

A Sense of Place

A Critical Mapping of the Geographical Locations in Children's Climate Change Books Written in and Translated into Dutch

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Starting from the observation that anthropogenic climate change manifests differently across geographical locations, this article argues that it is critical to examine the spatial representation of climate change in books for young readers. Such an examination necessarily navigates the global reach of climate change and the localised experiences of climate change around the world. We use a mixed method of close and distant reading to facilitate this navigation to study a corpus of climate change books for young readers that includes books written in and books translated into Dutch. We first zoom out, by creating maps of the geographic locations that are evoked in both sets of works. Then we zoom in, using a critical analysis of those areas that are indicated as significant by our visualisations. By mapping the geographical representation of climate change in works written in and translated into Dutch, we can better understand how the spatiality of climate change is presented to young readers and how these readers are encouraged to position themselves and others in this global crisis.

Introduction

We wrote a part of this research paper while Storm Eunice made landfall. It was one of the worst storms to hit the Netherlands in three decades and already the third storm of 2022. Stuck at home with a code orange warning from the Royal Dutch Meteorological Institute, the extreme climate events discussed frequently by meteorologists and climate scientists felt all the more tangible. On the one hand, these discussions affirm the urgency to take a climate change perspective in our scholarship on children's literature. On the other, it confirms the geographical embeddedness of anthropogenic climate change; while the Netherlands and other north-western European countries face a series of rainy winter storms, some regions of the world such as the Southwest US suffer from a »megadrought« (Fountain 2022). Taking into account that anthropogenic climate change manifests differently across geographical locations, it becomes critical to examine which of these locations are represented most in climate change discourse, since these moments of inclusion and exclusion work to shape the parameters of our imagination around the climate crisis.

One such discourse is found in the form of children's books. In the wake of growing awareness of the global climate crisis, facilitators of children's literature strive to make narratives about it more available to young readers. The subgenre of climate change books presents a significant challenge, since the climate crisis is what Timothy Morton calls a »hyperobject«: a phenomenon so »massively distributed in time and space relative to humans« (2013, p. 1) that it cannot be perceived in its entirety. How, then, does one narrate something so vast and all-encompassing? In order to create a narrative that

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is comprehensible and engaging, most books on the topic tend to narrow down the global phenomenon to a localised perspective. This perspective creates a special challenge for environmental books that are translated into a language for a community that is placed in a different spatial relation to climate change. This category constitutes a significant proportion of the climate books available for younger readers today. For example, in the Netherlands alone, we found that 17 out of 26 children's books on climate change available in spring 2022 were in fact translations into Dutch.

Against this backdrop, this article investigates the ways in which the spatial understanding of climate change is navigated in books for young readers, either written in or translated into Dutch, by drawing on insights from digital humanities and adopting a mixed-methods approach that combines close and distant reading. After presenting a visual mapping of the locations referred to in the books in the translated and non-translated subcorpora, we zoom in on some key locations to analyse the role played by these locations in the different stories about climate change presented there. Moreover, research on the sociology of translation has identified the imbalance in translation flows with central languages such as English acting as the dominant source language (Heilbron 1999). This exploration demonstrates the continued impact of the imbalance in this subgenre of children's literature, along with the subsequent homogenous representations of recurring locations in the larger narrative around climate change that is available to young readers.

Straddling interconnectedness and specificity: A translation studies approach to climate change narratives for children

Literary studies have endeavoured to understand »the relationship between literature and the physical environment« (Glotfelty 1996, p. xviii) through ecocriticism, which is a product of the movement to study literature about or in relation to the environment in order to respond to the ecological crisis. Although the initial wave of ecocritical scholarship primarily focused on literature for adults, the abundance of nature and animals in children's texts and an acute awareness of the effects of the ecological crisis on children has led to several ecocritical studies of children's environmental texts (Dobrin/Kidd 2004; Gaard 2009; Massey/Bradford 2011; Goga et al. 2018). The present study builds on the existing scholarship in two significant ways. First, it narrows the scope from environmental texts to climate change texts in particular, by paying heed to Oziewicz and Saguisag's (2021) concern about the paucity of considerations of climate change within our field. Second, it foregrounds the geographical embeddedness of climate change. Previous research has already indicated the necessity of this focus (see Benevento 2022; van der Beek/Lehmann 2022) since instances of over- and underrepresentation of certain geographical locations may lead to systematic alienation between the addressees of the message and climate change as a global phenomenon.

Here, »alienation« is employed in relation to the ecofeminist »logic of domination« (Warren 2000, p. 47) underlying the oppression of nature and other forms of social injustice. Ecofeminism draws important connections between the treatment of women, people of colour and the underprivileged, on the one hand, and the nonhuman environment on the other (Warren 1997, p. XI). In her influential study on children's environmental literature, Gaard (2009) suggests that this logic of domination begins with systemic alienation. Van der Beek and Lehmann (2022) and Benevento (2022) demonstrate that this alienation is acutely prevalent in children's books, which tend to distance the reader

from the ecological crisis by centring climate change discourse around the Arctic and in Africa. In order to combat this trend, ecofeminist approaches to children's literature endeavour to find textual antidotes to the logic of domination. Gaard explains:

[I]f the logic of domination is rooted in alienation and the myth of a separate self, then undoing this logic would require narratives of connection, community, and interdependence among humans, animals, and the natural world. (2009, p. 327)

Gaard, therefore, draws attention to interconnectedness. Interestingly, a parallel discourse foregrounding the notion of interconnectedness is found in translation studies, specifically in the emergence of eco-translation (Cronin 2017) that is situated at the intersection of translation theory and practice, on the one hand, and ecological considerations of anthropogenic climate change, on the other. Eco-translation argues that translation »cannot remain immune to the ecological shift in many humanities and social science subjects« (ibid., p. 3). Cronin argues that since translation has historically been »made to connect ideas« (ibid., p. 1) across linguistic and cultural borders, it plays a pivotal role in any systematic attempt to understand interconnectedness in the age of anthropogenic climate change.

At this point, it becomes important to distinguish between interconnectedness in (children's) climate change narratives and the problematic homogenisation both of the phenomenon itself and of the implied reader. The risk of homogenisation is particularly prevalent in children's literature, which has historically been understood to cross national and linguistic boundaries with ease. In her work on comparative children's literature (2005), O'Sullivan challenges this homogenisation of the child reader and the body of children's literature on grounds of the disparate realities of represented and real children in terms of ethnicity, class and – of particular relevance to the present study – geopolitical location. The present study follows from this appeal to challenge homogenisation by means of a comparative approach.

However, neither the specificity offered by the comparative lens nor the emphasis on interconnectedness in ecofeminist discourse can come at the expense of the other. Climate change is a phenomenon that is at once universal – in that its effects are planetary and demand collective action – and geographically specific – in that it manifests itself differently around the world in climatological, socio-political and financial terms. This quality demands a critical apparatus that does not overshadow specificity through its focus on interconnectedness, or vice versa. The present study, inspired by eco-translation, aims to strike a balance by combining insights from ecofeminist literary studies and translation studies to bring the representation of geographical locations to the fore.

Corpus creation

The creation of a corpus for this study started with garnering a comprehensive overview of the available Dutch non-fiction for children about climate change. We used two important criteria. First, we only included books that focus specifically on climate change and the resulting crisis. Books that discuss weather as a general meteorological phenomenon or focus on sustainable lifestyle options, for instance, were excluded. Second, we only included books that were actually available to young readers in spring 2022 when this study was undertaken. Books not accessible via bookstores or libraries during this period were excluded to ensure that we did not base our analysis on texts that were

unlikely to reach young readers. In order to find the books, we referred to the continually updated online database Centraal Bestand Kinderboeken (Central Dossier Children's Books), with over 345 000 books, curated by the Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Dutch Library).¹ Following the criteria mentioned in the diagram below, we arrived at an initial corpus of 26 books.²

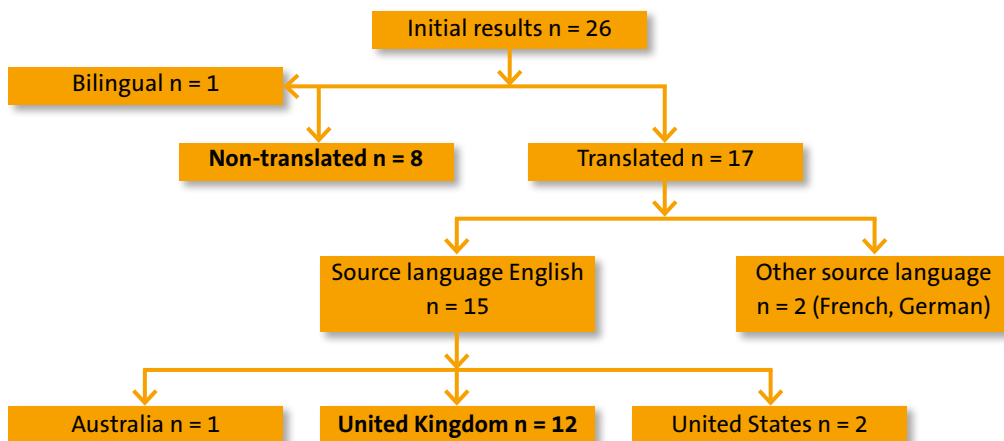


Fig. 1: Corpus with subcorpora of translated and original Dutch (untranslated) titles

When starting this research, we anticipated a wider distribution of source languages and regions in our corpus. This would have allowed for a broad comparison of differences and similarities in the spatial imagination of climate change based on the different geographical relations of our source contexts to the global environment. The overrepresentation of texts translated from British English into Dutch is so significant that UK texts outweigh even the original Dutch ones (twelve as opposed to eight). As mentioned in the introduction, the sociology of translation has already observed the imbalance in translation flows. Texts written in English, especially coming from the UK, are consistently overrepresented in international translation flows (Heilbron 1999; McMartin 2020). In the context of this specific genre, overrepresentation means that the spatial imagination of climate change as presented by UK texts is dominant, creating a limited perspective for young readers in the Netherlands. We cannot help but lament this narrow frame of reference about a phenomenon that both concerns communities from all over the world and at the same time means something different to all these different communities. In addition, the geographical proximity of the European parts of the Netherlands and the UK means that climate change manifests itself in largely similar climatological ways in these locations, thus narrowing the range of represented differences in spatial imagination.

The construction of our initial corpus shows that young readers in the Netherlands are not able to engage with climate books from diverse geographical contexts. Rather, their vision is almost exclusively limited to representations stemming from either the Netherlands or the UK. Based on this first significant finding of our study, we make a clear distinction between two subcorpora: Subcorpus 1 comprises books originally written in

¹ The database can be consulted at <https://picarta.oclc.org/psi/xslt/DB=3.34/?COOKIE=U905282,KCBKLogin,I2,B0003+++++,SY,NCBK+default+login,D3.34,E7d802936-100b,A,H,R137.56.53.42,FY>

² The selection also includes one bilingual text: a Dutch-English text about young people involved

in climate change activism. As bilingual publications occupy a linguistically unique place, we chose to exclude this work from this study. For discussions of bilingual publications for children, see Daly (2016, 2018) and Kulkarni (2021).

Dutch, and Subcorpus 2 comprises works translated into Dutch from British English only. Since the subcorpora were of uneven sizes, we condensed both to five books each (see Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1
*Subcorpus 1,
Books Originally
in Dutch*

Code	Year	Title	Author/Illustrator
NL01	2020	Ko's Klimaatboekje	Jeroen Visbeek / Alfred Knol
NL02	2019	Frida's Koele Klimaatboek	Frank Pollet and Moniek Vermeulen / Jurgen Walschot
NL03	2007	Het broeikaseffect	Kathleen Vereecken / Benjamin Leroy
NL04	2010	Ecohelden in actie!	Vrouwke Klapwijk / Mariska Vos and Willeke Brouwer
NL05	2009	Klimaatverandering	Martine van Kolschoten

Code	Year	Original title	Title of translation	Author/Illustrator
UK01	2021	Hot planet	Onze planeet warmt op!	Anna Claybourne / Irene Venditti / Rocket Design
UK02	2020	Our house is on fire	Ons huis staat in brand	Jeanette Winter / Ineke Ris / Jeanette Winter
UK03	2019	Protecting our planet	Klimaat en milieu	Jilly Hunt / Hubertine van den Biggelaar / [no illustrator]
UK04	2018	Science vs climate change	Science in actie... tegen klimaatverandering	Nick Hunter / Cecile Bolwerk / [no illustrator]
UK05	2013	Climate change	Klimaatverandering	John Woodward [no illustrator] / Camilla Hallinan

Table 2
*Subcorpus 2,
Books Originally
in British English*

Visualising the spatial imagination of climate change

In order to compare the spatial understanding of climate change in our subcorpora, we chose to visualise the different geographical regions that are evoked in these two sets of books. This involves a form of distant reading that focuses only on the mentions of geographical regions. Visualisation through digital mapping has proven to be a fruitful method in several previous studies on the spatial understanding of written texts (Piatti et al. 2009; Cooper and Gregory 2011; Kielland Samoilow 2022). One important function of this method is to »focus on a group of features and [...] indicate the literary geography described by an individual author, or of a genre, a motif or an epoch.« (Reuschel/Hurni 2011, p. 293) Maps help us understand the spatial dimension of texts, both inside the texts themselves and in connection to places that exist in the world outside of these texts. However, this visual understanding should not be considered the endpoint of the analysis. Rather, maps help us to think differently about the sense of place evoked by texts by focusing on a text's spatial dimension and presenting it in a visual manner. As Reuschel and Hurni rightly state, mapping facilitates »the decisive last step: what questions are posed by the maps – and which answers can be found?« (2011, pp. 293–294).

In order to prepare our corpus for visualisation, we marked all instances in which the texts mention geographical regions. A recurring complication in the visualisation is the vagueness with which texts refer to locations (Bennett 2001; Bittner/Stel 2002; Reuschel/Hurni 2011). In our corpus, geographical mentions differed between the micro level (e.g. cities or neighbourhoods), the meso level (e.g. countries or mountain ranges) and the macro level (e.g. entire continents or oceans). Because this project is interested in the ways in which the books in our corpus refer to more or less generalised spaces, we did not merge mentions of geographical places but stuck to the choices made in the texts (e.g. Amsterdam is considered as separate from the Netherlands). The regions men-

tioned were then matched with geographical coordinates via the »coordinates« function of Maps. The visualisation of this data was made using Palladio, a tool developed by the HUMANITIES + DESIGN lab at Stanford University, which allows for visualisations across time and space to give insight into networks that otherwise remain latent in texts and datasets.³ Using Palladio, we created maps of the corpus as a whole (Fig. 2), of Subcorpus 1 (Fig. 3) and of Subcorpus 2 (Fig. 4). These maps allow us to move between a distant reading and a close reading in order to come to an integrated understanding of the spatial imagination in the books in our corpus (Drucker 2011; Reuschel/Hurni 2011; van de Ven 2017). The practice of close reading has a slightly different function in traditional literary studies than in the field of digital humanities, where we position this article. Rather than following the work of the New Critics, we approach close reading as roughly the more attentive counterpart to distant reading (van de Ven 2017). In the following analysis, we first examine the visualisations of our subcorpora, identifying regions that are seldom represented and those that occur the most in one or both of the maps. Based on these first findings, we select areas that have been identified as significant. We then return to our texts to perform a close reading on the ways in which these areas are presented.



Fig. 2
Visualisation of the occurrence of geographical locations in the entire corpus



Fig. 3
Visualisation of the occurrence of geographical locations in Subcorpus 1

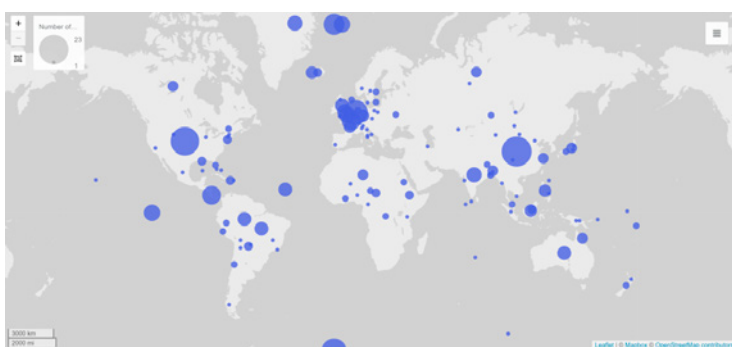


Fig. 4
Visualisation of the occurrence of geographical locations in Subcorpus 2

3 The tool is accessible at <https://hdlab.stanford.edu/palladio/>

Zoom out: At first glance

Some clear patterns emerge when studying the maps. The visualisation of the entire corpus (Fig. 2) indicates a broad geographical understanding of climate change. However, there are several regions that are underrepresented. One such region is Russia. Other regions that are largely absent include those of Africa. The absence of southern Africa is particularly significant in Subcorpus 1 (Fig. 3) in light of the colonial history of the Netherlands and South Africa. Similarly, our attention is drawn to the lack of occurrence of the Caribbean in that same subcorpus. This region includes countries that not only share a history of colonisation by and subsequent decolonisation from the Netherlands, but also ones that are still a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This finding confirms previous research that demonstrates a general lack of interest in the Caribbean regions in Dutch environmental texts (van der Beek / Lehmann 2022). Finally, while in our visualisations show that some regions are underrepresented, others stand out due to their high number of occurrences. The maps primarily indicate two such geographical areas: the northern and southern polar regions and north-western Europe, specifically the UK and the Netherlands. In order to understand the significance of this imbalance in representation, we perform a close reading of the mentions of these regions in both subcorpora and analyse how both sets of books present these regions in the context of climate change.

Zoom in: North-western Europe

Our maps indicate that the books in our corpus pay significant attention to the north-western corner of Europe, especially the UK and the Netherlands. This is unsurprising since the corpus originates from here. Significantly, the translated books mention the Netherlands almost as often as they mention the UK (20 versus 24 mentions).⁴ By focusing on the Netherlands, the books embed the immediate environment of their young readers in the narrative about climate change. A closer look at the mentions of Dutch locations in both subcorpora shows a recurring strategy. First, the books make an effort to explain how climate change manifests itself in the Netherlands, mostly by referring to changes in the weather (NL01, pp. 7–9; NL02, pp. 12, 34; NL05, pp. 3–4; UK03, pp. 10, 14) and by pointing to rising sea levels (NL01, pp. 15–17; NL05, pp. 4–6; UK04, p. 15). In the translated books, these mentions always relate to the present: for example, they mention that water levels are currently rising or that some of the most recent summers hit record temperatures. In the Dutch books, however, temporal distancing plays an important role. A recurring rhetorical strategy in Subcorpus 1 involves a combination of zooming in geographically while zooming out temporally. In these instances, readers are invited to imagine the Netherlands either in the distant past or the distant future, as for example in the opening paragraph of one of the books:

»It's so hot!« Exhausted, Jos and Pim sit down in the shade of a palm tree. It is half past noon and school is out. It is way too hot for class. The weak sea breeze provides hardly any cooling in Amersfoort. »Are you going on vacation this summer?« Pim asks. »Yes,« Jos answers, »We're going diving in the North Sea, looking at sunken cities.« Pim sighs: »Cool ...« »Talking about cool,« Jos exclaims, taking off his trousers. »I'll race you to the sea, but watch out for sharks!« (NL05, p. 3)⁵

⁴ By contrast, the books written in Dutch make no effort to include the UK in their narrative; we find only six mentions of the UK in all of Subcorpus 1, as

opposed to 80 mentions of Dutch locations.

⁵ Unless otherwise specified, all translations from Dutch are by the authors.

This scene is clearly meant to alienate for Dutch readers because it paints a picture of the Netherlands that does not resonate with our knowledge of Dutch weather and the position of the North Sea. This might bring climate change closer to home because it helps young readers imagine what climate change can mean for their own region and thereby understand the significance of this problem in relation to their own environment. However, the scene is set in a distant future – when the sea has reached the currently landlocked city of Amersfoort, and other Dutch cities have already been swallowed up by the North Sea. Although this focus on the impact of climate change for the Dutch context might bring the topic closer to home, the final effect could, in fact, be the opposite. By presenting the manifestation of climate change as something that might be geographically near but always temporally distant, Dutch readers might be alienated from the immediate problem of climate change. This frequently recurring strategy therefore aligns with the broader strategy of distancing and alienation that has been observed in earlier research (Warren 2000; Gaard 2009; Benevento 2022, van der Beek/Lehmann 2022).

A second recurring context in which the Netherlands is mentioned in both corpora is the discussion of its contribution to climate change. The texts in the corpus include remarks about the negative impact it has on climate change, including mentions of cars (NLO3, p. 46; NLO4, p. 17). Much more prominent, however, are discussions of the innovative measures that are being taken by the country to fight climate change, including investing in renewable energy (NLO2, pp. 29, 63; NLO3, p. 58), halting the extraction of natural gas (UKO3, p. 5), partaking in international climate agreements (UKO3, p. 12), discouraging the use of plastic bags (UKO3, p. 28), building floating houses that can withstand rising sea levels (UKO4, p. 22; UKO5, p. 47) and investing in greener forms of transportation (UKO4, pp. 30–31). This is most prominent in NLO4, which structures the story of anthropogenic climate change into five major themes: air, water, energy, consumption and waste, and weather and climate. At the end of each chapter, the text outlines possible measures to take on individual, national and global levels and concludes with a discussion of the measures being taken or which could be taken in the Netherlands to fight climate change. This focus on Dutch agency allows young readers to envision their country as an active party in combatting climate change. In addition to being distanced from the consequences of climate change, Dutch readers are invited to see themselves as part of the solution rather than part of the problem. They occupy the position of fighter or even saviour, rather than victim or perpetrator.

Although for both subcorpora north-western Europe is a significant area on the map, we can see a major difference when we zoom in on both visualisations (see Figs. 5 and 6). Subcorpus 1 shows a far greater number of mentions in this region than Subcorpus 2 (121 mentions in Subcorpus 1 versus only 23 in Subcorpus 2). Moreover, the spatial references in Subcorpus 1 are much more specific than those in Subcorpus 2. We can explain this by referring to the fact that the translated texts that were not originally created for a Dutch audience – they were created for an English-language audience and a heterogeneous audience of potential translations of the books. The authors might therefore choose to include only regions that are likely to be meaningful to large groups of readers from different backgrounds (e.g. England, London). Subcorpus 1, on the other hand, consists of books that are written explicitly for Dutch readers and that are not likely to be translated. The potential readership for these books is therefore more homogenous, resulting in a corpus that mentions places likely to have meaning only for Dutch readers (e.g. IJmuiden, Egmond aan zee). By making them more precise, these spatial references allow Dutch readers to position themselves quite specifically in the climate change nar-

rative. The Dutch texts therefore have a greater potential to allow young readers to build a personalised connection to the story of climate change. We can see this potential in action when we have another look at the dystopian scene cited above. A reader needs be familiar with specific Dutch locations (Amersfoort and the North Sea) in order to appreciate its catastrophic implications.

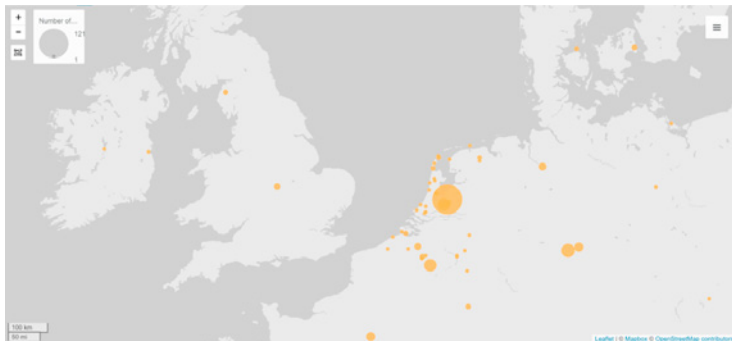


Fig. 5
Visualisation
of the occurrence
of geographical
locations in
north-western
Europe in
Subcorpus 1

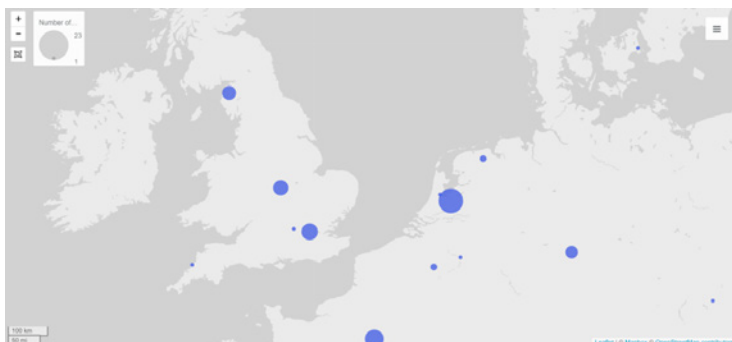


Fig. 6
Visualisation
of the occurrence
of geographical
locations in
north-western
Europe in
Subcorpus 2

Zoom in: Polar regions

Besides north-western Europe, our maps show that the northern and southern polar regions also play a significant role in the corpus. Again, this is not a surprise since they are the unofficial poster child for climate change (quite literally, as shown by Manzo's 2010 study of poster campaigns about climate change). Here, we combine the northern and southern polar regions because they are usually mentioned together in both subcorpora. Overall, there is very little difference between the ways in which these regions are presented in books written in and those translated into Dutch. Both subcorpora implement a similar set of strategies.

The polar regions are described as the epitome of distant and far away. They are almost exclusively referred to on a macro level (e.g. the North Pole, Antarctica, the Arctic Sea). Previous research has already remarked on the widespread presentation of the polar regions as »wasteland« (Dodds 2006, p. 61) and »barren wilderness« (Moriarty 2020, p. 151). The discussions of the polar regions in the corpus also tend to focus on macro phenomena, including changing sea currents and holes in the ozone layer that result in melting ice caps in both the northern and the southern polar regions. Due to these discussions of abstract and large-scale developments, climate change is presented as far removed from the reader. The language used in these discussions is frequently more science-oriented than in other parts of the books. Graphs and maps are used to explain to young readers how melting ice caps can be explained and what effect this will have for the rest of the world. Focusing on scientific language in relation to Antarctica, Dodds argues that

»[t]he role of science and the production of scientific knowledge [...] have to be considered essential elements in the colonisation of Antarctica.« (2006, p. 62) He points to the important functions of scientific practices such as mapping, measuring and surveying in the imperial project of navigating and claiming this uninhabited area. This perspective highlights how the initial process of distancing and alienating can lead to a hierarchical ordering of space that ultimately supports a logic of domination (Warren 2000; Gaard 2009).

The hierarchy that is evoked via this discourse clearly presents the victims of climate change in the polar regions. Besides worldwide floods, the most recurring consequence of melting ice caps that is mentioned is the diminished habitat of certain animals, in particular the polar bear. Several books from the corpus focus on explaining the habitat and life cycle of polar bears to highlight how they are impacted by climate change (NLO1, p. 23; NLO3, p. 62; UKO3, p. 19; UKO5, pp. 36–37, 40). This focus on the polar bear has the potential to translate abstract phenomena into a more concrete problem and thereby to combat alienation and disinterest in the reader. In terms of language and tone, this combination results in a curious mix of scientific and emotional language. We move between emotionally neutral explanations of a given situation and an affective discourse that calls for sympathy with the plight of these animals. A close reading of the following paragraph reveals such a mixture:

Although a rise in temperature of 0,8°C might not seem impressive, it already hinders some animals, such as this ivory gull. The graph beside this text shows the average rise in the earth's temperature. There is hardly any change in some parts of the world, but in other parts, such as the North Pole region, where the ivory gull lives, temperatures have risen by 4°C in the last fifty years. Consequently, the ice in which the bird finds its food has melted away. (UKO5, p. 17)

Here we see an attempt to translate the abstract notion of temperature increase into an emotional appeal by referring to the lived reality of a specific animal's lack of food. This emotional appeal is based on the understanding of the polar regions and their nonhuman inhabitants as inherently passive. In contrast with the Dutch who, as we concluded above, are primarily portrayed as active agents and potential saviour figures, the polar bears and ivory gulls are consistently depicted as passive non-agents and victims. In this aspect, our corpus seems to comply with Gaard's assertion that nature's role in climate change is not usually considered in environmental books for children. She therefore encourages us to ask, »What kind of agency does the text recognize in nature? Is nature an object to be saved by the heroic child actor? Is nature a damsel in distress, an all-sacrificing mother, or does nature have its own subjectivity and agency?« (2009, p.330) It is telling that the polar regions, considered remote because of sparse or complete lack of human habitation, occupy such a central position in climate change discourse. They are seemingly the passive, victimised regions to be saved by humans living in other parts of the world.

Conclusion

This research took as its point of departure the observation that anthropogenic climate change manifests differently across geographical locations, necessitating academic attention to the spatial representation of climate change in children's literature. Building on earlier work by ecofeminists and the emerging field of eco-translation, it contributes to the study of climate change as a phenomenon that is fundamentally based on interconnectedness between global and local communities. By applying a mixed method of close and distant reading, we zoom in and out of our texts and come to an understanding of the ways in which this dynamic is navigated in original Dutch and translated books. A first central finding of this study relates to the homogeneity in the origin of climate change books for young readers that are translated into Dutch. As the vast majority of these books originate in the UK, there is a limited opportunity for young readers in the Netherlands to come into contact with perspectives on climate change from other parts of the world. In comparing the geographical representation of climate change in our Dutch and translated subcorpora, we find some important similarities, including the underrepresentation of certain regions, whereas others dominate, and recurring strategies of distancing and alienation. We also find some significant differences. For example, the Dutch books apply strategies of distancing and hierarchical rhetoric that are less prevalent in translated books, including temporal distancing and the insistence that the Netherlands are mostly concerned with fighting climate change rather than suffering from it. The mixed method used in this research supports findings from previous research with regard to the positioning of young Western readers in the context of the climate crises, and it demonstrates the need to understand the spatial imagination around climate change that is presented to them. Finally, it highlights the importance of constructing a theoretical framework that strikes a balance between interconnectedness and geographical specificity. Coupled with insights from the emergent field of eco-translation, this approach can be applied to further research on the sociology of translation of climate change books for children to highlight the imbalance in translation flows.

Primary Literature

- Claybourne, Anna / Rocket Design (Ill.) (2021): *Onze planeet warmt op!* Transl. Irene Venditti. Etten-Leur: Corona Schoolsupport
- Hunt, Jilly / [no illustrator] (2019): *Klimaat en milieu*. Transl. Hubertine van den Biggelaar. Etten-Leur: Corona Schoolsupport
- Hunter, Nick / [no illustrator] (2018): *Science in actie... tegen klimaatverandering*. Transl. Cecile Bolwerk. Etten-Leur: Ars Scribendi
- Klapwijk, Vrouwke / Vos, Mariske (Ill.) / Brouwer, Willeke (Ill.) (2010): *Ecohelden in actie!* Heerenveen: Columbus
- Kolfschoten, Martine van (2009): *Klimaatverandering*. Groningen: Noordhoff
- Pollet, Frank / Vermeulen, Moniek / Walschot, Jurgen (Ill.) (2019): *Frida's Koele Klimaatboek*. Eke: De Eenhoorn
- Visbeek, Jeroen / Knol, Alfred (Ill.) (2020): *Ko's Klimaatboekje..* Deventer: Zodiak
- Winter, Jeanette (Author and Ill.) (2020): *Ons huis staat in brand*. Transl. Ineke Ris. Antwerpen: C. de Vries-Brouwers
- Woodward, John (2013): *Klimaatverandering*. Transl. Camilla Hallinan. Hilversum: Memphis Belle

Secondary Literature

- Beek, Suzanne van der / Lehmann, Charlotte (2022): A Study on the Ecopedagogical Potential of Dutch Non-fictional Environmental Texts for Children. In: *Children's Literature in Education*, Vol.52, No.2. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-022-09482-z>
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