritage are common amongst migrants as a means that compensates for their sometimes reluctant displacement and sense of loss. While it is true that memories manifest nostalgia, they also validate and solidify migrants' identities that may become shattered or changed as a result of spatial and temporal displacement or movement. According to Inwood and Alderman (2013), our present imaginations about selves are the result of how we remember ourselves in the past. Although memory is apparently about the past, "it is shaped to serve ideological interests in the present and to carry certain cultural beliefs into the future" (Inwood & Alderman, 2013, p. 187). Memory in this regard has a wider scope than personal experiences in the past. Pamela Sugiman (2004) suggests that "[m]emory may be understood as a cultural and social phenomenon" (p. 72) that bridges the temporal gap between past and present and links individuals with the collective through complex dynamics. As such, she calls for problematising and rethinking the nature of memories and their politics, arguing for the need to analyse memories not as a "passive repository of facts" but as an "active process by which meanings are created" (Sugiman, 2004, p. 299).

Personal, Collective and Cultural Memory

Several of the picture books discussed in this chapter deal with migrants' personal or collective memories as an active process that manifests meanings. The picture books discussed in Chapter 4 generally depicted family histories or some aspects of the cultural or geographical past. For instance, *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996) depicts a journey across time and between spaces and cultures. It also renders the dynamics between forgetting and remembrance of the past, personal history and cultural memory. Kakek's dismay about Omar's disregard of his family's past compels him to recall memories of life in a small village in Indonesia. These prompt Omar to remember endearing moments attached to geographical and cultural spaces: night markets, fishing with Kakek, shadow puppetry and folk tales. Other texts discussed in this chapter further demonstrate the value of memory and storytelling for understanding the significance of the past and its effect on the present. However, the paradoxes of remembering and forgetting within the reciprocity of modernity and tradition negotiated in the narratives discussed in the previous chapter do not continue in these picture books. Instead, the picture books discussed in this section embody the nostalgia and personal memories of cultural elders as a link that connects cultural past and posterity. At the beginning of *Grandpa's Mask* (Guo & Wu, 2001) a young Chinese-Australian girl recalls her memories of home in China where she lived with her family before moving to Australia. In *The Wishing Cupboard* (Hathorn & Stanley, 2002) a Vietnamese grandmother recalls her memories through mementos kept safely in what is called a 'wishing cupboard.' In *The Most Beautiful Lantern* (Heinrich, 2007), Mei-Ling finds an old lantern from her grandparents' wedding that she considers to be the most beautiful lantern ever.

Shared cultural memories are at the centre of texts selected for the analysis in this chapter. As social constructions of the past, cultural memories allow individuals and groups to orient themselves in time and space (Meusburger, Heffernan, & Wunder, 2011), and as such, cultural memory is vital in the construction and maintenance of cultural identity. By definition, cultural memory denotes the liaison between "memory and the individual" (Douglas, 2010, p. 7) who has one or more cultural affiliations. As Douglas explains, cultural memory is "the collective ways in which the past is remembered, constructed and made intelligible within culture" (p. 20). Cultural memory is often associated with mnemonic triggers that initiate

meanings based on the knowledge of the past. Such knowledge brings back the time of legendary origins, solidifies shared experiences of the past and can keep these stories going for centuries. Rituals, lore, myths and ceremonies are inevitable aspects of cultural memory, shared and transmitted to generations through “conscious manipulations” that result in “unconscious absorption” (Kansteiner, 2002, p. 180). Cultural memory is, nevertheless, subject to change according to shifting interpretations of the past, counter memories of individuals or cultural groups, and histories that challenge existing cultural memory (Douglas, 2010).

Recall of cultural memories is often triggered by emotional or environmental cues attached to life scripts or schema. In psychology, life scripts are defined as “unconscious systems of psychological organisations and self-regulation primarily formed from implicit memories” (Erskine, 2010, p. 1). Berntsen and Rubin (2004) interpret life scripts more broadly, seeing them as a part of the socially shared knowledge within a particular culture. For them, life scripts are “culturally important transitional events that are expected to occur in a specific order and at highly circumscribed periods during the individual’s life” that exist as “shared cognitive structures” (p.440). Wilson (2009), however, finds the concept of life script useful as an alternative method for portraying the significance we credit to the incidents that transpired in our life. Contingent upon our specific script, we can decipher these events in various and distinctive ways. Berntsen and Rubin (2004) also acknowledge how life scripts favour “positive events over negative, and events from youth over events from other ages” (p.440). Memory in this case becomes an idealised version or representation of the past providing the illusion of truth. From a psychoanalytic perspective, Hirsch (1992) shows how such a sanitised impression of the ‘idealised’ past leads to nostalgia: “a combination of different memories, integrated together, and in the process all the negative emotions are filtered out” (p. 390). Nostalgia is the bittersweet yearning for the past. When people migrate to locations which diverge from the landscapes and culture of their upbringing, they long for the people, places and good times they remember: “the memory and significance of which ... contributes to the sense of the self in the present moment” (Rubenstein, 2001, p. 221).

Stimulating Memory and Nostalgia: The Role of Cultural Artefacts and Mementos

Memory and nostalgia manifest in picture book narratives of migration in various forms to manipulate readers' empathy towards the migrant subjects. One device is to use cultural artefacts that are reminiscent of home and conveyers of the familial bond. For some, "memories of home are closely associated with these treasured artefacts which they have brought with them" (Dolan, 2012, unpagged). These souvenirs become mementos of life in the homeland and often work as tokens of memory in stories. Three immigration-themed picture books, *The Wishing Cupboard* (Hathorn & Stanley, 2002), *The Most Beautiful Lantern* (Heinrich, 2007) and *Grandpa's Mask* (Guo & Wu, 2001), introduce various artefacts as mementos. Holding onto these mementos in these stories symbolises the migrant characters' hold on to their homeland and cultural past. More importantly, they symbolise immigrants' profound relationship with their family and the loving memories of those who have been left behind.

In *The Wishing Cupboard*, Tran is a young boy whose mother has gone "far away over the sea to Vietnam" (Heinrich, 2007, unpagged) to bring his cousin over to Australia to live with them. Tran longs for his mother and anxiously anticipates her return. To mollify his anxiety, his grandma decides to show him something very special, the 'wishing cupboard.' It is full of treasures that reflect her hopes, dreams and memories. Together the two experience numerous past occasions and dreams attached to these treasures as Tran is permitted to investigate the cabinet's contents. Through the grandma's recounting, Tran realises how much she misses her only sister, Kim. When Tran is invited to put a wishing token in the special place in the cupboard that has been reserved for him, he makes two wishes instead of one. He wakes to realise that both his wishes have been realised: his mother returns with cousin Lan, and as an unexpected surprise, his grandmother's sister Kim also accompanies them.

The Wishing Cupboard highlights the importance of family and the valuing of family and heritage even after migration to another country. The book explores migrants' sadness due to separation in terms of time and space and shows their yearning to reunite with their loved ones. The introduction of Vietnam as a place "far away over the sea" (unpagged) suggests the geographical distance of separateness.

Clinging to mementos in the wishing cupboard not only suggests the surrogate migrant characters' bond with the past time and homelands but also indicates their strong affinity with family and familial memories of people they have left behind. *The Wishing Cupboard* in this regard is a symbolic archive of a family's past: "My father made this cupboard when I was just a child in Vietnam" (unpaged), Tran's grandmother shares her memories of the past in the old country (see Figure 5.1 below). However, the cupboard itself is only a receptacle for the tokens; Grandmother is the carrier of those memories who links those tokens with the family history. Tran too becomes part of the process when he is invited to place various objects in the cupboard.

Figure 5.1 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.1. *The Wishing Cupboard* (Heinrich, 2007), Opening 7

Depending on the reason for migration, migrants may have left some or most of their possessions behind. Leaving behind family and friends, however, can be a painful experience, especially for adults whose relationships are deep and mature. When Tran is inquisitive about the glass eye in one of the drawers of the wishing cupboard, it awakes his grandma's memories of her only sister Kim, who gave this eye as a memento to her when she was leaving Vietnam. By putting this keepsake in the wishing cupboard, grandma wished for a reunion with her sister one day:

‘I wish that one day I would see my sister Kim again.’

‘And did you?’

His grandmother sighed. ‘Not every wish comes true, I’m afraid. She’s away over the sea and I am here.’ (unpaged)

Her words convey the pain of separation from her only sister. In her disclosure of the story behind a feather, another token stored in a “fine, thin drawer”, both Tran and the reader further witness the suffering of expatriation. The feather is purportedly from a legendary bird that grandma’s brother rode in his adventure to find a magic herb. After listening to the story Tran asks:

‘Did you wish to ride the bird too?’ Tran asked her.

‘Oh yes, I did then. But now I know that flying away could mean leaving people I love.’ (unpaged)

Her words hint at the emotional longing that the reality of distance and separation engender. They also suggest that only with maturity and hindsight – “I did then. But now I know” – that one comes to know of this emotional hardship.

An incident of narrative empathy occurs when Tran finally reaches a small compartment of the wishing cupboard kept aside for him by his grandma. When he is left to decide what to put in that drawer, Tran thinks initially of something he “wanted very, very badly” (unpaged). There is nothing other than his mother, whom Tran misses and longs to see again. However, Tran remembers his grandmother’s enduring wish for her sister Kim to come and live with them. Empathising with his grandma’s sorrow and her longstanding desire to see her sister, Tran decides to make “not one wish, but two” (unpaged). While there is no textual evidence of the wishes he makes, the story closure reveals that he has wished for his grandma’s sister Kim to come. Tran’s excitement to see his great-aunt’s presence and exclamation further consolidates this inference:

There stood his mother smiling right at him. And there beside her stood a tired smiling child. Must be his cousin, Lan for sure. But who was this tiny, rosy-cheeked woman with a brown eye and a green one?

‘Grandma! Tan called out with a smile in his voice. ‘You’d better wake up! Grandma, oh Grandma! The wishing cupboard’s worked!’ (unpaged)

His own longing for his mother has helped him to understand his grandmother’s feelings of yearning for her sister. Tran’s ability to share his

grandmother's perspective and his act of compassion transcend the age difference. It also encourages readers to take up an empathic stance by imagining the sadness of families who have been separated for many years from their loved ones. All the keepsakes and the grandmother's wishes are about the family, its prosperity and its wellbeing. The narrative emphasises the strength of familial bonds and offers young readers an optimistic ending with the reunion of the loved ones. While the ending serves the story well, its reliance on wish fulfilment, a familiar motif of folk tales, is a celebratory conclusion reminiscent of a welcoming multicultural society and where migration from one country to another is unproblematic.

Mementos are objects that are kept by people across cultures in commemoration of persons, places or various life events. This schema of keepsakes is modified in *The Wishing Cupboard* in a way that offers a perspective on nostalgia through its focus on one family and its intergenerational emotions. The mementos act as emotional cues for various life scripts of familial history. The narrative elaborates how migrants can oscillate between emotional extremes: sense of hope and anticipation of a reunion/grief and sense of loss of the other. Memories that are passed on to generations are called 'shared cognitive structures' (Berntsen & Rubin, 2004, p. 432). The wishing cupboard brought over from Vietnam to Australia stands as a precious family treasure as well as a cultural symbol of values that transcend geography.

While *The Wishing Cupboard* contains various objects that prompt reminiscences of family and cultural memories, *Grandpa's Mask* and *The Most Beautiful Lantern* show how even a single object (an opera mask and a lantern respectively) can trigger personal memories and inspire cultural attachment. Unlike the grandmother who shares the content of the wishing cupboard with her grandson, a migrant girl in *Grandpa's Mask* recalls memories of her own childhood experience back in a village in China. In this story, empathy is similarly shown to be a means to bridge age difference.

The paratext (a note on the end paper) states that the narrative of *Grandpa's Mask* is based on the author Jing Jing Guo's real-life story. She arrived in Australia in 1991 as a child migrant and recounts this story five years later as a child writer. The surrogate character Jing Jing is portrayed in the story as a third generation migrant child or a 'third culture kid': an individual who moved across cultures before

her individual and social identity has formed. As noted in the previous chapter, a problem for third-culture children is that they often forget cultural elements of their original culture due to lack of exposure, and thereby they lack a clear sense of belonging to the home culture. This forgetting and the disappointment it entails for an older generation is evident in the case of Omar in *The Old Magic* (discussed in Chapter 4). Omar has a developed sense of belonging in the host culture over his originary Indonesian culture. In *Grandpa's Mask*, however, Jing Jing still maintains a clear sense of home culture even after migrating to Australia, though she appears in Western style clothing in the illustrations.

As the first-person narrator, Jing Jing's reminiscences of the warm memories of her childhood in a village in China are woven into the story. Predominant among these memories is her fondness for watching Peking opera on television with her grandfather. In Australia, where she and her family now live, they maintain that interest by watching videos of those operas. One day, when her grandpa dozes off in an armchair, Jing Jing exercises her opera face drawing skills on her grandpa's face. When Grandpa wakes up, he sets off to the market to collect some groceries, unaware of the painted mask on his face. After his return to China, Grandpa sends Jing Jing an opera mask, "one like she painted on his face," as a birthday present.

The story unfolds as an older Jing Jing, sitting in a park in a seemingly Australian landscape, thinks of the past. The illustration uses common symbols – the gum tree, Californian bungalow style house and Qantas plane in the air, to establish the Australianness of the landscape. Jing Jing is depicted as an adolescent evoking her earlier childhood memories of a village in China, where she lived with her family including Grandpa, as well as her early days in Australia as a new migrant. Her reminiscence of the past is visually and verbally delineated through a spatio-temporal journey back in time. Metaphorical representation of memory as being like a flowing river implies that it cannot be stemmed. The words, "the sparkling ripples in the river of memory" (unpaged), are drawn as whirling clouds over her head, and represent her thoughts as an interior monologue. These thoughts lodge in a village in China, which is an important place of her childhood memories of home and remembering.

Figure 5.2 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.2. *Grandpa's Mask* (Guo and Wu, 2001), Opening 4

Most prominent among Jing Jing's memories of home is watching Peking Opera, "the most popular opera" (unpaged) on the television, with her grandfather. The excitement of watching Peking opera is heightened by magnification of opera characters (insignificant on the TV screen, but large and life-like in the represented thought bubbles) to provide a close-up view for the reader (Figure 5.2). Colourful opera stills are also shown in Jing Jing's imagination, inspired by grandfather's explanation of the opera tradition. This strategy encourages the reader to share the excitement with represented participants – grandpa and Jing Jing. Vivid colours of the opera faces and dresses fill the domestic environment while warm red and yellow colours of opera masks are well incorporated into the colours of Chinese domesticity furnished with wooden and bamboo appliances (see Figure 5.2). Posed with high modality, along with narration, the opera faces give recognition to this authentic cultural artifice. However, when the protagonist moves to Australia where "There was no Peking opera on television" (unpaged), she satisfies her passion by watching opera on the videotapes that her grandfather brought with him from China.

Chinese cultural artefacts – the Peking opera masks – play a vital role in this story. Their presence in China is actual, whereas the imported videotapes are virtual. The illustrations seem to convey this contrast between the 'authentic' object and its

simulacrum. In the double page spread showing the girl watching opera on television with her grandfather in their Australian home (see Figure 5.3), there is no intensity integrated into the illustration compared to the ones that were depicted in the Chinese household. Drawn in pale white and grey tones, the family's Australian house with closed door and windows gives a sense of isolation or separateness from the neighbourhood. The opera characters have also been reduced to insignificant miniature figures devoid of colour on the television screen. Furthermore, the symbolic association of the colour red that makes a direct link between China (nation) and the Chinese home is absent in the Australian scene. The text offers a perspective of a failure of Chinese artistry to sustain its splendour in an Australian setting and thereby poses questions with regard to the complex dynamics of cultural diversity and the ideology of liberal multiculturalism.

Figure 5.3 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.3. *Grandpa's Mask* (Guo and Wu, 2001), Opening 5

Peking opera in the story is symbolic in terms of Chinese migrants' cultural 'possessions' as transcultural subjects. However, the way it is being represented in the above illustration as exotic artistry suggests its failure to embellish the host culture. Given that, the story puts the rhetoric of cultural inclusion to question within the context of Australian multiculturalism. Contrastively, the distant view of the television screen showing opera characters as insignificant changes to a medium shot view of the living room in the next illustration which brings a closer view of the

television showing a car race. The vivid, bright red cars are drawn with motion lines to indicate speed. This detailed view of the car race may indicate the domination of Western popular cultural interests over traditional Chinese cultural theatre in Australia.

In the text, cultural artefacts, drama, dance and lore are duplicated as if they cannot maintain their authenticity in the host country. Even the concept of ‘home’ is duplicated through memories, and through the construction of the two homes. A sharp contrast between these two ‘homes’ – Chinese and Australian – is shown through modality: the vivid, fine details of fixtures and furniture in Chinese domesticity are absent in the more blandly represented Australian home. This contrast is extended to the relationship between the two main characters, Grandpa and the grandchild. At their Chinese home, when Grandpa tells the stories behind the Peking opera, he affectionately holds the girl, who lays her head on his lap, looking up at him adoringly. Another scene shows Grandpa playing the Chinese violin while the girl draws opera faces. These endearing moments emanate warmth, love and affection. However, Grandpa “started to doze off in his chair” (unpaged) when he was left to look after the girl at the Australian home. The attachment between the two seems to have been weakened by the monotonous, lifeless languor of domesticity for this family in the Australian context. The little girl, who sits on the floor with her hands clasped around her legs, looks with disappointment at her sleeping grandpa. Her inaction and posture present her as a character who is bored and desires more stimulation and excitement.

Through Jing Jing’s growing interest in opera before moving to Australia and her skill in drawing the opera face, the text attempts to convey the internalisation of those cultural traditions and values. In order to maintain the sense of cultural attachment and values while living in a host country, this story shows that renewal and reaffirmation of the traditions and values are important for maintaining migrant children’s sense of belonging to the home culture. However, Grandpa’s strategy of playing the videotapes to sustain Jing Jing’s cultural interest does not seem productive as “the excitement gradually wore off” (unpaged) as the same tapes are played over and over again. As the narrative implies, limited exposure to home culture will eventually result in migrant children’s assimilation into the dominant culture. Similar to the kite that Omar creates for his grandfather in *Old Magic*, Jing

Jing's opera mask drawn on Grandpa's face serves as a symbolic reminder of her cultural memory. The book's paratext (back cover) not only asserts the cultural significance of the mask, but also implies its sustainability: "Her memories of the colourful costumes and exquisitely painted faces remain vivid after the family moves to Australia" (unpaged). By framing the story in words such as 'exquisitely' and 'vivid' *Grandpa's Mask* positions readers to see one cultural context (Chinese) as more authentic, colourful, and exciting than the other mundane, boring Australian context. This juxtaposition results in a reductive representation of the Chinese migrant who appears to lack any agency or status in their new country, reproducing the cliché of the migrant-as-victim to an Australian way of life that lacks high culture and embraces a (low) sports culture.

Migrant children who have limited originary cultural memory and whose ethnic identities are subject to challenge by the influence of the dominant host cultural norms may become involved in cross-generational conflicts. This situation is played out in picture books such as *Old Magic* and *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* (Chapter 4) which capture this conflict from different generational perspectives. However, the schema of a migrant child growing up in a contemporary multicultural society which often presents a script of disharmony and conflict is not followed in *Grandpa's Mask*, which offers readers a more conciliatory and harmonious script of a cross-generational relationship that is not considerably challenged because of relocation. However, the exoticism shown with respect to the Peking opera opens up for interrogation by the reader how cultural inclusion is translated both inside and outside Australian life. This exoticism positions the reader to take a more critical view on contemporary Australian multicultural society whereby different cultural traditions are meant to co-exist. Instead of manipulating cultural forgetfulness as the point of conflict the story manifests the surrogate child character Jing Jing's attentiveness to cultural traditions. This solicitude to cultural tradition is depicted in the next picture book, *The Most Beautiful Lantern*, as a means to foster confidence in integrating different cultural traditions into multicultural societies.

The Most Beautiful Lantern is a story of a young girl, Mei-Ling, who is preparing to take part in a 'Grand Lantern Parade' with her friends for the celebration of the mid-autumn festival in China. She is determined to have the most beautiful lantern. After checking a number of fancy lanterns of various shapes, sizes, colours

and designs, Mei-Ling is not certain that any of them is the “most beautiful lantern of all” (unpaged). She wakes up feeling miserable on the day of the parade but to her surprise, her grandfather retrieves a lantern from an ‘old dusty’ box of ‘memories’: the lantern he gave to his wife on their wedding day and the one she has always kept safely. When grandfather asserts that it was the most beautiful lantern for him, Mei-Ling realises “what the lantern had meant to her grandparents” and decides to carry it in the parade.

Grandfather’s role as a cultural elder and conduit through which cultural knowledge is transmitted is a recurrent element in the story. Mei-Ling’s grandfather offers many legendary accounts attached to cultural symbols as a way of conveying their significance to Mei-Ling and implied child readers alike. Cherie Allan (2013) suggests that such stories passed on through the generations or mythologised as historical truths turn into the methods for children to comprehend and link family and cultural histories in the process of developing their hyphenated identities (pp. 130-131). Although these picture book stories seemingly illustrate memories associated with personal history, a family dynasty or a particular ethnic tradition within their limited narrative spaces, they nevertheless provide insights into and open up space to discuss shared cultural memories.

The Mid-Autumn Festival, which is also known as the Moon Lantern Festival, is a 3000-year-old, traditional East-Asian celebration designed to rejoice in the mid-autumn harvesting, prosperity and togetherness. This is celebrated around September on a date that parallels the autumnal equinox of the solar calendar. The traditional food of this festival is the moon cake. Ethnic groups celebrate these traditions of homeland, albeit in altered forms, as a means of passing their cultural traditions on to new generations.¹⁹ *The Most Beautiful Lantern* reflects the vibrant colours and excitement of the Moon Lantern Festival celebrated by Chinese communities across Asia and Australia. The story unfolds in an Australian setting, and its inclusion of Chinese arts and crafts, foods and costumes, lore and legends blends Chinese history, culture, tradition and the value of family, and as such provides evidence of a liberal multicultural Australian society.

¹⁹ Significant events that celebrate Mid-Autumn festival (also known as Moon Lantern Festival) in Australia are Moon Lantern Festival in Brisbane and Sydney, the OzAsia Festival in Adelaide, and North Richmond Moon Lantern Festival in Melbourne during the months of September or October each year.

Among other things, the Moon Lantern Festival is mainly about family reunion. Even the items bought at the marketplace to celebrate the festival have particular value traditionally associated with them, for example: “they bought gourds for long-lasting family ties and pomegranates filled with seeds for many children” (unpaged). However, it can also be the time when people remember their loved ones who have departed or been left behind, and experience the emotions attached to these memories. For instance, Mei-Ling’s grandfather misses his late wife whom he married “on the day of Mid-Autumn Festival seventy years ago” (unpaged). He recalls those “happy memories” attached to this significant life event through various mementos safely kept in an “old dusty box.” Among these happy memories, there was one thing of great significance: the lantern he gave his bride on their wedding day. It has been a precious keepsake that symbolises their affection. In the illustration, in which the grandfather holds the lantern high, readers are left to observe the other contents of the box: a comb, scarf, hand mirror and a hairpin – some of his wife’s possessions (Figure 5.4 below). Like *The Wishing Cupboard*, the grandfather’s box of memories symbolises the cultural and familial bonds many migrants take with them across time and place.

Figure 5.4 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.4. *The Most Beautiful Lantern* (Heinrich, 2007), Opening 14

In the discussion between Grandfather and Mei-Ling, readers are informed of Grandfather's grief and loss:

'You know Mei-Ling' said Grandfather, looking a little sad,
'to me, this is without doubt the most beautiful lantern of all.'

Mei-Ling thought about what the lantern had meant to her grandfather and it seemed to her that he was right. It was far more beautiful than all the fancy lanterns she had seen during the past week. (unpaged)

Mei-Ling's emotional maturity to feel his sorrow reveals her empathic subjectivity. Readers are also positioned through the language ("looking a little sad") and the focalisation of Mei-Ling's thoughts to share his grief and in turn respond empathically. The lantern becomes a precious artefact for Mei-Ling. In the illustration where she sees the lantern there is a clear excitement on her face and her visual gestures convey her exhilaration caused by the sight of the lantern. Although the text says the lantern is "nothing out of ordinary," it is nevertheless a precious memento of her grandfather's life. Mei-Ling's realisation of the lantern as being the most beautiful does not rely on the fact of beauty but on the value and meaning it holds as a family treasure. She compares it with other "fancy" lanterns she has seen on her quest to find the best of the best. The word 'fancy' here segregates ordinary lanterns from this special one, which is in fact quite plain, but contradicts the cultural values imposed upon them elsewhere in the story. For instance, different lanterns were given importance by linking their motifs and designs (Jade Rabbit or Crimson Bird) to traditional folktales. Mei-Ling's willing acceptance of the lantern symbolises her admiration of and adherence to home culture and her desire to incorporate a family memento into her life.

Figure 5.5 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.5. *The Most Beautiful Lantern* (Heinrich, 2007), Opening 16

In the final opening of the book, Mei-Ling is depicted holding the lantern in the parade of children of different ethnicities (Figure 5.5). Various lanterns with some cultural imprint attached to them, exotic dresses, hair styles, and different complexions are embedded into the illustration giving significance to their cultural identities. The starry sky and the glamour of lanterns alongside colourful dresses symbolise the vibrancy of a harmonious multiculturalism. The intensity of the moment is rendered through the accompanying text comprising short, sensory-filled sentences: “Drums banged and cymbals crashed. Some people were letting off fire crackers. All around was noise and laughter” (unpaged). Together with the illustrations, this text communicates a visual and aural sensation. Although the Mid-Autumn festival is a celebration unique to China and some East and South-East Asian nations, the story uses it as a vehicle for multicultural celebration, thereby attributing a positive perspective on cultural heritage and ethnic traditions. The lantern’s symbolic value lies in its cultural and familial significance and how this enhances Mei-Ling’s confidence in engaging with, and active participation in, the activity.

Drawing from three picture books – *Grandpa’s Mask*, *The Wishing Cupboard* and *The Most Beautiful Lantern* – this section explored the dichotomy of individual

and cultural memory. Narrative synthesis of cultural memory is embodied in the form of performance, arts, crafts, celebrations, folktales, lore and legends, which are part of a multicultural celebratory story. *Grandpa's Mask* represents Peking opera as a symbolic part of Jing Jing's Chinese cultural heritage, whereas traditional arts and crafts epitomise Tran's familial history and cultural inheritance in *The Wishing Cupboard*. *The Most Beautiful Lantern* integrates celebrations, folktales, lore and legends into the storyline as emblematic devices of Chinese traditions. However, grandparents act as conduits through which these traditions are conveyed. What is manifested in these stories are not only the represented grandparents' cognitive dispositions related to their own past and their ability to retrieve those memories as nostalgic reminiscence, but also the effect those memories can create in terms of reconstructing and regenerating moral and cultural ideals of the past in their descendants' minds and actions. In doing that, these stories outline the cultural-historical perspective in a way that encourages readers to conceive of individual memory as an inextricable part of an overarching cultural discourse, the discourse of cultural memory (Brockmeier, 2002, p. 15). Notably, the stories model how the young characters enact empathy by coming to realise the importance of cultural traditions and values, and how they discover the pleasure that comes with this cultural transmission.

The discussion so far has considered picture books about (voluntary) migrants' experiences. Many of these narratives are concerned with the intricacy of migrants' acculturation or their continuous struggle in coming to terms with a new culture different to the culture of origin (or home culture). While various aspects of intercultural transition have been taken into account, some of these aspects are even concerned with objective conditions of the receiving end, for instance, political provisions and social exclusion. To consider how such socio-political conditions cause further sufferings to forced migrants, the next section will examine picture books that thematise refugee and asylum seeker issues to elevate empathy towards the other.

REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS: POLITICS, TRAUMA AND EMPATHIC UNSETTLEMENT

In her book *Empathy in the Global World* (2010, Ch. 4), Carolyn Calloway-Thomas considers the contemporary situation regarding immigration as "empathy's flickering

flames” (p. 83). By “flickering flames” Calloway-Thomas suggests that empathy is overridden by antipathy as increasing migration poses perceived threats to national identity and the sense of sameness. She also observes that the presence of the foreign other is becoming a dwindling force of empathy as Westerners perceive migration as “sounding the death-knell for Western civilizations” (p. 165). In a similar line of argument, Debra Dudek (2011a) considers how compassion diminishes from Australian borders with the increasingly negative public reaction to refugees and asylum seekers. According to some social researchers, these negative public attitudes are mostly influenced by the political rhetoric and media construction of refugees and asylum seekers as illegal or unauthorised entrants (Hartley & Pedersen, 2015; McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2012). Australian picture book narratives seem to challenge these conceptions by depicting both fictional accounts and personal experiences in their narratives. This section considers metanarratives of refugees and asylum seekers as represented in seven Australian picture books about forced migration to see how empathic unsettlement operates within these narratives.

Empathic unsettlement does not deny the narratives’ ability to foster empathy or readers’ engagement with narrative characters to feel with them. However, fictional manifestation of empathy often relies on extreme character identification achieved through what Cohen (2001) postulates as a four dimensional process: sharing the feelings of a character, sharing the perspective of the character, internalisation and receiving the goals of the character, and absorption or the loss of self-awareness (p. 256). LaCapra (2001) calls this kind of empathic engagement “extreme or full identification [...] wherein one becomes a kind of surrogate victim oneself and assumes the victim’s voice” (p.146). The opposite of this extreme is the total denial of victims’ experiences. Empathic unsettlement is the middle ground between the two extremes, “engagement and disruption” (Hite, 2015, p. 39), that allows writers of trauma and readers of it to become ‘secondary witnesses’, “who resist full identification and the dubious appropriation of the status of the victim through vicarious or surrogate victimage” (LaCapra, 2001, p. 78). Empathic unsettlement involves two processes: acting out or the re-enactment of the trauma in the narrative form and working through, which, among other things, deals with the problems related to trauma or extreme disruptions (LaCapra, 2001, p. 50). Whether narratives empathically engage or unsettle the reader depends on the extent to which

the texts work through problems of trauma using re-enactment and positioning readers to become attentive secondary witnesses of that trauma. It can be further supported, at least to some extent, by the readers' perception and what they bring to the reading (schema). The following discussion will investigate how the selected picture books create a de-familiarising effect through the aesthetic configuration of trauma through complex juxtaposition of words and images.

In the previous chapter migrants were regarded as 'voluntary expatriates' in contrast to refugees or asylum seekers, who are generally known as 'forced migrants' or 'exiles.' Exiles differ from migrants in other aspects, such as their departures may be without prior notice; the cause of the flight is often due to a catastrophic socio-political situation in the home country. Consequently, the exile cannot maintain an attachment to the home and home country and they may be viewed with suspicion and accepted unwillingly by the public of the host country (Akhtar, 1999, p. 124). Motivations for voluntary migrants to leave their home country are predominantly due to their desire to live, work or study in a host country, whereas a compelling reason for refugees' flight has to be a "well-founded fear of persecution" (Hugo, 2012, p. 4). Migrants also have the privilege of selecting their destination, whereas exiles, especially asylum seekers, cannot have a particular country as their planned destination or point of arrival.

The term 'exile,' in its broader sense, refers to people on whom refugee status has been conferred and people who are considered asylum seekers. Refugees, by definition, "are persons who have left their homes unwillingly, have not planned their migration to Australia and been unable to bring resources with them in their migration" (Hugo, 2012, p. 4). People who are leaving their home countries in search of economic security, fleeing persecution, and being depressed by ethnic conflicts or war are known as asylum seekers. That is, their legal status as refugees has not yet been determined (Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005). However, the narrative of asylum seekers as illegal immigrants, queue-jumpers²⁰ and

²⁰ 'Queue' here means the waiting list of international applicants for political protection in Australia. Queue-jumpers are those who seek other means of getting in to Australia than the standard method of applying for protection visas.

boat people²¹ goes beyond this definition and links back to discourses of people smuggling, border protection and national security that first emerged in the 1970s (Dudek, 2011a; Johnson, 2007c). As discussed in Chapter 3, the issue of boat people contributed to the Australian public's unease with the arrival in Darwin of six boats carrying 218 asylum seekers from Vietnam on 20th and 21st November 1977 (Neumann, 2015, p. 12). Since that time the matter of 'boat people' has become a growing concern in the Australian political metanarrative.

While the Australian refugee metanarrative continues to be a topic of national and international interest since the early 2000s, at the same time the literature written for children, picture books in particular, began to capture the issue from different perspectives. Some of these 'refugee-themed' Australian picture books include: Narelle Oliver's *Dancing the Boom-Cha-Cha Boogie* (2005), Armin Greder's *The Island* (2007), and Liz Lofthouse's *Ziba Came on a Boat* (2007). There are many other picture books depicting refugee issues, but they have had less attention in academic discussions. The reason is partly due to the fact that some of these have been published recently (within the past four years). Considering the thematic resemblance in their manifestation of trauma, seven of these picture books have been selected for the discussion in this section. They are *Ziba Came on a Boat* by Liz Lofthouse and Robert Ingpen (2007), *Rainbow Bird* by Czenya Cavouras (2007), *Hyrax and B.* by Brian Caswell and Matt Ottley (2003), *Home and Away* by John Marsden and Matt Ottley (2008), *Ships in the Field* by Susanne Gervay and Anna Pignataro (2012), *The Little Refugee* by Anh Do, Suzanne Do & Bruce Whatley (2011), and *A Safe Place to Live* by Bic Walker (2011). While addressing various aspects of the political metanarrative of illegal immigrants, these texts attempt to depict refugee or asylum seekers' traumatic experiences of the past and their after-effects on individual psyches in the reminiscence of such experiences as haunting memories. In doing so, these narratives sometimes raise for children important issues regarding compassion and empathy by presenting the situation from a child's point of view. Some also attempt to 'engage and disrupt' through empathic unsettlement.

²¹ Illegal immigrants or asylum seekers, who arrive usually in large numbers by old and unsafe boats to Australia. The term illegal immigrants came to be used in the 1970s when large numbers of Vietnamese refugees left Vietnam following the Vietnam War seeking political asylum in Australia.

Politics and the Refugee Metanarrative

Refugee picture book narratives embody the notion of ‘refugee’ in a way that accords with Australia’s official definition, as Hugo (2012) notes above. However, sometimes more allusive language or allegory is used to communicate refugee status. For instance, in *The Island* (Greder, 2007), a character arrives at an island after his raft was washed ashore by “fate and ocean current.” Three little Marmels in *Dancing the Boom Cha-Cha Boogie* (Oliver 2005) had no intention to flee their habitat, Marmella, but “wild whirligig winds and waves” carried them away while they were calmly asleep in a canoe. Other more explicit texts name the subject but may still be allegorical, such as *Refugees* (Miller, 2003), which narrates how two ducks become homeless, due seemingly to industrial development. A more realistic treatment is offered in *Ziba Came on a Boat* (Lofthouse & Ingpen, 2007) and *The Little Refugee* (Do & Do, 2011), where war makes it necessary for families to seek asylum. Another common feature is that most of the refugee-themed picture books deal with ‘boat arrivals,’ which in turn subjects the refugees to mandatory detention in Australia. ‘Plane arrival’ seems to have been overlooked by Australian writers despite many refugees seeking a protection visa arriving by plane (Zwi & Chaney, 2013). There is only one picture book – *A Safe Place to Live* (Walker, 2011) – in the corpus that considers plane arrival. Dudek observes that the boat arrivals began to be a major theme as a response to the series of events that occurred during August and October 2001, which informed “national and international opinions about Australia’s treatment of refugees and asylum seekers” (2011a, p. 16). Those events include the refusal of permission to enter into Australian waters for Norwegian vessel *MV Tampa* carrying 438 asylum seekers rescued at sea en route to Australia, and Australia’s refusal to accept 250 refugees heading to Christmas Island based on the alleged claim that people threw children overboard²² as a ploy to force coast-guards to rescue them (as discussed in Chapter 3).

Following these events, the Howard coalition government at the time furthered the policy reforms governing the refugee presence in Australia – reforms that were introduced by the Keating Labour government in 1992 (Briskman et al., 2008). The

²² The Children Overboard affair was an Australian political controversy over the alleged claims by Howard government ministers during the federal election in October 2001 that the asylum seekers on-board the vessel named SIEV IV, carrying 223 people, threatened to throw children overboard as a ploy to compel Australian navy to rescue them and secure entry to Australia.

government's measures included the 'temporary protection visa' and the 'Pacific Solution.'²³ With the Pacific Solution and following amendments, illegal immigrants, especially boat arrivals, were detained in remote inhospitable camps such as Christmas Island or sent to neighbouring countries such as Nauru and Papua New Guinea. Immigration detention, regardless of whether it is within Australia or offshore, involves indefinite detention, often for long periods of time in remote locations. In their attempt to offer a counter-narrative, many picture books such as *The Island*, published in Australia, represented the harsh conditions of detention centres and the deleterious effect of incarceration on detainees' mental health (Dudek, 2011a; Ommundsen, 2006; Penovic, 2009).

Within the discourse of refugees, children's detention has also become a major topic of discussion, and has become part of the refugee discourse in Australia. Australia's Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission's (HREOC hereafter) report, *A Last Resort? National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention* (HREOC, 2004), probed into the question of whether or not Australia's detention policy protects children's human rights. It revealed that the Australian detention system does not comply with the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. According to the report:

The Convention requires detention of children to be 'a measure of last resort'. However, Australia's immigration laws make the detention of unauthorised arrival children the first – and only – resort.

Australian immigration laws require the detention of all unauthorised arrival children, regardless of their individual circumstances. These laws also expressly limit access to courts. The end result is the automatic, indeterminate, arbitrary and effectively unreviewable detention of children. No other country in the world has a policy like this. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 2004, p. 20)

²³ Temporary protection visas limited refugee protection for a maximum three year period. During this period, people who have identified as potential refugees were banned from travelling and denied family reunion rights. After the three years they were required to reinstate their refugee status or go back to their home countries. The Pacific Solution involved the interdiction and deflection of boats from Australian territorial waters and the interception of asylum seekers who would be processed 'offshore' in territory excised from Australia's migration zone or in nations such as New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Nauru (Briskman et al., 2008; Ommundsen, 2006; Penovic, 2009).

On this ground, detention and detention centres become an object of critical attention in Australian post-multicultural picture books. For instance in *Dancing the Boom Cha-Cha Boogie* (Oliver, 2005) three young sea creatures called Murbels are put in a ‘prison’ until their boat is fixed. In subsequent years, more picture books such as *Rainbow Bird* by Cavouras (2007), *Ziba Came on a Boat* by Lofthouse and Ingpen (2007), *A True Person* by Gabiann Marin and Jacqui Grantford (2007) and *A Safe Place to Live* by Walker (2011) recount stories of children in detention. These stories, what Dudek (2006) calls ‘detention-centre narratives,’ elucidate how safety and freedom for children shifted from a universal right to a conditional privilege under detention policies. The ambivalence of this ‘privileged’ sense of freedom is manifested in *Ziba Came on a Boat*, which brings a child’s perspective to an asylum narrative.

Ziba Came on a Boat (Lofthouse & Ingpen, 2007) provides flashbacks of Ziba’s life with her extended family in a village, presumably in Afghanistan, a life which shatters as a war breaks out, and her subsequent voyage as an asylum seeker. Back in the ‘peaceful village’ her memories recall the warmth of the mud brick house; rich spicy meals that consist of “flatbread cooked in tander,” and cool, smooth textured goat milk yoghurt; her mother weaving coloured wool; her father’s peaceful face and the stories and poems he told to her. As the war breaks out, the village becomes no longer a safe place, forcing Ziba and her mother to flee “from madness” into the darkness. On the “soggy old fishing boat” Ziba dreams of smiling faces welcoming her to a new land, free of fear where she can learn and laugh and dance again. The book ends with her mother whispering “*Azadi*,” which means “freedom.”

The title of the book – *Ziba Came on a Boat* – and its repetition in the opening line suggest, as Stephens (2011) observes, that there has been an arrival, but this is not evident anywhere else in the book. However, two sea birds flying over the boat in the penultimate page suggest that they are close to land. The motion of the boat contributes to the rhythm of Ziba’s thoughts: “As the boat drifted through the night, Ziba’s thoughts drifted too” (Lofthouse & Ingpen, 2007). The grey, stormy seas convey the imminent danger of the journey. In the darkness of the night and the harshness of the sea, “Ziba shivered and huddled closer to her mother in the crowded hull” (unpaged). Having lost the warmth of the home, her father, and cousins, there is only the hope of life beyond this perilous journey of asylum. The story describes the

Ziba's prospective life as one full of happiness and anticipation. She dreams of welcoming, laughing Caucasian children in the new land, where "she would be free to learn and laugh, and dance again" (unpaged). In commenting on this text, Aziz (2011) observes how this dream glosses over the reality of strict Australian immigration policies and off-shore deportations and detention. Stephens (2011) too notes a similar dissonance between the story and the reality: "Adult readers know all too well that at the time of the book's publication, what awaited Ziba was not that happy multicultural childhood affirmed by Ingpen, but indefinite detention" (p. 34). While Ziba's dream resembles a hope for a happy multicultural childhood, her mother's word, 'Azadi', the only word uttered throughout the story by someone other than the narrator, extra-textually carries a bitterly ironic subtext for readers who know that their illegal entry to Australia will mean mandatory detention which will hinder the dreams of freedom. However, replication of the first illustrations in which the "boat rose and fell ... across the endless sea" in the last opening indicates that there is no resolution to the journey.

The images are a combination of close up views, medium shots and long shots that engage readers with offers and demands. Images that complement verbal expressions of Ziba's inner feelings show the characters' head or face view, demanding the viewers' direct interaction with the represented participant. This visual strategy denotes intimate distance (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006), inviting the reader to enter into a subjective relationship with the represented participants, share their predicament and thereby empathise with them. However, the abundance of medium and long shot views throughout the text may help to empathically unsettle readers by positioning them externally as observers, or what LaCapra (2001) calls 'secondary witnesses,' of the events unfolding. These visual strategies position readers as critical evaluators who understand the problem, rather than personalising the character's emotional plight through sensational engagement. These visual commitments, along with the figurative language that encourages active reading and invokes particular meanings on the readers' part, help maintain what LaCapra (2001) calls the delicate but tense "relationship between empathy and critical distance" (p. 147).

Ziba Came on a Boat represents the stark truth about children exposed to the terror and horror of war. Stephens (2011) points out that the story draws on the

familiar script of “*conflict, self-reflection, creative action, and social integration*” that counterpoints the schema of living in a war zone but is then “deeply experienced as a loss of a *normal childhood* schema” (p.32, italics in the original). The normal childhood schema is shown through Ziba’s memories where she played with friends at the mountain stream, laughing and splashing each other with icy water. She learns at school. But as the escalation of the conflict shatters the serenity of the village, she is deprived of this childhood freedom. Ziba is confined to a dark corner of the home: “No longer able to attend the school, Ziba hid from the world behind the earthen walls of her home” (unpaged). Her dispossession is not limited to the material comfort of home or the filial care of her parents and aunts, as Ziba has to flee for her life when “gunfire echoed through the village and angry voices surrounded her” (unpaged). Readers (both adult and child) who are well informed or have experience of the cruelty of war or the tyranny of certain political regimes are presented with a moving account of the plight of refugee children through Ziba, who is deprived of a normal childhood, the right for education, freedom to play and be safe. While the story unfolds as an ‘acting out’ of the harrowing boat journey of Ziba, her mother and many others, the readers are informed of their predicament and positioned to bear witness to these traumatised characters’ ill-fate and victimisation.

Imagining children in detention: empathic unsettlement

Whereas *Ziba Came on a Boat* manifests a pre-arrival emotional passage of a refugee child, *Rainbow Bird* (2007), written and illustrated by an adolescent school girl, Czenya Cavouras, represents a story of post-arrival detention as narrated by a seemingly young refugee child who tells the story in first-person narration with short simple statements. Fleeing an unstated fear, the girl arrives “in a strange place”, in this case Australia, which is represented on an image of a yellow globe against a background of coloured red and black bands, signifying the Australian Aboriginal Flag. The words that accompany the image ask: “Am I better off here?” This conjunction of Aboriginality to a refugee story encourages various interpretations, ranging from the country’s historical ownership to current status of White hegemony to deny refugees/asylum seekers’ entry. The emotional tenor of the story begins with the words: “The day I left my home... I cried” (unpaged). This text is complemented by a double-page illustration of a childlike drawing that indicates the narrator’s seemingly Middle-Eastern background. The most vibrant and colourful of the

narrator's memories of the past are happy moments of home: her mother laughing and her father dancing. These memories of the warmth of the home fade away in the sterility of the detention centre, where she ends up. Readers are invited to roam with the invisible narrator and experience the harshness of the barbed wired fence, blankness of the room and the bleakness of the penitentiary. The short, simple statements reinforce the desolation: "The walls are bare. The floor is cold" (unpaged). The monotony of life in captivity leaves people to languish and stagnate. This bored existence is conveyed through the text: "Every day is the same, but it's unfamiliar" (unpaged). The illustration which accompanies the words: "Now I am here", shows a section of a detention yard with rolls of coiled barbed wire at the top of high security fences. The perimeter of the image is a collage of newspaper headings relating to government policy on detention (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.6. *Rainbow Bird* (Cavouras, 2007), Opening 4

On top of this indignity of the detention centre, awaiting a decision that might change detainees' lives for better or worse, is another traumatic tension. This uncertainty is put forward for the reader's attention through three questions: "Am I better off here?"; "Will I see my mother's face light up in laughter?"; and "Will I see my father dance again?" (unpaged). These questions urge the reader to contemplate the emotional hardships endured by refugees seeking asylum who are put in detention. Dispossessed of their family and belongings at the onset of the journey,

met with hostility and distrust, and the indignity at detention – all the despair glosses over the hope. However, hope is symbolised by the eponymous rainbow bird, which is foreshadowed by multi-coloured teardrops in an early illustration, and appears in close up towards the narrative closure, carrying with it implied hope for contentment and hope for freedom (see Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.7. *Rainbow Bird* (Cavouras, 2007), Opening 9

Narrative empathy is conveyed through the stark words and emotive illustrations which include snippets of newspaper reportage of Australia's immigration policy. However, narrative strategies such as naming, character descriptions or character portrayals that encourage strong (character) identification are not used in the story. Readers can decipher some aspects of the emotional plight of the narrator through the verbal text, which is also minimal. However, the internal perspective offered through first-person self-narration (Keen, 2010) cues the anguish and traumatic disquietude of the narrating subject in the detention centre. For instance, the statement – “I felt butterflies in my stomach” (unpaged) – on the third opening, describes the narrator's anxiety on arrival at a strange place. Vibrant-coloured butterflies in the complementary illustration turn to black in the opposite image with the accompanying words: “A shiver coursed through my body”

(unpaged). Equivocation between conflicting expressions and the colour contrasts of the butterflies conveys the mental instability and psychic bewilderment of the character. Similar visual representation of an emotional state is repeated when the narrator reveals her unpalatable feelings about the detention facility: “The walls are bare. The floor is cold” (unpaged). While the narrator says that the walls are bare, the readers’ eyes are drawn to the window on the wall, framed with newspaper cuttings. What is visible is barbed wire curled atop an enclosing fence and a bright yellow earth with a distant green mountain range in the background (Figure 5.6).

Inspired by the information shared by her grandfather, who made visits to Port Augusta (South Australia) and possibly to the nearby Baxter Immigration Reception and Processing Centre, Czenya Cavouras was motivated to write and illustrate *Rainbow Bird* and its imagined narrator’s experiences and emotions of living in a detention centre. Given this information on the inner back cover of the book, the story offers the authorial voice of a child (who was fourteen when she completed the story). The story vividly gives other child readers a sense of the harsh nature of detention centres and the miserable condition of destitute people who are virtually incarcerated. However, the story offers hope rather than giving way to despair. Renewed hope for detainees becomes freedom, freedom from this captivity which is foreshadowed by the rainbow bird. Nevertheless, the text does not sugar-coat reality, as the narrator questions whether or not she will ever see her parents laughing and dancing again. In this way, the text attempts to unsettle readers with a sympathetic characterisation. Readers are also challenged to think about Australia’s immigration and detention policy which is conveyed through the newspaper clippings and map of the Australian Aboriginal Flag: illustrations that precede the child narrator’s musing about her family’s future happiness. This strategy of empathic unsettlement invites readers to compassionately reconsider the current political situation from a child’s perspective.

As *Ziba Came on a Boat* and *Rainbow Bird* depict childhood disrupted by conflict-induced dispossession, traumatic memories of loss and loneliness are given a very different treatment in *Hyrām and B.* by Brian Casswell and Matt Ottley (2003). Being discarded by their first owners, two toy bears – Hyram and B – end up together in a second hand shop. When an adopted war orphan, Catherine, purchases

the two bears, they find love and peace again as Catherine too knows how it feels to be abandoned.

Remembering and Experiencing Trauma

B, the narrator of the story, recalls memories of the time he had with Jessica, a young girl who forgot the secret language of bears as she grew up. Vibrant and colorful drawings in two double-page spreads depict B's happy time with Jessica. However, not all of his flashbacks are pleasing, especially the one about the day he was discarded. B had learnt much about bears from what Jessica used to tell him before she outgrew and forgot him. One thing he learnt is that bears sleep a lot. But Hiram is "too scared to sleep" (unpaged). Two double-page illustrations visually render what makes him scared. Although the first of the two illustrations shows how Hiram was dumped on a cardboard tray with another worn-out toy in a dark, filthy cellar of trash containing "creeping things that scabbled and scuffed and squeaked around" (unpaged), it was not the darkness or the creeping creatures that terrified him. The real cause was his state of abandonment where readers are presented with a two-part illustration representing the past and the present: one shows Hiram left in a ditch and threatened by a menacing dog; the other shows him whispering the memory into B's ear. The reader's empathy is evoked through these juxtaposed images (see Figure 5.8), and by the text, which reveals how these haunting memories are so traumatic that they can "convulse even Hiram" (Dissanayake Mudiyansele, 2014, p. 79) who "looks really big and tough but he's not tough at all" (Casswell & Ottley, 2003, unpaged). Following Hiram's recount, the subsequent double spread represents B's memories of being dropped into a charity box by an adolescent girl, possibly Jessica.

Figure 5.8 has been removed due
to copyright reasons

Figure 5.8. *Hiram and B*. (Caswell and Ottley, 2003), Opening 7

While both Hiram and B are left on a shelf in a second hand shop for “longer than anyone” (unpaged), Catherine changes the course of the bears’ lives. In the mid opening, where Catherine holds B, his eyes emanate an eyeline vector that connects with Hiram, who sits alone on the shelf. The accompanying text reveals B’s self-questioning: “Where’s Hiram?” Hiram’s corresponding speculation, “Where’s B?”, appears on the next illustration, in which Catherine and B play head-stands. B’s perception of Catherine is revealed in the third last opening, which reveals B’s feelings as he misses Hiram:

Catherine loves me.

Catherine understands the secret language of bears.

She understands what it means to be lonely. (unpaged)

Complementary to this text on the left on the double-page spread, Catherine is seen from behind in the dark on the right bottom corner, her hair illuminated by the flames and blasts of warfare. The terror that war can evoke is highlighted with the red and black colour combination (see Figure 5.9). The double-page spread, which is dominated by abandoned weapons, an armed tank, and ruins of a city devastated by a war, simultaneously depicts how Catherine came to know the feelings of loneliness.

Catherine is a war refugee, an orphan adopted by a family of a different ethnicity to her own (Catherine is white, whereas her adopted parents are black).

Figure 5.9 has been removed due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.9. *Hiram and B*. (Caswell and Ottley, 2003), Opening 13

The narrative empathically unsettles the reader by foregrounding the cruel destruction of war. Although the trauma is not explicitly stated, its implied impact is represented through complex juxtaposing of words and pictures. The characters' plight as trauma victims is represented without sensationalism. This lack of sensationalism not only prevents empathic fallacy,²⁴ it also encourages the reader to consider the gruesome nature of war and its impact on people. The divisiveness of war and the trauma of disaster, separation of loved ones, loneliness, and child adoption are put forward in antagonistic details.

All three characters in the story have experienced trauma. Individual trauma is delineated through flashbacks of their experiences: B tossed into a rubbish bin; Hiram thrown into a ditch and threatened by a menacing dog; and Catherine hidden in a dark corner amidst a bloody war. The text depicts trauma through the images,

²⁴ The view that people can enlarge their feelings of sympathy and empathy by reading sentimental depiction of others' plight in narratives alone: "by exposing ourselves to ennobling narratives, we broaden our experience, deepen our empathy and achieve new levels of sensitivity and fellow-feelings" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2013, p. 324)

and invites readers to make the connections and draw conclusions. In this way, the text encourages readers to understand the impact of war and abandonment on survivors and their feelings of emotional alienation. Catherine's empathic reaction to the bears is an expression of her own situation where she was forcibly dislocated from her home, family and friends, and in turn her reaction encourages readerly empathy.

The story is presented mostly through illustrations accompanied by a small amount of words. The limited verbal text is symbolic of how trauma is manifested at a psychic level and cannot always be captured by linguistic means. Emotional depth of trauma is rendered through poignantly detailed illustrations. In order to comprehend the extent of this trauma, readers need to revisit both text and illustrations: stopping, returning, moving forward. Lack of linear progression in the narrative can be a disruptive strategy that helps maintain the critical distance that LaCapra (2001) suggests is necessary for empathic unsettlement. This empathic engagement and distancing achieved through disruption is further evident in the next picture book, *Home and Away* by John Marsden and Matt Ottley (2008).

Home and Away recounts a story of a 'typical' Australian family who become refugees when war starts annihilating their country.²⁵ The story is told through a 15-year-old-girl's²⁶ diary entries. Her mother works as a counsellor, and takes care of her mother, who lives next door. Her dad is a truck driver and loves growing vegies. The eldest of the children is the narrator, who loves typical adolescent past-times such as music, surfing and computer games, and "wants to be a vet" when she grows up. She has two younger siblings, an 11-year-old sister, Claire, and a five-year-old brother, Toby. They are a self-sustained family. However, the tranquillity of their life shatters when the war breaks out. Suddenly their life is in chaos. They suffer from scarcity of food and water. In desperation, the family escape to another country called Hollania by boat. Having lost their father along the way and the mother is later put in 'prison', the three siblings end up in detention. Claire suffers from mental illness, while Toby starts harming himself as he thinks he is put in prison for his

²⁵ The book's title, *Home and Away*, is an intertextual reference to the long-running popular Australian television series of the same name, which features the lives of 'typical' Australian families.

²⁶ Whilst the gender identity of the narrator is not clear, for the purposes of the discussion I will be referring to the narrator using the feminine pronoun.

brutality. The narrator, who has “given up on being a vet” (unpaged) ruminates about possible jobs so that she can look after her siblings after they leave detention.

Empathic unsettlement operates in the story for readers as they become witnesses to the girl and her family’s traumatic story. In reading this story, readers not only come to understand the torment the family undergo, but are invited implicitly to reconsider the refugee experience from their own perspective, and possibly ask of themselves: What if I were a refugee? Hope (2008) argues that political and media rhetoric is partly responsible for many Australians’ lack of knowledge or understanding of refugees or asylum seekers’ plights and predicaments. The story challenges this preconception by making a ‘typical’ Australian family endure the experience of being refugees, thereby abandoning their previously safe and self-sufficient lifestyle. Within this reverse representation of host and refugee, the narrative further invites implied Anglo Australian readers to realise how external circumstances can change the course of one’s life, to imagine how it might feel to be forced to flee one’s home, to be met with hostility when seeking asylum and to be locked up in detention centres. While these feelings cannot be the same as those experienced by real refugees, by empathic unsettlement the text attempts to engage the reader imaginatively in the experience and disrupt any misconceptions or preconceptions.

According to Vickroy (2002) one important aspect of trauma narratives is that by representing the predicaments of fictional characters, they “confront us with many of our own fears – of death, of dissolution, of loss, of loss of control – and provide a potential space within which to consider these fears” (p. 2). *Home and Away* offers insights into this psychology of fear through verbal and visual depiction of a harrowing tale of despair. Exploitation of such anxieties as the atrocity of war, the terror, desperation and the grief of loss in a way that engages readers with what Vickroy (2002) calls “personalised” and “experientially oriented narration” (p. 3) this narrative features the agonising effects of trauma.

The illustrations are a mixture of childlike drawings and photorealism. This strategy offers both child and adult perspectives for the implied child reader; however, both styles are the work of Matt Ottley. As discussed later in this analysis, the use of childlike drawings also help to productively unsettle readers, preventing them falling into what Nikolajeva (2011) elsewhere calls the “identification trap” (p.

202). This unsettling occurs as the child-like drawings avoid realistic details that instigate over-identification and invite subjective engagement with characters, yet the more realistic images present a more subjective account. On the first double-page illustration, the family members of the narrator appear in a close shot image of a camera held by a steady hand, seemingly the father's. The way he holds the camera with the high angle indicates that he is the one who holds the family together. Happy, smiling faces of represented participants who are in close proximity are directed at the viewers, inviting them to share the composure of the family further described in the accompanying text. For instance, mum "watches CSI²⁷ channel on cable" whereas dad "rings up talk-back radio heaps when he's driving" (unpaged). However, the dark clouds gathering in the distant horizon portend a future calamity. The beginning of the war changes everything in their ordinary life. The soft blue colour dominant in the first two openings translates into bloody red in the third opening. This gruesome change further extends to the childlike drawings which are seen torn apart in the next opening. War-planes, military helicopters and blasting bombs have captured the space dedicated for family mannerism in previous drawings. The typeface also changes from computerised letters printed on illustrations to handwritten notes on scraps of paper. This indicates limited or no access to the internet or digital connection: "The city is in ruins, blackouts nearly all the time, food is hard to find" (unpaged).

The gruesome effects of war on people's physical and mental bodies are depicted with high intensity: "Mum's lost twenty-four kilos, Toby's got jaundice and flu and pain in his kidneys, and Claire hasn't talked for six days" (unpaged). Stricken by the poverty, father brings a dead possum to feed the starving family. Complementary to this text on the top left corner of the double page illustration is a raw-boned dog on the right bottom corner walking on a blood-spilled barren landscape (see Figure 5.10).

²⁷ CSI (Crime Scene Investigation) is a popular American television series.

Figure 5.10 has been removed
due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.10. *Home and Away* (Marsden and Ottley, 2008), Opening 5

The dog is viewed from a low angle, and this altered power relation suggests its vulnerability. It further indicates the fragility of the symbolic value imposed on the dog as a pet. Not only is the human–non-human relationship at stake, but also the painful ambivalence of the circumstance diminishes the interpersonal and social relations of the family members. In the illustration where family members sit together around a table the night before they leave for asylum, a long-shot view highlights the detachment among family members and the distancing from the viewer compared to the proximal relation established in the first image. The dark black tone of the image encroaching upon represented participants is symbolic of their predicament. The burning candle placed off centre illuminates their gaunt and downcast faces, and further implies that their decision to flee is the only hope of survival. However, their gazes do not connect with each other and therefore do not build transactional vectors, suggesting the daunting ambivalence of their decision. Readers whose involvement with the represented participant is weakened by the high, oblique angle are not encouraged to share the “perceptual and conceptual point of view” (Nikolajeva, 2011, p. 193) of the represented participants and thereby are positioned as observers or, in LaCapra’s terms, they become secondary witnesses.

Figure 5.11 has been removed
due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.11. *Home and Away* (Marsden and Ottley, 2008), Opening 7

The series of events that begins to unfold from this point is heavily charged with emotions. The grandmother dies just before they get on to the boat, the father is stabbed to death during the journey, and the mother dies at the detention centre, the “prison” where the narrator and her brother Toby are being locked up. Claire is also sent to the psychiatric unit in another detention centre. In the child-like illustration where the father is shown being stabbed by one of the smugglers on the boat, we see three more people whose bodies are thrown overboard to be consumed by sharks (see Figure 5.12).

Figure 5.12 has been removed
due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.12. *Home and Away* (Marsden and Ottley, 2008), Opening 10

As the text explicates, the killing occurred because of a dispute over dividing the fish they had caught for food. Although readers are well informed of the incident, they are prevented from being too confronted or distressed by these ferocious acts because the emotional intensity of the event is toned down by the lack of poignant fine details that would invite readers' affective engagement with the characters' plight. The use of child-like drawing can be regarded, therefore, as a disruptive technique that prevents what LaCapra (2001) calls the 'extreme' of full character identification wherein one adopts a fictive character's subject position to claim his/her voice.

Empathic engagement, however, is offered in the next illustration in which an image of a female character, possibly the narrator, appears in a head and shoulder shot that represents a close personal distance (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006), and re-establishes the image-viewer relationship (see Figure 5.13 below).

Figure 5.13 has been removed
due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.13. *Home and Away* (Marsden and Ottley, 2008), Opening 11

Readers are positioned to feel empathy towards her plight as they realise what she has been exposed to and experienced along the way. Lack of hygiene, ungroomed hair and skin infections are presented in realistic detail to indicate the harsh conditions she has endured. Her gaze, which forms an eye-line vector directed at the distant horizon, symbolises the ambivalent reality between anticipation and uncertainty. A sense of sadness attached to the dark blue colour scheme is intensified by a deep blue that is reflected in her wide eyes that epitomise hope, which in the narrator's words is "the most wonderful thing in the world" (unpaged). Hope of a land.

Figure 5.14 has been removed
due to copyright reasons

Figure 5.14. *Home and Away* (Marsden and Ottley, 2008), Opening 12

Another childlike but powerful illustration depicts the family's arrival in a new country (Figure 5.14). The dark lines of the left side of the illustration suggest the evil from which they are escaping. The right side communicates the light and prosperity by the sun in the white sky and the green on the ground. In between are coastguards drawn in black, and a huge navy vessel drawn in red: symbolic of power and intimidation, which is emphasised by the tiny boat being viewed from a low angle, creating a downward diagonal vector. This view suggests a power differential between the disempowered people and the officials. All the boat people are at the mercy of the coastguards, who hold the "immense power to accept, refuse and expel" (Phillip, 2000, p. 289). This intimidation is further aggravated in the next illustration where images of guards with batons threaten a child, possibly Toby, who holds his head in both hands with fear. The accompanying text poses questions that Toby asks: 'Are we bad?' 'No, why?' 'Well, why are we in prison?' (unpaged). These same questions that possibly echo in many refugees' minds are given voice through Toby, illustrating how the discourse of detention is beyond the scope of a child's comprehension. However, the text's inability to rationalise 'why are they in prison?' may reverberate in readers' minds, compelling them to think about issues of border policing and human detention in the name of state sovereignty.

As Jill Rutter (2006) observes, asylum seekers' accounts are often misunderstood or misinterpreted and that ignorance leads to generalizations and

stereotyping of their experiences. One of these stereotypes concerns the political impositions or media myths that show refugees, asylum seekers or boat people as ‘economic opportunity seekers’. This proposition foists refugees as impoverished and penurious beings in their own countries. The above picture books not only challenge, but also expose these myths. Refugees may not necessarily be poor; they can be wealthy people who had been living affluent lives before wars break out, threatening the peace and shattering their lives. For instance, in *Home and Away*, the protagonist recounts how happy her family was before the war began, while in *Rainbow Bird*, the narrator in the detention remembers her mother’s laughter and father’s dancing at home. *Ziba Came on a Boat* also explains how cheerful the child protagonist Ziba was at home. While these stories offer readers insights into an imagined refugee experience, the following discussion examines texts that draw on the writers’ personal experiences.

Personalising the Refugee Story: A Token of Optimism

Narratives based on authors’ experiences as a refugee or of living with a parent who had to flee their own country invite readers to become witnesses to those predicaments. When these life stories or memoirs are told in the form of picture books, they are fictionalised and modified in ways that make them appropriate for the age of the implied readers. According to Gillian Whitlock (2010) memoirs can give an authentic voice to stories by assigning a truth value to fictional accounts: “life narratives touch the world in distinctive ways [...]: it refers to lived experience; it professes subjective truths; and above all it signals to the reader an intended fidelity to history and memory” (p.12). However, this fidelity, according to LaCapra (2001), is not a necessary condition of empathic unsettlement as, along with the tendency to valorise trauma, fidelity to trauma and its victims may generate “resistance to working through” (p. 145), the process that facilitates the witness to envisage, understand and work over the problems causing the trauma. Therefore LaCapra emphasises credibility in place of fidelity.

Stories drawn from personal experience manifest the subject’s experience of emotional and psychological trauma in a way that gives credibility to the narrative and thereby induces empathy by directly communicating a ‘lived’ experience to the reader. This has the potential to authorise the story as ‘authentic’ (Morgan, 1995). The following texts offer ways for readers to engage with personal stories or

memoirs about the experience of being a refugee: *The Little Refugee* (2011) by Anh Do and Suzanne Do, illustrated by Bruce Whatley; *A Safe Place to Live* (2011) by Bic Walker and *Ships in the Field* (2012) by Susanne Gervay and Anna Pignataro. These picture books provide insights into refugee experiences of torture and trauma prior to and after arrival in Australia. In these stories child readers find refugee children who have lost their normal childhood to wars and disasters. These children speak out about their childhood memories. Readers may also encounter parents who undergo deep emotional and psychological trauma in attempting to protect their children. The following discussion of *Ships in the Field* examines how these life narratives encourage readers to empathise or attempt to empathically unsettle readers by encouraging them to witness sufferings of individuals caused by unforeseen catastrophes by recounting their lived experiences in fictional format.

Trauma is often regarded as ‘unspeakable’ and therefore cannot be acutely communicated (El Nossery & Hubbell, 2013). However, it is not unrepresentable. According to Kacandes (in Herman, Manfred, & Ryan, 2010), narrative texts are able to “mimic” various manifestations of trauma such as amnesia “through ellipses or flashbacks through anachronies and repetitions” (p. 618). *Ships in the Field* (Gervay & Pignataro, 2012) is a story that encourages readers to envision the parameters of enigmatic trauma through narrative manifestation. As the story unfolds through the voice of a young girl, readers enter into a world of a family whose life was shattered by war, forcing them to seek asylum in another country. The girl’s life in new home (in the host country) begins to fill out with humour, love and courage. Yet, the trauma of the war has made her mother reticent and melancholic.

Trauma is expressed in the story neither as corporeal manifestations, nor as idealised representations. Readers are left to discern trauma through flashbacks, reminiscence and observations of the child narrator whose limited experience does not capture the depth of trauma. Nevertheless, psychological effects of trauma are conveyed through the child’s observations of her mother, who cries in the dark and sheds tears. The narrator speculates that the mother cries because “She’s frightened of war” (unpaged). The indelibility of the haunting memories of loss marks the mother. The girl observes these happenings and shares her emotional responses with Brownie, a toy dog that she holds onto as her companion and confidante. This is how she copes with her own trauma. The family used to have a dog that her mother loved

very much at their previous home, but now it is only a part of the haunting memories of their loss. Readers are positioned together with this little girl, the focaliser, to witness her mother's agony, which resonates throughout the story.

A new day begins with a shimmering sun, which symbolises a fresh start to their lives. It is a Sunday, the picnic day. The family goes on a picnic in a forest. On the way the father draws others' attention to a sheep farm by asking them to see the 'ships in the field.' This makes everyone laugh, but the narrator feels sorry for her father as she knows how others make fun of his English pronunciation. The incident brings the humiliation migrants experience due to the language barrier into the context, inviting readers to join with the narrator, who invites readers to empathise with many migrants like her father. In the forest the girl climbs a tree, on which she sits, to view a vast open land. This uninterrupted gaze upon the land signifies her family's freedom. The story ends with an unexpected but welcome surprise, the appearance of a homeless puppy that brings back the smiles, and comes to symbolise their renewed hope for a new life. This lightened mood also reassures that regardless of all the obstacles they have passed through, for instance change of country, occupation, and language, they will find the happiness again.

Ships in the Field recounts Susanne Gervay's family's story as WWII war refugees from Hungary. Her parents escaped across minefields in the dead of night, leaving behind everything they had but their little son. When they were selected from an Austrian refugee camp to come to Australia, hope for a new life began. However, settlement in Australia and rebuilding their life was difficult. Both parents had to work tirelessly: her father did double shifts at a Holden factory and her mother worked in a clothing factory and at home as a dressmaker. Although the barriers of language, a foreign culture, memories of loss and torments of war were drawbacks, their spirit and tireless effort enabled them to find renewed happiness in their new home. This story begins as a personal experience, but eventually translates into a familiar narrative of war refugees. Gervay's declaration as a "daughter of Hungarian refugees" in the prologue together with re-enactment of her experience throughout the story give an 'authenticity' to a seemingly typical refugee narrative, or in LaCapra's (2001) terms, offer "a fidelity to trauma and its victims" (p. 145). Even if the book represents an autobiographical account, the narrative depicts the capacity of the human subject to persevere despite predicaments and misfortunes. The aftermath

of war, especially in terms of trauma, torment and the anguish of survivors, is brought together and focalised through a young girl. It is through the child focaliser that implied child readers are offered an empathic subject position towards refugees. Trauma is the core point, but the story concludes on an optimistic note.

While optimism is treated as a vexed element in *Ziba Came on a Boat* with respect to the future that Ziba and her mother will encounter, *The Little Refugee* by Anh Do and Suzanne Do (2011) and *A Safe Place to Live* by Bic Walker (2011) offer positive post-arrival narratives. *The Little Refugee* (Do & Do, 2011) is the picture book version of Anh Do's award-winning memoir, *The Happiest Refugee* (2010), which is both testimonial and fictional. *The Little Refugee* is a story of a Vietnamese boy and his family who escape from war-torn Vietnam to an eventual harmonious life in Australia. Although the story was published in 2011, Anh Do arrived in Australia as a Vietnamese refugee in 1980 – that is, before mandatory detention came into existence in Australia's asylum processing system. This policy was first introduced by the Keating Labor Government in 1992 following a number of boat arrivals from Indochinese region (Phillips & Spinks, 2013). The book reinforces throughout the message of optimism, exhorting implied child (migrant/refugee) readers to: "have hope, and to believe that everything would turn out okay in the end" (Do & Do, 2011, unpagued). Hence the picture book offers a positive story about refugee integration into multicultural Australia.

The Little Refugee begins with a brief introduction about Vietnam, which in the narrator's terms is "a crazy place." While 'crazy' can have different connotations, the story attempts to relegate its meaning to seemingly disorderly mannerisms of poor people. However, the economic pauperism is only attributed to the infrastructure: poor transportation and unhealthy living conditions. Regardless, the children appear happy because they had "lots of people to play with" (unpagued). However, it is not the poverty that makes them flee the country, but the war which puts their lives in danger. The story depicts the dangerous journey by boat: "the cruelty and inhumane treatment they received at the hands of the men who abandoned them on the boat after stealing all their possessions and threatening the life of Khoa, Anh Do's baby brother, by dangling the baby over the side of the boat" (Dissanayake Mudiyansele, 2014, p.81). Sombre tones are used in the illustrations to depict the war and the treacherous voyage in a smelly fishing vessel. Dark black and murky

grey hues are replaced with vibrant colours as the family arrives in Australia. These emerging tender and bright hues indicate the family's renewed hope and heightened optimism. Although life in Australia is difficult, Do's story is one of success – he becomes popular with the other children, learns English and is elected class captain.

The Little Refugee also manifests perspective-taking ability as the force of empathic engagement. Having been through the traumatic adventure of asylum that lies beyond the innocence of the childhood, Anh also has gained an emotional insight that helps him understand others' plights and respond empathically. This is evident in the story when Anh helps "a new kid," Angus, who is lonely and different. The compelling force of Anh's empathic engagement is his memory of his own experience of being the new kid at school: "I remember how lonely I used to be" (unpaged). At this point the readers' attention is drawn back to what they already know about Anh's first days at school: his lack of English proficiency holds him back in the class; his different food makes some students laugh at him; and he looks different because he is wearing ordinary clothing while the other school children are in uniforms.

Both *Ziba Came on a Boat* and *The Little Refugee* clearly explain how cheerful the protagonists are in their ordinary homes regardless of poverty and other difficulties. These texts therefore serve to illuminate the importance of friends and classmates, and may contribute towards developing mainstream children's tolerance and understanding when they read how friends can be lost or friendship withheld. At the same time, biographical texts such as *The Little Refugee* challenge refugee stereotypes by offering a more positive representation and thus offering a different script from the 'migrant as victim.'

A Safe Place to Live delivers a similarly optimistic refugee experience of the author Bic Walker, who fled Vietnam in 1979 at the age of three. Although the narrative begins with the traditional mode of storytelling: "Once upon a time, my family lived in a place that was unsafe" (unpaged), the rest of the story follows a reporting style rather than a narrativising of the events. The way events transpire follows the familiar refugee story schema: fleeing the war, perilous journey across the sea by a boat, plundered by pirates, rescued by a tanker, detention in an island and settlement in a safe country. The familiarity of this schema and its unfolding plot induces empathy more easily according to Keen (2010) because of the predictable

story events and ‘stereotyped’ characters. However, in *A Safe Place to Live*, the story lacks what Keen terms “the fullness and fashion by which speech, thoughts and feelings of characters reach the reader” (Keen, 2007, p. 96) to enhance character identification.

Although the first-person narrative begins with three siblings recounting their fate in a harrowing journey in a boat, which was plundered by pirates and left to drift in the sea along the way, it ends as a successful asylum story of resettlement, offering a more positive schema to the increasingly familiar failed asylum seeker schema. The story takes a moderate attitude towards refugee processing, which is both verbally and visually mitigated as ‘waiting’ on an island where many other people camp for refuge:

We waited while we swam in the river
We waited on the swings
We waited in the trees
We just waited and waited. (Walker, 2011, unpagged)

After the long wait in the camp, the three “flew across the world to a safer island called Australia” (unpagged) where there is no war or fighting. In Australia they are allowed to do what they want and go where they please. This privileged freedom and autonomy at the arrival is the hope of any asylum seeker fleeing war and persecution as posited in *Ziba Came on a Boat*. However, transformation of welcoming acceptance to dispiriting rejection at the arrival, conversion of open-space camping to locked detention centres and transition from waiting in earnest to passive stagnation are depicted in many narratives published after the implementation of new policies that set parameters within which “asylum for refugees is narrowly framed and often contested” (Gordenker, 1987, p. 140). The end papers of *A Safe Place to Live* confirm the truth status of the story: “This is a true story based on her journey to Australia” (unpagged). Further support for this note is offered by a picture of a young Bic holding a board with her name and refugee number written on it. This declaration together with re-enactment of her experience throughout the story lends a ‘fidelity’ to the asylum seeking experience (2001, p. 145). Even if the text represents an autobiographical account, the narrative ironically depicts the capacity of the human subject to persevere in adversity.

The three texts discussed above provide a different perspective on the refugee story by offering an optimistic view of acceptance and settlement in a new country and thereby generating revised scripts and schemas about refugees and asylum seekers. They provide readers with an accessible story for understanding the silent suffering that many refugees experience. Further, readers are encouraged to contemplate and interrogate schemas such as boat people, queue jumpers or illegal immigrants that carry negative impressions rather than consider them as people who suffer and have desires to be accepted and treated with compassion. Therefore, by recalling these subjective experiences of asylum, the authors share their own stories of the perils and predicaments that they or their family endured, which deploy the familiar scripts of war, displacement, and social integration. The texts also remind readers of the more ethical and empathic aspect of migration that is often obscured by political rhetoric and policy regarding immigration, asylum seekers and refugees.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the complex ways that memory, nostalgia and trauma are reflected within the narrative representation of migrants' and refugees' plights in Australian picture books. Chapter 4 focussed on paradoxes of self-other encounters and investigated cross-generational conflict through the use of dichotomous connections between remembering and forgetting. The first part of chapter 5 extended this discussion on inter-generational relationships by focusing on nostalgia as a means of reconstructing cultural memory. It focused on how cultural memory can be reconstructed through nostalgic reminiscence of personal history and through deployment of artefacts (cultural or otherwise) as mementos of collective memories of familial, group or communal traditions. Through their valuing of the past (time and space) these picture books promote the value of cultural heritage and familial bonds. The second half of the chapter analysed picture books in which characters endure the trauma of war, persecution and other tragedies. Such stories draw upon personal experience of trauma to invite readers to witness children's and adults' emotional plight as refugees or asylum seekers through schematic cues and conscious manipulation of the imagination. These stories of exile discussed above not only challenge but also problematise stereotypes by creating counter discourses to often misrepresented narratives of refugees' plights in various contexts inside and outside Australia.

Both chapters 4 and 5 have assessed narrative representations of migrants' plights, drawing on literary and visual devices to encourage both empathy and empathic unsettlement. Chapter 4 predominantly focused on how picture books provide an interface for readers to empathically engage with culturally diverse characters through affective interaction. Such an empathic relation is achieved by the deployment of various scripts, schemas, and linguistic and semiotic strategies that invite and enable readers to contemplate and perceive the emotions of fictional migrant characters experiencing detachment, estrangement and alienation – the resultant effects of migration and displacement. While inviting empathic responses to some extent, some picture book narratives of refugee or asylum seeker issues empathically unsettle readers in their representation of trauma or suffering by encouraging them to be secondary witnesses to the characters' predicaments. Chapter 5 explored how picture books invite readers to cognitively envision what life can be from someone else's subjective viewpoint, but disrupt the full identification with fictional characters. Thereby, these narratives offer readers empathic subject positions with respect to the problems and hardships of trauma victims, such as refugees or asylum seekers.

While the texts discussed in the analysis chapters offer empathic subject positions to readers, their representations of cultural difference generally, and of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers specifically, utilise familiar scripts and schemas which function as effective cognitive instruments. As I have argued, to appreciate or comprehend these narratives, readers need to accept or modify their existing knowledge or scripts. For some readers, these scripts will presumably activate their knowledge of what they already understand about migrants, refugees, detention centres, and so on. Many of the picture books discussed offer readers revised scripts and schemas that invite them to make adjustments to their existing cognitive frameworks, especially if they are forged through negative stereotypes, fear, and other cautionary tales offered by the media and other sources (family, friends and so on). As I have shown, narrative empathy operates as a significant device for aligning readers with the text's attempt to reinforce prosocial emotions between self and other, and the humanistic desire for equity and social inclusion.

Empathic relation is achieved by the employment of various narrative, linguistic and semiotic devices that invite and enable readers to contemplate and

perceive the emotions of fictional migrant characters experiencing detachment, estrangement and alienation – the resultant effects of migration and displacement. While inviting empathic responses to some extent, some picture book narratives of refugee or asylum seeker issues empathically unsettle readers in their representation of trauma or suffering by preventing them from indulging themselves in the drama of the situation but by encouraging them to be secondary witnesses to other people's predicaments. Chapter 5 explored how picture books invite readers to cognitively envision what life can be like from someone else's subjective viewpoint, but disrupt full identification with fictional characters. Thereby, these narratives invite readers to take a critical standpoint and inquire into the problems of trauma victims, such as refugees or asylum seekers, that lie beyond the narrative and connect to political metanarratives of state sovereignty and border protection.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of narrative empathy in the fictional constructions of migrants' experiences in Australian multicultural picture books. It has explored the ways in which picture book narratives attempt to engage readers to empathise with fictional 'others,' in this case, voluntary migrants and forced migrants (refugees and asylum seekers), whose plight and predicaments are reimagined and narrated from different perspectives within a changing social and political landscape. In order to answer the research question: How do contemporary Australian multicultural picture books draw on empathic narrative techniques to encourage readerly empathy towards cultural difference and adversity?, this study has drawn on cognitive narratology, narrative empathy and semiotics to conduct the textual analysis of a selection of seventeen migration-themed Australian picture books published from 1995 – 2014. The study found that a common strategy employed by the texts to encourage empathy was through reader positioning. Texts attempted subjective engagement of the reader with the plight of the migrant/refugee character by drawing on familiar scripts and schemas to affirm or disrupt ideas about migrants and cultural difference. The study also examined how LaCapra's (2001) notion of empathic unsettlement could be usefully deployed as a way of seeing how some texts maintain a delicate balance between empathy and critical distance.

In providing a conclusion, this chapter highlights the key issues that have emerged throughout this study and considers future research that could be undertaken in this area of endeavour.

AUSTRALIAN PICTURE BOOKS AS SITES OF POLITICAL AND EMPATHIC ENGAGEMENT

This research is situated within the wider field of children's literature, with a specific focus on Australian picture books. Picture books (both Australian and overseas) have become a sophisticated medium through which complex ideas are introduced in ways that are accessible for children. Throughout this study, I have shown how the interplay of words and images in the selection of picture books opens up ways for readers to understand competing perspectives on complex issues, such as multiculturalism and migration, as well as complex emotions, such as empathy. The

corpus also highlights the versatility of Australian picture books to capture intricate socio-cultural and political issues which characterise Australian life over an extended period of time.

The term ‘multicultural picture books’ has gained significant usage both inside and outside Australia during the last five decades (Hope 2008, Ommundsen, 2009). Within this broad categorisation, there has been considerable growth in what I have considered as ‘migration-themed’ picture books or picture books that address the diverse experiences of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. In selecting seventeen focus texts for this study, I read 61 picture books (see appendices A and B) which represent only a relatively small number of the overall picture books that fall into this sub-category. Over the past 40 years, texts taking up the migration theme have not only grown in numbers, but also have maintained a clear socialising purpose of building/developing tolerance and acceptance of cultural difference in its readers, which aligns with the original tenets of a liberal multicultural Australia. However, it is notable how the issue of empathy has taken on a particular significance as more picture books over the period engage with the complexities of migration, border protection, asylum seeking and discrimination.

Empathy, in general, is regarded as a necessary component in our ethical understanding and moral engagement with fellow human beings. As this study has explained, recent neuro-scientific discovery of mirror-neurons affirms the biological mechanism of empathy (Pineda, 2009). However, humans’ inherent partiality towards kin, clans and in-groups prompts them to emotionally respond to those who are most like themselves (Gallagher, 2012): a condition known as either the ‘similarity bias’ (Hoffman, 2000), or ‘empathy bias’ (Harrison, 2011). The cognitive aspect of empathy or what is called ‘perspective-taking’ enables people to feel empathy beyond in-groups. As Keen and other researchers discussed in this thesis contend, literature is regarded as a powerful means that can foster intersubjective emotions and attitudes, and promote narrative empathy.

This thesis has argued that narrative empathy has much to offer in an exploration of vicarious emotions in narrative representations of cultural otherness in picture books. I have demonstrated how picture book narratives encourage readers to take up an empathic position with respect to culturally and ethnically different characters and their circumstances. The analysis of the focus texts provided an

insight into how texts evoke familiar schemas and scripts as ways for affirming or disrupting ideas, attitudes, and assumptions that readers bring to a text based on their own experiential and literary repertoires. It is through this mental processing of information that readers are encouraged to empathise with characters and their circumstances. However, it is not my contention that reading literature makes readers more empathic, tolerant or ethical individuals, nor do I claim that reading about injustice and trauma will lead to individuals responding to real world ethical demands. To investigate these possibilities is beyond the scope of this study.

A further contention of this thesis is that picture books, like other cultural texts, are ideologically formed and therefore impart, either intentionally or not, particular ideological positions to their readers. Children's literature theorists support the view that children's texts are inevitably ideological and play a significant role in shaping children's ethical and moral understanding (Stephens, 1990, 1992). In terms of politics, or what Stephens (1992) calls 'ruling ideologies,' children's literature is never innocent but always embodies ideologies through its language and, in the case of picture books, its illustrations. In this way, children's literature proposes and models ways of being, particularly, a social, ethical, and empathic subject.

Depending on the ideological position the author and the text want their readers to adopt, picture books may advocate, attack or assent to (Sutherland, 1985) a political, social or cultural doctrine that it addresses. On this basis, I discussed (Chapter 3) how Australian picture books' underlying ideological message about multiculturalism varies depending on the period when they were published, and on the socio-political background of the country at the time of publication. While picture books published during the early years of Australian multiculturalism seem to have attempted to advocate or affirm various aspects of multicultural ideology, later publications, especially ones that were published during and after the 1990s, were found to be counter-narratives in their response to state politics. In particular, picture books responding to the different Australian governments' stances against asylum seekers or those known as 'boat people' often invite readers to take critical perspectives on those measures such as border protection, refugee detention, and vilification of asylum seekers as boat people, queue jumpers, people smugglers or criminals. While these observations align with the previous research (Dudek, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2007, 2011a, 2011b; Hillel, 2010) on earlier picture books' responses

to former government policies, this study claims that the progression, discontinuity and emergence of new trends are reflected in later picture books such as *The Other Bears* (2010), *A Safe Place to Live* (2011), *Ships in the Field* (2012) and *My Two Blankets* (2014).

Multiculturalism in Australian picture books has been largely treated as celebratory and committed. This dual conception has been well documented by children's literature scholars (Bradford & Hui-Ling, 2007; Dudek, 2011b; Stephens, 1990, 1996, 2012). Whereas some (multicultural) picture books present multiculturalism as embodying a celebratory discourse and thereby downplay or eliminate ideological tensions, others attempt to promote multicultural values, or interrogate multiculturalism's meaning, usage and currency in light of changing politics, demography, public demands and questions of Australian identity. This differing approach gives rise to further descriptions or categorisation of these picture books, namely, those that are committed to the ideals of multiculturalism and those that are critical of its politics. While the committed texts promote multicultural ideals, politically inflected texts take a more critical perspective on cultural diversity, its positive effects on Australian society and its negative by-products such as racism, prejudice and discrimination. Although the current study sought the selected picture books' thematic resemblance to migration, it did not attempt any 'neat categorisations' (Mallan, 2014) of this sort. Instead, the study examined how both celebratory and committed aspects of multiculturalism are used to promote or inhibit empathy towards cultural difference. Accordingly, it found many picture books use celebratory aspects such as arts, crafts, dance and food to appeal to young children, while committed aspects are submerged and suggested as a subtext in many picture books (see: *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010b) and *Marty and Mei Ling* (Cummings & Smith, 1996)).

Throughout this thesis, I have treated Australian children's picture books as sites where liberal multicultural ideals such as equality, tolerance and respect are negotiated, promoted and contested. With focused attention on multiculturalism, Chapter 4 investigated how picture books about migration attempt to deepen children's perceptive understanding of migrants' plights, and thereby potentially nurture tolerance and empathy. Indeed, imagined migrant experiences in the focus picture books explain how migration may cause real-life problems and anxieties to

children as well as to adults. In particular, these texts reveal the complex nature of identity confusion/crisis in children who shift between cultures and the effect on their subjective understanding and intersubjective relationships, especially in cross-generational interactions, as discussed with respect to *Old Magic* (Baillie & Wu, 1996). Speaking a different language from the host country is a further difficulty many migrants face during and after migration. While *Speak Chinese, Fang Fang!* emphasises the importance of language for the membership of a collective, *My Two Blankets* metaphorically foregrounds how lack of proficiency in a language can affect interaction with native speakers, causing migrants to be alienated or marginalised.

A further element that disrupts the multicultural ideals of equality and tolerance is how notions of inclusion and exclusion are played out in texts. While the picture books *Marty and Mei-Ling* (Cummings & Smith, 1996) and *My Two Blankets* (Kobald & Blackwood, 2014) provide realistic accounts of the emotional states that this dualism can engender, *The Other Bears* (Thompson, 2010) and *Cat and Fish* (Grant & Curtis, 2003) offer more analogical interpretations using non-human characters. Together these texts illuminate how spatialised power operates within the binaries of acceptance and rejection, inclusion and exclusion and belonging and not-belonging at the encounters between (mainstream) self and (cultural) other.

Picture books in which fictional characters endure the trauma of war, persecution and tragedies are not new, but as this study has shown, recent Australian picture books are drawing on biographical experiences of trauma, inviting readers to witness the agonising predicament of an asylum seeker or a refugee. In the selected texts, the brutality of war and the resultant agony of dispossession are focalised by a child character. Using children as focalisers not only augments the story's pathos, but also works to orient child readers as empathic individuals through cognitive and affective engagement. For instance, in *Ships in the Field* (Gervay & Pignataro, 2012), the suffering of the parent is witnessed by the focalising child, but not given prominence. Some texts also show how trauma and suffering need not be final or without hope. As the discussion of *The Little Refugee* (Do & Do, 2011) and *A Safe Place to Live* (Walker, 2011) demonstrated, despite the formidable truth of dispossession, people persevere and navigate through life's perils and predicaments.

By analysing picture books about trauma in terms of empathic unsettlement,

which counteracts subjective engagement with characters, I have shown how texts can still encourage readerly empathy towards victims. For instance, the analysis of *Home and Away* (Marsden & Ottley, 2008) disclosed the text's use of unsettling strategies (for instance, the use of child-like drawings between the realistic illustrations) to disrupt readers' unchecked identification with characters and position them as secondary witnesses of the traumatic experiences of an Australian family who flee for refuge when their country is attacked. It revealed that these strategies interrupt linear progression of the plot trajectories common in picture books, but allow reconstruction of the victim's voice in a way that substantiates trauma and thereby encourages reader's affective engagement with them (LaCapra, 2001).

Mediation

In investigating the empathic potential of Australian migration-themed picture books, I did not anticipate or expect that every picture book would necessarily promote multiculturalism, or support positive attitudes such as empathy towards migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, or cultural difference generally. Nevertheless, picture books are a highly mediated genre of literature due to the age of their target readership. Such mediation exerts a considerable influence on how texts are written, produced and received and warrants consideration.

Children's books are mostly written by adults. Researchers in the field of children's literature agree that adult mediation in creating children's fiction puts the whole notion of *children's* literature into a question (Nodelman, 1985; Rose, 1984). Adults' mediation of children's literature, however, is not limited to its writing and production, but prevails during the processes of recommendation (including purchase, and book awards), reading and interpretation of children's texts. Adults' evaluation of what is good for children is oftentimes influenced and shaped by the assumptions and notions of 'the child' and of childhood that are prevalent in different historical, social and cultural contexts. Adults may often underestimate children's ability to comprehend complex matters such as migration, asylum seeking, and traumatic exile. Consequently, some adults who play a mediating role in the lives of child readers (parents, teachers, librarians and book publishers) may believe that picture books such as those discussed in this thesis are too difficult or inappropriate for children, and therefore they act as gatekeepers, restraining or controlling children's access to literature that they think is 'not suitable' for them. However,

paradoxically, it is also the adult mediation that makes children's literature accessible for children. Pedagogy, in that regard, is vital as teachers can enhance children's literary experience and its potential for developing ethical understanding of self and other. It is clear from the analysis in this thesis how picture books furnish teachers and students with an accessible means to explore inter-cultural and intersubjective matters through sensitive discussions.

In fact, picture books provide materials that inspire young children to reflect on self and the other. Understanding that others have emotions and they share similar mental states is one way that children develop positive intersubjective engagement. Empathy becomes crucial in this regard. Picture books have the capacity to enhance children's affective responses. Narratives exemplify subjective feelings and outward expressions of such emotions. Illustrations play an important role in conveying the emotional state of characters and in eliciting readers' response. Therefore, picture books have the capacity to help children "to infer deeper meanings from the information gleaned from both the written and the visual texts, and to engage in the meaning-making processes that construct a narrative" (Goodwin, 2009, p. 154). However, this meaning-making process may not be completed by children alone as it may require adult mediation. Children's literary experience can be enhanced by sensitive talk with more experienced readers. While many young readers have little or no experience of complex emotions, picture books offer vicarious emotional experiences of which they can partake (Nikolajeva, 2014a). With adult mediation, children not only learn or experience these emotions but also attempt to understand the possible causes of sufferings and contentment that others experience. Furthermore, in a time when Australian school classrooms have become increasingly diverse, and issues of cultural difference are of high political profile, studying intergroup emotions, such as empathy, and the possibility of advocating such emotions through children's literature is timely.

Educational Implications

In the Australian educational context, cultural otherness has become an important aspect of school education. Although this study does not take an educational perspective, it has some implications for use in the classroom as well.

For example, teaching for cultural diversity adds another dimension to the pedagogical use of migration-themed picture books. Migrant students from diverse

backgrounds form a significant component of many Australian classrooms. Developing awareness about ethnic diversity in Australia and promotion of intercultural understanding amongst students have now become a national curriculum priority (ACARA, 2013). Teaching for diversity in a way that meets such curriculum requirements can be challenging. As this thesis has shown, picture book narratives of migration are often reflective of ethnic and/or cultural diversity and are informative of how it feels to be different. *Marty and Mei-Ling* with its school context offers an imaginative account of being different in both the classroom and the playground and the feelings associated with feeling sad and lonely. As a part of pedagogical mediation, teachers' effective use of these texts may help children to understand, recognise or imagine what it feels like to be someone who is different and how one might feel when treated as such. As discussed in chapter 4, this kind of exposition offers children the opportunity to see themselves and others in a realistic environment and to exercise their empathic imagination.

Students from refugee backgrounds, however, bring more than a cultural experience to the school classroom. As discussed earlier in this thesis, children of refugee backgrounds may have been exposed to some form of violence, persecution, armed conflict or civil disorder. Therefore, trauma associated with refugee experience becomes an inevitable part of any concerns regarding these children. At schools where refugee children are offered with suitable level of education, other children in the classroom should also be offered with some education about refugee experiences. Such an understanding may be necessary to challenge distorted conceptions about refugees which influence mainstream school students' perceptions of refugees and thereby influence their capacity for engagement and empathy (Hattam & Every, 2010). Refugee-themed picture books such as *Hiram and B*, *Home and Away*, and *Ziba Came on a Boat* offer stories of young people caught up in war and adversity. These books (and others) are substantial resources for teachers to introduce sensitive and politically-charged issues into the classroom and to engage in thoughtful discussions with students about the plights of diverse human experiences.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESEARCH FIELD

This thesis contributes to an emerging area of research on picture books' use of empathic narrative techniques. In exploring empathic narrative techniques in migration-themed Australian picture books the thesis makes a new contribution to

the children's literature research by adapting LaCapra's (2001) theory of empathic unsettlement in the analysis of picture books that deal with traumatic experiences of forced migrants. This perspective has unsettled the more familiar ways in which empathy can be understood and treated in picture books, whereby readers are expected to identify with the central character. I have argued that in picture books that use strategies that deliberately distance readers, demanding an objective stance, empathy assumes a different function, one that enables readers to take on an ethical responsibility to consider the historical specificity of the traumatic events and bear witness to the resultant suffering of its victims.

A further contribution that this thesis makes is with respect to how Australian picture books over an extended period of 40 years reflect the changing social and political attitudes to multiculturalism and migration. Australia's treatment of asylum seekers has become a recent player in these discussions. The current political climate in Australia reflects fears about what is seen as the 'refugee problem' or predominantly the problem of boat people. The Operation Sovereign Borders policy (known as the 'stop the boats' policy) relegates the asylum seeker problem, which otherwise should be treated on humanitarian grounds, to border issues that threaten Australia's national security. Further development of these and other political imperatives regarding asylum seeking will no doubt inform and add different narrative dimensions to prospective picture books to capture these intensities.

There is potential for this study to make international contributions beyond the usual academic outputs. I come from a country (Sri Lanka) where multiculturalism is not followed as a political doctrine and therefore issues of cultural diversity are not a concern in the literature for children. This situation exists despite the fact that Sri Lanka is demographically a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious country that hosts people of different ethnic descent including Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers and Malays. At the current time, reconciliation is of the highest importance for Sri Lanka after the ending of the 30-year-long war against The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 2009. Although there is a handful of adult fiction which offers insights into the tensions which exist in the contemporary Sri Lankan social and cultural milieu, children's literature is yet to capture inter-ethnic and intercultural conflicts in a way that could affect young readers' developing sense of self and their society. Sri Lankan picture books in particular remain didactic and are

governed by traditional moral codes and taboos from which children's picture books in the Western countries became free decades ago (Evans, 2015). This thesis therefore has challenged me to rethink many of my prior assumptions and conceptions as I investigated how picture books delineate different aspects and attributes of those matters associated with contentious issues of multiculturalism and migration. However, exposure to Australian multicultural picture books and the experience gained through this research will enable me to contribute new insights into Sri Lankan children's literature studies. Dissemination of the findings of this research in Sri Lankan academia will hopefully further encourage similar research in the local context.

A further significant contribution of this study lies in its application of schema and scripts from cognitive narratology to the examination of picture books. As noted above, these cognitive constructs have to date received limited attention in children's literature research. Stephens's application of schema and scripts to the examination of topics of empathy and migration in Australian multicultural picture books has provided important groundwork for the analytical approach in this study. Specifically, this study demonstrates how these cognitive constructs assume a local significance and resonate with Australia's political stance towards asylum seekers and refugees from 1996 to the present (e.g., *Refugees*, *The Island*, *Ziba Came on a Boat*). While some picture books draw on familiar schemas (e.g., *The Little Refugee*), others challenge these schemas by offering different cognitive frames (e.g., *Home and Away*). This strategy of reproducing or questioning a schema is shown in the study to offer different ways for revising assumptions about cultural difference and for realising the significance of memory and storytelling for re-imagining the past and understanding the present. By focussing on Australian picture books this study shows how the familiar celebratory multicultural narrative continues to be promoted, but it now exists alongside a more politically-inflected narrative about refugees. Further research over the next decade will be able to determine the extent to which these narratives continue or change, and whether a different narrative emerges that reflects Australia's geo-political location as part of the Asian region.

Throughout this thesis, I have shown how picture books invite readers to imagine the lives of differently situated others, especially those who are disadvantaged, marginalised or treated unfairly because of circumstances that are

often beyond their control. Such an imagining allows readers to understand different people and their plight by recognising the state of distress they experience. Readers can feel compassion as they observe how both migrants and refugees can be subject to cruelty in their search for safety and protection – basic human needs. Perhaps this understanding will help children who are not themselves refugees or asylum seekers to develop tolerance toward those who are; or perhaps it will encourage them to shed preconceived notions and negative attitudes toward refugees and asylum seekers. For children who have experienced involuntary exile, these books may provide acknowledgement of their experience. Understanding and compassion are the basis for empathic feelings and the ethical engagement necessary for multiculturalism to flourish.

Appendices

Appendix A

Sample 1: Picture Books about Migration

1. Wagner, Jenny & Brooks, Ron. (1978). *The Bunyip of Berkeley's Creek*, Melbourne: Penguin
2. Gleason, Libby & Greder, Armin. (1991), *Big Dog*. Sydney: Ashton Scholastic
3. Rubinstein, Gillian & Denton, Terry. (1992), *Mr. Plunket's Pool*, Milsons Point, New South Wales: Random House
4. Cummings, Phil & Smith, Craig. (1995). *Marty and Mei Ling*. Milsons Point, New South Wales: Random House
5. Loh, Morag & Mo, Xiangyi. (1995). *Grandpa and Ah Gong*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Hyland House
6. Overend, Jenni & C. Lewis, Naomi. (1995). *Princess Grandma*. Sydney: Ashton Scholastic
7. Baillie, Allan & Wu, Di. (1996). *Old Magic*. Milsons Point, New South Wales: Random House
8. Fox, Mem. (1997). *Who Ever You Are*, Sydney: Hodder Headline
9. Marsden, John & Tan, Shaun. (1998). *The Rabbits*. Sydney: Hachette Livre
10. Morimoto, Junko. (1998). *The Two Bullies*. Milsons Point, New South Wales: Random House
11. Tan, Shaun. (2000). *The Lost Thing*. Port Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian Children's Books.
12. Rippin, Sally. (2000). *What a Mess, Fang Fang!*. Norwood, South Australia: Omnibus Books
13. Guo, Jing Jing & Wu, Di. (2001). *Grandpa's Mask*, Sassafras, Victoria: Benchmark

14. Hathorn, Libby & Stanley, Elizabeth. (2002). *The Wishing Cupboard*. Port Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian.
15. French, Simon & Rawlins, Donna. (2002). *Guess the Baby*. Sydney, New South Wales: ABC Books
16. Willis, Scott & Packer, Jenna. (2003). *Enough is Enough*. Lindfield, New South Wales: Scholastic
17. Curtis, Neil & Grant, Joan. (2004). *Cat and Fish*. Port Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian
18. Graham, Bob. (2004). *Jethro Byrde, Fairy Child*, London: Walker Books
19. Curtis, Neil & Grant, Joan. (2005). *Cat and Fish Go to Sea*. Port Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian
20. Jolly, Jane & Wu, Di. (2005). *Glass Tears*. Balmain, New South Wales: Limelight Press
21. Tan, Shaun. (2006). *The Arrival*. Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian Books.
22. Oliver, Narelle. (2006). *Home*. Malvern, South Australia: Omnibus Books.
23. French, Jackie & Whatley, Bruce (2006). *Pete the Sheep*. Pymble, New South Wales: Harper Collins
24. Thompson, Collin. (2007). *DUST*. Sydney, New South Wales: ABC Books
25. Cunxin, Li & Spudvilas, Anne. (2007). *The Peasant Prince*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin Books
26. Wild, Margaret & James, Ann. (2007). *Lucy Goosey*. Surry Hills, New South Wales: Little Hare Book
27. Heinrich, Sally. (2007). *The Most Beautiful Lantern*. Sydney, New South Wales: Hachette Livre
28. Tan, Shaun. (2008). *Tales from Outer Suburbia*. Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allan & Unwin.
29. Wu, Di & Huang, Kathy. (2009). *Are You a Dragon?* Willoughby, New South Wales: Rainbow Dragon Publishing
30. Rosen, Michael. (2009). *This is Our House*. London: Walker Books.

31. Thompson, Michael. (2010). *The Other Bears*. Fremantle, Western Australia: Fremantle Press
32. Baker, Jeannie. (2010). *Mirror*. London: Walker Books
33. Greder, Armin. (2010). *The City*. Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin
34. Graham, Bob. (2011). *A Bus Called Heaven*. London: Walker Books
35. Wheatley, Nadia & Rawlins, Donna. (2012). *My Place*. New Town, New South Wales: Walker Books.
36. Kobald, Irena & Blackwood, Freya. (2014). *My Two Blankets*. Richmond, Victoria: Little Hare Books.
37. Magerl, Caroline. (2014). *Hasel and Rose* – Melbourne, Victoria: Penguin

Appendix B

Sample 2: Picture Books about Refugees/ Asylum Seekers/ Boat Arrivals

38. Wild, Margret & Vivas, Julie. (1991). *Let the Celebrations Begin*. Norwood, South Australia: Omnibus.
39. Garland, Sherry & Tatsuro Kiuchi. (1993). *The Lotus Seed*. Marco Book Company.
40. Say, Allen. (1993). *Grandfather's Journey*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
41. Martin, Sibylla. (1998). *The Lost Children*. London: Macmillan.
42. Heffernan, John. (2001). *My Dog*. Hunters Hill, New South Wales: Margaret Hamilton
43. Hoffman, Mary. (2002). *The Colour of Home*. London: Frances Lincoln
44. Miller, David. (2003). *Refugees*. South Melbourne, Victoria: Lothian Books.
45. Caswell, Brian & Ottley, Matt. (2003). *Hynam and B*. Sydney, New South Wales: Hodder Children's Books
46. Oliver, Narelle. (2005). *Dancing the Boom Cha Cha Boogie*. Norwood, South Australia: Omnibus Books
47. Williams, Mary. (2005). *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*. Madison Avenue, NY: Lee and Low Books
48. Jolly, Jane & Hurst, Ellis. (2006). *Ali the Bold Heart*. Balmain, New South Wales: Limelight Press.
49. Lofthouse, Liz & Ingpen, Robert. (2007). *Ziba Came on a Boat*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin
50. Beck, Jeniffer & Fisher, Lindy. (2007). *Stefania's Dancing Slippers*. Auckland: Scholastic
51. Greder, Armin. (2007). *The Island*. Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allan and Unwin.

52. Marin, Gabiann & Grantford, Jacqui. (2007). *A True Person*. Frenchs Forest, New South Wales: New Frontier Publishing
53. Cavouras, Czenya (2007). *Rainbow Bird*. Collingwood, Victoria: Australians Against Racism
54. Williams, Karen L. & Mohammed, Khadra. (2007). *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eardmans Books
55. Marsden, John & Ottley, Matt. (2008). *Home and Away*. Melbourne: Lothian
56. Williams, Mary & Mohammed, Khadra, (2009). *My name is Sangoel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eardmans Books
57. Morley, Ben & Pearce, Carl. (2009). *The Silence Seeker*. London Tamarind: Random House Publishing.
58. Do, Anh & Do, Suzanne & Whatley, Bruce. (2011). *The Little Refugee*. Crows Nest, New South Wales: Allen and Unwin
59. Susanne Gervay & Pignataro, Anna. (2012). *Ships in the Field*. Ormond, Victoria: Ford Street Publishing.
60. Rachael Castle & Wight, Nicholas (2012). *Emmaline Rabbit*. Melbourne, Victoria: Salvo Publishing.
61. Wild, Margaret & Blackwood, Freya (2013), *The Treasure Box*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin

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