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Seeing the Possibilities: Global Literature and Cultural Inquiry Across Multiple Contexts

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Seeing the Possibilities: Global Literature and Cultural Inquiry Across Multiple Contexts
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Seeing the Possibilities: Global Literature and Cultural Inquiry Across Multiple Contexts

> *I have come to believe that our work should not be a closely guarded secret, something to which we alone have access. Instead, I now know that our work is most powerful when it is done in the service of the common good. After all, what is the purpose of research in particular, and education in general, if not to improve the human condition?*
>
> *Sonia Nieto (2017)*

We began working on the Spring 2020 issue of *WOW Stories: Connections from the Classroom* some months before the COVID-19 health crisis, a situation affecting every aspect of life, especially, education and schools. No one in the field of education could have anticipated the profound impact the pandemic would have on their work, students, and literacy practices. The goals, however, remain the same, as Sonia Nieto notes, to improve the human condition."

The vignettes featured in this issue of *WOW Stories* exemplify the notion of research and teaching that works toward the common good, notably, stories of how educators across a range of contexts, from university to preschool classrooms, use global literature to foster knowledge of, and appreciation for, people living in other parts of the world whose lives differ from their own. But, even more than this, the authors of this issue see their engagement with students and global literature as an opportunity to develop what Johnson calls in her vignette a socially responsible reader. She argues that this type of reading invites readers into a space of nepantla, which is to hold two competing ideas in an attempt to understand them both."In times of social upheaval, such as what we are experiencing, this ability seems more significant than ever.

In the first article titled "*Critical Conversations about Global and Multicultural Literature*"," teacher educators Maria Perpetua Socorro U. Liwanag, Xiaoming Liu and Huili Hong describe how students in their university children's literature courses viewed the use of language variations in global and multicultural children's literature. Through their discussions around global and multicultural literature, teacher candidates learned more about diverse texts and developed a more inclusive lens. Similarly, Holly Johnson describes her process and experience teaching the first iteration of an international children's literature course in "*Using International Literature to Think about "Home' with Teacher Candidates*". In this vignette, Johnson describes her initial goals for the course, her process for selecting texts, and the instructional engagements she implemented, all framed within the broad theme of Home. Rocio Herron and Julia López-Robertson take us into Herron's preschool classroom in a story that starts with a chance encounter that led to a university and school collaboration centered around global literature and inquiry. They provide a description of how Herron facilitated inquiries with young students and their families around their personal cultures, and how López-Robertson was able to bring teacher candidates to Herron's classroom to experience

sharing diverse texts with students. Lastly, Priscila J.B.M. Costa, in "*Codeswitching in Picturebooks and the Representation of Spanish-Speaking Cultures: A Reader Response Approach*", shares from a larger case study she conducted examining instances of code-switching in Spanish-English texts with a Spanish-English teacher and mother through a reader response lens. Her analysis and findings further shed light on the complexities of language, literature, and global inquiry.

The authors of these vignettes share a common goal--an unyielding commitment to intercultural education through the integration of multicultural and global literature within their diverse teaching contexts. Their purpose is to develop students' knowledge about the world, including global perspectives and skills, in order to interact effectively in an increasingly diverse and globalized society. These educators and researchers chose not to keep their work a "closely guarded secret," and inspire us with the possibilities offered by interactions with global literature in realizing alternative ways of being in the world—for the common good.

Tracy Smiles & Mary Fahrenbruck, Editors

Nieto, S. ((2017, August 23)). On reconciling divergent ideas: A life-long quest. Acquired Wisdom Series, S. Tobias, D. F. Fletcher, & D. Berliner((Eds.). *Education Review, 24.* http://dx.doi.org/er.v24.2285.

Critical Conversations about Global and Multicultural Literature

Maria Perpetua Socorro U. Liwanag, Xiaoming Liu and Huili Hong

In the U.S., especially in large urban schools, the number of students from diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds is growing. According to the most recent National Center for Education Statistics ((CES) report, between 2000 and 2017, the percentage of school-age children who are white decreased while the percentage of children from other racial and ethnic groups increased ((e.g. Hispanic and Asian children). However, the teachers in public elementary and secondary schools were still predominantly White (de Brey, et al., 2019). In order to prepare culturally responsive teachers, as literacy teacher educators, we believe that it is important for students to read widely as they explore and expand their knowledge of books that depict stories and characters that differ from their own lives and experiences. Bishop (1990))highlighted the value of children's literature as mirrors, windows and sliding glass doors. This value guided our thinking and teaching as we used global and multicultural literature in our literacy courses. We made it a point to read aloud books to show examples of diverse texts. We became advocates of books as we brought and shared a variety of diverse texts. We even provided copies of children's and young adult books for the students to read so they would know about quality global and multicultural literature. We wanted students to read widely and share their insights about how these texts can help them understand the perspectives of others in society.

In this article, we discuss how students in our courses viewed the use of language variations in global and multicultural children's literature. Issues about language are close to our hearts as we ourselves speak more than one language beyond English. We believe that any instance where language is portrayed and treated as a deficit or speakers of certain languages are positioned as the "other" (Delpit, 2006) is worth exploring and unpacking.

Defining Global and Multicultural Literature

We consider global literature as "any book that is set in a global context outside the readers' own global location"((Short, 2016, p. 5)). For most students in our courses, this would mean any book set outside the United States. We also use this term to "include books authored by Americans and by insiders to a global culture""(Short, 2016, p. 5). We define multicultural literature as texts that "reflect the racial, ethnic, and social diversity that is characteristic of our pluralistic society", particularly books by and about groups "whose histories and cultures have been omitted, distorted, or undervalued" (Bishop, 1997, p.3). We also stress the importance of including books with socially diverse story elements (e.g. exceptionality, age, religion, class/ poverty, immigration, and sexual orientation))within our definition of multiculturalism because this is often an overlooked area.

Who We Are

As teacher educators of Asian-descent, we bring our own backgrounds and experiences to our teaching in a predominantly White population in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. We came together as a collegial group of faculty who bonded over our common interests in children's literature and diversity to form a community of practice ((Wenger, 1998).

The three of us met regularly to have conversations about our teaching. Maria Perpetua and Huili work with undergraduate students while Xiaoming teaches the students in the Master of Arts in Teaching ((MAT) program. Maria Perpetua and Xiaoming regularly teach a course in children's literature. Huili teaches a class on linguistically diverse learners where she guides students to use multilingual and multicultural children's literature to connect and teach diverse children. In our conversations with one another, we identified themes about our teaching and decided to highlight students' views of language variations across our courses. We share some classroom scenarios that made us examine how students viewed the use of language variations in global and multicultural children's literature. Students' views prompted us to reflect on the actions we took to disrupt the notion of language difference as a deficit.

Class Scenarios

After reading *Last Stop on Market Street* ((de la Peña, 2015), Linda (all student names are pseudonyms), a student in Maria Perpetua's undergraduate children's literature class, responded that she liked the story but was concerned about what she thought was "wrong grammar" in the book. She was referring to the following two sentences from the book: ""How come we gotta wait for the bus in all this wet?" (n.p.) and ""Nana, how come we don't got a car?"((n.p.))

This award-winning picturebook tells a story about the different communities, community members, and transportation means through the voices of a young African-American boy and his grandmother. This book skillfully used urban African-American English to show how language is culturally representative of a community. Linda's initial thought was that the text encouraged "wrong use of grammar."

In contrast to Maria Perpetua's students, the MAT students in Xiaoming's class commented that the language variation in *Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015) reflected the culture. They considered the use of dialect as an indicator of cultural authenticity. However, one student, Brittany, pointed out that even though this book is empowering, it does make her think of how she does not feel safe in certain areas. She was referring to the city nearby our university that has a large African-American community.

Our Actions

As we continuously reflected on our experiences as educators and students' responses to literature in our classes (Liwanag, 2017), we found commonalities in our instructional approaches and how we engaged the students in critical conversations. For example, Maria Perpetua considered Linda's concern about the author's use of "incorrect grammar" as a teachable moment and involved the class in a critical conversation about language variations and language as power in texts (Janks, et al., 2013). The students also read more texts that included additional examples of language variations (see Table 1) to help them consider and think more about this issue. Students exchanged views about diversity in languages from the stories they read.

Title	Author/Year	Language Variation	Description
Flossie & and the Fox	Paticia McKissack, 1986	African American English	Flossie takes some eggs to her neighbor and manages to outwit a fox along the way.
Mirandy & Brother Wind	Paticia McKissack, 1988	African American English	Mirandy tries to catch Brother Wind to be her partner for the cakewalk.
Chato Goes Cruisin'	Gary Soto, 2005	Hispanic American	Chato and Novio Boy, two cool cats, win a cruise only to find out that everyone on board is a dog.
Home at Last	Susan Middleton-Elya, 2002	Hispanic American	Eight year old Ana encourages and helps her mother learn English.

Table 1. *Texts Featuring Language Variations*

Maria Perpetua encouraged and guided students to investigate the author's purpose and the context of the story. She also encouraged them to ask why authors might use this language form in their writing and to think about its impact in the story. Students discussed how text can reflect the language of a social, racial, cultural, or linguistic group, and be considered a dialect. At the end of the class, students reached a consensus about the value of authenticity in the use of dialects in diverse texts.

Brittany's notion that reading *Last Stop on Market Street* ((de la Peña, 2015) reminded her of how she felt unsafe in the city caught our attention. We decided to use text sets to avoid reinforcing stereotypes of a certain cultural community. A text set includes books of different genres and covers a variety of aspects of a certain culture. We wanted students to read with purpose so they can "become more conscious and committed to others" (Short, 2019, p. 8) instead of narrowing their views of the world as Chimamanda Adiche warned about with the dangers of a single story (TEDGlobal, 2009). Through reading a collection of books about a given culture, students can potentially develop a holistic view of that culture.

In our classes, we engaged students in exploring text sets of bilingual books (Table 2) and provided opportunities for students to see languages and orthographies from other cultures in these books.

Title	Author/Year	Language other than English	Description
Lakas and the Makibaka Hotel	Anthony Robles & Eloisa de Jesús, 2006	Tagalog	Families come together to fight for each other and for their homes.
Little Rabbit's Questions	Dayong Gan, 2016	Chinese	Little rabbit asks questions and her mother answers each one.
La Muñeca de Elizabeti (Elizabeti's Doll)	Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen, 1998	Spanish	Elizabeti takes care of her doll the same way her mother cares for her new baby brother.
Mango, Abuela, y Yo (Mango, Abuela, and Me)	Meg Medina, 2015	Spanish	Mia helps her grandmother learn English.
Cooper's Lesson	Sun Yung Shin, 2004	Korean	This story is about identity and how friendship can be shared by different generations.
A Place Where Sunflowers Grow	Amy Lee-Tai, 2012	Japanese	Despite living in a Japanese internment camp, families continue to have hope.

Table 2, *Text Set on Bilingual Books About Family*

Reading books showcasing families across varied perspectives enhanced students' knowledge of diverse texts. It also became evident in reading different perspectives that they came to realize the value of other written languages. This was noticeable in Amanda's reflection:

> "The different languages give students a chance to practice reading in multiple languages, see their own language or a chance for students to see the difference in written languages across the world the various perspectives would allow students to develop their own thoughts of the world."

In addition to bilingual books, we also used video resources. Huili and Maria Perpetua used *American Tongues*((Kolker & Alvari, 1987)) and *Do you speak American?* (Cran, et al., 2005) to introduce English variations and help students reflect on these variations in this country, their own states, and their home communities. Huili further challenged students to think about language as connected to social identity, power, and family history so they could understand that language is more than words, sentences, and grammar. The "correctness" of certain language uses are socially and culturally situated and defined.

Final Reflections

The key to helping students actively engage and learn about diverse texts was to provide them with many opportunities to read widely along with a safe place to raise tensions and exchange ideas. Throughout the semester, we continued to help students learn about the value of diverse texts as they expanded their own multicultural views and developed an inclusive lens for participating meaningfully in a global world. We found in their final course reflections a renewed interest in reading as well as a zest for reading global and multicultural books. Our courses had become a space for students to bring together their questions and understandings of quality diverse books. Students were also challenged to articulate their new understandings and to learn from others about their use of global and multicultural texts.

To sustain their reading access and interest in diverse texts, we also provided students with additional resources where they looked for books according to their needs beyond our courses. Resources included:

- Storyline Online: A web resource of streamed videos of award-winning children's literature featuring actors reading books.
- Notable Books for a Global Society: An award list of outstanding books to help children understand others and their cultures.
- The Collaborative Children's Books Center: This web resource provides research information related to the study of children's and young adult literature.

As part of a learning community of educators, we found ways to work together by sharing ideas around books. Through this, we found commonalities in our teaching as we organized ways to help expand students' knowledge about diverse books. Inspiring students to be open to different perspectives by critically conversing about books helps develop an inclusive lens. By learning and thinking globally we can see our connections to one another.

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Using Global Literature to Think about "Home" with Teacher Candidates

Holly Johnson

When thinking about young people and their reading, more often than not young people can't name authors and stories from around the world, nor do they know when they are reading global literature. The *Harry Potter* series is one of the most ubiquitous international book series in the world, yet students don't know they are reading globally while doing so. And while we are delighted that young people know and love the *Harry Potter* series, there is so much more to discover. To discover not only others from around the world, but who they are in response to the Other they may find in literature from another country, another situation, another social world. To find great stories from around the world it often takes a teacher, but what if teachers don't know what is available?

In the Fall of 2019, I conducted the first iteration of a literature course that would highlight children's and young adult literature from around the world. The course met twice weekly for 15 weeks, and students were invited to not only embrace the literature, but the Other who may be found within that literature. In essence, when reflecting on my goals for the class, I wanted students to discover ways they might become more reflective and socially responsible readers. Determining an umbrella or universal theme that would allow for such development became a critical aspect of the class.

Contemplating a universal theme, I wanted a concept that would resonate with students while also incorporating an opportunity for addressing what I valued as a teacher educator and as a citizen. I valued the concept of cosmopolitanism, especially the aspects of being "reflectively loyal" and "reflectively open" to the Other (Hansen, 2017), in which individuals are able to embrace and reflect upon their own beliefs and values while also being open to considering and reflecting on other ideas and values. I also appreciated the concept of "hospitality" to the stranger, a Kantian idea from 1795 that embraces the idea that the stranger or foreigner not be treated with hostility upon entering somebody else's territory (Kant, 1795). The concept of hospitality includes "feeling for the other—feeling sympathy for, compassion for, sorry for, distressed for, concerned for, and so on" (Bateson, 1991, p. 11), which directly considers the Other and embraces the idea of what Bateson suggests is to be "other-oriented."

To encompass these ideas, I selected the umbrella concept of "home," which seemed especially fitting for students who were in the midst of one of the greatest transitions of their lives—moving from their own sense of home into a wider and often more diverse world or territory than they had previously experienced. Many students were, in multiple ways, becoming Other, far from the familiar and becoming a stranger in need of hospitality.

With the umbrella concept of home in place, I developed a course that incorporated readings and discussions of children's and adolescent literature as well as professional articles. I prepared presentations on issues related to teachers knowing about and using global literature in their classrooms. I also determined a way for students to respond to what they were learning and pondering through a weekly journal that specifically addressed the concept of becoming socially responsible readers. The journal included developing a metaphor that encapsulated their thinking of home, the Other, and their social responsibility as readers as they negotiated

and discussed the world and their geographical, psychological, social, and political locations. As a final project, I asked groups of students to research a region of the world, which included a booklist about that region. By researching various regions of the world with the intent of becoming more familiar with not only what those regions might be like geographically, politically, and socially, but also the literature of that region or about that region, students had an opportunity to expand their ideas of home or to consider ways in which an Other's concept of home was similar to theirs. I encouraged them to find texts written by authors from the region when possible and to address the issues of authenticity and accuracy.

The groups were encouraged to especially consider the issues faced by the region's inhabitants and how those issues might be global in nature. In this article, I attend particularly to the books I used and their general reception by students who participated in the course. As an IRB is in progress, I cannot report individual student responses or on their specific work in the class, but rather only general knowledge from the course. In addition, I use the term "student" for all class participants while noting that some were sophomores not yet accepted into the professional cohort of teacher candidacy, and others were already teacher candidates.

An Expanding Sense of Home

On the first day of class I asked students to explore the concept of home by doing a short write of their ideas of home and reading aloud Patricia MacLachlan's (1995) *What You Know First* to address the concept of reflective loyalty (Hansen, 2017). From our discussion of the book and our ideas, many students suggested home included concepts of the familiar, which was comprised of the comfort and safety that came from family and friends. Many considered a particular neighborhood, family home, or city as home with very few students noting home as a concept remaining solidly within the realm of the physical. They also considered the transitioning of home as they were living away from their childhood homes on their own for the first time. As we went though the course, I asked students to return to the concept of home as they read the selected pieces of global literature. Students responded to exit tickets that asked questions such as, "How does this impact your concept of home?" or "What metaphor would you use to address your concept of home?" In their responses, students embodied the possibilities of reflective loyalty and openness (Hansen, 2017). By the end of the term, many shifted their thinking from home as a physical space to ideas that included "being their own home," which resulted from discussions of literature that included the tragedy of having home destroyed or characters being displaced. Seeing the self as home, and with it a certain sense of autonomy in thought and behavior, began to make more sense as they noted that their movement from their childhood locations was a type of disruption, a concept found in class novels.

One particularly powerful discussion was based on the concept of a cosmopolitan ideology from the perspective of a physical map, a globe, and then a photo of the earth (Choo, 2013). Using language such as "inhabitants" and "citizens" (Hanson, 2017) as different concepts also created new ways of thinking about "home" and all living things within a region or place. In addition, the idea that Others embraced their "home" locations—including their values and beliefs that grounded them—as places of comfort, family, and safety was eye-opening to students who assumed immigrants did not love their home countries. The distance between "the Other" and themselves began to close as they read about lives—and home—from around the world. Some students embraced the concept of Other as all living things that had rights to

comfort and safety. A smaller group of students remained closer to loyalty than openness, but that loyalty included a more appreciative stance to those within their families and communities that might have been Othered in the past.

Contemplating Loyalty and Openness through Literature

To create reading experiences that addressed both the familiar and the strange and allowed for the practice of reflective loyalty and openness, we read novels, picturebooks, and websites that engaged students in lived through experiences that could ground them and expand the ground beneath them. By starting with the picturebook *What You Know First* (MacLachlan,1995) as a way of substantiating the idea of reflective loyalty, I was able to move to reflective openness (Hansen, 2017) through class novels and the frequent use of picturebooks.

Required Reading: Novels

The first book students read was a novel with magical realism, *The Head of the Saint* (Acioli, 2016), about Samuel, a Brazilian boy who becomes homeless after the death of his mother. Samuel's promise to his mother leads him to travel to the small village of Candeia where he lives within the head of a large statue of a saint that never quite got off the ground (think the statue of Christ the Redeemer overlooking Rio de Janeiro). Discussing the concept of home in relation to this novel and What You Know First created possibilities of loyalty and openness and awareness of the reality of change, perhaps to a sense of homelessness (both in their lives and in the lives of the characters), and to responsibilities toward realities unlike their own they might be willing to embrace.

As we moved through the course, we read more novels from various parts of the world, including *Moon Bear* (Lewis, 2015), *The Smell of Other People's Houses* (Hitchcock, 2016), *A Land of Permanent Goodbyes* (Abawi, 2018), *A Year Without My Mom* (Tokstikova, 2015), *This Thing Called the Future* (Powers, 2011), and *The Night Diary* (Hiranandani, 2019). As we read each book, we brainstormed themes and topics that could be addressed in connection to each book, and narrowed that list as we created intertextual connections to the previous novels. We constructed a list of concepts such as displacement, family love and alienation, connection, acceptance, power, and Othering.

As students' feelings of familiarity and connection associated with home were echoed in the books, their thinking about and response to the books broadened, yet remained relatively close to "home." When they were asked to rank the novels read within the course, they highly rated *The Smell of Other People's Houses* (Hitchcock, 2019), a coming of age story set in 1970s rural Alaska that tells the story of four teenagers, most of whom were displaced either physically or emotionally. The four learn to overcome individual obstacles and navigate towards adulthood, and was the book that was most relatable to students. It was also the book they read right after *The Head of the Saint* (Acioli, 2016), which some resisted due to the metaphysical and religious aspects of the storyline. Other People's Houses set the standard due to its similarity of experiences in respect to family, growing up, and becoming

independent. Because it was one of the first books students read, the sense of familiar became a palatable foundation of other-orientedness as they encountered the less familiar and their ideas of hospitality to the stranger in subsequent reads.

The third novel read during the term was Atia Abawi's (2018) *A Land of Permanent Goodbye's*. Set during the Syrian Civil War, readers are lead through teenage Tareq's horrific encounters as a refugee. When most of his family is killed in a neighborhood bombing and his brother is lost, the remaining members of the family make their way to Turkey, where Tareq's father remains when they lack the money for the water crossing to Greece. Filled with the trials faced by Syrian refugees as they seek safety, students responded to the book's emotional impact and commented on their own lack of knowledge and superficial experiences from media stories. They confronted the idea of losing their own homes and how that would impact their sense of home and identity. This book created the greatest sense of "home as self" for students and the greatest sense of reflective openness.

Veera Hiranandani's (2019) *The Night Diary* was the fourth book we read. This novel chronicles the experiences of motherless 12-year-old Nisha and her family in the days leading up to and during their forced journey to India during the Indian-Pakistani Partition in 1947. It was a favorite for many. They appreciated the diary format and the knowledge they gained about an historical time period and event, noting the journal-like format was familiar to them and the story evoked a sense of family comfort and empathy. This book further developed students' sense of Other-orientedness because of Nisha's struggle with feeling both Indian and Pakistani, Muslim and Hindu. Being both created otherness that Nisha attempted to negotiate during her journey, heading to and from "home."

Students also expressed appreciation for Gill Lewis' (2015) *Moon Bear*, the story of Tam and his care of and love for a baby moon bear that was abducted from its mother to be "milked" for bile. In this case, the relationship between the bear and Tam resonated with those who loved animals, while others noted Tam's agency and willingness to risk his life for something beyond himself. Many were drawn into the phenomenon and plight of bears abused throughout the world for their bile. It was one of students' favorites.

Two other novels read during the semester were *A Year Without Mom* (Tolstikova, 2015) and *This Thing Called the Future* (Powers, 2011). While not considered favorites for many students, the texts still enlightened them about realities they had not faced, but for which they had empathy. Both were read toward the end of the term, which may be part of the reason for not appreciating them in ways similar to the other texts. Students noted they did not read these books as "deeply" as other books due to additional academic responsibilities and time limitations. Only *A Year Without Mom*, however, was not selected as a personal favorite by any student.

Read Alouds and Picturebooks

Another venue for contemplating the concept of "home" was the picturebook read alouds. Each week I selected at least one picturebook that created space for either stretching our

thinking about home as a cosmic sensibility or developing an other-orientation. These books included places and emotions close and far from our own cultural locations and most were pieces of global literature or had a setting from countries other than the U.S.

Toward the beginning of the course, I introduced books about names students especially appreciated, including *My name is Gabito: The life of Gabriel García Márquez/Me llamo Gabito: la vida de Gabriel García Márquez* (Brown, 2007), *Archie Snufflekins Oliver Valentine Cupcake Tiberius* (Harnett, 2016), *Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal, 2018), *My Name is Bilal* (Mobin-Uddin, 2005), *My Name is Sangoel (*Williams & Mohammed, 2009), and *My Name is Yoon* (Recorvits, 2003). Using books about names introduced the familiar in respect to naming and loyalty to families and the importance of our names, but also created an opening to think more critically about how unfamiliar names have been received by many within dominant U.S. culture.

We also addressed the concept of location and who has what through books such as Temple and Temple's (2019) *Room on Our Rock*, Lucas's (2015) *This Is My Rock*, Trottier's (2011) *Migrant*, Nuño's (2016) *The Map of Good Memories*, and Orbeck-Nilssen's (2016) *Why Am I Here?* This last book addresses the philosophical idea of why this place and not somewhere else. Ultimately, readers are asked to contemplate the notion that because they are where they are, perhaps that is the way it is supposed to be, but it doesn't relieve one of responsibility toward the Other.

Many times during the term I asked students about how the picturebooks I selected addressed the concept of home or why they thought I shared this book with them. And finally, there were times when I shared books because they related to professional readings or addressed an issue we had discussed in class. One such book was *Mirror* (2010) by Jeannie Baker. Upon first read, students found the book a wonderful comparison of two cultures' ideas of home. But when thinking about the stereotypical aspects of the book, many realized they needed to think about how the Other is represented as well as remember that a single story (Adichie, 2009) never tells the whole story about any culture. Other picturebooks we used are listed in the appendix as well as other books I have added to the collection for use in subsequent semesters.

An additional way picturebooks were used was through the regional study, where students found picturebooks that highlighted the region of the world they selected for their final projects. Learning where to access such works was also an important aspect of the course. Students had to first accept the use of picturebooks in middle grade classrooms, but once they realized the power of these narratives, they recognized the importance of utilizing them for critical knowledge their own students could access while becoming socially responsible readers.

Contemplating Socially Responsible Reading through Reading

As part of the course, students addressed the concept of becoming socially responsible readers (Johnson, 2016). Developing as a socially responsible reader compels us to enter into a space of nepantla (Dávila, 2014), which is to hold two competing ideas in an attempt to understand both. By reading outside of their own cultural locations, students needed

to attempt understanding an author's text while also holding off from embracing those ideas prematurely so the author's voice could be heard as separate from their own ideas of what they believe the author is saying. In addition, socially responsible readers codify their responses to literature so they could investigate those responses critically. Thus, a socially responsible reader is aware that the Other does not need to conform to the reader's sense of the world while also committing to hearing the voice of that Other. In many ways, they could practice reflective loyalty and reflective openness, which requires the ability to name why they hold certain ideas and resist others, and how those actions are tied to their own cultural understandings and values.

I often asked students to give a book a chance, remembering there is an author behind each story, and to explore which values and beliefs they embrace that might create a barrier to their appreciating or understanding the book. Through it all students needed to realize that what matters to an author has to be addressed in their thinking through the author's text as they reflect upon their meaning-making. In addition, they can act intentionally in:

- **creating an openness** to what the text could teach with a spirit of acceptance of difference, while simultaneously
- **acknowledging their individual limited knowledge** of the culture combined with the certainty that one text cannot represent an entire culture, and
- **recognizing their unique and cultural positioning** as only one of many, and finally
- **investigating the biases** we bring to the text as a means of embracing social responsibility.

In essence, socially responsible readers come to realize that a reader's transaction with the text will create something new, what Rosenblatt (1995) refers to as the poem, and thus they need to accept the risk that their thinking might change them in ways they may not anticipate. This risk is an opening that allows them "to take the fullest possible account of—to respect, safeguard, and learn from—the otherness and singularity of the other" (Attridge, 1999, p. 28).

These concepts were introduced toward the beginning of the term, and students were asked to respond to the course literature through a socially responsible lens. For many, these concepts helped them approach hospitality to the Other by hearing the voices of both characters and those who created the characters. Students noted that the Other became familiar to them through global literature; this familiarity resonated through struggles of alienation represented in the texts as well as issues of displacement, family, and separation

experienced by the characters. For other students, global literature was the connection that helped them understand kindness, empathy and gratitude towards the represented Other in the narratives.

As noted, a key component of being a socially responsible reader is to turn a critical lens inwards towards analyzing the reader's own response to the text. In reading student journals, it was clear that the concept of social responsibly took time and effort for them to understand how their particular social conditions, family situations, and cultural mores and values were brought to their transactions with the readings (Rosenblatt, 1938/1995). Other points made in the journals included student reflections on how empathy and its representation were not easy for them to find within the books they typically read, yet engaging in these pieces of global literature and the class discussions helped them learn to empathize with those who differ from themselves. A common theme across the journals was that the use of global literature and a focus on representation was lacking in middle level classrooms. Representation was also tied to the concepts of authenticity and "a single story" (Adichie, 2009) with students commenting on how the proliferation of literature from a range of global cultures helps readers address questions of stereotypes and misunderstandings.

Throughout the course, students reflected on their future as teachers and the role of using global literature in their classrooms. Students were encouraged to think about the concept of nepantla (Davila, 2014), or inbetween meeting spaces, which could be a type of third space to create in their classrooms. Many considered the theme of "home" and the possibility of opening up their classrooms as home or the inbetween meeting space, recognizing that the concept of home differs from one individual to another and that their own students might not have positive associations for "home." Thus, while at the beginning of the semester many associated literature and home with reflections of themselves, with each subsequent novel and discussion, their responses within the journals took on an understanding of themselves and home that expanded outward to include those different from themselves and their realities.

Final Thoughts and Suggestions

Upon reviewing the course and the documents such as exit tickets, student journals, and regional studies from the course, I noted that many of my academic and social objectives for the class had taken root, but growth, especially in respect to socially responsible reading and becoming more reflective in respect to students' own loyalty and openness toward the Other, still remained elusive. One student did reach out and ask for the journal template to use with middle school students, and another emailed to note that she was thinking about the concept of social responsibility as we all go through the Covid-19 pandemic.

There will be changes to the course that need to be made going forward. One of those changes is to determine which books might be replaced, and what other ways I might use

picturebooks. I am also thinking of creating book groups rather than requiring whole class reads. With the attention to issues faced by inhabitants across the world, I now know to spend more time on addressing those issues and how each of us might think more globally and with a greater other-orientation. I also created a booklist for students on our umbrella concept of home and how it can be addressed from multiple and global perspectives (see appendix).

Ultimately, starting a course that highlights global literature and using an umbrella concept such as home, or responsibility, or walking with the Other will engage and perhaps provoke students to deeper thinking in respect to who they are in the world, their place within it, and the responsibility we have toward each other, regardless of political, cultural, or geographical boundaries. It is, afterall, a view from space or a global event, such as our current pandemic, from which we see that the earth is our collective home, and we are each other's neighbor.

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Harnett, K. (2016). *Archie Snufflekins Oliver Valentine Cupcake Tiberius*. Flying Eye.
Hiranandani, V. (2019). *The night diary*. Dial.
Hitchcock, B. (2016). *The smell of other people's houses*. Wendy Lamb.
Lewis, G. (2015). *Moon bear*. Antheneum.
Lucas, D. (2015). *This is my rock*. Flying Eye.
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Nuño, F. (2016). *The map of good memories.* Illus. Z. Celej. Cuento de Luz.
Orbeck-Nilssen, C. (2016). *Why am I here?* Illus. A. Duzakin. Eerdmans.
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Temple, K., & Temple, J. (2019). *Room on our rock*. Illus. T. Baynton. Kane/Miller..
Tolstikova, D. (2015). *A year without mom.* Groundwood.
Trottier, M. (2011). *Migrant*. Illus. I. Arsenault. Groundwood.
Williams, K., & Mohammed, K. (2009). *My name is Sangoel.* Illus. C. Stock. Eerdmans.

Appendix: Recommended Books to Use for the Umbrella Concept of Home

Novels

Abawi, A. (2018). *A land of permanent goodbyes*. Philomel Books.
Acioli, S. (2016). *The head of the saint*. Delacorte.
Adiele, F., & Frosch, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Coming of age around the world: A multicultural anthology.* The New Press.
Bolden, T. (1994). *Rites of passage: Stories about growing up by Black writers from around the world.* Hyperion.
Cisneros, S. (1989). *The house on mango street*. Random House.
DeWoskin, R. (2019). *Someday we will fly.* Viking.
Dimaline, C. (2017). *The marrow thieves.* Cormorant.
Hiranandani, V. (2018). *The night diary*. Dial.
Hitchcock, B. (2016). *The smell of other people's houses*. Random House.
Jaramillo, A. (2006). *La línea*. Roaring Brook Press.
Killeen, M. (2018). *Orphan Monster Spy*. Penguin.
Kuklin, S. (2019). *We are here to stay: Voices of undocumented young adults*. Candlewick.
Lewis, G. (2015). *Moon bear*. Atheneum.
Marsh, K. (2028). *Nowhere boy*. Roaring Brook.
Mckesson, D. (2018). *On the other side of freedom: The case for hope.* (excerpt on pp. 98-102). Viking.
Mead, A. (2007). *Dawn and dusk.* Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.
Park, L.S. (2002). *When my name was Keoko*. Houghton Mifflin.
Pausewang, G. (1995). *Traitor.* Trans. German by R. Ward. Lerner.
Philbrick, R. (2000). *The last book in the universe*. Scholastic.
Pinkney, A.D. (2014). *The red pencil*. Illus. S.W. Evans. Little Brown.
Powers, J.L. (2011). *This thing called the future*. Cinco Puntas.
Raúf, O.Q. (2018). *The boy at the back of the class*. Delacorte.
Rivera, R. (2008). *Tuk and the whale*. Groundwood.
Rodkey, G. (2019). *We're not from here.* Crown.

Svingen, A. (2016). *The ballad of the broken nose*. Trans. Norwegian by K. Dickson. Simon & Schuster.
Thomas, J., Shapard, R., & Merrill, C. (Eds.). (2015). *Flash fiction international: Very short stories from around the world*. Norton.
Tolstikova, D. (2015). *A year without mom*. Groundwood.
Uwiringiyimana, S., with Pesta, A. (2017). *How dare the sun rise?* (excerpt on pp. 123-128). HarperCollins.
Vanderberg, H. (2009). *Growing up Latino: Teens write about Hispanic-American identity.* Youth Communication.
Venkatraman, P. (2019). *The bridge home*. Penguin.
Vermette, K. (2018). *The Break* (excerpt on pp. 300-302). House of Anansi Press.

Picturebooks

Bradby, M. (2000). *Mama, where are you from?* Illus. C.K. Soentpiet. Orchard.
Brown, M. (2007). *My name is Gabito: The life of Gabriel García Márquez/Me llamo Gabito: la vida de Gabriel García Márquez*. Illus. R. Colón. Luna Rising.
Buitrago, J. (2015). *Two white rabbits*. Illus. R. Yockteng.Groundwood Books.
Buntig, E. (2001). *Gleam and glow*. Illus. P. Sylvada. Harcourt.
Chanchani, V. (2015). *The house that Sonabai built.* Photographs S. Huyler. Tulika.
Christie, R. G. (2015). *Mousetropolis.* Holiday House
Coffelt, N. (2007). *Fred stays with me.* Illus. T. Tusa. Little Brown.
Croza, L. (2010). *I know here.* Illus. M. James. Groundwood.
Croza, L. (2014). *From there to here*. Illus. M. James. Groundwood.
Dahl, G. (2003). *Angry man*. Illus. S.Nyhus. Trans. from Norwegian T. Chace. NorthSouth.
Davies, N. (2018). *The day the war came*. Illus. R. Cobb. Candlewick.
de Arias, P. (2018). *Marwan's journey.* Illus. L. Borrás. minedition.
Dubuc, M. (2014). *The lion and the bird*. Enchanted Lion.
Dumont, J. (2015). *I am a bear*. Eerdmans.
Garland, S. (1993). *The lotus seed.* Illus. T. Kiuchi. Houghton Mifflin.
Harnett, K. (2016). *Archie Snufflekins Oliver Valentine Cupcake Tiberius*. Flying Eye.
Hathorn, L. (1994). *Way home.* Illus. G. Rogers. Crown.
Herrera, J. (2000). *The upside down boy/El Niño de cabeza*. Illus. E. Gómez. Lee & Low.
Hessell, J. (1989). *Staying at Sam's*. Illus. J. Williams. Lippincott.
Jordan-Fenton, C., & Pokiak-Fenton, M. (2013). *When I was eight*. Illus. G. Grimard. Annick.
Kullab, S. (2017). *Escape from Syria.* Illus. J. Roche. Color by M. Freiheit. Firefly.
Lucas, D. (2015). *This is my rock*. Flying Eye.
Martinez-Neal, J. (2018). *Alma and how she got her name.* Candlewick.
MacLachlan, P. (1995). *What you know first*. Illus. B. Moser. Harper.
Meddour, W. (2019). *Lubna and the pebble.* Illus. D. Egnéus. Dial.
Mobin-Uddin, A. (2005). *My name is Bilal*. Illus. B. Kiwak. Boyds Mill.
Nuño, F. (2016). *The map of good memories*. Illus. Z. Celej. Cuento de Luz.
Orbeck-Nilssen, C. (2016). *Why am I here?* Illus.A. Duzakin. Eerdmans.

Recorvits, H. (2003). *My name is Yoon*. Illus. G. Swiatkowska. Farrar.
Temple, K., & Temple, J. (2019). *Room on our rock.* Illus.T. Baynton. Kane/Miller
Trottier, M. (2011). *Migrant.* Illus. I. Arsenault. Groundwood.
Williams, K., & Mohammed, K. (2009). *My name is Sangoel.* Illus. C. Stock. Eerdmans.

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Learning through Engagements with Multicultural and Global Literature

María del Rocío Herron and Julia López-Robertson

Rocío is a PreK teacher at Jackson Creek Elementary School in Columbia, South Carolina and Julia is a teacher educator at the University of South Carolina. Our meeting was destined; I (Julia) happened to be in my office one day in the summer of 2008 when Rocío entered our departmental office with questions about teacher credentialing and certification. Since I was the only faculty member around that day, our administrative assistant sent Rocío my way. Coincidentally, a few days prior I had spoken with the principal at my youngest son's school and she shared how unsuccessful she had been in finding a Spanish teacher for the preschool. It was fate; here in my office was a bilingual Spanish-speaking teacher searching for a position! Our paths were meant to cross. I immediately called the principal and my son's school and made an appointment for her to meet with Rocío and the rest, as they say, is history. Rocío spent a few years as the Spanish teacher and teaching assistant at the Montessori program and eventually became a certified teacher with her own classroom.

Fast forward a few years; in the fall of 2017, a brand-new school, Jackson Creek Elementary [JCE], opened with the principal from the Montessori program at the helm. Rocío moved to this new school as a Pre-K teacher and I joined her. I have taught literacy methods on site for many years and worked closely with my son's former teacher. I had not, however, worked with a bilingual teacher and was very excited for the chance to work with Rocío. In what follows we share some of our experiences using multicultural children's literature with young Pre-Kindergarten children. The first vignette is told in Rocío's voice, where she describes how she "brought books to life" through an inquiry into students' cultural heritage using global children's literature and cooking demonstrations. The next vignette describes my work as a teacher educator and how my position working with early childhood educators played out in Rocío's classroom through a favorite children's book.

Bringing Books to Life-Rocío

Many years ago, I asked myself, "How can I bring books to life for my students?" Online I found quite a bit of information and ideas for activities, such as storytelling baskets, dressing up, baking, acting out the story, creating a storybook, creating alternative endings, and story-themed crafts. Although I appreciated these ideas, they did not meet my needs and did not help me connect with the diversity of the students in my classroom; specifically, their ethnic, regional, religious, and linguistic diversity. I wanted these preschoolers to acknowledge, be conscious of, and value the differences in their personal or family cultures so that one day they see their culture as a tool to navigate and understand the world, instead of a barrier as it was sometimes presented.

I started looking for books that reflected students' personal experiences and connected family and school experiences as a part of a family unit. I started the family unit with the children by provoking conversations about people around the world through the video *The World's Family (an embracing culture story)*. After viewing the video students were curious to look for the countries mentioned on the world globe, and the conversations started. Students asked so many

questions about the video, such as, "Where is the big clock?" They also made statements such as, "I want to know about that building that is slanted," and "My dad went to Japan for work, and I want to learn about what he saw." To further explore what students wanted to learn, I gathered books from the public library and brought them into the classroom. I wanted students to become familiar with the names of different countries around the world. Browsing and reading books in the text set, students were able to see real pictures and discover, or point out, differences in the food, clothes, and languages across countries.

After a week of investigation, I decorated a voting box with red, white, and blue paper and made a slot in the top. We talked about the books and different countries, made a list, and voted on one country they would like to investigate further. The winning country was Italy. We happened to have two teachers in our school whose families were from Italy. I talked with the teachers about coming to the class and discussing Italy with the children. In preparation for their visit, we read the book *Pizza for the Queen* (Castaldo & Potter, 2005). Our guests talked about Italy and the food they like to make and eat and invited the children to cook with them. Together we made spaghetti and meatballs; Figures 1 and 2 show the cooking process. The children were involved in real cooking; they measured, stirred, poured, and of course, ate!

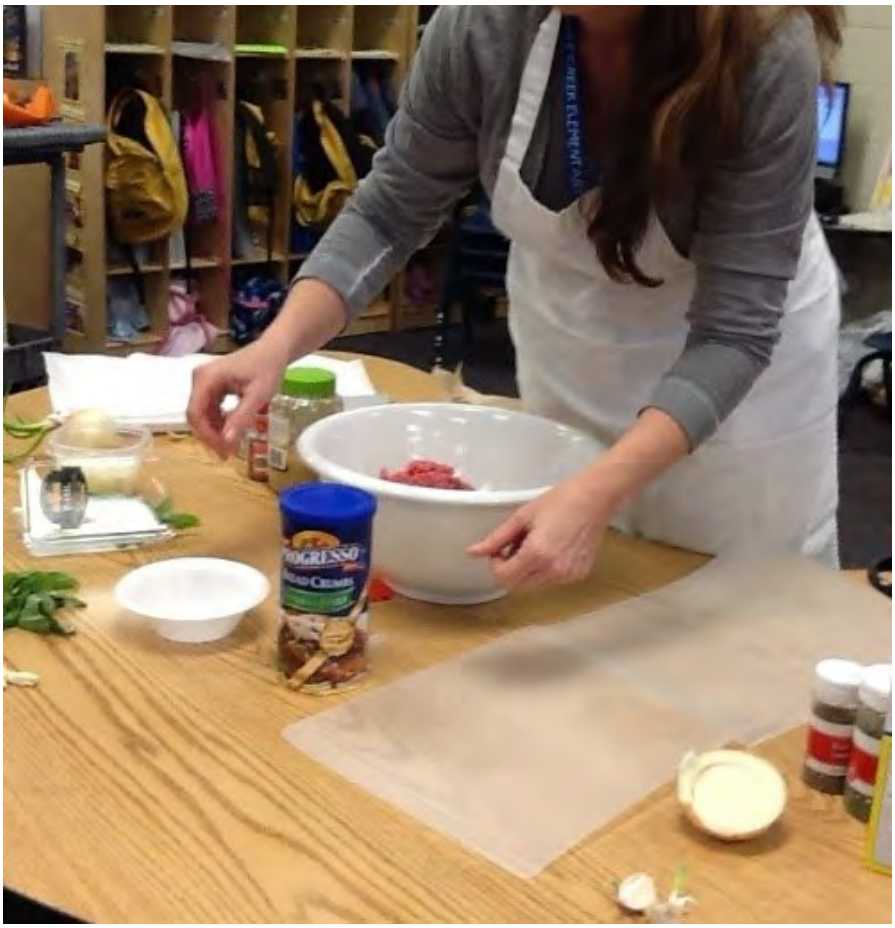

Figure 1. Preparing the ingredients.

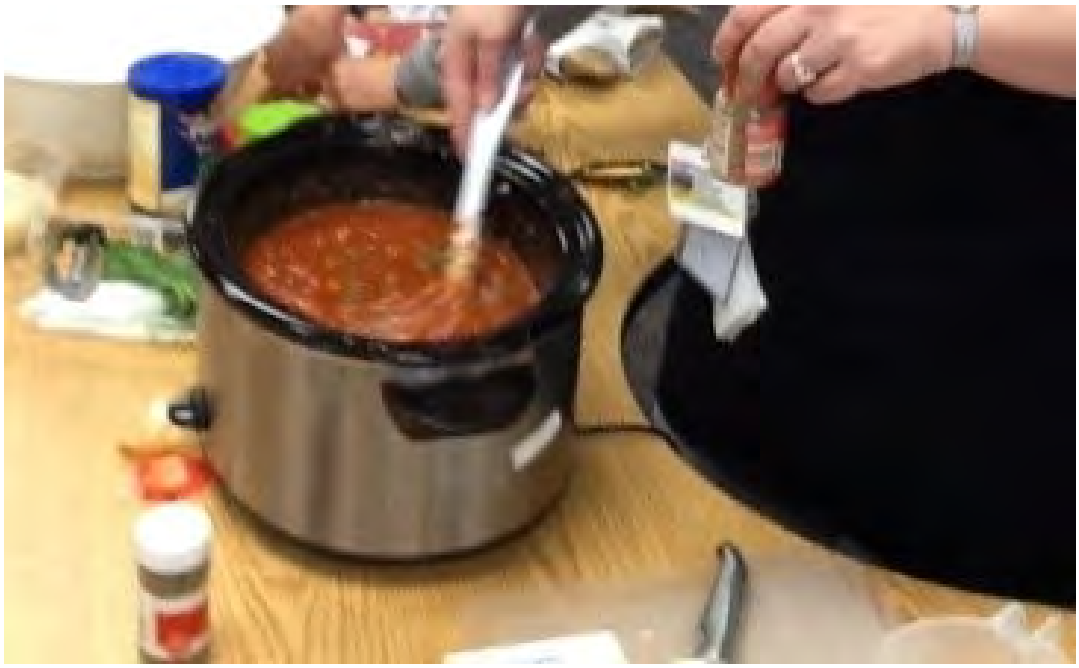

Figure 2. Adding spices to the meatballs.

Investigating the books in the text set provided students with examples of the different foods and places where people live and helped them gain a little understanding that people are different and also share similarities. While cooking and later eating the meatballs, one student said, "my mom makes these but in soup." Working on this inquiry together was a great model for what was to come next.

My goal was to have each family engage in a study of their cultural heritage. I sent a letter to parents explaining the cultural heritage project and included a questionnaire asking about their family's cultural heritage. I asked them to take a moment to complete the survey along with their child and use that opportunity to teach their child information about their family's cultural heritage. Parents were then asked to help their child decide on four symbols that represent their culture (food, clothing, sports, music, etc.), and draw or find images for those symbols. Each child came to school with the questionnaire and symbols, and shared them with the class. We put the finishing touches on the family projects (see Figure 3) and invited the families for a culminating celebration of our collective Culture Story (see Figure 4).

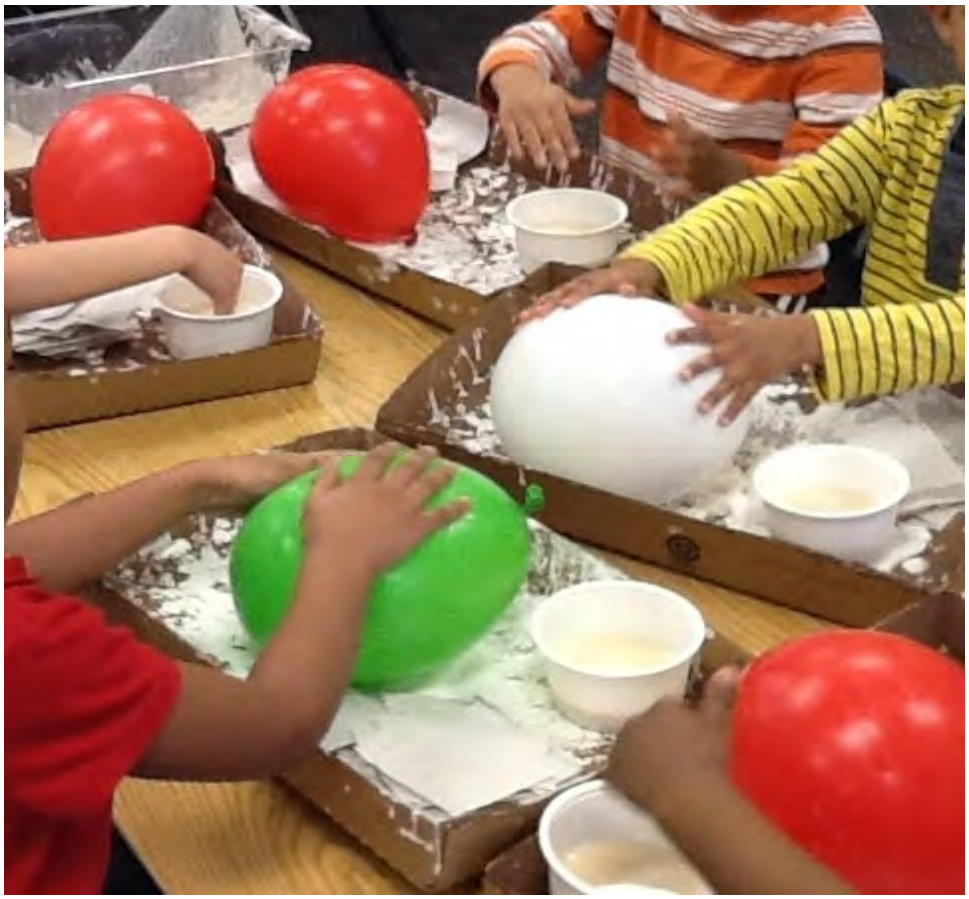

Figure 3. Creating culture symbols in school.

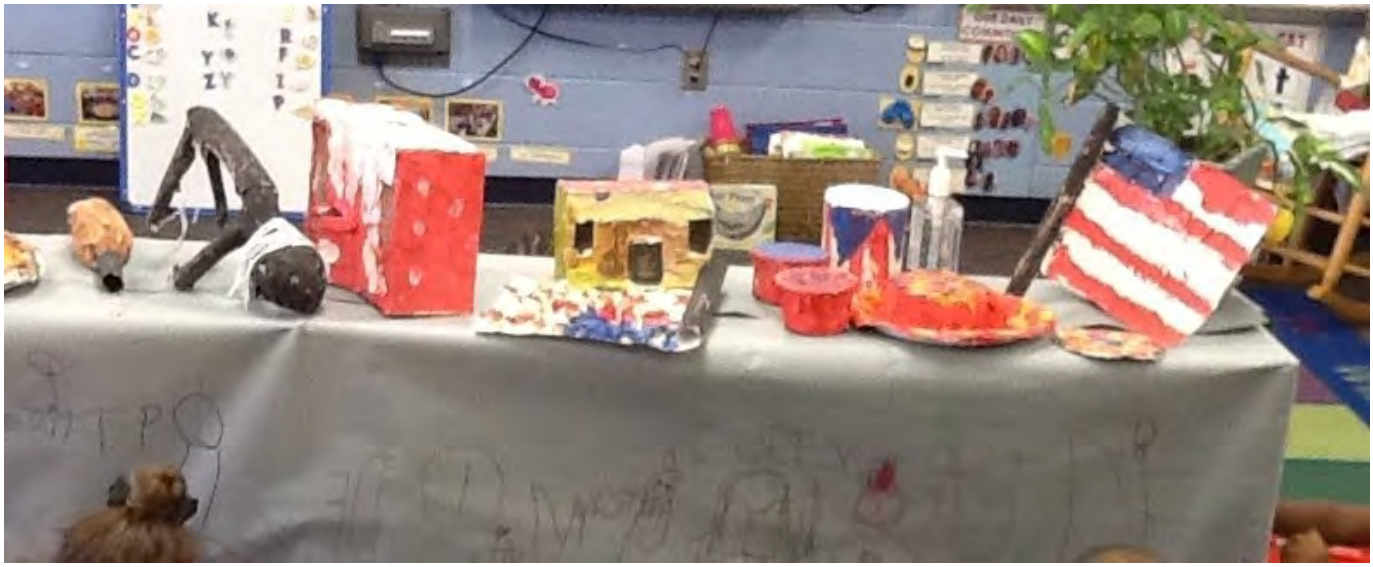

Figure 4. Culture Story Celebration

Introducing multicultural and global literature in our classroom, we discovered that students were more involved and more open to speaking in their native language. Also, other students showed interest in and frequently tried to speak in their friend's native language. The stories we read helped students' imaginations and also helped them connect their personal experiences with those in the books.

Connections with Preservice Early Childhood Teachers & Cuentos-Julia

As noted, I teach an undergraduate literacy methods course at Jackson Creek Elementary and work with Rocío and her students every week. A major component of our course is the time we spend with the Pre-K children in a program I call Amiguitos—a Spanish word of endearment for 'friends'. Preservice teachers create lessons based on multicultural children's literature and implement them weekly with their Amiguitos. As preservice teachers, students learn about the importance of incorporating quality multicultural children's literature in all classrooms regardless of the backgrounds of the students (Freeman & Freeman, 2004). Creating weekly lessons, teaching those lessons, and reflecting on the teaching provides students with the opportunity to receive immediate feedback and the necessary scaffolding to support their teaching. Additionally, preservice teachers are able to see firsthand the level of engagement children have when presented with books where they can see themselves reflected.

On Friday mornings I return to Rocío's class and engage the children with bilingual stories/ cuentos. For about one and half hours I read aloud a variety of children's books, listen as the children share stories with me as they make connections to the books, and sing children's Spanish songs and fingerplays. Each Friday, I read two books and end with *Niño Wrestles the World* by Yuyi Morales. The book tells the story of Niño, a young boy who uses his imagination to wrestle a bunch of bad guys and save the world. This book is beloved by each and every child in the class. Since they are so familiar with the book, it has turned into a theatrical shared reading; we groan, laugh, and join Niño as he wrestles the bad guys. Most Fridays, I basically start us off reading and then turn the pages as the children excitedly read aloud with me. I was not a fan of the book when I first saw it; I am not a fan of lucha libre, but after my first engagement with children and the book, I was sold!

Closing Thoughts

While only a few children in the class are bilingual (speaking both Spanish and English), every child in the class believes that they are bilingual and makes sure everyone entering the class knows this. As Rocío noted, reading bilingual and multicultural books with children helps them learn about each other, try out an unfamiliar language, and fully engage with stories that they can connect to in some manner.

Children's literature plays a major role in Rocío's classroom. Children are engaged in the literature with her daily, preservice teachers create and engage them in weekly lessons focused on children's literature specific to their interests, and on Fridays I engage the children in bilingual songs and books. Inquiries into a text set about countries around the world and 'tasting' a cultural dish began the journey into understanding different cultures while the family unit brought the inquiry to the individual family. Authentic engagements with quality bilingual children's literature and multicultural and global literature have opened the

children's worlds from the local to the global in culture, language, and ways of being.

One feature of our work together that cannot be overemphasized is the power of collaboration. Rocío and I met by circumstance and developed a professional relationship that supports us both in the critical work of locating quality multicultural and global texts for young learners and preservice teachers at the university and creating engagements that develop cultural awareness in our students through literature and interactions in Rocío's preschool bilingual classroom.

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Codeswitching in Picturebooks and the Representation of Spanish-Speaking Cultures: A Reader Response Approach

Priscila J.B.M. Costa

As the mother of two bilingual children who switch between Portuguese and English languages regularly and as a junior scholar in language and literacy, I have examined instances of codeswitching in children's literature for several years. Auer (1999b) describes codeswitching as the strategic alternation of linguistic codes used by bilingual speakers to convey meaning. The building blocks that brought me to my study include a review of the scholarly literature on codeswitching as well as on linguistic characteristics of children's books.

Prior to this study, I did a content analysis of cultural representation through codeswitching in children's literature. For the content analysis, I selected four books recommended by the library of a state university in a large metropolitan city in the southeast of the United States. During the National Hispanic Heritage Month in 2017, the library had children's books on display by the main entrance. The selected picture books, written by Spanish-speaking female writers, contained instances of code-switching and representations of Latin American cultures. However, I realized that my study lacked the perspective of Spanish-speaking readers. Although I am a bilingual educator, I have an outsider's perspective examining cultural representation of Spanish-English bilinguals and their cultures in children's literature. The rationale for me to choose English-Spanish bilingual books over English-Portuguese books lies in the prevalence of Spanish as the second most spoken language in U.S. public schools, where English is the dominant language.

With this article, I present a small portion of a larger study where I investigated instances of codeswitching in two of the four books from a reader response perspective (Rosenblatt, 1982). The article focuses on the opinion of one participant, a bilingual Spanish-English teacher and mother of three who grew up in the Midwest during the 1980s. I sought Kay's (pseudonym) opinion about the codeswitching in an attempt to investigate whether the multilingual choices in the picturebooks are representative of the culture of bilingual Spanish-speaking readers. I use Reader Response Theory and critical theory for this study from the position of a scholar trying to fill the gaps left by my initial analysis of the texts.

Multicultural Children's Literature and Some of Their Challenges

Nodelman (2008) characterizes children's literature as a rich and complex "body of literary texts labeled as intended for an audience of children" (p. 138). Describing that complexity, he highlights the ideally didactic aim of adult writers as a critical characteristic disguised in the tendency of books "to see things from the viewpoint of innocence – as children theoretically see them" (p. 135). Despite age appropriate varieties in language density, recurring features, and topic complexity, it is impossible to disregard the ideologies of the adult writer when analyzing children's literature. Within the scholarship of children's literature, Latinx-American picturebooks have particular characteristics.

Since the 1980s, the growth in the Spanish speaking population in U.S. public schools has prompted publishers to improve the literature selection "in the quality and quantity of books for and about Latino children" (Schon, 1995, p. 393). Schon lists some of the popular books published from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s that depict the sensibilities and complexities of characters from various Spanish-speaking countries of Latin-America (e.g. Mexico, Puerto Rico, Argentina, and Venezuela). Her list includes stories set in Latin American countries as well as in the U.S. which reflect the various experiences of Spanish-speaking readers. More recent statistics show that since 2015, the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has received 446 books written by Spanish-speaking authors and 680 books about Latin American cultures (CCBC, 2019). However, this growth brings its own challenges, such as the laws limiting access to bilingual education in several U.S. states (Schon, 1995).

Morales (2003) addresses the issues of linguistic varieties and language ideologies that publishers must consider in their selections that represent Spanish speakers. In his data collection from several publishers and specialists, Morales found some of the key questions they must answer before publishing a book with a Spanish-speaking community in mind. The issues include: (1) the preferences between translated and original titles – literal translations may maintain the main ideas but often lose the nuances of the text such as rhymes and linguistic authenticity; (2) the linguistic standards and preferences of educators – Spaniards have often set the standards, but that does not represent the various cultures of Latin America; (3) the Spanish variety of choice and the prejudice against certain varieties; (4) the intended audience – Spanish speakers born in the U.S. or those born in one of the dozens of Spanish-dominant countries; (5) the terminology used to describe the audience – Hispanic, Latino, Spanish-English bilinguals, or Spanish-speakers; (6) the commodification of Latinx cultures and the demands of the market; (7) the differences and preferences between bilingual and dual-language editions; (8) the interests of adult versus child readers; (9) political and economic controversies within the Latinx community; (10) the schools' budgetary constraints and cost-effective choices; (11) the indisputable need of some kind of standard Spanish variety including syntax, grammar, and vocabulary; and (12) the wide heterogeneity of Spanish-speaking cultures.

The issues of language choice and cultural representation abound in global and multicultural children's literature, and they complicate the choice of books that appropriately represent Spanish-speaking communities. The use of Spanish words within some English-dominant picturebooks may reproduce a stereotyped image of Spanish speakers based on cultural bias and the commodification of Spanish-speaking cultures (Martínez-Roldán, 2013, 2017). Chappell and Faltis (2007) analyze the ideologies embedded in multilingual books where Spanish words are added as an effect to English texts. During my content analysis of the children's books for this study, this theme of authenticity and cultural representation through codeswitching kept arising.

Codeswitching in the Research Literature

Conversational codeswitching between English and Spanish was initially described in the literature in the early 1970s (Gumperz & Hernandez-Chavez, 1971). The understanding of

codeswitching has evolved in scholarly fields, such as sociology, anthropology, linguistics, education, neurosciences, communication sciences, and psychology. Twenty-five years later, Nicoladis and Genesee (1996) explained that the early research on bilingualism assumed monolinguals as the norm and bilinguals as the users of two separate linguistic codes and competencies. Such assumptions led to the misconception that code-switching was triggered by carelessness, interference, or lack of ability to differentiate the two languages. The most often used definition of codeswitching, especially as supported by linguists, refers to the use of two or more divergent linguistic codes during one same conversation (MacSwan, 2004).

More recent research shows that codeswitching embodies complex sociocultural functions. Bhatt and Bolonyai (2011) have identified 130 different functions of codeswitching described in the literature. Their analysis includes textual codeswitching as opposed to conversational codeswitching, and they explain that in both cases it establishes the speaker's position in society according to sociocultural circumstances. MacSwan (2004) identifies ill-formed (ineffective) and well-formed instances of code-switching and proposes two main classifications of well-formed codeswitching: intra-sentential and inter-sentential codeswitching. Both types occur in the selected texts as I include in the methods section. In the analysis of several types and functions of codeswitching, Auer (1999a) states that the right language is that which offers the best possibility for interaction as perceived by multilingual interlocutors. In my conversation with the reader-informant, I investigated if the codeswitching present in the picturebooks reproduces that possibility in accordance with bilingual English-Spanish cultures.

The Critical Role of the Reader

Louise Rosenblatt (1982, 1995) defines reading as a transactional process between the text and the readers. Based on her reader response theory, the full meaning of the text is constructed through the reader's interpretation of the text, which is specific to the time and socio-cultural context when the reading occurs (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 295). In this study, I use critical multicultural theory as the scholarly approach to examine how a bilingual reader responds to codeswitching and cultural representation in two bilingual picturebooks. Critical multicultural theory examines the power dynamics, sociocultural authenticity, historical accuracy, and sociopolitical contexts expressed in children's literature (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). I observe the reader's response attentive to instances of those elements of critical multicultural theory. They serve to inform the academic community of critical language representations and cultural authenticity used in multicultural children's literature (Johnson & Gasiewicz, 2017).

Research Methodology

For this study, I selected two books intended for an audience of children between ages 3 and 8 years and written by the award-winning Cuban-American author Meg Medina: Tía Isa Wants a Car (Medina & Muñoz, 2011) and Mango, Abuela, and Me (Medina & Dominguez, 2015). The author's relationship with the culture depicted in the text as well as the assumed audience may affect the authenticity of the cultural representation in picture books (Johnson & Gasiewicz, 2017). Both selected books have Spanish editions published in the U.S. However, for the purpose of this study, I have used the English-dominant editions which present instances of English-Spanish codeswitching.

When a language other than English is used in multicultural texts published in the U.S., those words are often surrounded by contextual clues that clarify the meaning for the majority English readers. This characteristic speaks to the issues of authenticity of the multicultural representation (Johnson & Gasiewicz, 2017). The occurrence of Spanish words is sparse in the two selected picturebooks. Here are some examples of codeswitching coding in the texts:

(1) Inter-sentential codeswitching: at the beginning or at the end of sentences
1.a. She leaves two pink lip marks on my forehead from her **besíto**. (Medina & Muñoz, 2011)
1.b. **Mi español** gets faster and Abuela and Mango learn the days of the week. (Medina & Dominguez, 2015)

(2) Intra-sentential codeswitching: in the middle of sentences
2.a. Help me stack those oranges nice and pretty, **niña,** and I'll pay you. (Medina & Muñoz, 2011)
2.b. I tell her about my **buen día** and show her my best **pintura** of Mango. (Medina & Dominguez, 2015)

The original project had five participants, and three were interviewed, but this article tells the perspective of only one participant. Kay and I have been friends for several years, which made for a smooth conversation about the books. I chose to tell Kay's story because she has the most multicultural lived experience among the other participants. She was born in Wisconsin to her Ecuadorian mother and American father. When she was 11, her Ecuadorian grandmother came to live with her family. She grew up bilingual, and upon high-school graduation, she decided to move to Florida to develop her connection with Spanish-speaking communities. She is married to her Argentinian husband, and they have three young children, who speak only Spanish at home and are exposed to English in other social contexts. Kay currently lives in a large city of the southeastern United States where she teaches in a dual-language immersion program at a private school. I sent Kay electronic copies of the two books. After a week, our conversation about the books happened in English through Skype web-conferencing (because we reside in different states).

Key Themes Related to the Picturebooks

"It makes for a nice story, but maybe it is not realistic."

Eleven themes emerged in the conversation with Kay. In alphabetical order, the themes address the book characters, codeswitching, critical multicultural analysis, cultural representation, differences between the books, family history, gender, home-language use, personal connections with the stories, social interactions, and Spanish language varieties.

Kay drew personal connections with the texts. Excerpt 1 shows her response to the storylines.

> *Excerpt 1* – about *Mango, Abuela, and Me:* "Obviously I made a lot of connections with that one, thinking of my grandma. I could relate to trying to communicate. I remember my grandma sitting down and telling us, el tenedor. She had a really big strong personality and she was going to make sure that we spoke Spanish. When the grandma [in the book] first arrived, she was kind of a stranger to [the child narrator] and not only did they not know each other but they didn't know how to connect with one another, and just kinda growing up and growing that relationship, and grandma developing a connection with her granddaughter. I think that was very realistic. I can really connect, you know?"

The excerpt shows the relevance of the texts for the reader. Kay considered the two stories "cute," and said she would read them with her children as well as her students. The narratives seem authentic and relevant to her. However, she did not connect to the two stories at the same level. She could not directly connect with Tia Isa's story because it took place in an urban setting, while she grew up in a rural Midwest setting. From a reader response perspective (Rosenblatt, 1995), this is indicative of the transaction between the reader and the text.

When asked more specifically about the codeswitching, Kay pointed out a significant difference between her experience and that presented in Mango, Abuela and Me. She stated that the grandmother switching from Spanish to English "makes for a nice story, but maybe it is not realistic," and added, "I do know quite a bit of families where that's not really the case." This essential observation shows the misleading representation of codeswitching in the voice of a relative who arrives in the U.S. at an older age. The codeswitching in Kay's case is not as common as depicted in the picturebook, which speaks to issues of sociocultural authenticity. In excerpt 2, she explains how codeswitching typically happens in her bilingual household:

> *Excerpt 2* – I think, especially with [the younger children], if they are talking about school, they have their vocabulary that they learned at school. When they play school, they play in English … It sounds more natural for them. But if they are hurt and crying, they go straight to Spanish. For me, it speaks larger to their heart, so it's partly the context. It is one of the things, thinking about the Tia Isa Wants a Car, and maybe that more urban environment where you're going to have more of a community… that's just a natural way for things to happen. I think [the codeswitching within the bilingual communities] is very authentic.

Here, I noticed that Kay did not mention the insertion of random single words within English-dominant sentences. Rather, she describes what seems a complete shift from one language to the other as functional for socio-cultural purposes within her family.

As for the dominant cultural values, excerpt 3 shows Kay's interpretation of the occurrences of Spanish words in the two books. She deepens the discussion of cultural representation and addresses the plethora of cultural backgrounds of Spanish speakers in the U.S.

> *Excerpt 3* – [initially about *Tia Isa Wants a Car*, but extended to multicultural books in general] "Each book is one cultural perspective, right? And that's just true of any book, but we need to remember that…no matter what, you are part of a mix of the cultures that you bring. You know, to me sometimes, when I look at children's literature with Spanish, I'll find it hard to find things that represent a wide range of experiences. For example, like I said, my mom was the only Spanish speaker in the county for a really long time. I come from dairy farm country, and most of the dairy farms in the area now are all run by people mainly from Central America and Mexico, so there's a huge [Spanish speaking] population now. There are a lot of kids growing up in dairy farms in the Midwest now, who have a different cultural experience [than mine]. They also can't relate to a book written in the Bronx, for example."

Considering that Kay believes that each book contains one cultural perspective, it is understandable why she explained that the codeswitching as depicted in the books did not represent her personal experience. Because she lived in a rural community and her mother was the only Spanish speaker in the county at that time, she did not live within an extended bilingual community. Kay either spoke Spanish only to her relatives, or she spoke English only to everyone else. That is to say, other readers who live in extended bilingual communities might relate to the use of Spanish in these English texts. Nowadays, children in that same area live a very different linguistic and multicultural experience. Because of Kay's perception that each picturebook can only capture one culture representation at a time, she questions which culture will be more strongly represented (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). That representation can be subtle sometimes, but we must examine it critically.

Botelho, Young, and Nappi (2014) explain that teachers "must consider who is represented, underrepresented, misrepresented, and invisible" in the books they select for their classrooms (p. 42). Kay examined, for example, the choice of words in the Spanish language insertions. Her observation speaks to the matters of hegemony among Spanish varieties, which must be taken into account carefully by children's authors and publishers as well as by teachers. Anecdotally, she exemplifies in excerpt 4 how difficult it is for her to find books that will depict accurately the wide range of linguistic backgrounds of all her students. In order to represent a variety of cultures through codeswitching, the publishers of children's books must take into consideration that words are used differently in each of the nineteen Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America. Any individual book that depicts bilingual or monolingual Spanish-speaking communities will not represent all children who speak Spanish.

> *Excerpt 4* – "I was talking to my teaching assistant the other day, and she's from Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans mix a lot. They go back and forth. They use a lot of Spanglish, and they have a lot of [English] words that they have incorporated into Spanish. She asked my class if they wanted [inaudible] and I said, 'I have no idea what you're saying to me,' and finally it occurred to me that she was saying popcorn. And, I said, 'we use a different word for that. We say **canguil.** That's our word for popcorn.' There is a lot of that in Puerto Rico, where they will take an English word and they pronounce it differently.
>
> Me: In which country [do you say **canguil**]?
>
> Kay: In Ecuador.
>
> Me: Is it the same in Argentina?
>
> Kay: No. He [her husband] calls it **pochoclo**. **Y en Mexico** they call it **palomitas.**

In the short excerpt, Kay mentions Spanish language variations in four different countries (Puerto Rico, Ecuador, Argentina, and Mexico). That, again, points to the multicultural challenge of selecting the contextually accurate variety of Spanish language for codeswitching in children's books.

Implications

I looked at the English-Spanish codeswitching in picturebooks from a reader response perspective, investigating whether it is used as a form of cultural representation. Morales (2003) explains the issues of cultural authenticity in the storylines as well as in the choices of words in bilingual books, which can be challenging for the representation of codeswitching. There is a wide range of cultural backgrounds, linguistic experiences, and linguistic varieties among bilingual English-Spanish children. As Kay stated, teachers must be aware that each book depicts only one reality which may or may not be equivalent to students' experiences.

It is very important to notice that the insertion of Spanish words in an English text, in the way it is done in the two books analyzed here, is often not intended for a Spanish-speaking population (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Johnson & Gasiewicz, 2017). As I have illustrated in this article and in my larger study, the Spanish-English codeswitching in the books I used in the study has a didactic function (Nodelman, 2008) for U.S. English-dominant readers to get a small sampling of Spanish rather than actually representing Spanish speakers.

Listening to the considerations of the reader was eye opening to me as I realized that, being an outsider to many U.S. Spanish-speaking communities, I had a partial understanding of the codeswitching I found in the books. I initially thought that the codeswitching in the two children's books represented the actual language use of Spanish-English bilingual children. Now I realize that, although bilingual children do alternate codes in their communication, the instances of codeswitching in the literature may not be authentic to the codeswitching

functions in bilingual communities. Having a cultural insider can inform educators and scholars about the actual critical multicultural representations in the books. Morales (2003) recounts the experience of a publisher in regards to a book about the Mexican Day of the Dead, which was written by a transnational Colombian author. Because the author was Colombian and the editor Cuban, she requested the book be edited by a Mexican editor to ensure the authenticity of the cultural representations. This is the approach that educators should take, if possible, when selecting books that represent Spanish speaking communities.

In the case of this study, Kay is my cultural-insider informant. Although she is not of Cuban origin like the author of the selected books (Meg Medina), she comes from a bilingual upbringing with her Ecuadoran mother and grandmother, she is married to an Argentinian man, and she raises her children bilingually in the U.S. (similarly to the children in the books). Kay has also taught in bilingual programs for over a decade, which immerses her into the diversity of Spanish-speaking families. Kay is aware of the cultural heterogeneity and the nuances of the Spanish language in various regions. As Morales (2003) discusses, the research informant in this study is critical about not only the issues of culturally relevant storylines but also the culturally accurate linguistic choices in the books which contain hints of codeswitching.

Chappell and Faltis (2007) argue that educators must examine critically the constructions of bilingualism in picturebooks, knowing that not all the uses of words in a foreign language, Spanish in this particular case, are representative of linguistically diverse students.

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