

Reading Across the World: Developing Global Citizenship Through Translated Literature

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Abstract

21st Century learners live in a shrinking world with advances in technology and transportation with political, social and economic choices made in one corner of the globe affecting the opposite (Friedman, 2005; Zahabioun, Yousefy, Yarmohammadian, & Keshtiaray, 2013). To help navigate this changing landscape, global citizenship is an important life-skill for youths. UNICEF (2003) describes life-skills in three dimensions: cognitive, personal, and interpersonal. These can be enhanced through the provision of high-quality international literature in the school library. Critical reading of translated literature provides an opportunity for youths to enhance their life-skills in reading the world and connecting their own experiences to others (Buck et al., 2011; Louie & Louie, 1999). Using the UN's Declaration of the Rights of a Child (1959) as an analytical lens, we identify powerful examples of youths enacting agency and managing profound difficulties related to their cultural memberships in a set of award-winning translated titles.

Keywords: Translated literature, Mildred L. Batchelder Award, global citizenship, global literature, human rights

Introduction

21st Century learners live in a shrinking world with advances in technology and transportation (Friedman, 2005). Today more than ever, political, social and economic choices made in one corner of the globe hold implications for another (Zahabioun, Yousefy, Yarmohammadian, & Keshtiaray, 2013). To help navigate the changing cultural landscape of our world, global citizenship represents an important life skill required of today's students. UNICEF (2003) describes life skills in three dimensions: cognitive, personal, and interpersonal, which can all be addressed through the provision of high-quality international literature in the school library collection. Critical reading of translated literature provides an opportunity for youths to enhance their life skills in reading the world and connecting their

own identity and experiences into the world (Buck et al., 2011; Louie & Louie, 1999). Using the United Nations' *Declaration of the Rights of a Child (1959)* as an analytical lens for a set of translated titles, we identify powerful examples of young people enacting agency and managing profound difficulties directly related to their cultural memberships and encourage teacher librarians to use these books to develop global citizenship.

Literature Review

Critics of global citizenship have interpreted the term quite literally to mean residents of the globe with all of the advantages (or disadvantages) one might have as a citizen of a country like Australia or the United States of America (Liu, 2012). Of course, such an official citizen does not exist in today's world. While the political focus of criticisms towards global citizenship are noted here, our study takes a broader view of the term, encompassing more empathetic and activist perspectives towards global citizenship as defined in the field of education.

Brigham (2011) defines global citizenship in three ways: *understanding* the world and our connections among each other, *seeing* instances of social justice and equity, and *acting* by exercising political rights and challenging injustices. This focus on understanding, seeing, and acting in developing the perspective of a global citizen holds support for the use of global literature in providing such experiences and making links for readers. Heilman (2008) describes seven capabilities of a "competent global citizen" including: curiosity, compassion, criticality, collaboration, creativity, courage, and commitment (p. 30). While Heilman (2008) notes the challenge in presenting "voices from the world" into a school curriculum, she explicitly suggests the use of children's literature as a way to overcome this challenge and offer cultural explorations for young students (p. 30). Given these definitions and descriptions of global citizenship, it is evident that learners must have authentic experiences with other cultures and groups different from themselves to understand and see the world. It is also clear that in the field of education and school libraries, translated literature representing global perspectives is a potential avenue to provide these experiences. Further, in a framework for Critical Global Citizenship Education (CGCE), Canadian researchers identified students' need for "spaces to critically engage with dominant views and perspectives" about global issues, histories, and cultures as a principle for using CGCE with students (Eidoo, et al., 2011, p. 76). The school library is in a strong position to serve as this space with quality global literature used as the resources for supporting engagement in critical discussions and examinations of global citizenship and social justice issues.

Research suggests the use of global literature as a powerful tool in promoting global citizenship with young students (de Groot, 2006; Jewett, 2011; Smolen & Martin, 2011). With a classroom of third grade students in the United States, Martin, Smolen, Oswald, and Milam (2012) used books set in countries that dealt with serious social issues like poverty, education, and hunger to engage students in discussions about global injustices. The students then created an action plan where they researched a micro-financing organization, presented findings to each other, and then used class funds to support the organization. This socially empowering lesson encouraged students to critically examine social issues outside of their own communities and develop "a deeper understanding of what it means to be a global citizen in the twenty-first century" (Martin et al., 2012, p. 163).

An integral piece of Brigham's (2011) focus on understanding and seeing others as aspects of being a global citizen is the consideration of human rights. Gaudelli and Fernekes (2004) stress the importance of global human rights as an integral piece of developing global citizenship in youth. In their study of secondary students engaged in a human rights education unit, they found that students lacked knowledge in global issues, but wanted to be more informed and learn about the infringements on human rights they examined in the unit. At the opposite age extreme, Johansson (2009) studied interactions with Swedish preschool children to determine their perspectives on basic human rights and morality. She found a

strong focus on rights in the pedagogical practices of preschool teachers that make this environment a ripe place to engage students in discussions of global citizenships and the rights of others beyond their small classroom.

Through an examination of the literature from various fields on what global citizenship is and how it is interpreted and practiced in K-16 education across the world, it is clear that this is an important concept and that school librarians have the opportunity to impact its development in their students through the use of translated, global literature. The research we present here analyzes a sample of award-winning translated children's literature and considers their potential for engaging youths in discussions and actions surrounding global citizenship issues through the lens of human rights.

Method

The findings presented here are derived from previous research (Forest, Garrison, & Kimmel, 2013; Forest, Kimmel, & Garrison, 2013) studying portrayals of culture in 35 Batchelder Award winner and honor titles published since 2000. The Association of Library Services to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), gives the Batchelder Award to a publisher who has published the English translation of a title originally published in another language outside of the United States (ALSC, 1987). One to three honor titles are also awarded each year. (See Appendix A for the full citations of Batchelder books analyzed for this study.) The books mostly derive from European languages including French, German, and Dutch. The story settings show somewhat broader diversity in places throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America (Garrison & Kimmel, in press).

Using an inductive content analysis approach described by Berg (2001), we each read the books and coded for critical incidents of cultural constructs including gender, religion, disability, social class, immigration, and race/ethnicity/nationality. Then we met to discuss the books and reach a consensus on the coding of cultural constructs. It was during these discussions that we realized the rich potential these translated titles held for engaging students with discussions and examinations of global citizenship and social justice issues from around the world. In analyzing the characters and attributes of the books themselves, we noted an interesting connection to the United Nations 1959 document, *The Declaration of the Rights of the Child* (DRC). Thus, we present our findings using the DRC as an analytical lens to examine and support the use of translated literature in promoting global citizenship for young readers.

The DRC was adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1959, and was subsequently ratified by the United Nations General Assembly. The document asserts that the child needs "special safeguards and care" which were also stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924 and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and further that "mankind owes to the child the best it has to give." We were particularly struck in our review of this document by how many of the ten rights enumerated in the document were often violated in the various Batchelder winners. We found counter-examples in these titles that might serve to raise awareness and discussion about these human rights and the kinds of human rights violations found throughout history as well as in more current events. We were also struck by the resistance and resilience displayed by young characters in the titles.

For the purposes of this analysis, we felt the "In Plain Language" version of the DRC written for use with children was a more appropriate resource to use in our discussion than the full version of the document (UN, n.d.). Paired with Batchelder titles, the DRC offered powerful source for discussion. In the analysis, we made the decision to place a book with only one of the rights despite the fact that characters frequently either experienced violations of multiple rights, or in a few cases, multiple rights were upheld by caring adults. We made the decision to group the books where they would best illuminate the particular right instead of discussing all 35 titles. We also decided to use the entire book as our unit of analysis in order to retain

the integrity of the whole book and to provide the reader with an introduction to each of the books selected for this study and the Batchelder Award as well. Table 1 shows the ten rights “In Plain Language” (UN, n.d.) and the books selected for the discussion of each which follows the table.

Table 1: United Nations’ *Declaration of the Rights of the Child*^a
with Corresponding Batchelder Titles

Corresponding Batchelder Titles	Ten Rights of the Child
Introduction to discussion	1. All children have the right to what follows, no matter what their race, colour sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or where they were born or who they were born to.
<i>Run, Boy, Run</i> (Orlev, 2003); <i>An Innocent Soldier</i> (Holub, 2005)	2. You have the special right to grow up and to develop physically and spiritually in a healthy and normal way, free and with dignity.
<i>A Time of Miracles</i> (Bondoux, 2010); <i>How I Became an American</i> (Gündisch, 2001)	3. You have a right to a name and to be a member of a country.
<i>The Thief Lord</i> (Funke, 2002); <i>Moribito</i> series (Uehashi, 2008; 2009); <i>Big Wolf, Little Wolf</i> (Brun-Cosme, 2009)	4. You have a right to special care and protection and to good food, housing and medical services.
<i>Samir and Yonatan</i> (Carmi, 2000)	5. You have the right to special care if handicapped in any way.
<i>The Pull of the Ocean</i> (Mourlevat, 2006); <i>A Faraway Island</i> (Thor, 2009)	6. You have the right to love and understanding, preferably from parents and family, but from the government where these cannot help.
<i>Daniel Half Human and the Good Nazi</i> (Chotjewski, 2004); <i>The Lily Pond</i> (Thor, 2011); <i>The Shadows of Ghadames</i> (Stolz, 2004)	7. You have the right to go to school for free, to play, and to have an equal chance to develop yourself and to learn to be responsible and useful. Your parents have special responsibilities for your education and guidance.
<i>My Family for the War</i> (Voorhoeve, 2012); <i>A Game for Swallows</i> (Abirached, 2012)	8. You have the right always to be among the first to get help.
<i>Son of a Gun</i> (de Graaf, 2012); <i>The Last Dragon</i> (De Mari, 2006); <i>Tiger Moon</i> (Michaelis, 2008)	9. You have the right to be protected against cruel acts or exploitation, e.g. you shall not be obliged to do work which hinders your development both physically and mentally. You should not work before a minimum age and never when that would hinder your health, and your moral and physical development.
<i>Brave Story</i> (Miyabe, 2007)	10. You should be taught peace, understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people.

^a The ten rights in the right column come from the United Nations’ Cyber Schoolbus website listing the rights “In Plain Language” based in part on a 1978 translation (UN, n.d.).

Discussion of Findings

1. All children have the right to what follows, no matter what their race, colour sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or where they were born or who they were born to.

The first of the rights that “all children have the right to what follows” asserts that the rights listed are for all children regardless of their race, color, sex, language or religion and also includes politics, place of birth, and parents. We often found examples where ethnicity, gender, or religion impacted the freedom of characters in the Batchelder Award titles. Given

the explicit relationship of this right to each of the others, we will address these differences as they relate to the other more specific rights.

2. You have the special right to grow up and to develop physically and spiritually in a healthy and normal way, free and with dignity.

The two books selected to illustrate this right feature boys whose freedoms are severely curtailed in a manner that does not allow them to grow up in a "healthy and normal way." *Run Boy Run* (Orlev, 2003) is set during the Holocaust when Jurek, a young Jewish boy, escapes from the Warsaw ghetto after becoming separated from his family. The book is in many ways the ultimate counter-example to growing up free. Jurek is constantly under physical threat, even losing an arm after an Anti-Semitic doctor refuses him treatment for a treatable injury.

"I'm not operating on this boy."
Pani Herman was startled. "Why not?"
"Because he's a Jew."
"He's not a Jew!" she shouted. "I got him from the Gestapo and he's my worker. You'll operate on him at once!"
"He's a Jew," the doctor insisted.
"You don't know what you're talking about!" Pani Herman shouted. "I paid 157 marks and 25 pfennig for him!" (Orlev, 2003, Loc. 1562)

After the war, Jurek remembers a promise he made to his father about keeping his Jewish faith, but little else about his early childhood and is confused about his religious identity.

"He thought I was a Jew," Jurek said.
"Never mind," said Pani Kowalski. "Jesus was a Jew at first, too. As far as we're concerned, you've been confirmed and you're a Christian." "You should know, though," Pan Kowalski put in, "that from now on the Jews will try to take you."
"Let them try," Jurek said. "They can't make me." He couldn't say his prayers that night. He didn't know which sin was greater: betraying Jesus and the Holy Mother or betraying his promise to his father. (Orlev, 2003, Loc. 2479)

In *An Innocent Soldier* (Holub, 2005), young farmhand Adam is conscripted into the Napoleonic army in place of his master's son despite the observations and objections of one of the officers at his youth:

"He's just a boy," he says in a quiet voice. "Just observe his skinny frame, his narrow chest. His voice hasn't broken, you can hear it squeaking and scratching. And other signs of adolescence ... Well, see for yourselves. We don't want children in our army." (Holub, 2005; Loc. 194)

For a period, Adam is under the service of an unrelenting bully, but later becomes the servant of a young officer. Harrowing details of war, near starvation, and illness mark their journey to Russia and back. Upon their return, Adam faces the fact that he is not free: "Where is my home? With the farmer, who doesn't want me? I no longer feel connected to my village or to the land. A thread of melancholy dangles from my head down into my belly" (Holub, 2005; Loc. 2390).

Both books are historical fiction lending a reality and immediacy to the ways that a "normal" childhood is threatened by war.

3. You have a right to a name and to be a member of a country.

Names and nicknames are important markers of identity in many of the Batchelder titles. Both Adam and Jurek have their names changed. For Jurek, it is a matter of hiding his Jewish identity, and for Adam, it is not a matter of choice but of deception. Immigrants often changed their names to better assimilate into their new country. Two Batchelder titles capture the desire and journey to become a member of a new country. Seven-year old Koumail opens *A Time of Miracles* (Bondoux, 2010) with the declaration: "My name is Blaise Fortune and I am a citizen of the French Republic. It is the pure and simple truth" (p. 1). The truth, it turns out, is not so simple as the identity of Blaise slowly unravels as he flees the Georgian Republic and journeys across Europe to France. The French, bound by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, must take in the unaccompanied minor:

Then one day Modeste Koulevitch reads Article 20 of the convention to me, concerning the rights of children: it meant that I had obtained the protection of the state. "As long as we can't find someone who knows you, and we don't know where you come from exactly, we're stuck," he added. I was sent to another shelter, near the town of Poitiers, and there I was enrolled in school. (Bondoux, 2010, p. 131)

In *How I Became an American* (Gündisch, 2001), young Johann, who becomes Johnny, recounts how his family immigrated to America, making the journey on a ship and entering the country through Ellis Island. He describes how some family names were changed:

Janusz told me his father had changed the family name so that they'd become Americans faster. When he had been asked by the clerk of the immigration commission on Ellis Island what his name was, he had given their Polish name, Kowalski. But the Irish clerk didn't understand Polish so he asked the interpreter what the name meant. "Smith," said the translator. "Smith?" enquired the clerk and Janusz's father had nodded approvingly. (Gündisch, 2001, p.69)

4. You have a right to special care and protection and to good food, housing and medical services.

In one of the few picture books recognized by the award, *Big Wolf and Little Wolf* (Brun-Cosme, 2009) is a story about friendship and attention to those smaller than you (i.e. children). Big Wolf recognizes the needs of Little Wolf as the weather turns cold and snowy:

He thought that if Little Wolf returned, he would leave him a larger corner of his leaf blanket, even a much larger one. And he promised himself that he would give Little Wolf as much to eat as he wanted. (Brun-Cosme, 2009)

Moribito (Uehashi, 2008), translated from the Japanese, is quite a different story of protection. Balsa, a feisty woman warrior is hired as a bodyguard for Chagum, a prince whose father wants to kill him because he is in possession of a mysterious spirit egg. In an action-packed quest, the young Chagum matures and realizes:

I didn't 'survive,' he thought. *You saved me.* This realization hit him forcefully. Even he, who had known firsthand the egg's desire to live, had found it hard to sacrifice himself to save it. Yet these people had willingly confronted terror for his sake. As a prince, he had taken it for granted that he should be protected, but now he knew how precious this protection was. He wrapped his good hand around Balsa's neck and hugged her tightly. (Uehashi, 2008, p. 237)

In *The Thief Lord* (Funke, 2002), another tale of survival, runaway brothers Prosper and Bo are taken in by a band of homeless children living in an abandoned movie theater in Venice. As one of the children explains:

“Back then we were living in the basement of an old house,” Mosca explained. “Riccio, Hornet, and me. It was over in Castello. You can always find a place there. No one wants to live there anymore. It was awful: wet and cold and we were always ill and we never had enough to eat.”

“You may as well say it straight: We were in deep trouble,” Riccio interrupted him impatiently. “‘You can’t live in a rat hole like this,’ is what Scipio told us. And so he brought us here, to the Star-Palace. He picked the lock of the emergency exit and told us to barricade the front entrance. And since then we’ve been doing quite well. Until you turned up.” (Funke, 2002, Loc. 2154)

The children in *The Thief Lord* (Funke, 2002) are resourceful yet their ability to protect and care for themselves and each other is limited by their age. In each of these three examples, caring adult characters are also present to offer protection, special care, and necessary food and shelter to the youth.

5. You have the right to special care if handicapped in any way.

While disability was one of the main cultural constructs we sought in our investigation of this literature, it was rarely noted as an issue encountered in any way. *Samir and Yonatan* (Carmi, 2000) was an exception. This title was originally published in Germany and translated to English from Hebrew. Set in modern-day Israel, it told the story of Samir, a young Palestinian boy, who is forced to seek medical help in a Jewish hospital after he suffers an injury the Palestinian hospital in his village cannot treat. In the opening scene to the book, he shows his fear and hesitation in this situation:

Since morning I’ve been waiting for a curfew. If there’s curfew I won’t be able to leave the village and won’t have to travel with Mom to the Jew’s hospital. So, like a chicken, I’m perched on the windowsill, waiting. Sure enough, it has turned out to be a quiet day. The street’s empty. The sahlab seller is walking down the road, dragging his sick leg. I wouldn’t mind dragging my leg like that old man all my life as long as I don’t have to go to the hospital. (Carmi, 2000, p. 1)

Such injuries, handicaps, and even death are facts of life to Samir who describes many people in his neighborhood who are physically disabled, like the sahlab seller and his blind Grandpa, or even killed like his younger brother. Despite the known issues between the Palestinians and Jews in Israel, Samir’s story supports the 5th UN Right, that children are guaranteed special care in response to injury or handicap.

Moreover, this story gives a unique perspective on the issues between the two opposing ethnic groups in this region that could educate readers unfamiliar with the circumstances and thereby develop the understanding piece of being a global citizen. *Samir and Yontan* (Carmi, 2000) is a tale of tolerance and understanding as Samir evolves from complete fear in the mere presence of the Jewish children he shares his hospital room to friendship with these same kids. Samir considers these friendships shortly before his discharge from the hospital and how he will remember it in the future:

I’ll want to believe that I, Samir, a boy from the occupied West Bank, stood here with a Jewish boy who has a soldier brother, and the two of us peed into a sandbox and laughed and didn’t give a damn about the whole world. (Carmi, 2000, p. 182-3)

Samir and Yonatan (Carmi, 2000) exemplifies the UN's 5th Right of the Child focusing on special care for children with any type of handicap. And further, is a quality choice for developing global citizenship and making connections to the Palestinian-Israel conflict for English-speaking readers.

6. You have the right to love and understanding, preferably from parents and family, but from the government where these cannot help.

Two of the Batchelder titles show the 6th Right in divergent ways. In *The Pull of the Ocean* (Mourlevat, 2006), seven brothers flee their home after the youngest Yann overhears a conversation between their parents, indicating their father may intend to harm them. Yann is neglected and mistreated by his parents because of his abnormal size and muteness. In his brother's words, "The parents took a dislike to him. We don't know why. Maybe 'cause he's different" (Mourlevat, 2006, p. 26). Yann's parents do not give his six brothers much love and understanding either. The government attempts to step into the situation as described by a social worker who visits in the opening scene of the book, but there is not much they can legally do.

The two sisters Stephie and Nellie Steiner in *A Faraway Island* (Thor, 2009) leave their family for a much different reason. As Jews, they face trying times in their native Austria during the Nazi occupation of the 1930s. Their parents exemplify love and understanding by sending them to Sweden to stay with foster families while the war plays out or until they can get immigration approval to Sweden themselves. In the case of the Steiner sisters, it is not the government but the Swedish Refugee Committee that helps the families; the Austrian government is essentially powerless against the Nazis. The Swedish group recognizes this and adheres to the UN's 6th right for children, ensuring love and understanding for the Austrian sisters.

Reading these two books will give English-speaking readers insight into historical and contemporary issues affecting the world's children. Such insight could help them to develop their own understandings of and connections to others. In this way, they can build empathy and develop a firmer understanding and awareness of what it means to be a global citizen.

7. You have the right to go to school for free, to play, and to have an equal chance to develop yourself and to learn to be responsible and useful. Your parents have special responsibilities for your education and guidance.

This right was illustrated in unique ways in three of the Batchelder titles and was highly dependent on the historical and geographical setting. Two of these books were set during World War II in countries overtaken by the Nazis (Austria and Germany.) Characters in both *The Lily Pond* (Thor, 2011), the sequel to *A Faraway Island* (Thor, 2009) mentioned in the 6th Right, and *Daniel Half Human and the Good Nazi* (Chotjewitz, 2004) are permitted to go to school thanks to scholarships and the charity of others. School is not a given or free, but it is clear that there are people in the books who support the UN's 7th Right to give the youth a more "equal chance" to learn and achieve in life.

Another title, *The Shadow of Ghadames* (Stolz, 2004), is set in 19th Century Libya and gives a much different perspective on education. As a girl, Malika is not encouraged to learn to read or write mostly because her future as a wife and mother will likely not require such skills. Her own mother refused to learn such things, "believ(ing) that women will lose their powers if they pry and try to know the same things as men" (Stoltz, 2004, Loc. 621). Despite this traditional view of her mother's, Malika's father is more advanced in his beliefs. He taught his second wife Arabic; Bilkisu came from an area of Africa where women were not permitted to "even attend Koranic school" (Stolz, 2004, Loc. 618). She recalls how proud she felt "to have a wooden board, a stylus and writing ink, like a boy" (Stolz, 2004, Loc. 619). In the book, Malika learns to read and write as she and her mothers take in an injured young man who is sought by the village men for his forward ideas surrounding religion and equality.

Abdelkarim teaches Malika these valuable skills because he believes that “Girls deserve to be taught just as much as boys” (Stolz, 2004, Loc. 803). In Malika’s 19th Century Libyan village, girls do not share the 7th UN right with boys; however, it is clear in the story that not all people believe or support this idea.

The three stories described here illuminate the rationale behind the UN’s 7th Right in different ways. They provide an opportunity for librarians to discuss such issues with their students and consider the marginalization of different social groups through history. These historical evaluations can help inform a modern perspective of these same groups and the current social climates in areas of the world. Developing such understandings is key in promoting global citizenship.

8. You have the right always to be among the first to get help.

Two of the most recent Batchelder titles exemplify the 8th Right dealing with emergencies and disasters: 2013 winner *My Family for the War* (Voorhoeve, 2012) and 2013 book *A Game for Swallows: To Die, To Leave, To Return* (Abirached, 2012). *My Family for the War* begins in Berlin, Germany in 1938, while *A Game for Swallows* is set in Beirut, Lebanon in 1984.

In *My Family for the War* (Voorhoeve, 2012), the protagonist, Ziska, is an adolescent girl living with her mother and father in Nazi-Germany. When Hitler comes into power, Ziska’s Jewish family is forced from their home and made to live in a cramped apartment with other people, and her father is arrested and placed in a Gestapo prison. As the situation for the German Jews grows worse, Ziska learns of an opportunity for escape: English families are willing to take in Jewish children until Germany is safe. Though a fictitious story, there were hundreds of real children like Ziska who escaped from Germany on the *kindertransports*. The English families who spared these children from the horrors of war illustrate the idea of helping children first and foremost.

In *A Game for Swallows* (Abirached, 2012), the safety of children in a dangerous situation is prioritized. In this graphic novel, Zeina and her brother are small children in Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War where violence between Christians and Muslims breaks out daily. One afternoon, Zeina’s parents walk the short distance to her grandmother’s house and are unable to come home due to intense bombing. Zeina and her brother are left alone. Yet as the day wears on and turns to night, their neighbors come to comfort and distract them. The care and love that Zeina and her brother are shown by these adults helps to ease their fear during a long, frightening evening.

9. You have the right to be protected against cruel acts or exploitation, e.g. you shall not be obliged to do work which hinders your development both physically and mentally. You should not work before a minimum age and never when that would hinder your health, and your moral and physical development.

Children are exploited in several titles. In *Son of a Gun* (de Graaf, 2012), two young children in 1990s Liberia are kidnapped from school and thrust into the country’s civil war. *The Last Dragon* (De Mari, 2006) portrays orphans forced to do hard labor. And, Safia in *Tiger Moon* (Michaelis, 2008) is sold into a loveless marriage with a violent man. These books serve as counter-examples of the childhood that all young people deserve as exemplified by the 9th right.

The treatment of Nopi and Lucky in *Son of a Gun* (de Graaf, 2012) violates nearly all of the tenets of the 9th Right. These siblings are kidnapped and made into child soldiers. Not only are they exploited and forced into violent, dangerous work, but Nopi loses her hearing as a result of the conflict. Further, their moral development is hindered when they are forced to pick up guns and kill people. Though *Son of a Gun* is fiction, de Graaf (2012) based it on the experiences of real children who lived through the Liberian conflict whom she interviewed.

This connection makes this title particularly notable to use with young readers in developing global citizenship.

The Last Dragon (De Mari, 2006) underscores the cruel treatment of children as well. In this fantasy, the orphans of the country of Daligar are made to farm the land in order to feed the wealthy and powerful. The children receive very basic shelter and rotting food in return. They are viciously punished when they try to run away or when they “steal” a bit of the food they harvest. Though the story, which is populated by elves and dragons, is a fantasy, the treatment of the children is not a far cry from the experiences of real children throughout history, such as the children of slaves in the United States before 1865, the Jewish children locked away in concentration camps in the World War II era, or the experiences of Nopi and Lucky described in *Son of a Gun* (de Graaf, 2012).

Safia in *Tiger Moon* (Michaelis, 2008) is forced to become a bride to a much older man she does not love. Safia, who is extraordinarily beautiful, is spotted by the merchant Ahmed Mudhi who decides he must have her. Safia’s father is more than willing to sell her into marriage as a way to support his impoverished family. While Safia’s family is relieved at their “improved financial circumstances” (Michaelis, 2008, p. 6), Safia is fearful when she envisions her wedding night with Mudhi: she knows he will kill her when he learns she is not a virgin. Though the book is also a fantasy, Safia’s early marriage is not unlike those of other child and teen brides existing in the real world. The sad circumstances of the children in *Son of a Gun* (de Graaf, 2012), *The Last Dragon* (De Mari, 2006), and *Tiger Moon* (Michaelis, 2008) illustrate what happens when a young person’s right to a childhood free from exploitation, violence, and hard labor is taken away.

10. You should be taught peace, understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people.

One story that underscores this right is *Brave Story* (Miyabe, 2007), the 2008 Batchelder Award winner. In this book, Wataru is a fifth grader living with his mother and father in present day Tokyo. Wataru’s world crumbles when he learns his father has a mistress and plans to leave Wataru and his mother, who makes a suicide attempt in response. Wataru is given the opportunity to change his family’s fate when he stumbles upon a portal to Vision, a fantasy world.

On the surface, the world of Vision, populated by creatures of all shapes and colors, is nothing like the real world. Some creatures look like humans and are called “ankhas,” while others, called “non-ankhas,” resemble various animals. Wataru forms strong bonds with both groups and learns upon further examination of Vision, that this place is similar to the real world in lamentable ways. In some parts of Vision, people are segregated based on race:

There were many different races living in the northern lands, Wataru learned, but of them the ankha were by far the most numerous. “They joined together and started exterminating the other races, and they were strong, real strong. If you lived in the northern lands and you weren’t an ankha, your house and fields’d be taken away, you’d be killed, or thrown in a camp and made a slave. The number of non-ankha dropped by the day. And then, the ankha had their glorious empire.” (Miyabe, 2007, loc. 5332-36)

Wataru is reminded of apartheid in South Africa when he learns of the discrimination faced by non-ankha people in Vision. The racial extermination described in the passage above is reminiscent of historical events like the Holocaust and modern genocides. Though Wataru’s personal relationships demonstrate the spirit of the 10th Right, the larger social structure of Vision, with its segregation of races and persecution of non-human creatures, is a counter-example of this right.

Significance

In examining this sample of award-winning translated literature through the lens of the DRC, it is clear that these titles hold strong potential in connecting readers across languages and cultures. Through the publication and promotion of translations, young readers are handed a bridge towards understanding and seeing peoples around the world who are both similar and different from themselves. Translated titles like the Batchelder sample presented here represent literal bridges as they can be read in their original and translated languages. As leaders in their schools, teacher librarians are in a position to take on the role of supporting experiences and inquiry into global issues through translated literature. For libraries working with English speakers and English language learners, the Mildred L. Batchelder Award titles represent a quality option for getting global literature into library collections and the hands of teachers and students. For libraries not affiliated with the English language, we encourage librarians to seek translated titles from other countries in the native languages of students and teachers. Such efforts could promote the important life-skill of global citizenship in our youth.

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Appendix A. Sample of Batchelder Titles

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