

Around the World in 18 Books: An introduction to literary translation in children's and YA publishing

By Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp

Introduced by Patricia Billings of Outside In World

HOST ORGANISATIONS

- [University of Reading's Centre for Book Cultures and Publishing](#)
- [Outside in World](#)
- [World Kid Lit blog](#)

BOOKS CITED

PB = picture book // MG = middle grade (junior fiction) // NF = nonfiction // YA = young adult (teen)

Original Language	Country of origin	Title	Genre / age category	Publisher	Author	Illustrator	Translator
Spanish / Arabic / Hebrew	Chile	Daniel and Ismail	PB	Restless books	Juan Pablo Iglesias	Alex Peris	Ilan Stavans
Farsi	Iran	There's Room for Everyone	PB	Tiny Owl	Anahita Teymorian	Anahita Teymorian	Delaram Ghanimifard
Arabic	Syria	Tomorrow	PB	Lantana	Nadine Kaadan	Nadine Kaadan	Nadine Kaadan
French	France	My Pictures After the Storm	PB	Gecko Press	Eric Veillé	Eric Veillé	Daniel Hahn
Swedish	Sweden	The Bird Within Me	PB/NF	Book Island	Sara Lundberg	Sara Lundberg	BJ Epstein
Russian	Russia	How Do Bridges Work	PB/NF	b small	Roman Belyaev	Roman Belyaev	Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp
Chinese	Taiwan	Bibbit Jumps	Chapter book	Gecko Press	Bei Lynn	Bei Lynn	Helen Wang
Norwegian	Norway	Brown	Chapter book	Enchanted Lion	Håkon Øvreås	Øyvind Torseter	Kari Dickson
Hungarian	Hungary	Arnica and the Duck Princess	MG	Pushkin Press	Ervin Lázár	Jacqueline Molnár	Anna Bentley
Afrikaans	South Africa	Good day for climbing trees	MG	Oneworld/Rock the Boat	Jaco Jacobs	Jim Tierney	Kobus Geldenhuys
Japanese	Japan	Kiki's Delivery Service	MG	Puffin	Eiko Kadono	Joe Todd Stanton	Emily Balistieri
Dutch	Netherlands	Lampie	MG	Pushkin Press	Annet Schaap	Annet Schaap	Laura Watkinson
German	Germany	Magical Bookshop	MG	Oneworld	Katje Frixe		Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp

Indonesian /Javanese	Indonesia	The Adventures of Na Willa	MG	Emma Press	Reda Gaudiamo	Cecillia Hidayat	Ikhda Ayuning Maharsi Degoul and Kate Wakeling
Italian	Italy	The Distance between Me and the Cherry Tree	MG	Hot Key Books	Paola Peretti	Carolina Rabei	Denise Muir
French	France/Côte d'Ivoire	Akissi	Graphic novel / MG	Flying Eye Books	Marguerite Abouet	Mathieu Sapin	Judith Taboy and Marie Bédrune
Spanish	Spain	Poems the Wind Blew In	Poetry	Emma Press	Karmelo C. Iribarren	Riya Chowdhury	Lawrence Schimel
Bengali	India	Wordy Gurdy Boom: The Nonsense World of Sukumar Ray	Poetry / mg	Puffin	Sukumar Ray	Sukumar Ray	Sampurna Chattarji
Arabic	Lebanon	Ghady & Rawan	YA	Texas University Press	Fatima Sharafeddine and Samar Mahfouz Barraaj		Marcia Lynx Qualey and Sawad Hussain
Portuguese	Brazil	Here the Whole Time	YA	Scholastic	Vitor Martins		Helena Larissa

1. What gets translated?

- [Literature Across Frontiers](#) - series of research and reports on translated literature in the UK and Ireland
- [Building Bridges: The Art of Children's Book Translation](#) (Publishing Perspectives)
- Overview of factors in translation including co-editions - [MA dissertation](#) Gabriele Thomson-Wohlgemuth

2. Why read children's books in translation?

- Diversity, inclusion, #ownvoices - authentic diverse experiences
 - Syrian author Nadine Kaadan ([Tomorrow](#)) on [How to Diversify your Children's bookshelf](#) (in a way that is inclusive and not tokenistic): BBC 100 Women 2020 Masterclass
 - [CLPE Reflecting Realities](#): 3rd year of UK study looking at diversity in children's literature
 - Disability and neurodiversity - potential for translated titles to fill these gaps. See OIW project [Reading the Way](#) for recommendations
 - Sensitivity and inclusivity consultancy - cf [Inclusive Minds](#) inclusion ambassadors network

HOW? THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

3. How do publishers hear about books in other languages?

- Prizes

- IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Prize: Kiki's Delivery Service written in 1985, film in 1989, English translation after Eiko Kadono won [HCA prize in 2018](#)
- Translator does a sample on spec and pitches independently
 - Arnica - Anna had translated whole book; [interview with translator and illustrator](#)
- Literature organisations
 - [IBBY Honour List 2020](#)
 - BookTrust [In Other Words](#): ACE-funded two-year project 2017-2018, funding for sample and publicity grant - resulted in 6+ translations
 - International Youth Library [The White Ravens catalogue 2020](#)

5. How are translations funded?

- National literature promotion bodies
 - e.g. [Books from Taiwan](#) (Bibbit Jumps); [NORLA](#) (Brown); [LitRI](#) Indonesia (Na Willa); Lampie ([Nederlands Letterenfonds](#))
- Arts Council England
 - [BookTrust In Other Words](#) project: funded samples and marketing
 - Funding direct to publishers, e.g. Emma Press - Na Willa
- English PEN / [PEN Translates grant](#)
 - Poems the Wind Blew In - first youth literature funded? Several since
- [Creative Europe](#)
 - 3 books by Book Island, including The Bird Within Me
 - Young Dedalus middle grade fiction also funded

6. What are some of the challenges for the translator?

- Names and cultural terms
 - Anna Bentley on translating the irony of names in [Arnica The Duck Princess](#)
- Swearing and taboos
 - ['Damn!' and Other Translation Conundrums](#) - by Claire Storey (World Kid Lit blog); see also [Rachel Ward on translating Zippel: The Little Keyhole Ghost](#)
- Word play, rhyme and visual challenges
 - Anna Bentley on challenging word play and rhyme in [Arnica The Duck Princess](#)
 - Daniel Hahn on visual puns in [My Pictures After the Storm](#): new images to work in English! See the [recorded panel discussion](#) at CUNY Center for the Humanities: Translating the Future series, and [write-up by Mohini Gupta](#) for WKL blog)
 - Ingenious translated word play by [Sampurna Chattarji](#) of Bengali classic nonsense verse by Sukumar Ray
- Copyright and credit
 - Star publishers who name translators prominently: [ECB](#) website has a translators section, [Daniel & Ismail](#) - 4 translators named on the cover!

Credit for translators: prizes

- Eligibility for prizes, eg Poems the Wind Blew In 'Highly Commended' for [CLiPPA 2020](#) prize, Lampie shortlisted for [CILIP Carnegie](#), only recently opened up to translations

Making a living & professional development

- Negotiating fees, royalties and subsidiary rights
- Model contracts & contract vetting: [SoA/TA](#), [ALTA](#), [Author's Guild](#), [SCBWI](#)
- SCBWI now has translator membership, CPD events

TRENDS AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

7. How many books are translated from outside of Europe?
 - **Outside in World** database (based on books received for review) - see Appendix for figures from 2010-2020
 - France 204, twice as much as Germany 102. Netherlands 63 but the next big hitter is Japan 38 (5 times as many books from France as from Japan).
 - Countries with between 10-30 books: Canada, Iran, Norway, Spain, China
 - Countries with less than 10: Brazil, Russia, India, South Africa, Indonesia (some of the biggest countries in the world)
 - **World Kid Lit** database (incorporates data from Outside in World and other sources; to be shared on the [blog](#) soon) - see Appendix for figures from 2017-2010
 - French, German, Spanish, Swedish, Italian and Dutch dominate - testament to success of literary agents and literature funding bodies in Sweden and Netherlands
 - Languages with fewer than 10 children's books translated in last 4 years: Russian, Arabic, Farsi, Hungarian, Bengali, Indonesian, Afrikaans
 - **Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC)** at the University of Wisconsin
 - [CCBC search 1](#): 2018-2020 / translation / authors of all ethnic groups except white: 56 books
 - [CCBC search 2](#): 2018-2020 / translation / authors = white: 295 books
 - [CCBC total in translation](#): 351.
 - Therefore, $295/351 = 84\%$ WHITE // $56/351 = 15\%$ ALL OTHER ETHNICITY CATEGORIES
 - [CCBC search 3](#): 2018-2020 / translation / authors = black/Africa: 4 books, all translations from French

8. **How can translation for young readers become more linguistically and ethnically diverse?**
 - Editors expanding their networks/broadening their search:
 - [World Kid Lit expert readers list](#) - find a reader to assess a manuscript in a language you can't read
 - Editors with no experience of translation - CPD opportunities, eg [Daniel Hahn's ACE funded trip to Bologna](#)
 - Book fairs and online rights portals
 - Target funding during market focus years eg. Sharjah (UAE) is [market focus at London Book Fair 2021](#) and also Guest of Honor at [Bologna Children's Book Fair](#)
 - Frankfurt Book Fair 2021 - Canada: amazing diverse picture book publishers eg [Orca - Plains Cree](#), Groundwood Books, but translation only from French? translations into first nation languages, but still v little *from* indigenous langs - an opportunity for more inclusion?
 - [dPictus](#): discover catalogues of picture books publishers further afield; see [dPictus 100 Outstanding Picture Books](#)
 - National / regional Literature Promotion channels / events
 - [Books from Taiwan](#), [Latvian Literature](#), [#RomaniaRocks](#),
 - But so many countries still don't have this kind of representation or only focus on adult literature.
 - Focus weeks/festivals eg #ReadingAfrica, August #WITMonth, Sept #WorldKidLitMonth - good time for editors to gather recommendations
 - World Kid Lit blog as a platform for highlighting lesser translated languages, e.g. series of interviews re [languages spoken by few](#)
 - Literary agents & foreign rights
 - Make use of the World Kid Lit community to find translators and [readers](#) to work with

- Development initiatives and funding
 - [SCBWI: Work-in-progress grant](#) on uncommissioned translation
 - [PEN Heim](#): grants to work on uncommissioned translation - not aware of precedent of children's literature, but still worth asking
 - [ACE](#): National Lottery Project Grants: individual artists can apply
 - BookTrust In Other Words led to 6+ translations including from [South Africa](#) - only 3 translations in history of OIW!
- Summer schools and mentorships
 - [Antwerp University Children's Literature Summer School](#)
 - [BCLT Summer School](#) (Children's literature strand with Daniel Hahn)
 - UK [National Centre for Writing](#) - Emerging Translator Mentorships, diverse range of languages including Korean; never any African languages besides French/Portuguese?
 - [YASA](#) - could associations like this have a forum or resources for supporting translations from lesser translated countries or underrepresented ethnicities?
 - [Bristol Translates](#) summer school
 - Scope for more summer schools or workshops focussing on literature for younger readers? Literature for young people in translation by writers of colour?
- Decolonise and diversify education
 - Translated literature for young people can contextualise and broaden scope of e.g. primary and secondary curriculum for history, geography, citizenship, religious studies
 - Translation as a means for exploring inclusion, social justice, identity politics, systemic racism
 - Practical translation workshops in schools, and study of translated literature, can raise perceived value of home and heritage languages, inspiring language study & multilingual creativity >> next generation of translators?
 - Shadow Heroes 2020 project '[Exploring race through translation](#)'
 - Stephen Spender Trust [Poetry prize](#) and [creative translation in the classroom](#) projects: opening access & diversifying language study, proposing creative routes for an intersection of literacy and expression, theory of language and intercultural awareness

READING IDEAS

9. Where to find children's and YA books in translation?
 - [Outside in World](#): explore a world of books
 - [Planet Picture Book](#)
 - [World Kid Lit blog](#) and September, [World Kid Lit Month](#)
 - [Marsh Prize winners](#)
 - [ALSC Batchelder Prize winners](#)

Appendix

Outside in World

Translations of books for young people received for review, from 2010-2020, from the 18 countries considered in this talk

France 204

Germany 102

Netherlands 63

Japan 38

Italy 31

China 23
Spain 22
Poland 21
Norway 19
Iran 17
Canada (French) 16
Brazil 9
Russia 8
Syria 3
Chile 2
Hungary 2
India (Tamil) 1
South Africa -

World Kid Lit database 2017-2020

Number of translations listed, for the 18 languages considered in this talk

French	74
German	39
Spanish	28
Swedish	28
Italian	25
Dutch	23
Japanese	17
Portuguese	17
Chinese	16
Norwegian	13
Latvian	11
Russian	8
Arabic	7
Farsi	3
Hungarian	3
Bengali	2
Indonesian	2
Afrikaans	1

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www.ruthahmedzai Kemp.com

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