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“Will this be Home, or Will we Return one Day?” Return Migration Themes in Children’s Picturebooks, Embracing Diversity and Acceptance¹

Abstract: This article examines the different categories of return migration in picturebooks targeted at young readers. Return migration, the process of individuals or families returning to their country of origin after residing abroad, is a multifaceted phenomenon with significant cultural, social, and psychological implications. This study conducts a basic thematic analysis of picturebooks that portray return migration scenarios. It examines how return migration is represented, the various categories it encompasses, and its potential effects on young readers. By examining the narratives presented in these picturebooks, this article seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of migration experiences within children’s literature and their broader societal implications, entailing the knowledge of fighting against poverty through migration and accepting diversity.

Keywords: return migration, picturebooks, young readers, children’s literature, representation, cultural diversity, SDGs

INTRODUCTION

When we hear about migration, we automatically make a mental association with people fleeing their countries of origin, “poor” countries, due to war, political or religious intolerance, or systemic poverty. However, there are some facts that we do not usually contemplate due to “the growing diversity of migration categories (ranging from economic migrants to refugees and asylum-seekers)” (Cassarino, 2004: 1) and migrant students. People migrate from all countries, in all contexts, and for very different reasons. Striking media examples are those of elite athletes or the so-called “brain drain,” specialists in

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all fields who go to a country where they find better working conditions than those they can obtain in their own countries. Also, as García-González explains, “other specific form of [migration] is known [as] “quiet migration” (Weil), that is, internationally adopted children” (2017: 7) is not taken into account in the collective imaginary as migration. The second aspect that we do not bear in mind is return migration. The cases of people who migrated from their countries one way or another and for different reasons have gone back “home,” sometimes to stay and improve the lives of their people, that is, change their status from migrant to an active asset to their native community.

Migrant literature for young readers can be varied, both thematically and structurally. Nevertheless, it seems that the portrayal of the migration experience and the complications of the adaptation process play a prime role in this literature (Pourjafari, Vahidpour, 2014). This is the case of *Stepping Stones. A Refugee Family's Journey* (2016) by Margriet Ruurs, wonderfully illustrated with pictures made of stones by Nizar Ali Badr. This work tells the story of Rama's family, who are forced to leave everything behind because “the war came to our country.” Rama's family sets off to seek refuge in Europe, taking only what they can carry on their backs. By the end of the story, Rama says, “Will this be home, or will we return one day?” This question prompted a reflection on the presence or absence of picturebooks that depict migrants returning to their place of origin. If such books existed, then what diverse circumstances might lead migrants to return? This line of inquiry formed the foundation of the research question guiding the present study. The justification for the choice of picturebooks as the corpus of research is that they often act as a bridge between adult and child perspectives, enabling researchers to analyze how complex phenomena such as migration are translated into narratives that are accessible to young readers while still retaining depth. The ability of picturebooks to distill abstract concepts into relatable and tangible experiences makes them an ideal medium for examining return migration. Although the primary focus of this study was not on the visual design of the publications, the selection of picturebooks was motivated by their capacity to encapsulate return migration narratives in an engaging, relatable, and emotionally resonant format. Further research could delve more deeply into the role of illustrations and their relationship to the text in conveying migration experiences. Nonetheless, even in this study, the picturebook format was deemed essential because of its unique ability to present these themes in a holistic, multimodal manner that transcends the limitations of text-only narratives.

Return migration “concerns the detailed description of the journey from homeland to the new land and the notion of return, which portrays the migrant character's feeling aroused by a visit to the former home” (Pourjafari, Vahidpour, 2014: 689). Children's experiences in the context of return migration have garnered increasing attention from researchers (Baldassar, Merla,

2013; Nesteruk, 2019; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, 2009). This phenomenon encompasses various experiences, from voluntary returns driven by personal or economic factors to forced returns due to legal or political circumstances. Understanding return migration is crucial for policymakers because it affects labor markets, social cohesion, and development efforts in origin and destination countries (Cassarino, 2004). Moreover, return migration has significant implications for individuals and families, influencing their sense of identity, belonging, and socioeconomic status (De Haas, 2007). In today's globalized world, where migration is increasingly common, examining the patterns and impacts of return migration is essential for addressing its challenges and opportunities (Arizpe, Colomer, Martínez-Roldán, 2014; Vullnetari, King, 2008).

There is broad scientific evidence that literature for young readers can be a valuable tool to develop more excellent initiative, understanding, and active participation in everyday environments, including those related to conflicts of all kinds in which the acquisition of citizenship competence plays a relevant role (Alcantud-Díaz, 2024). Since the UN introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 (United Nations, 2015), children's literature has increasingly addressed themes like peace, conflict, equality, poverty, and hunger, often linked to migration. These books help young readers connect local experiences to global issues, fostering critical thinking while offering an enjoyable reading experience (Alcantud-Díaz, 2024). Therefore, children's literature serves as a foundational platform for shaping young minds and fostering their understanding of societal dynamics, including the complexities of migration. Examining how migration is portrayed in picturebooks gives scholars and teachers insights into how cultural narratives, stereotypes, and identities are constructed and conveyed to young readers (Botelho, Rudman, 2009). Through critical engagement with migration narratives in children's literature, scholars contribute to broader discussions on the role of literature in promoting empathy, intercultural dialogue, and global citizenship (including knowledge about SDGs) among future generations.

Therefore, this article has three primary objectives. First, it aims to identify picturebooks written in or translated into English that focus on the theme of return migration. Second, if such picturebooks are identified, the study seeks to conduct a basic thematic analysis to examine whether they depict diverse return migration scenarios, thereby establishing distinct categories of representation for return migration in picturebooks. Third, the article endeavors to analyze the narratives in these picturebooks to contribute to a deeper understanding of migration experiences as represented in children's literature. This analysis also aims to explore the broader societal implications of these works, including raising awareness about combating poverty through migration and fostering acceptance of diversity.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used in the present chapter followed various stages. First, a substantial investigation was carried out to look for different picturebooks related to return migration to accomplish the first objective. The selection criteria were that the works were picturebooks (not novels), written or translated into English and/or Spanish. The timeframe was bound to the twenty-first century. The country was not taken into account to be able to find as many titles as possible. To do so, the primary source was the IBBY Honour List (from 2002), complemented by searches in Google and Google Scholar using different entries in Spanish and English. The keyword entries were: conflict, deportation, escape, exile, environment, freedom, immigration, migration, refugee, return, and war. These words were used either isolatedly or combined (e.g., return migration). Words such as environment or war were used since there are many real-life examples of migration related to these topics.

Second, elementary thematic analysis was used after finding some examples because it involved identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes within qualitative data. Researchers use this approach to uncover common threads or concepts across a dataset. Thematic analysis is widely used in social sciences and qualitative research to explore complex phenomena (Braun, Clarke, 2006) across various disciplines.

In the present case, since preliminary research was conducted to create the thematic axis, a vast amount of research was implemented on different categories of return migration. After finding Cerase's (1974) four different types of return migrants, which was the basis for my categorization, and considering the different representations of return migration in the picturebooks found, I created an extended list of return migration categories composed of six types:

1. Return of failure: migrants who could not integrate into their host countries or have been forced to return for many reasons.
2. Return of retirement: those who go back home to spend their retirement or that of some relative.
3. Return of improvement: those who think that the skills and the money acquired abroad have turned them into assets for change in their families or communities.
4. Return to visit and meet origins: those who temporarily return to their origin communities but have already settled in the host countries.
5. Return after a war or conflict: those returnees who had been forced to leave due to war or conflict (and had not previously intended to leave).
6. Return through memories: those migrants who cannot go back to their original countries but somehow go back through their memories.

This categorization accomplished the second objective of the present chapter, that if such picturebooks are identified, the study seeks to conduct a basic

thematic analysis to examine whether they depict diverse return migration scenarios, thereby establishing distinct categories of representation for return migration in picturebooks.

In the third stage, the found books were classified according to one of the categories described to state the thematic axis. Then, I focused on the story’s description and relationship to the different representations of return migration. The study focused mainly on the text and only superficially on the visual literacy (Arizpe et al. 2014) that the found works provided due to space constraints.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Although the extensive search provided some works on return migration, the majority were novels, with only a limited number of picturebooks identified on this topic. Within the 24-year period encompassed by the search, eleven works were located. This fulfills the first objective of the current chapter: to identify picturebooks, either originally written in or translated into English and/or Spanish, that address the theme of return migration. The second phase, corresponding to the second objective of this research, involved conducting a preliminary thematic analysis to determine whether these works portray diverse scenarios of return migration, thereby enabling the establishment of distinct categories for representing return migration in picturebooks. Table 1 presents the categorization of the identified works according to the six previously defined categories.

Table 1. Categorization of the identified works according to the six previously defined categories.

Title	Author	Year and publishing company
Return of failure		
Still Dreaming: Seguimos Soñando	Claudia Guadalupe Martínez	2022, Lee and Low Books
I Wish You Knew	Jackie Azúa Kramer	2021, Roaring Brook Press
Return of retirement		
Grandfather’s Journey	Allen Say	2008, HMH Books for Young Readers
This Is Not My Home	Vivienne Chang	2023, Brown Young Readers
Return of improvement		
Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa	Jeanette Winter	2018, Clarion Books
Return to visit and meet origins		
14 Cows for America	Carmen Agra Deedy	2009, Peachtree
My Two Border Towns	David Bowles	2021, Kokila

Title	Author	Year and publishing company
Lleva un libro en la maleta (Take a book in the suitcase)	Virginia Read Escobar	2011, Editorial Santillana
Return after a war or conflict		
The Last Garden	Rachel Ip	2020, Hodder Children's Books
Paloma Voló	María Jesús Guardado	2021, Editorial Planeta Chile
Return through memories		
Homeland	Hannah Moushabeck.	2023, Chronicle Books

After this categorization, I analyzed the narratives in these works to contribute to a deeper understanding of the return migration experiences that they represent.

RETURN OF FAILURE:

This category includes returnees who could not integrate into their host countries or who have been forced to return due to stereotypes, non-adaptation to the new culture, or homesickness. Two examples match this category: *Still Dreaming: Seguimos Soñando* (2022) by Claudia Guadalupe Martínez, and *I Wish You Knew* (2021) by Jackie Azúa Kramer.

Migrants in this category return to their or their ancestors' communities, such as Mexicans forced back to Mexico from the U.S. Many children exemplify "the transnationalization of childhood," growing up with ties to two nations, languages, and cultures (Sánchez, 2007: 260). This is what narrates the bilingual English-Spanish picturebook *Still Dreaming: Seguimos Soñando*. It is a story of the forced repatriation between 1930 and 1940 of more than 2 million Mexican Americans who were living in the United States.

In *Still Dreaming: Seguimos Soñando*, a Mexican-American family is forced to flee their home in the United States of America due to a dangerous political situation that threatens to break their family apart. The story is narrated from the perspective of a child whose father lacked papers. Fearing that he might be deported to Mexico, the family made the difficult decision to leave Texas voluntarily, even though the mother and son had lived their entire lives in the United States. They drive past empty and abandoned houses since other families in the same situation have already left. They get to the Mexican border and are forced to cross it toward Mexico. This bilingual book's cover features the bittersweet family's leaving (sad faces looking forward, but butterflies around them which represent hope), drawn in diverse tones and shades that beautifully capture the emotions coursing through the child's mind (looking sadly backward to his home) during their challenging journey.

In *I Wish You Knew*, Estrella and her family live in the U.S. Suddenly, her father must leave because he was not born there, like her, but in Ecuador and had to be deported. Estrella misses him and wishes everybody knew how she felt and how the situation affected her in every aspect of her life. This is represented on the colorful cover, representing Estrella's wish to be with an adult. She feels alone. The school environment wraps up her and her friends, making them not feel alone. This story is about how deportation causes pain and divides families and the importance of community amid uncertainty. This story represents the social media movement #IWishMyTeacherKnew,² a movement started by a teacher at Denver Public Schools who wanted to find a way to understand her students better. Those students were primarily Hispanic and shared with her their everyday struggles to adapt to their new environments.

RETURN OF RETIREMENT:

Included in this category are migrants who go back home either to retire or to assist a retired relative. Two examples have been found: *Grandfather's Journey* (2008) by Allen Say and *This Is Not My Home* by Vivienne Chang.

Grandfather's Journey is a children's picture book about a young Japanese man who traveled to the U.S. during the Meiji era. He loves California but returns to Japan to marry. Afterward, he and his bride settle in California and have a daughter. Nostalgic for his childhood, he moves his family back to Japan. While happy to reunite with his hometown and friends, they relocate to a bigger city for his now-grown daughter, who had only known city life. She marries and has a son (the narrator). The grandfather later longs for California again but cannot return due to World War II. Ultimately, his grandson retraces his journey and understands his love for both homes. The cover shows sepia tones reminiscent of a family album in which we cannot decide whether the man in the picture is the grandfather or the grandson. This kind of work helps to reinforce inaccurate stereotypes affecting minorities that had to migrate for different reasons, and it reflects an authentic portrayal of Asian American migrants (Aoki, 1981; Pang, 2012; Rodríguez, Kim, 2018).

This Is Not My Home is a humorous return migration story about finding a home in unexpected places. The authors explore children returning to their parents' countries of origin and discovering it can feel like home. In the story, Lily's family moves to Taiwan to care for her elderly Ah Ma. Initially, Lily is upset about leaving her life behind, as shown on the cover: "This is not my backyard barbecue. This is not our car; these are not my fireflies... This is not my home." With her family's support, she learns the true meaning of home and begins to embrace it. Berglind (2022) notes that Lily's shift in perspective may

² <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/04/16/denver-teachers-reality-check-heart-wrenching-moving/25915533/>

help “kids processing their culture shock due to a move.” As Ley and Kobayashi (2005) explain, return migration is often considered by migrants but only carried out later, typically during retirement, when they can live securely in their homeland.

RETURN OF IMPROVEMENT:

This category includes those returnees who think that the skills and the money acquired abroad have turned them into assets for change in their families or communities. As Cerase explains, it refers to people who “are prepared to make use of all the means and new skills that they have acquired during their migratory experiences” (1974: 251) to reach their objectives in their origin countries. Nevertheless, these return migrants can either be innovators for their communities and become agents of change or impact their families’ progress (not to jeopardize their communities’ situation and traditional structure).

One example belongs to this category: *Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa* (2018), written and illustrated by Jeanette Winter. It is about migrants who have acquired skills and/or money abroad and become assets in their families and/or communities. Also, in many cases, the main characters get a grant to study in another country and become trained to go back and help their people.

Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa tells the story of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Wangari Maathai. Upon returning to her native Kenya, once lush with trees, she is shocked to see the forests gone. Determined to reverse this, she begins planting trees in her backyard: “I can start replacing some of the lost trees here in my backyard, one tree at a time. Start by planting nine seedlings.” The cover illustrates this with simple organic African patterns, lively pastel shades, and a scene of Wangari crouching and planting tiny seedlings. Gradually, other women join her, planting rows of seeds under her guidance despite opposition from authorities. Eventually, “everyone hears about Wangari’s trees and her army of women who have planted them.” Her passion, vision, and determination sparked significant change in her community after returning home.

This book represents how Wangari Maat started The Green Belt Movement,³ an environmental organization that empowers communities, particularly women, to conserve the environment and improve livelihoods. In addition, this book shows how children’s literature works toward representing the “poor” world to the “rich” one by connecting and promoting issues related to return migration, eco-literacy, indigeneity, and women’s rights (Smulders, 2016). This work is an excellent example of how return migration “came to be considered

³ <https://www.greenbeltmovement.org/>

as both a movement back to normal that restores pre-conflict natural and social order as well as a movement forward to change in which returnees contribute to development and peace-building" (Houte, Davids, 2014: 71).

RETURN TO VISIT AND MEET ORIGINS:

According to Carling and Erdal, return visits to the country of origin are a specific "transnational practice" (2014: 4) that interacts in numerous ways with possible return migration (Asiedu, 2005; King, Lulle, Mueller, Vathi, 2013; Lulle, 2014; Mason, 2004; Oeppen, 2013). Three examples match this category: *14 Cows for America* by Carmen Agra Deedy (2009), *My Two Border Towns* by David Bowles (2021), and *Lleva un libro en la Maleta* (Take a Book in the Suitcase) by Virginia Read Escobar (2011), illustrated by Lucia Sforza.

14 Cows for America narrates the story of Kimely, a true story of a Maasai returning to Kenya – depicted on the cover with the warm colors of that continent – from North America, where he has lived for the past few years to study medicine. He goes back to ask for help from the American people after the terrorist attacks of September 11th in New York. In this case, the short-term return experience has the effect of letting the main character go over his balance of belonging (Oeppen, 2013), reinforcing his significant ties to the country of origin and accentuating his sense of closeness to his community of origin, but without creating the desires for moving back since he has an excellent job as a doctor in the United States. This transnational experience re-engages social and cultural ties (Lulle, 2014) with his Massai community.

My Two Border Towns is a picturebook about the daily life of a boy who lives on the U.S.-Mexico border. He lives in the American area but visits "the other side" every Saturday morning, just down the street from his school, with his father in a weekend ritual. There, they spend time with friends and family, have a meal at their favorite restaurant, carry out some errands, and share the responsibility of community care by checking in with friends seeking asylum and dropping off the supplies they need. The other side is a twin of where he lives, just across the bridge over the *Rio Grande*. This book exemplifies community care and praises life's intricacy, fluidity, and vitality on the U.S.-Mexico border. The cover shows both worlds in two colors and the main character in both.

Border areas host an exceptional type of transnational life because their bi-national communities are geographically linked, simplifying a continuous exchange of people, ideas, commerce, and culture. This geographic closeness makes transnational living more available to more people living on both sides of the border (Fussell, 2004; López, 2020: 243).

In *Lleva un libro en la maleta*, "a girl will return to her native Dominican Republic for holidays after living in Spain for three years" (García-González, 2017). Yaniris' mother decides to return to her country of origin for holidays

after three years of working in Spain. Yaniris came to Spain as a child. This book represents her difficulties in the new country: “How difficult it had been to adapt, the new school in Spain was huge, the playground was huge, the accents were different, the leaves on the trees were different.” Luckily, she had started to read; she remembered the library of her hometown with its almost empty shelves. Now that she is going back with her family on holiday on the island, she decides that the best gift she can bring is a book, as shown on the cover of the work: “if each of us carried a book in our suitcase, our school in Hatillo would be filled with books [...]. With books you travel, with books you dream, books protect you, they accompany you, they have coverage everywhere, they don’t need batteries, plugs, or wifi, you can read them anywhere.” This picturebook represents how education and reading can improve the lives of children. *Lleva un libro en la maleta*⁴ is also a cultural association that, with the help of various people and organizations, collects books and school materials for schools in the Dominican Republic.

RETURN AFTER A WAR OR CONFLICT:

The international political landscape is marked by war across all continents. While the wars in Ukraine and Palestine dominate the media, ongoing conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Myanmar, Nigeria, and parts of South America persist. Many are forced to flee their homes without preparation. Once the conflict is settled, they return to their homes, or what is left, sometimes “to a rehabilitation center or newly created settlements, their area of origin or previous residence having been destroyed by war” (Arowolo, 2000: 61). Surprisingly, despite the international outlook described above, only two examples were found: *The Last Garden* (2020) by Rachel Ip and *Paloma Voló* (2021) by María Jesús Guardado.

The first story, *The Last Garden*, set in a war-torn city, follows a little girl caring for the last garden. As bombs draw closer, everyone must flee and abandon their homes. Despite being left alone, the garden’s scattered seeds begin to grow. When the girl and her friends return to their shattered city, they find new plants, offering a metaphor of hope for return migrants as shown on the cover, illustrated with vivid colors in the foreground but with the smoke of bombs and warplanes in the background. “War gardens worldwide” inspired *The Last Garden* and commemorated war gardens (Kenneth, 2008) and gardens for peace-building worldwide (Helphand, 2006).

In *Paloma Voló* (Paloma flew), the war is caused by a dictatorship that makes Paloma and her family flee without even the chance to pack their things. They have to run for their lives. After time has passed and she has gotten used

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064403091315>

to her new country, Paloma returns to her country of origin, which she barely remembers: "A different but familiar country was waiting for us... At first I missed the country that my parents didn't seem to remember." This is a journey toward identity, an allegory of freedom since the name of the main character, Paloma (dove), represents peace, as shown on the simple but effective cover. From 1973 to 1990, the Chilean dictatorial regime was characterized by the persecution and oppression of dissidents. Overall, the regime left thousands of dead or missing people and tortured prisoners. It also drove around 200,000 Chileans into exile. This picturebook is the representation of that.

RETURN THROUGH MEMORIES

Return through memories covers those migrants who cannot return to their original countries but somehow return through their memories. One example found is *Homeland* (2023) by Hannah Moushabeck. Memories play a significant role in the field of migration. A growing body of research has explored how "migrants foster nostalgia, maintain cultural identity, and create a sense of home in their new environment through food, music, clothing, objects, or routine home-making practices" (Marschall, 2020: 302). Even though migrants are wholly integrated into their new world, their home world is "like a palimpsest" (Donohoe, 2014: 18–20) and will always rise to the surface.

Homeland is a love letter to home and to the family that sticks up to the hopes of people who transcend borders and cannot go back home. This picturebook narrates the story of a Palestinian father and his daughters who cannot return home physically, but they do it through their daily memories. Every night, as bedtime approaches, the three young daughters are impatiently waiting for their father to return home to tell them stories of a faraway homeland – Palestine. A window to the Old City of Jerusalem opens through their father's memories, and the five senses come into action. The three girls can hear the sounds of juice vendors beating rhythms with brass cups, smell the argileh drifting through windows, and see the doves flapping their wings toward home. These diaspora daughters can also feel love for a place they have never been and will never be. As their father's story goes by, they know they will always return through his memories. These memories are present on the cover in the shape of an album; around it, the whole family and, in the background, their city of origin, all the ingredients of the story.

All these literary representations offer readers opportunities for empathy, understanding, and reflection on the experiences of return migrant children. Thus, return literature needs to emerge to show various narratives of the social, cultural, economic, and political features of migrants' lives when returning to their original places, usually to become an asset to their families and their communities, becoming a bridge "between the home and the world" (Bhabha,

1994: 13). The migration of people fleeing from bombs, famine, persecution, and intolerance on the grounds of religious, sexual, gender, or political diversity, among many other reasons, as shown in most of the picturebooks detected, contrasts with the migration of athletes in all sports, scientists, and experts in all disciplines, all of them potential return migrants (that are not reflected in the picturebooks found). What Bhabba (1994) calls “a global cosmopolitanism” is then being established in return migration picturebooks, a representation of a society in which those migrants that produce can stay since those communities that take part in

such multicultural multinationalism affirm their commitment to “diversity” at home and abroad, so long as the demography of diversity consists largely of educated economic migrants – computer engineers, medical technicians, and entrepreneurs, rather than refugees, political exiles, or the poor.[...] [T]his mode of cosmopolitanism moves swiftly and selectively from one island or prosperity to yet another terrain of technological productivity, paying conspicuously less attention to the persistent inequality and immiseration produced by such unequal and uneven development. (Bhabba, 1994: xiv)

Carling and Erdal (2014) emphasize the link between return migration and transnationalism, showing how migrants sustain ties with their home countries both abroad and after returning. Thus, literature for young readers is an effective way to highlight the emotional, social, and cultural complexities of return migrant children.

CONCLUSION

This article has explored the intersection of return migration studies and children’s literature to understand better how the experiences of return migrant children are portrayed in picturebooks. While such books exist, they are rare, with only eleven identified works addressing this topic. These works fall into six distinct categories, reflecting the diverse circumstances that lead migrants to return. The intersection of return migration studies and children’s literature offers valuable insights into the lives of return migrant children and their families. Representations of return migration in picturebooks are crucial for raising awareness, fostering empathy, and promoting cross-cultural understanding. By analyzing these literary works, scholars, educators, and students can better understand the complexities of return migration and its impact on children’s well-being and development.

Further research is needed to explore the nuances of return migration experiences and their portrayal in literary works to advance knowledge and promote social inclusion and equity. Furthermore, since finding examples of literature on return migration for young readers was challenging, a more in-depth

search in other sources, such as the Bologna Ragazzi Award or White Ravens of the International Youth Library in Munich, will be carried out. In addition, it is estimated that one out of four migration experiences imply a return to the migrant’s country of birth (Azose, Raftery, 2019). Therefore, thousands of stories about returnees in every NGO, media, or street could be the basis of new picturebooks, fostering higher production. This could help children understand their situations or those of their friends and acquaintances trying to cope with their “double identities,” their transnational identities as fruit of the blending of migrants’ origins with the identities they gain in their host countries. Moreover, a more detailed analysis of the illustrations will be carried out since, as Arzipe et al. put it, “with their characteristic blending of exceptional artistic images with narratives that often arouse complex emotions and their invitation to explore the language of the visual, picturebooks [...] invite readers to use their precious knowledge and then to reassess and extend it alongside new ideas and feelings” (2014: 32).

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