이름 Namen Noms 名字 Nomi नाम ονόματα பெயர் k'àab'á'ó'b' adlar nafn Tōcāitl नामन Awiinsoonemaawa НАЗВАНИЯ Ainmneacha

"My Name Is …": Picturebooks Exploring Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Names

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Abstract

A child's personal name is an integral part of their identity. Names and name negotiation in children's picturebooks can explore this connection by narrativizing the impact of positive and negative experiences involving name-carriers, name-givers, and name-users. In this study, we began with a framework combining a socio-onomastic perspective with the children's literature metaphor of "mirrors and windows" (Bishop 1990) and the educational research concept of "damage and desire" narratives (Tuck 2009). Our content analysis of twelve picturebooks featuring characters with culturally and linguistically diverse names led to a coding scheme of six common episodes of name negotiation in the picturebooks' narrative arcs: (1) inflicted damage; (2) internalized damage; (3) supplying desire; (4) internalized desire; (5) asserting the desire; and (6) joining the desire. Our findings highlight how episodes of damage focus on the pain, sadness, and struggle name-carriers undergo, while episodes of desire center the support of parents and teachers as well as detailed cultural and familial information about names. We conclude that while both "damage and desire" episodes contribute to the narratives, too heavy a focus on damage could lead to the perpetuation of a "single story" (Adichie 2009) that normalizes pain and struggle as an inevitable experience for children with linguistically and culturally diverse names.

Keywords: diversity, picturebooks, content analysis, socio-onomastics, Rudine Sims Bishop, Eve Tuck

Introduction and Literature Review

Several picturebooks[1] address diversity and inclusion through stories centered on children's linguistically and culturally diverse names. These books and their portrayal of names are important because, although the books' characters are fictional, the books' readers are not. The name negotiations that occur on these pages often reflect the name negotiations that children with linguistically and culturally diverse names face daily.

As we know, naming and personal names are significant to individual identity. While naming practices do vary across cultures and communities, considerable evidence indicates that linguistic, cultural, and social meanings are taken into consideration when choosing a child's name (Macdonald & Zheng 2010; Souto-Manning 2011; Olatunji et al. 2015; Ainiala & Östman 2017). Names can also be used to position an individual within a community or cultural space and carry the hopes and dreams of one generation to the next (Aldrin 2017). In a study of unusual first names, Zweigenhaft (1983) argues that they carry a range of positive and negative implications for the name-carriers based on race, class, and gender. He concludes that unusual names when "thoughtfully chosen and given in context" can become special and have a positive effect on individuals (Zweigenhaft 1983, 269). Drawing on the "My Name, My Identity" campaign, Zalznick (2018) argues that teachers need to make an effort to learn the right pronunciation of student names, especially of those coming from minority backgrounds. Such efforts can nurture empathy and understanding in classroom spaces and contribute to eliminating implicit bias (Peterson et al. 2015). Through ethnographic research encounters in an Australian multicultural primary school setting, Tualaulelei (2021) shows that teachers' willingness and efforts to learn students' Samoan names can transform learning spaces into empowering spaces for those students. Similarly, in English medium instruction education class contexts, teachers' initiatives to learn and use students' personal names that carry cultural meanings are seen to elevate student confidence and performance (Murdoch et al. 2018).

On the other hand, studies have also noted a damaging impact on students' identities and successes in educational contexts when teachers are lackadaisical in learning and correctly pronouncing their students' names (Kohli & Solorzano 2012; Rice 2019). Additionally, practices of renaming (Souto-Manning 2011) or simplifying a child's name are "indicative of and contribute to a deficit perspective" (Peterson et al. 2015, 40). Citing instances of racial-renaming of African Americans and Native Americans in the past, Kohli & Solorzano (2012) argue that mispronunciations of personal and family names resulting from educators' unwillingness to spend time and effort learning correct pronunciations perpetuate notions of minority inferiority. Despite contemporary society's move towards combating overt forms of racism, many forms of racial microaggressions persist. Though an unusual or foreign-sounding name (Clifton 2013) itself may not necessarily be the cause of discrimination, name negotiations can serve as tangible spaces for others to express their intolerance. Therefore, mispronunciation of names or renaming, even if "well-intentioned" can be read as racial microaggression (Souto-Manning 2011; Kohli & Solorzano 2012; Rice 2019). Subsequently, such experiences can also cause students to internalize racism, accepting the racial microaggressions towards their name as normal which can undermine their sense of identity and self-worth (Peterson et al. 2015).

While the literature cited above confirms the significance of personal names in society—and emphasizes the importance of correctly pronouncing a child's name in the classroom—two studies have looked at the incorporation of linguistically and culturally diverse names within picturebooks. First, Franzak & Keller (2016) focused on how names are addressed in the classroom and educational spaces of ten picturebooks—identifying three main themes:

1. negotiating the pressure to assimilate
2. teacher characters and the abdication of responsibility
3. negotiating the fear of identity loss

In a second article, Sembiante et al. (2018) analyzed five picturebooks centering on immigrant childhoods—also framing their findings around three themes:

1. names as representations of origin
2. names as a source of cross-cultural conflict
3. self-identity to outsider perceptions

In the present study, we take a different approach from both Franzak & Keller (2016) and Sembiante et al. (2018) to consider twelve picturebooks that were published between 2000 and 2020 which focus on child protagonists with linguistically and culturally diverse names. Rather than simply identifying common themes, we take a socio-onomastic approach (Ainiala & Östman 2017) to examine the social context of name negotiation within the books' narrative arcs, focusing on the interactions between name-givers, name-carriers, and name-users.

Framework

Drawing on the fact that "onomastics is essentially inter-disciplinary" (Hough 2016, 8), our analysis into picturebooks utilizes a proposed theoretical framework that situates Rudine Sims Bishop's (1990) "mirrors and windows" metaphor from the field of children's literature and Eve Tuck's (2009) "damage and desire" dichotomy of educational research within a socio-onomastic approach. In combining these three perspectives, we posit a unique theoretical construct that allows us to critically analyze how linguistically and culturally diverse names are portrayed throughout the narrative arcs of picturebooks.

Mirrors/Windows

Much analysis into multicultural children's literature has seized upon Bishop's (1990) metaphor of "mirrors and windows" to understand the importance and impact of diverse representations in children's literature on the child reader. In her seminal essay, Bishop (1990) states:

> Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange […]. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. (ix)

This apt metaphor applies to picturebooks centering characters with culturally and linguistically diverse names. Peterson et al. (2015) confirm that multicultural literature celebrating diverse names or depicting social conflict in response to diverse names contributes to students' exploration "of self, family, friendships, school, and community" (40). These books portray examples of human experience that may serve as windows for young readers, teaching them to appreciate and value the diversity of names they encounter among their peers, and as mirrors for young readers who themselves are negotiating their linguistically and culturally diverse names.

Damage/Desire

Nineteen years after Rudine Sims Bishop (1990) wrote about the importance of positive literary mirrors for non-white readers, Eve Tuck (2009) penned an open letter to communities, researchers, and educators calling on them to shift from "damage-centered" research on disenfranchised communities to a "desire-based" research framework (409). Damage-centered research documents pain and brokenness, creating "long-term repercussions of *thinking of ourselves as broken*" (Tuck 2009, 409). In contrast, desire-based research is "concerned with understanding complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives", while

documenting "wisdom and hope" (Tuck 2009, 416). The damage perspective Tuck (2009) identifies in educational research also emerges in the narratives that are told about groups of people. Too often, outsiders embrace "all-too-easy, one-dimensional narratives of damage in order to expose ongoing structural inequity" (Tuck 2009, 417). We see this damage perspective in picturebooks documenting the bullying and pain young protagonists experience due to others' discriminatory attitudes toward diverse names. Even when names are mispronounced unintentionally or suggestions of renaming stem from a desire to help, the fact remains that the effect on the name-carrier can still be negative. Good intentions do not prevent damage. Fortunately, desire is an antidote to damage narratives, and by refusing to "trade in damage", by instead writing "stories of desire, of complexity, of variegation" (Tuck & Ree 2013, 647), "people are seen as more than broken and conquered" (Tuck 2009, 416). Recognizing the interplay of "damage and desire" narratives in the analysis of picturebooks centering characters with culturally and linguistically diverse names is critical in examining what types of windows and mirrors these books provide.

Socio-onomastics

Because our analysis "looks at how names are used" and examines "attitudes and stance towards names and name usage" (Ainiala & Östman 2017, 2), we have situated our study within socio-onomastics. Specifically, we draw on the idea that "the role of names is key to the construction of identity and to notions of selfhood" (Hough 2016, 8). Within the picturebooks we studied, the narrative tells the story of how a protagonist's name is part of their identity and how this name is used and viewed by others around them. The role that names play in the construction of identity goes hand in hand with the role children's literature plays in constructing mirrors for the identities of young readers. Leslie and Skipper (1990) explain that "how individuals experience names cannot be fully understood without revelation of situational and contextual exigencies" (274). Within our picturebook samples, the "damage and desire" episodes constitute the situations and contexts. In identifying the "damage and desire" episodes, we also pay attention to the "name-giver", "name-carrier", and "name-user" (Aldrin 2016, 383) in the stories and how these characters frame the protagonists' names in terms of inflicting damage or inspiring desire. The value of a socio-onomastic study of diverse names in these picturebooks lies in showing the linguistic significance of children's names explored in these stories and their sociocultural impact within the story world and upon potential readers in the real world.

Methods

Text Selection

In selecting the picturebooks for our analysis, we narrowed our search to picturebooks published between 2000 and 2020 with plotlines explicitly centered on a child protagonist's linguistically and culturally diverse name. After beginning with the books identified in Franzak & Keller (2016) and Sembiante et al. (2018), we employed a targeted sampling technique in which we looked at the related and recommended items from Amazon, our local library catalogue, and YouTube read-aloud videos. We also consulted the Children's Literature Comprehensive Database (*CLCD Enterprise V6.0*) with the search phrase "names OR my name is". We used Franzak & Keller's (2016) definition of "name negotiation" to capture the process where a protagonist struggles on account of their diverse name and has to negotiate with others to validate and assert their name and identity (180). And so, we excluded picturebooks focusing on common English names such as *My Name is Elizabeth* (Dunklee 2011). Though anthropomorphic children's picturebooks such as *Hello, My Name Is…: How Adorablis Got His Name* (Polansky 2018), fantastical picturebooks such as *The Change Your Name Store* (Shirtliffe 2014), and fictionalized 'prehistoric-era' picturebooks such as *My Name is Wakawakaloch!* (Stiefel 2019) narrativize the name negotiation process, we excluded them from the present study because they were not set in a cultural context equivalent to the real world. On the basis of these criteria, we narrowed our booklist to twelve picturebooks. See Table 1 for a list of the selected picturebooks with short summaries.

Table 1: Twelve Selected Picturebooks

	Title (Source)	Name, Language/ Culture*	Summary
1.	*The Name Jar* (Choi 2001)	*Unhei* (최은혜), Korean/ Korean-American	A young Korean girl immigrates to the United States and tries to choose an 'American name' from a jar of suggestions her classmates supply. Ultimately, she chooses to keep her Korean name.
2.	*My Name is Yoon* (Recorvits 2003)	*Yoon* (윤), Korean/ Korean-American	A young Korean girl immigrates to the United States and wants to continue writing her name in Hangul. After her parents and teacher repeatedly insist that she write her name in English, she gives in.
3.	*Hannah is My Name* (Yang 2004)	*Na-Li* (娜麗), Chinese/ Taiwanese-American	A young Taiwanese girl immigrates to the United States where her parents give her an 'American name'. The girl accepts this new name when she sees it written on her new green card.
4.	*My Name is Bilal* (Mobin-Uddin 2005)	*Bilal,* Arabic/ Islamic, American	An American boy changes his name to hide his Muslim identity. His teacher then provides a book about the boy's namesake, inspiring the boy to claim his name and religion while standing up to bullying.
5.	*René Has Two Last Names* (Colato Laínez 2009)	*René Colato Laínez,* Spanish/ El Salvadoran-American	After his teacher omits one of his last names and his classmates make fun of his long name, a young Salvadorian immigrant uses a family tree project to tell his American class about his two last names and family heritage
6.	*My Name is Sangoel* (Williams & Mohammed 2009)	*Sangoel,* Dinka/ Sudanese-American	A young Sudanese boy immigrates to the United States where everyone mispronounces his name. He creates a t-shirt that pictorially represents his name's correct pronunciation and wears the shirt to school.
7.	*My Name is Aviva* (Newman 2015)	*Aviva,* Hebrew/ Jewish, Russian ancestry	After experiencing teasing at school, a young Jewish girl wants to change her name. However, once she learns about her namesake (great-grandmother), she decides to keep her name.
8.	*How Nivi Got Her Names* (Deal 2016)	*Niviaq Kauki Baabi Iremla Jamesie,* Inuit	A young Inuit girl's mother tells her about Inuit naming culture and all the special people from whom her names originate.
9.	*Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal 2018)	*Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela,* Spanish/Peruvian	After a young Peruvian girl says her name is too long, her father tells her about all of the ancestors from which her names come.
10.	*Always Anjali* (Sheth 2018)	*Anjali,* Sanskrit/ Indian ancestry	After she cannot find a personalized bicycle license plate with her unique name, a young girl decides to rename herself. Her mother's explanation of her name's origins and meaning inspires the girl to make her own personalized license plate.
11.	*I Love My Name* (Grant 2019)	*Tahirih,* Persian/ Bahá'í, Iranian ancestry	The teacher of a young Bahá'í girl reads to her a book about the girl's namesake. The girl then tells her friends, who had been making fun of her name, about this Persian heroine.
12.	*Your Name is a Song* (Thompkins-Bigelow 2020)	*Kora-Jalimuso,* Mandinka/ West African	A Black mother teaches her daughter how to "sing" her name after the teacher and classmates mispronounce it. The girl returns to school and teaches everyone to "sing" her name and their own names.

* The first qualifier indicates the linguistic origin of the name, the qualifier(s) following (/) indicate the cultural, religious, and/or nationality of the name-carrier.

Content Analysis

We employed Krippendorf's (2004) method of content analysis, commonly utilized in the field of children's literature, to analyze our twelve selected picturebooks. Short (2017) explains that qualitative content analysis is useful for making inferences from text, and we needed to infer how "damage and desire" appeared in the text. Furthermore, "recognizing meaning is the reason that researchers engage in content analysis" (Krippendorf 2004, 21–22), and our analysis sought to recognize the meaning behind episodes of name negotiation for characters with linguistically and culturally diverse names.

Our initial readings of the selected picturebooks revealed recurring events of name negotiation (e.g., bullying and deliberate or accidental name mispronunciation; desire or pressure to change one's name; information about a name's origins and meaning; acceptance and celebration of one's name) that we began coding in terms of "damage and desire". Iterative readings led to a final coding scheme consisting of six episodes of "damage and desire":

1. inflicted damage
2. internalized damage
3. supplying desire
4. internalized desire
5. asserting the desire
6. joining the desire

We described these six episodes of "damage and desire" that compose our coding scheme in Figure 1. We then applied our coding scheme to the narrative arcs of all twelve picturebooks focusing on instances where names are negotiated between name-carriers, name-givers, and name-users within each story. In our analysis, "name-carrier" usually refers to the protagonist who carries a linguistically and culturally diverse name. "Name-giver" refers to the parent(s) or elder who names the protagonist. "Name-user" refers to the character(s) within the story who use/misuse the diverse name. Following this stage, we examined the coded passages from the twelve picturebooks to further interpret the desire and damage elements as marked in our coding scheme.

Figure 1: Episodes of "Damage and Desire"

Inflicted Damage	Name-users (teachers & peers, etc.) inflict damage on the name-carrier by • Incorrectly pronouncing the name • Making fun of the name • Trying to change the name (suggest or force assimilation)
Internalized Damage	The name-carrier thinks badly of their own name, including • Thinking it is too long or hard to pronounce • Wanting to change their name (wanting to assimilate)
Supplying Desire	Name-givers* (parents, teachers, elders) supply desire to the name-carrier's name by • Explaining the name's origin, meaning, importance, and/or beauty • Informing about the namesake (family members, ancestors, historical people) • Sometimes the name-carrier supplies desire toward their name on their own
Internalized Desire	The name-carrier internalizes desire toward their own name by • Learning the origin, meaning, importance, and/or beauty of their name • Deciding to keep their name (refusing to culturally assimilate)
Asserting the Desire	The name-carrier returns to the name-users who inflicted damage in order to • Assert their name's origin, meaning, importance, and/or beauty • Teach name-users to pronounce the name correctly
Joining the Desire	Name-users stop inflicting damage based on the name-carrier's name, sometimes • Learning the name-carrier's correct pronunciation • Appreciating the name-carrier's name and culture • Following the name-carrier's example by asserting desire toward their own name

Note: Not all these episodes have to be present or occur in this particular order.

Findings

We used our coding scheme of the six common episodes of "damage and desire" to analyze our selection of twelve picturebooks. As Hough (2016) explains in the introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*, "Much research in the field begins at the level of the individual name, but only reaches full significance when the results are grouped together, allowing patterns to emerge" (2). Therefore, we discuss the patterns that emerged after bringing the individual analyses of the twelve books together into conversation.

Inflicted Damage

One cause of inflicted damage can result from name mispronunciation—both deliberate mocking and unintentional or accidental mispronunciation of a name-carrier's name. Sometimes name-users encourage assimilation through renaming. These episodes of inflicted damage often occur toward the beginning of the story, but occasionally continue throughout the narrative. In *Always Anjali* (Sheth 2018), name-users deliberately inflict damage on the Indian-American name-carrier, Anjali, by mocking her name: "PEANUT BUTTER AN-JELLY CAN I GET A PEANUT BUTTER AN-JELLY WITH A DOT ON TOP?!" (14).[2] Another example of inflicted damage is seen in *My Name is Yoon* (Recorvits 2003). When Yoon's family moves from Korea to the United States, she retains a strong internalized desire towards her name, loving the meaning "shining wisdom" and its written form in Korean Hangul (Recorvits 2003, 6). When her parents (name-givers) and teacher (name-user) expect her to write it in English, they unintentionally inflict damage on Yoon and her internalized desire towards her name.

Internalized Damage

Episodes of inflicted damage often result in name-carriers internalizing that damage. Internalized damage is seen when name-carriers express concern about the length of their name or experience distress from name-users' struggles to pronounce their name. Internalized damage can create an urge to assimilate through renaming. When name-users mock Aviva's name in *My Name is Aviva* (Newman 2015), calling her "Amoeba" and "Viva La France" (4–6), Aviva internalizes this damage and decides to rename herself "Emily". In *Hannah Is My Name* (Yang 2004), the protagonist is *Na-Li* (娜麗), meaning "beautiful", at the beginning of the story. However, when the family immigrates to the United States, Na-Li's parents (name-givers) change her name to "Hannah" believing that it will be an easy name to learn for a child who does not yet know English. Although the sudden renaming feels strange, Nal-Li accepts Hannah in order to "become American" and "to be free" (Yang 2004, 3). Hannah internalizes this damage, never mentioning her Chinese name again in the story. In fact, upon seeing "Hannah" on her green card, she connects her legal right to be in the United States with an English name, permanently internalizing the damage: "Hannah Lin, I repeat to myself. Hannah doesn't sound like a stranger's name anymore. It's my name. Hannah is my name" (Yang 2004, 24).

Supplying Desire

Supplying desire exists in contrast to episodes of inflicted and internalized damage. In these crucial episodes, supportive adults surrounding the name-carriers play pivotal roles in preventing and combating damage. Generally, a parent (name-giver), teacher or elder (name-users) spends time building a desire narrative for the protagonist. Desire is supplied through explanations of a name's ancestral origin, linguistic meaning, and cultural importance. The namesake could be a family member, ancestor, or a person of historical significance. For example, both *Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal 2018) and *How Nivi Got Her Names* (Deal 2016) involve a parent explaining the origin of each and every one of the protagonist's names throughout the majority of the text. In *Alma and How She Got Her Name* (Martinez-Neal 2018), Alma starts the story with, "'My name is so long, Daddy. It never fits'" (4). Her father (a name-giver) responds by narrating the story of her names. He also narrates the lives lived by the people for whom she is named. At the end of the story, Alma declares, "'I love the story of my name!' […] Alma Sofia Esperanza José Pura Candela. […] 'That's my name, and it fits me just right!'" (Martinez-Neal 2018, 27–29). In *How Nivi Got Her Names* (Deal 2016), Nivi wonders, "'Why do I have so many names?'" (7). Her mother explains she was named according to the Inuit naming traditions. She goes on to narrate the backstory of each of her names. At the end of the story, Nivi states, "'I'm proud of all my names Niviaq Kauki Baabi Iremla Jamesie!'" (26).

Internalized Desire

Internalized desire is often the result of supplied desire, but occasionally a name-carrier begins the story already in possession of internalized desire regarding their name. Either way, internalized desire represents a point in the story where the name-carrier intrinsically recognizes and embraces their name. Internalized desire can inspire the name-carrier to resist renaming and cultural assimilation. In the autobiographical picturebook, *René Has Two Last Names* (Colato Laínez 2009), René begins the story with strong internalized desire whereby he feels that his full name "René Colato Laínez" is a "happy song" (6). When his teacher unintentionally inflicts damage by dropping the "Laínez" in his name, his internalized desire manifests in a dream one night in which the dropping of "Laínez" results in the loss of an entire branch of his family. He wakes up the following day with a strengthened internalized desire to keep all his names and the connections they represent to the two sides of his family. In *My Name is Bilal* (Mobin-Uddin 2005), Bilal reads a book supplied by his teacher about his namesake, the Islamic prophet Bilal. The resulting internalized desire toward his name and religious identity also manifests in a dream one night that further strengthens Bilal's internalized desire and empowers him to stand up to his bullies stating: "'My name is not Bill. It's Bilal. My sister and I are Muslims'" (22).

Asserting Desire

Supplied and internalized desire motivate name-carriers to boldly assert the desire narrative of their name in front of name-users, particularly those who had earlier inflicted damage towards their name. In *I Love My Name* (Grant 2019), Tahirih overhears name-users from among her classmates and friends making fun of her unique name and becomes sad and confused. Tahirih's teacher supplies desire by reading her a book about her namesake, the heroic Tahirih from Persia. Subsequently, the protagonist, Tahirih, feels "a spark of courage"

(Grant 2019, 27) and decides to assert desire by repeating the story to the name-users who had made fun of her name. Through this brave assertion of desire, Tahirih believed that "she was removing a veil and teaching her friends something new" (Grant 2019, 27). In *My Name is Sangoel* (Williams & Mohammed 2009), Sangoel, a young Sudanese immigrant to the United States, remembers the desire supplied towards his name by an elder: "'You carry a Dinka name. It is the name of your father and of your ancestors before him'" (5). When he faces damage towards his name because of unintended, yet incessant, mispronunciations, he asserts desire by creating a pictographic t-shirt. With images of a sun and a soccer goal, the t-shirt helps name-users correctly pronounce Sangoel's name.

Joining the Desire

In episodes of "joining the desire", name-users cease inflicting damage towards the name-carrier's name in direct response to episodes of "asserting the desire". In different narrative trails, this episode is also marked by name-users learning the correct pronunciation of the name-carrier's name, name-users learning to appreciate the name-carrier's name and culture, and/or name-users mirroring the name-carrier's example to assert the desire narrative of their own name in a similar fashion. In *Your Name is a Song* (Thompkins-Bigelow 2020), a young Black girl, Kora-Jalimuso, recounts the damage her classmates and teacher inflicted by mispronouncing her name. Kora-Jalimuso's mother responds by building a desire narrative; she sings out linguistically diverse names and teaches her daughter: "'Names are songs. Sing your name. Your teacher will learn to sing it too'" (Thompkins-Bigelow 2020, 10). Kora-Jalimuso then asserts this desire narrative at school by singing her name. In response, the name-users join the desire: "The teacher sang it back. One kid sang it. Then another. And another. Everyone sang her name: 'KO-rah DJAAAA-lee-MOOOO-so!'" (Thompkins-Bigelow 2020, 37). The name-users also join the desire by asking Kora-Jalimuso to sing their names as well. In *The Name Jar* (Choi 2001), Unhei considers choosing a new name when some classmates mispronounce and mock her Korean name. However, after multiple episodes of supplied desire, Unhei internalizes and asserts this desire by writing her name in English letters (Unhei) and Korean Hangul (최은혜) on the chalkboard, stating, "'I realized that I like my name best, so I chose it again. Korean names mean something. Unhei means *grace*'" (Choi 2001, 28-29). Unhei's classmates join the desire by applauding her choice and working to correctly pronounce her name. Additionally, some classmates join the desire by sharing the meaning of their own names and requesting Korean names "with good meanings" for themselves (Choi 2001, 31).

Patterns of "Damage and Desire"

Beyond coding the narrative arcs of each picturebook for episodes of "damage and desire", our analysis revealed some patterns across the twelve books regarding "damage and desire". In particular, picturebooks whose narrative arcs involved a higher ratio of damage episodes often lacked supportive parents or teachers, leaving the name-carrier unaided in their efforts to combat inflicted and internalized damage and on their own in asserting the desire narrative of their name. For example, though a wise elder contributed vague desire to Sangoel about the Dinka heritage of his name before he immigrated, his mother suggested changing his name once in the United States, leaving Sangoel to assert the correct pronunciation of his name entirely on his own (Williams & Mohammed 2009). Similarly, though René's parents were sympathetic to his name shortening, it was up to René himself to assert desire through his family tree project (Colato Laínez 2009). Lastly, because Yoon is alone in insisting on writing her name in Korean, receiving no support from her parents or teacher, she ultimately gives in and writes it in English (Recorvits 2003). In contrast, picturebooks whose narrative arcs involved a higher ratio of desire episodes often included supportive parents or teachers. In particular, the mothers of Nivi, Aviva, Kora-Jalimuso, Unhei, and Anjali all play a significant role in supplying a desire narrative to their daughters.

Furthermore, picturebooks that focus heavily on damaging episodes provide minimal information regarding the meaning, heritage, or cultural significance of the protagonists' names. Though we learn that *Yoon* means 'shining wisdom' (Recorvits 2003, 6) and *Na-Li* means 'beautiful' (Yang 2004, 3), we learn nothing more about Korean or Taiwanese naming customs or culture from either picturebook. In contrast, *How Nivi Got Her Names* begins with a detailed introduction explaining Inuit naming traditions (Deal 2016) and *Your Name is a Song* includes a glossary that outlines the pronunciation, origin, and meaning of each of the nineteen names that the mother sings throughout the narrative (Thompkins-Bigelow 2020).

By identifying and critiquing the damage episodes of these books, we are not defining these picturebooks or their inclusion of damage narratives as unequivocally <u>wrong</u>. Rather, we want to demonstrate the complexity

of the issue and recognize the messy reality of the book's social, cultural, and situational domains. As Tuck (2009) acknowledged, "I appreciate that, in many ways, there was a time and place for damage-centered research. However […] a time for a shift has come" (415). This means that though many of these episodes of damage reflect real experiences (particularly in the semi-autobiographical picturebooks such as *René Has Two Last Names* and *Hannah Is My Name*), the time has come to shift the narrative more towards desire.

Discussion

In addition to synthesizing the patterns among episodes of "damage and desire" from twelve picturebooks featuring protagonists with linguistically and culturally diverse names, through our analysis we begin to address two important questions in socio-onomastics that Aldrin (2016) raises:

> Important questions that are yet to be investigated here include the perceived interplay between the perspectives of the name-giver and name-bearer, as well as the interplay between the inside-perspective of cultural identity and the outside-perspective of cultural identification and their coherence or change throughout different contexts. (388)

In the fictional contexts of our picturebooks, which closely mirror real life experiences of name negotiation, we have identified how the name-giver and name-users are capable of inflicting damage and supplying desire to the name-carrier, and how the name-carrier, in turn, can assert a desire perspective of their name and even influence name-users to join the desire. Furthermore, we see how name-users with an outside-perspective of cultural identification often inflict damage on the name-carrier through mispronunciation or pressure for name assimilation, which can negatively affect the name-carrier's identity. However, desire narratives expounding on the cultural significance and ancestral ties of a name can counter the damage and strengthen the name-carrier's insider-perspective of cultural identity. Our analytic perspective of the picturebooks' narrative arcs illustrates these interplays between name-giver, name-user, and name-carrier, as well as the interplay between inside and outside-perspective.

Our findings support and expand upon the findings of prior inquiries into diverse names in picturebooks. Although they did not use the term "damage", the themes Franzak & Keller (2016) identified focused on episodes of damage (e.g., educators inflicting harm on their students by mispronouncing or even renaming them). Similarly, the themes Sembiante et al. (2018) identified focused on perspectives of desire (e.g., how negotiation of names can provide opportunities for children to develop empathy, establishing an alternative to cultural assimilation that mar many immigrants' experiences). Furthermore, our findings of "damage and desire" regarding names in fiction reflect the everyday reality of many students in US schools (Souto-Manning 2011).

Additionally, our analysis contributes more broadly to socio-onomastic research into children's literature. Our blending of frameworks from children's literature, educational research, and socio-onomastics results in a unique coding scheme of "damage and desire" episodes that could be adapted and applied across other children's literature texts. For example, several chapter books such as *My Name Is María Isabel* (Ada 1993) and *The Name Soup* (Pillalamarri 2014) that did not fit our picturebook text selection criteria could be analyzed in a future study that considers how the damage/desire narrative episodes occur in longer children's books featuring protagonists with linguistically and culturally diverse names. Moreover, since we analyzed only picturebooks from the last two decades, our study did not include earlier picturebooks such as *My Name is Johari* (O'Brien 1998). Future research can consider these earlier texts in a comparative analysis to see how emphasis on "damage and desire" in children's picturebooks has changed over time in narrativizing name negotiations. Lastly, while our study only utilized content analysis, further research could employ a critical content analysis (Johnson et al. 2016) of picturebooks that considers power structures between name-carriers and name-users in name negotiation that would unveil the impact of microaggression and cultural assimilation on name negotiation.

Conclusion

Picturebooks exploring children's names can depict both desire episodes and damage episodes from their young protagonists' processes of name negotiation. Particularly in picturebooks based on their authors' own life experiences (e.g., *René Has Two Last Names* and *Hannah is My Name*), these episodes reflect authentic experiences. When stories address a balance of both desire and damage episodes, readers can critically engage with and think about name negotiation. As Peterson et al. (2015) assert, such books "offer teachers and students

a safe context for analyzing the complex social dynamics that contribute to or discourage name-calling and other bullying practices" (42).

However, an overwhelming emphasis on damage throughout the combined corpus of picturebooks featuring young protagonists with linguistically and culturally diverse names can result in a "single story" (Adichie 2009). A "single story" is created when a group of people or set of circumstances are shown in one limited way over and over again (Tschida et al. 2014). Only one picturebook (i.e., *How Nivi Got Her Names*) of our sample of 12 completes the story without a hint of an episode of damage. If every picturebook featuring a protagonist with a linguistically and culturally diverse name repeatedly shows episode after episode of inflicted damage, readers may come to expect linguistically diverse names as something inherently difficult and their negotiation process as an inevitable struggle. Considering the importance of names and identity and the realities of microaggression and racial discrimination seen in our world, we need to ensure enough "mirrors and windows" exist in picturebooks that celebrate linguistically and culturally diverse names.

The importance of ensuring an abundance of high-quality diverse children's literature is emphasized when Bishop (1990) explains the negative impact a lack of literary mirrors can have on minoritized youth: "When children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society of which they are a part" (x). Our perspective is that children should have access to a variety of picturebooks portraying encouraging images of child protagonists with linguistically and culturally diverse names so that these books can be positive windows and mirrors for young readers.

Notes

[1] According to Sipe (1998), "The picturebook is the principal format in which preschool and primary age children experience literature. In a picturebook, the words of the text and the sequence of the illustrations contribute equally to opportunities they provide for constructing meaning" (66).

[2] For unpaginated picturebooks, page numbers included in parenthetical citations represent what the page number would be when designating the book's title page as page 1 and counting forward.

Disclosure

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