

emphasised differences that distinguish children's literature from mainstream literature are: a different history (the emergence of children's literature is connected with the emergence of the child reader), differently defined historical periods (children's literature emerged later and developed in a specific exchange of periods, mainly due to the oscillation between the two extremes of education and pleasure), the canon (children's literature has its own canon, independent of mainstream literature, and its own distinction of lower and higher genres) (315, 319).

The biggest burden for children's literature is the claim that it is not artistic. To emphasise the opposite, scholars have been writing a history of children's literature focusing on highly appreciated children's books (establishing the canon), and everything else created and published for children has been judged according to this. But if the immanent literary critic is put aside and the problem of children's literature (as defined by a specific group of readers) is reconsidered from the perspective of contextual literary criticism and childhood studies, it is obvious that the development of children's literature imitates the flow of changing paradigms of childhood at a particular time in history. At once, all those didactic and moralistic stories find their proper place and purpose in the ideologies dominant at certain points in time.

Following this sequence of thought, Nikolajeva arrives at a surprising conclusion. Commenting on the cultural and literary phenomenon of Harry Potter, she notices a cyclic pattern of the evolution of children's literature: "Nevertheless, scholars are inevitably re-defining children's literature from the vantage point of the twenty-first century. With today's conspicuous crossover literature, the evolution has gone full cycle, back to the situation when adults and children shared their reading matter. [...] It shows that young readers can easily manage books of well over five hundred pages if these are engaging enough; that children's books can be popular without losing complexity and artistic quality; that children's books can be enjoyed by readers of all ages and transcend cultural borders" (325).

*The Routledge History of Childhood in the Western World* certainly accomplishes the set task: to impose a new perspective on childhood research, to question Aries's almost axiomatic thoughts on childhood, and to encourage the application of a new paradigm in other studies and fields of research.

*Sanja Lovrić Kralj*

## Picturebooks and Intercultural Education

**Anne M. Dolan. 2014. *You, Me and Diversity: Picturebooks for Teaching Development and Intercultural Education*. London: IOE Press and Trentham Books. 192 pp. ISBN 978-1858565224**

*You, Me and Diversity*, with its engaging title, draws one into the world of development and intercultural education and Dolan's project merits its DICE funding in selecting appropriate material for classroom use. She proposes a very helpful three-part framework for teachers to follow and devotes a chapter for each, suggesting themes that could be introduced. Every topic is extremely well researched and she details much historical

information when explaining her choices. She then lists a large number of picturebooks which could support the relevant themes, some of which are discussed in more detail than others, and makes many important textual quotations. What she doesn't do, however, is refer to the skilful ways in which the illustrators implement specific visual codes to make these picturebooks so powerful. Although she uses the current term 'picturebook' – signifying the unity of picture and text – a great deal of her references could be to picture-less short novels.

Her first chapter provides nothing new in terms of picturebook research, but she investigates the subject well and provides a basis from which she can launch her theories and allow her argument to develop. Her aim is to demonstrate how carefully selected picturebooks can “promote critical thinking and action-based projects in line with contemporary thinking in development and intercultural education” (1). After her initial research trawl, she begins to find her voice and focus on classroom teachers whose influence she says is “paramount in determining the means through which the child interacts with the picturebook” (13). None would dispute this, but her essential premise revolves around the need for enquiry-based learning and she believes that “the challenge for teachers is to interrogate the picturebook images” in order to promote this (16). Her point of departure differs from many researchers in as much as her geographical background leads her to believe that “picturebooks have the potential to supplement the work of the teacher in the development of a variety of development education concepts and skills” (17). From here she lists numerous examples of picturebooks which could be used for her purpose, concluding with Desmond Tutu's *Desmond in the very mean world* (21) where Desmond learns the power of words and the meaning of forgiveness. She then sets out her “core-values for development and intercultural education” which she believes can “help and extend children's perspectives in preparation for active citizenship in a global society” (24).

In her second chapter, Dolan provides the much needed definitions for her terminology which help the reader to understand her argument better. The observable and non-observable aspects of culture (25) are very useful, as are her definitions of the terms “multicultural” and “intercultural”; and her explanation of development education is vital for comprehension of what is to follow. She presents her core themes for culturally responsive teaching in a very interesting and informative discussion on development education, particularly child labour (31). This focuses on a number of picturebooks which give the reader insights into the variety of stories available on themes such as justice, equality, refugees and hunger. The books listed show extensive research and help to explain her standpoint. The follow-up work for use in schools, which is based on the books, is excellent although the activities could be done with any book format. Her argument would have been strengthened if she had given some indication as to why picturebooks are so special and how they can help us to “read” a character's feelings through facial expressions or body gestures; how specific circumstantial details can help us to “experience” the squalor of their surroundings; or how a tightly framed image can help us to “understand” the claustrophobic nature of some children's work conditions.

Chapter Three provides much helpful information on how to create a culturally diverse classroom and, as well as listing numerous books that can facilitate this, Dolan explains what a number of issues mean to her. These include diversity (of the book's title), gender, integrating quality multicultural literature into the curriculum, identity and cultural identity.

She also discusses the importance of authenticity in multicultural picturebooks, authors/illustrators and criteria for selection. Each of these sections is heavily supported by relevant research and, occasionally accompanied by reference to the illustrations; such as those when she talks about Africa not being a country but a continent. Here she suggests that “realistic illustrations are used to explore the cultural, environmental and social diversity of Africa” and “show people having breakfast, going to school, doing homework, shopping and playing” (51). Rather than stating that this is a “colourful, easy to read book” and that the “vast and varied continent is shown with different people inhabiting different environments”, she might have explained how the illustrations convey this and bring the book to life.

In Chapter Four, Dolan presents a number of terms relating to critical literacy and the concept of development and intercultural education which she believes are necessary in order to prepare learners to participate effectively in society (60). She includes a helpful framework for exploring this and believes that challenging picturebooks can help children to “view themselves in a different and more informed manner than they did previously” and provide “a lens” through which they can do this (64). She supports her ideas with references from Mallan (68) and Smidt (72), textual examples from a variety of picturebooks, and visual remarks about Anthony Browne’s books (68, 71). Her comments about these picturebooks being unique, beautiful, works of art, extraordinary, good or beautifully illustrated (65) don’t really support her argument for using them; but the curriculum framework she presents for teaching development and intercultural education through picturebooks is sound, and the specific sections very useful to teachers.

In the following chapters, Dolan examines the concepts of *Respect*, *Understanding* and *Action* – the three parts of her framework. *Respect* is seen in terms of self-respect and she suggests that it is a “key part” of development and cultural education – the “first rung” on the ladder of intercultural relations (93). In presenting a selection of picturebooks that deal with self-esteem, self-respect, identity, bullying, human rights and environmental issues, Dolan supports her argument and suggests ways in which teachers might make use of certain books. Her choice is excellent, in terms of the themes that she covers and, when discussing environmental issues, she begins to acknowledge the importance of the visual narrative in books like *The Window* which “uses several visual devices to indicate the passage of time” (88). What she does well in this chapter is to demonstrate the ways in which some of her chosen stories fit her thesis, although at times listing books which would have been better placed in an appendix. *Understanding*, the second part of her framework, is explained by looking at social movements which can help children to learn and appreciate complex development and intercultural issues. Dolan chooses specific picturebooks to support topics such as: climate change; deforestation; slavery; gender inequality; apartheid and the Holocaust and supports each of these with very vivid accounts of events relating to each. These accounts are again very informative and well researched, providing perhaps an “eye-opener” for many readers. After each section, she again lists many picturebooks which she feels develop greater understanding of these happenings and recounts, in some cases, their storylines. Chapter Seven addresses *Action*, the third part of her framework, and indicates how children can learn about different kinds of action through the ways in which picturebook authors and illustrators allow their young readers to “dream” and create

a vision for a better society (136). Whilst this is a vast expectation, Dolan nevertheless puts forward a number of helpful and informative themes to support her belief. The books she introduces to exemplify this, however, are still presented in list format and she doesn't often refer to specific illustrations.

In her final chapter, Dolan focuses on picturebooks that she feels “embrace” the refugee experience, enlighten children about their plight and reassure refugee readers that there is life and hope for them. She defines refugee and asylum seekers for her adult readers and suggests a range of picturebooks which she feels share these themes. As with the other chapters, her research is sound, informative and followed by examples of carefully chosen picturebooks that could be used by teachers. Occasionally she does mention how visual cues are used to convey meaning, such as during her discussion about Shaun Tan's *The Arrival* (147) but these moments are rare. This is in fact the first chapter that includes any illustrations and none are from inside the books. A great pity, as this would have enabled her to illustrate in depth why picturebooks are so powerful in conveying the sometimes harsh reality.

*You, Me and Diversity* is a well-researched, illuminating book which sets out the aims of developmental and intercultural education clearly and fulfils its aim in suggesting themes and picturebooks that will help teachers to guide children on the path to learning about controversial and complex social issues. In her concluding chapter, Dolan states that teachers cannot expect picturebooks alone to teach a theme and hopes that *You, Me and Diversity* will help them (151). This is certainly likely to be the case in terms of knowledge but teachers may still need guidance on how to discuss the picture-text relationships semiotically in order to make full use of the picturebooks. To complement her approach, the methodology used in a number of academic picturebook projects, to help both teachers and children to learn more about intercultural themes through visual narratives, might be useful.

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## Literature = Education

**Janice Bland and Christiane Lütge, eds. 2013. *Children's Literature in Second Language Education*. London: Continuum. 224 pp. ISBN 978-1441183521**

If you look up the term ‘literature’ in a dictionary, you will find these definitions. Literature is “the production of literary work” or it presents “writings in prose or verse which have excellence of form or expression that support ideas of universal interest” and of course it is “the body of written works in a particular language, country or age”. Literature, naturally, is a form of art, and because it is a form of art it is hard to explain why something should be considered literature, and why something else should not. If you take the definition of literature from the Merriam Webster English Learner's Dictionary, you will find that: “literature presents written works that are considered to be very good and to have lasting importance”. In this arena we come across “children's literature”, and, as Bland puts it in her introduction, for a long time this term has been used generally to describe any kind of literary work, either written, illustrated or an oral interpretation, aimed at children and