"Challenging Behaviors": What do Picturebooks Tell Preschool Children?

"Zorlayıcı Davranışlar": Resimli Kitaplar Okul Öncesi Çocuklarına Ne Anlatıyor?

Fulya EZMECİ[1] (iD), **Şeyma ATICI**[2] (iD)

Abstract: Children's books deal with challenging behaviors contributes to the development of children's ability to cope with difficulties and conflicts and to understand the causes and consequences of behaviors. In this study, we study examined 41 picturebooks for children ages 3 to 8 that addressed challenging behaviors. We investigated the challenging behaviors that were the subject of the picturebooks and the characters who demonstrate those behaviors. Our analysis indicated that, among the 9 different challenging behaviors we identified, telling a lie, bullying and uncontrolled anger were the most frequently discussed. In some of the books, the characters developed possible solutions as a result of their challenging behaviors. In addition, the characters made an effort to make amends after the challenging behaviors were solved, social acceptance was experienced in the environment where the behavior took place. Thus, the findings of this study indicate that picturebooks examined featured challenging behaviors were written in a solution-oriented format.

Keywords: Challenging Behaviors, Picturebooks, Children's Literatüre, Content Analysis

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Öz: Çocuk kitapları zorlayıcı davranışları konu edinerek çocukların zorluklarla ve çatışmalarla başa çıkma, davranışların nedenlerini ve sonuçlarını anlama becerilerinin gelişmesine katkı sağlar. Bu çalışmada, 3 ila 8 yaş arasındaki çocuklara yönelik, zorlu davranışları ele alan 41 resimli çocuk kitabı incelenmiştir. Resimli kitaplara konu olan zorlayıcı davranışları ve bu davranışları sergileyen karakterler incelenmiştir. Analiz sonucunda, 9 farklı zorlayıcı davranış arasından yalan söyleme, zorbalık ve kontrolsüz öfke davranışlarına sıklıkla yer verildiği belirlenmiştir. Bazı kitaplarda karakterler zorlayıcı davranışları sonucunda olası çözümler geliştirmişlerdir. Ayrıca karakterler zorlayıcı davranışlar çözüldükten sonra telafi etme çabası göstermiş ve davranışın gerçekleştiği ortamda sosyal kabul yaşanmıştır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmanın bulguları, incelenen zorlayıcı davranışların yer aldığı resimli kitapların çözüm odaklı bir formatta yazıldığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zorlayıcı Davranışlar, Resimli Kitaplar, Çocuk Edebiyatı, İçerik Analizi

[1] Sorumlu Yazar: Doç. Dr. Fulya EZMECİ, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi, Temel Eğitim Bölümü, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi, fulya.ezmeci@gmail.com, 0000-0002-3950-1780

[2] Arş. Gör. Şeyma ATICI, Hacettepe Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi, seymaatici@hacettepe.edu.tr, 0000-0002-8045-4779

1. INTRODUCTION

Picturebooks combine words and design elements that help children learn about their world. Children's interest in picturebooks in the early period also contributes to the following years. In the longitudinal study conducted between the ages of 5 and 9, children's picturebook comprehension was analyzed, and it was determined that vocabulary, metacognitive knowledge and task orientation developed according to the initial levels, even if there are individual differences (Lepola et al., 2020). According to Dermata (2019), children's literature helps to communicate with others, cooperate, accept and understand feelings and thoughts. Thus, children can find solutions when faced with difficulties and conflict situations. These books help children navigate the social and emotional vagaries of childhood as well as other periods (Coper, 2007).

Every subject in the natural and social environment can be dealt with in children's picturebooks. The events and people fictionalized by the author to explain the chosen subject to the child are a reflection of real life. Thus, these books can influence not only a child's personal development but also their socialization process (Ural, 2013). The literature defines such publications as problem oriented, having a special purpose, and realistic. The number of children's books dealing with realistic subjects has increased in recent years. Problem-focused children's books comprise a pedagogical literature that reflects the child's reality from the child's point of view and helps children face and understand various problems (Lukens et al., 2013). An examination of the literature revealed that problem-focused children's picturebooks most often address the theme of bullying (Flanagan et al., 2013; Fremann, 2014; Oppliger & Davis, 2015). However, there are also studies that have examined how the themes of problem-oriented books for preschool children are distributed (Işıtan, 2016), and how they are included in the program, which includes situations that require stress control, such as assertiveness, interpersonal relationships and emotion regulation (Dermata, 2019). In this study, we examined books directed at children that deal with challenging behaviors.

Behaviors that adversely affect the child's social interactions, that are repetitive, that are difficult to cope with, that cause problems for both the family and the environment and that require intervention are described as challenging behavior (Brock & Beaman-Diglia, 2018; Dunlap et al., 2006; Manimegalai & Parameswari, 2015; Miller et al., 2017). In early childhood, children learn to express their emotions. In line with their wishes and needs, they may show challenging, aggressive, incompatible and difficult behaviors, such as tantrums. Although these behaviors are considered developmentally typical, they can be challenging for the family, teacher and peer groups. If not subject to intervention, such behaviors can become difficult problems to solve in the future (Miller et al., 2017; Price & Steed, 2016; Uchegbu, 2020). During early childhood, egocentric thinking predominates. Abstract events are not yet fully perceived (Wadsworth, 2015). For this reason, behaviors such as lying and crying may develop spontaneously. In this study, all behaviors that adversely affect the family, social environment, teacher and classroom atmosphere arising from the child's developmental process or other reasons are described as challenging behaviors.

Some researchers have claimed that challenging behaviors children encounter in their early years may negatively affect their lives in subsequent years and that there is a high probability of encountering difficulties in the long run (Basten et al., 2016; Bornstein et al., 2010). It has been revealed that children with challenging behaviors continue to have problems in areas such as socialization, school success and mental health in future life (Dunlap et al., 2006). It is important that parents, and educators be aware of a child's persistent problem behaviors, deal with the cause of the behavior, identify tendencies toward these behaviors at an early age, and take steps to solve them (Meriç, 2020). Challenging behaviors negatively affect not only children's development and education but also the classroom atmosphere. In this context, it is extremely important to determine the causes of challenging behaviors and to solve them.

There are many opportunities for teachers to intervene in the future performance of children who exhibit challenging behaviors in their early years (Webster-Stratton et al., 2008). Children's picturebooks can be

used as one of these intervention methods. Lacina et al. (2016) used reading aloud for children who need to talk about courage and confidence to seize opportunities in the daily events that children experience. In addition, supporting the children's social-emotional development with books is important for their healthy development. For this reason, it is necessary to pay attention to selecting appropriate books for the child. It is known that children can express their feelings, learn various strategies and connect with messages through books (Harper, 2016).

Preschool children's books are used for educational purposes as well as for developmental benefits (Nonovic & Popoviv, 2019). Dilidüzgün (2018) stated that the purpose of these books is to help children learn some facts that they cannot yet fully understand and cannot communicate directly. The fact that a child finds in books a world similar to their own emphasizes that, although a book is not a cure, it can be beneficial to the child. Morris et al. (2000) suggested that using children's books to create a positive classroom environment is conducive to learning.

Examining the studies and activities in Turkish culture will help understand the course of children's literature in Turkey. Parents, libraries, policy makers and teachers are important variables in gaining a book reading culture. In studies conducted with parents, reading activities with children were examined and it was determined that 30% of parents read books with their children every day, while approximately 8% did not read books at all. It was revealed that they touched on the dimensions of interactive reading, reading activities and the importance of literacy as "occasionally" and the sub-dimensions of "being a model for reading and teaching literacy as "rarely" (Işıkoğlu Erdoğan, 2016). In addition, national illustrated children's books were also examined. In the study conducted by Ülker Erdem et al. (2017), strategies for coping with negative emotions and characters in illustrated children's books were discussed. It was concluded that the most common negative emotion in children's books was sadness. It was determined that children often sought peer and adult support when coping with these negative emotions.

In this context, we believe that the quality of children's picturebooks that address challenging behaviors is important. Picturebooks are educational tools, and most children come into contact with them. Therefore, the content of these books is extremely important (Russell & Anderson, 1994).

1.1. Purpose of research

We reviewed the literature and noted that children's picturebooks about challenging behaviors such as bullying and aggression in early childhood have been examined. However, no holistic examination of these behaviors has been conducted. Thus, the aim of this research was to examine picturebooks written for children ages 3 to 8 that address challenging behaviors. We sought answers to the following five questions:

1- What are the challenging behaviors addressed in children's picturebooks?
2- What are the gender and role of the characters who demonstrate challenging behaviors and are exposed in children's picturebooks? Where do the challenging behaviors occur?
3- What are the causes and solutions of challenging behaviors in children's picturebooks?
4- Who are the characters who discover or present solutions to challenging behaviors in children's picturebooks?
5- What is the reflections of the character's life after the challenging behaviors in children's picturebooks is resolved?

2. METHOD

This study followed a process to answer the research questions using the content analysis method. In content analysis, data are the products of selected procedures. It includes the researchers' descriptive explanations, coding and criticisms of the analysis (Krippendorff, 2018). This section provides details about the research process.

2.1. Research design

This study involved an in-depth analysis of selected children's picturebooks about challenging behaviors, in particular in the preschool period. It was designed as a basic qualitative research model (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Within the scope of the study, we attempted to reveal how picturebooks, especially those aimed at preschool-age children, deal with challenging behaviors, how they reflect the solutions, and what they present as the cause of the behavior.

2.2. Book selection process

Our study, aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of children's picturebooks addressing challenging behaviors. As criteria were that the books appeal to a preschool age group and contains a pattern of events. For the behavior handled in the book to be considered a challenging behavior, we noted whether it was a repetitive behavior that harms the child, their environment, peers, and/or animals.

Between April 1 and May 1, 2021, we selected approximately 100 children's picturebooks with the help of the Provincial Public Library database. We also searched the comprehensive Amazon database that provides extensive data on children's books. We purchased 60 books that met our criteria and differed from those available at the Provincial Public Library. A total of 160 books were examined. During the search on the search engines, we specifically used the parameters of challenging behaviors, such as problem behavior, aggression, bullying, teasing, harm, and anger. Additionally, the search was conducted with age ranges of 3-5 and 6-8, and the book genre was specified as children's books. The researchers examined a total of 160 books. Books that were deemed unsuitable in terms of page count and text length for preschool children, and those that lacked a coherent storyline were excluded. Additionally, for a behavior to be considered challenging behavior, it was important that it involved repetitive actions that caused harm to the child, their environment, peers, or animals. Books that did not meet these criteria were removed. As a result, 41 books were selected as the sample for the study.

The authors read the purchased books independently of each other. Books for which mutually agreed upon opinions were issued were published. Support was obtained from another specialist with a PhD in children's literature for the books about which there was a conflict. It was determined that the books that were published did not include compelling behaviors in the in-text processes and were not suitable for the targeted age group. We excluded those that did not meet our criteria, leaving us a sample of 41 books. Of the selected books, 30 were translation books (written in other languages and translated into Turkish) and 11 were local books (written in Turkish). The publication dates of these 41 books included in the study range from 2010 to 2021. Since some books are translations, the original work publication year is different.

2.3. Data collection

We created a "Challenging Behavior Book Review Form" to code the 41 books. This form consists of two parts. In the first part, there are nine sub-titles that include the book and the author's name, publication year, number of editions, notable awards or recognition, popularity, the institution that approves the book, publisher and translation book or local book, which are independent of the internal text of the book. In the second part, there are nine sub-headings focused on behavior, such as the type of the challenging behavior, the reason, the solution, the portrayal of the characters exposed and exhibitor to challenging behavior, by whom it is solved, the gender of the exposed and exhibitor and the place where it occurs.

Three preschool education experts were interviewed to examine the form. In line with the opinions of these experts, the situation of whether the impact on the child's life is included after the challenging behavior is resolved was added to the second part. In its final iteration, the form consisted of two main sections and a total of 19 sub-headings. The first and second authors filled in the form separately for 41 books.

2.4. Coding and analysis

We conducted a coding and analysis process for the 41 books included in the sample. The first author holds a PhD in this field and wrote her doctoral dissertation on challenging behaviors in the preschool period. The second author is working toward her PhD in preschool education and has taken classes that included the topic of challenging behaviors.

After the book sample was provided, a number was assigned to each of the books. After both authors completed the form work for all of the books, they came together again and examined the forms and prepared a common data set to ensure consistency. Compelling behaviors were determined by adhering to the data set. In the process of descriptively analysing and transferring the qualitative findings, the researchers included those sentences in the book that they thought would best reflect the process through

direct quotations. Due to this work flow, the authors had to read the books over and over again many times. Thus, the determined categories and themes were checked in a cyclical manner and consensus was achieved. In analyzing the data, we used inductive and deductive analysis from qualitative data analysis methods. With inductive analysis, arrangements were made to obtain more abstract units of the data, correct patterns were determined, and categories and themes were constructed. Then, each determined category and theme was deductively examined again to see if it needed additional information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Analysis was carried out by assigning codes as B1, B2, B3,...,B41 to each book in the data set.

After the picturebooks included in the sample were determined, thematic analysis was conducted by taking into account the texts in the books. The coding process in which challenging behaviors were determined was carried out with thematic analysis (inductive). Then, the picturebooks were re-read in accordance with these codes and categories and themes were created with content analysis. At this stage, reflections and quotations in the book were included (deductive). When the researchers started thematic analysis, they based the challenging behavior types on literature to create codes. First, 14 different codes emerged. Since some of these codes could be used interchangeably, the 9 codes seen in Table 1 were finally reached (telling a lie, kidding, etc.). The gender and roles of the characters who exhibit and exposed to challenging behaviors were examined as two different codes (Table 2). The places where challenging behaviors occurred were examined under two different codes as outdoors and indoors with different categories (Table 3). The causes and solutions for the 9 different challenging behaviors identified are discussed under 2 different categories. These 2 different categories were combined under different themes and explained with one-to-one quotes (Table 4). Characters who discovered or presented solutions to their challenging behaviors were coded in 2 different ways as "itself" and "others" and deepened with various categories (Table 5). Finally, after the challenging behaviors were solved, the reflections on the characters' lives were examined under various categories based on 9 codes and quotes were included for detail (Table 6).
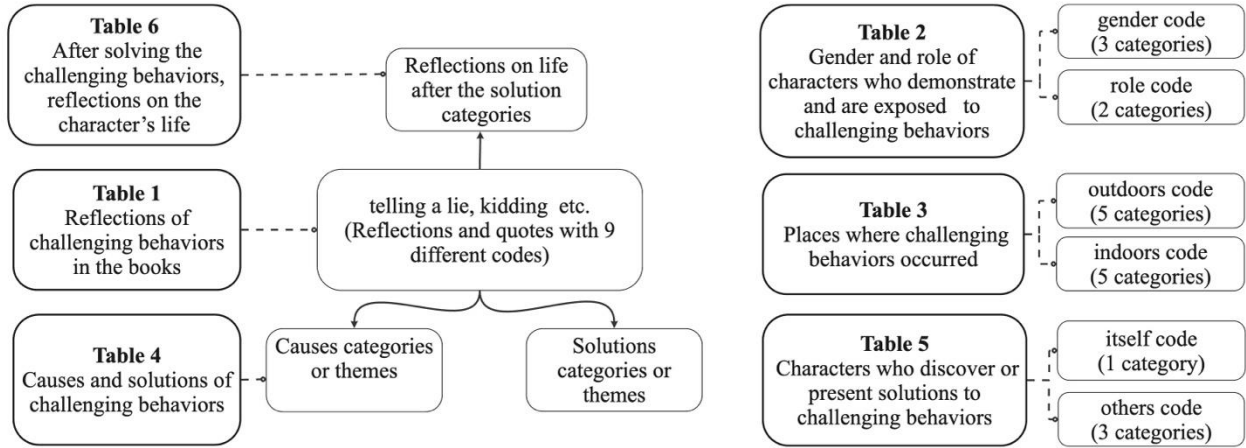
Figure 1. Code, category and theme relationships of challenging behaviors identified in picturebooks

Within the framework of the 9 challenging behaviors codes we created with thematic analysis, re-readings were made and reflections and quotes suitable for content analysis were used. Some categories were combined under themes. All of these are summarized with visuals in Figure 1.

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Challenging behaviors handled in children's picturebooks

In some of the books we examined had plots in which more than one challenging behavior coexisted. The results of our analysis of the 41 books, including a list of challenging behaviors, direct quotations about the challenging behaviors, the behaviors' depictions in the book are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Reflections of Challenging Behaviors in the Books

Challenging behavior	Reflection in the book	Book quotes
Telling a lie	Saying "I didn't break the thing; they broke it" Saying that they will do it when they won't Saying "I didn't eat it," even though they did Saying that they are not aware of the item when they know where it is (B1, 2, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19, 23, 35, 38)	*Although Ozan ate all the cake his mother made himself, when his mother got angry, he said "I didn't eat it, Pati ate it." (B2)* *Duck says, "If you give me the stick, I will give you all my toys" because it wants to take the stick from its friend's hand. After taking the stick, it does not give the toys. (B13)*
Kidding	About physical properties Crying at everything About differences About failures (B3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 22, 24, 25, 36)	*Because Pupa is the tallest in the class, her friends nicknamed her "giraffeaaa Pupaaa." (B4)* *Morris is a boy who loves to wear orange clothes and paint his nails. His friends call him "pink nails, pink nails." (B24)*
Taking something without permission	Taking the candies in a jar without asking permission Taking a friend's scooter without permission (B10, 21, 28, 30)	*After eating all the candies in the candy jar without permission, Can told his mother, "I don't know, Mom, the jar came to my room somehow. The contents may have spilled on the way." (B10)*
Bullying	Physical violence Verbal violence Exclusion from the group (B3,14, 18, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 31, 33, 34, 36)	*Faresu was so angry with Tavşancan that she threw the snow mouse's head at Tavşancan. (B31)* *Alfred said he hated the color yellow and that it was silly to cry. (B22)*

Table 1. Continue

Crying all the time	Trying to solve things by crying (B7)	*The unhappy cat Dila starts crying instead of saying "I'm hungry" when she is hungry. She cries when she is sleepy, when she is bored, when she eats a lot. She cries all the time and waits for her friends to fix her crying. (B7)*
Uncontrolled anger	Exhibiting aggressive behavior (B6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 20, 22, 26, 37)	*Octo wants to stay up late and watch TV. His mother turned off the TV. Octo is very angry again. Octo started throwing the things he had picked up. Whoops! He threw his favorite toy. (B11)*
Not sharing	Not sharing common toys (B 13, 28)	*Posy put on both the boots and the helmet. She pressed all the buttons. She pulled all the levers of the machine. Posy wouldn't let Ben and Alfie play either. She did not share the helmet and boots with them. (B28)*
Violating social rules	Not listening when someone is talking Farting Sticking out tongue, burping Interrupting someone else Pushing your friends forward (B 8, 14, 22, 34, 37, 39, 38, 41)	*Mayke had just arrived in the classroom and went to sit in her chair. Else stuck out Mayke's tongue. (B21)*
Causing harm	Harming the environment Harming animals Harming objects (B14, 27, 29, 32, 38, 40)	*Cihan was very hungry; he ate a pack of chips and threw his garbage on the ground. (B32)* *Ece is going to the zoo with her teacher and classmates. Her teacher constantly warns her, "Don't tease the elephants, hit the turtles, pull the peacock's feathers," because of his behavior that is harmful to animals. (B29)*

An examination of Table 1 reveals that 9 different challenging behaviors were depicted in the books. Lying and uncontrolled anger were the most frequently handled challenging behaviors, and the least frequently handled challenging behaviors were constantly crying and not sharing. "Not sharing", preventing others from using items that are meant to be shared, was considered a challenging behavior. Although crying is a humane behavior, always trying to get something by crying in order to make one's wishes come true is considered a challenging behavior and was placed into the category of "crying all the time."

3.2. The gender, role, and place where the behavior occurs of the characters who show and are exposed to challenging behaviors

The results regarding the traits of the characters who showed challenging behaviors and those who were exposed to challenging behaviors, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Gender and Role of Characters Who Exhibite and are Exposed to Challenging Behaviors

Character gender or role	Exhibiting challenging behavior (*n*)	Exposed to challenging behavior (*n*)
Girl	15	25
Boy	21	21
Another	12	18
Main character	35	16
Secondary character	9	30

The data in Table 2 show that the challenging behavior in children's picturebooks is mostly exhibited by boys, and the gender most exposed to challenging behavior is girls. In the "another" code in the gender category, the characters are animals. Animals were assigned any gender. In terms of their roles in the books, we noted that challenging behaviors were usually exhibited by the main characters. Secondary characters, on the other hand, were exposed to relatively more challenging behaviors. The results of our analysis of the places where challenging behaviors occurred are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.

Places Where Challenging Behaviors Occurred

Location	Places	*n*
Outdoors	Garden/park	16
	Schoolyard	5
	Beach	2
	Zoo	2
	Pool	1
Indoors	House	22
	School	16
	Submarine	2
	Mall/market	2
	Library	1

One can see in Table 3 that challenging behaviors took place both indoors and outdoors. When they occurred outdoors, they were mostly in gardens/parks. When they took place indoors, they occurred mostly at home and right after school. The submarine was included in the "indoors" category. The characters in the book about this place were creatures living in the sea and the challenging behaviors were exhibited in the characters' living space.

3.3. Causes and solutions of challenging behaviors

The data about the reasons for the challenging behaviors, and how the solutions were handled in the books, are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

Causes and Solutions of Challenging Behaviors

Challenging behavior	Causes	Solutions
Telling a lie	To get rid of problems (B1, 38) Because they are afraid (B10, 12, 23) No reason (B2, 13, 14, 19, 23, 35)	Regret for the damage caused (B1, 2, 10, 12, 38) With regret when left alone (B13, 35) Using fantasy element (B12, 19) No solution specified (B14, 23)
Kidding	To be strong (B3) For not accepting differences (B4, 24, 25, 36) Because he feels overconfident (B22) No reason (B5, 6, 18)	Modeling (B3) Case study (B25) By helping a friend (B4) Using fantasy (B18) Having a good time (B24) By discovering your favorite side (B5) No solution specified (B6, 22, 25, 36)
Taking something without permission	Because they are jealous (B21, 30) Because they don't want to share (B28) No reason (B10)	With apologies (B10, 30) Seeking favor (B30) Regret for the damage (B10) No solution specified (B21, 28)
Bullying	To gain respect (B3) To feel overconfident (B22) For not accepting differences (B24, 25, 36) Because they had a disagreement (B31) For starting the day badly (B33) Because it wants to be the best in class (B34) Out of jealousy (B21) No reason (B14, 18)	Modeling (B3) With expert support (B34) Regret for the damage (B14, 21, 31) With apologies (B14, 31, 33) Using fantasy (B18) Having a good time (B24) By being exposed to similar behavior (B33) By joining the group through play (B24, 36) Case study (B25) No solution specified (B22)
Crying all the time	No reason (B7)	No solution specified (B7)
Uncontrolled anger	For being teased (B6) For acting selfishly (B11) For the desire to be successful (B15, 16) Because they think he has been treated unfairly (B17, 20, 37) To feel overconfident (B22) No reason (B9, 26)	Case study (B6, 16) By getting expert support (B9, 15, 17) By discovering self-control (B11, 37) Having family support (B6, 15, 16, 20) Fearing the reflection of anger (B26) No solution specified (B22)

Table 4. Continue

Not sharing	No reason (B13, 28)	With regret when left alone (B13) By deprivation (B28) With apologies (B28)
Violating social rules	Because they are impatient (B8, 39) To feel overconfident (B22) Because he was excited (B41) To be the best in class (B34) No reason (B14, 38)	With regret when left alone (B8) Regret for the damage caused (B8, 14, 39) With apologies (B14) By gifting (B14) With expert support (B34) No solution specified (B22, 38, 41)
Causing harm	Because it is jealous (B27) Because she feels he has been treated unfairly (B29) No reason (B14, 32, 38, 40)	By discovering your favorite side (B27) With apologies (B14, 32, 40) By gifting (B14) Having family support (B32) No solution specified (B29, 38)

The data in Table 4 indicate that challenging behaviors that have no plot-related *cause* are grouped in the "no reason" category. In B14, the girl greets the duck with a cookie bowl and says, *"Hello, duck. How nice to see you."* Duck, on the other hand, knocks over the tray by hitting [her] hand without any reason.

An examination of the challenging behaviors suggest that the characters' desire to get rid of the feeling of fear, being teased and problematic situations can be combined under the theme of **"avoiding a negative situation".** In B38, the dog named Pig says that its friend did what it did to get rid of the problems: *"...I'm sorry to say that it was a big liar. Whenever it got into trouble... It blamed it on Kürdan..."*

Reasons for challenging behaviors, such as the characters thinking that they have been treated unfairly, being jealous, being impatient, getting excited, feeling overconfident, starting the day badly, and not wanting to share were grouped under the theme of **"inability to manage their emotions".** In B22, Alfred is an insecure child and shows challenging behaviors in order to feel confident: *"...A bubble rose up his throat, came to his mouth and said, "Gaaaark!" They all started laughing together... In fact, Alfred laughed at the end too. That's when something happened... The lesson was starting, and Alfred sat up. Then he burp[ed] loudly..."*

Characters acting selfishly, wanting to be the best in class, wanting to gain respect, and being successful were combined under the theme of **"willingness to have power".** In B34, *"...The Little Kangaroo silenced its other friends and shouted out every question the teacher asked... The Little Kangaroo said, 'But this is how I do it to be the best in class.' ..."*

In the solution of challenging behaviors, the categories of having a good time, apologizing, and being included in the group through games and gift giving can be combined under the theme of **"acquiring social skills"**. In B40 we saw *"'I'm sorry I ate your book,' said Alfons. 'It's okay,' said Natali, 'and I'm sorry that I treated you badly.' ..."*

3.4. Characters who discover or present solutions to challenging behaviors

Data regarding the discovery of solutions to the challenging behaviors discussed in the children's picturebooks by the character herself, or by other characters, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5.

Characters Who Discover or Present Solutions to Challenging Behaviors

Code	Category	*n*
Itself	Itself	24
Others	Family member (mother, father, grandfather)	9
	Specialist (classroom/counselor)	5
	Fantastic item	3

As the data in Table 5 indicate, when the solutions to challenging behaviors are examined at the end of the books, in more than half of the books the solution is presented to the child by different characters, and in the rest the children discover the solution through their own experiences. The experts who present the solution in the books are the classroom and guidance teachers; however, we noted that family members played most of the characters who offered the solution to the children. In addition, in one book the solution was presented to the child by a fantastic element: a lie detector. In some books, the solution was discovered by the children themselves and their grandparents, or in collaboration with their mother and classroom teacher.

3.5 After solving the challenging behaviors, reflections on the character's life

After the challenging behaviors discussed in the books had been solved, we examined whether the reflections of the characters in their lives were included in the books and, if so, how they were included. The data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.

After Solving the Challenging Behaviors, Reflections on the Character's Life

Challenging behavior	Reflections on life after the solution
Telling a lie	Having a happy time with the exposed person (B12) Making an effort to make up for the mistake (B2) No reflections (B1, 2, 10, 13,14, 19, 23, 35, 38)
Kidding	Being socially accepted by friends (B3, 24) Making an effort to compensate (B18) No reflections (B4, 6, 22, 25, 36)
Taking something without permission	Having a happy time with the exposed person (B30) No reflections (B10, 21, 28)
Bullying	Social acceptance by friends (B3, 24, 34) Having a happy time with the exposed person (B14, 21, 24, 25, 31, 33) Making an effort to compensate (B18) No reflections (B5, 22, 36)
Crying all the time	No reflections (B7)
Uncontrolled anger	Teaching anger management methods to a friend (B6, 37) Social acceptance by friends (B9, 11, 15, 17, 20) Having a happy time with the exposed person (B17, 20, 26) No reflections (B16, 22)

Table 6. Continue

Not sharing	Having a happy time with the exposed person (B13) No reflections (B28)
Violating social rules	Social acceptance by friends (B8, 34) Winning an award (B8) Having a happy time with the exposed person (B14) No reflections (B22, 38, 39, 41)
Causing harm	Having a happy time with the exposed person (B14, 40) No reflections (B27, 29, 32, 38)

An examination of Table 6 reveals that some bookshad no plot about how the characters change their lives after the challenging behaviors are solved. It is noteworthy that some of these books did not address the solution of challenging behavior (see Table 4: B6, 7, 14, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 29, 36, 38, 41).

Except for the categories of "constantly crying" and "making fun of," there are reflections indicating that the character spends a happy time with the exposed people after the behavior is resolved in all other challenging behaviors. In *B31 "...They shared play dough and made mice AND bunnies..."* the characters who apologize to each other and reconcile return to their homes and spend time together.

We noted that after the challenging situations involving harmful behaviors such as mocking, bullying, uncontrolled anger, and violations of social rules wreresolved, the state of "social acceptance by their friends" ws reflected in the lives of the characters. In B9, for example, *"... 'You know what, we became friends with Erika!' said Anais to Mirmir. 'We laugh a lot together. She was going to have a birthday party next week, and he invited me too.' ..."*

We determined that the characters tried to compensate for the damaged caused ss a result of the challenging behaviors of lying, mocking, and bullying. These reflections were combined into the category "striving to compensate for the error." In B2, *"...The next day, while playing, Pati slipped off the rug and PAT! İt crashed into the coffee table and dropped the vase to the floor. BANG! Ozan said: 'Pati really did this, what are we going to do now.' Ela replied, 'Maybe my mother won't be angry if we clean the place... They worked all day long and made the place sparkly... It's like there was a smile on Pati's face.'"*

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

Studies in the field of early childhood have revealed that children's inability to manage their anger and aggression behaviors affects their future lives (Denham et al., 2002; Tremblay, 2008) and that children who exhibit aggressive behavior have a high incidence of peer rejection and problems in teacher–child relationships (Ostrov & Crick, 2007). Daniels et al. (2012) emphasized that it is possible to insist on exhibiting such behaviors and to experience tantrums. Pardeck and Pardeck (1992) found that books are effective in helping children cope with and manage various problems. One of the most important intervention tools for children's behaviors is picturebooks geared toward their age. For this reason, in this study we examined challenging behaviors depicted in children's picturebooks in regard to several variables.

The most common challenging behaviors portrayed in the books we studied were lying, making fun of someone, bullying, and out-of-control anger. The least frequently encountered behaviors were constant crying and not sharing. Upshur et al. (2009) observed that 34% of preschool children showed aggression, maladaptive behaviors, or poor adaptation skills. Previous studies have emphasized that behaviors such

as loss of appetite, aggression, noncompliance with rules, lying, taking other people's belongings without permission, mocking, bullying, crying, and jealousy are quite common in children (Derman & Başal, 2013; Miller, 2014; Özbey & Alisinanoglu, 2009). In this context, one can see that the challenging behaviors discussed in the books, except for anorexia, are parallel to the challenging behaviors exhibited by preschool-age children. Oppliger and Davis (2016) examined children's books on bullying, physical aggression (e.g., hitting), verbal aggression (e.g,. teasing, nickname-calling), and relational aggression (e.g., exclusion, gossip). Our findings are similar to theirs.

Wiseman and Jones (2018), on the other hand, determined that 45% of the victims of bullying behavior in children's picturebooks are boys, 27% are girls, and 13% are both girls and boys. In our study, we found that characters on the side of the challenging behavior were mostly male, and those on the exposed side were mostly female. We observed that the numbers of books in which male characters as well as girls are exposed to challenging behaviors were similar. This is an important factor that highlights how challenging behaviors in picturebooks should not be attributed to a single gender. In addition, various animal characters that are not attributed to any gender in the books also showed challenging behaviors and were exposed to these behaviors. Similarly, in a review children's picturebooks by Moulton et al. (2011), 42% of bullying characters were depicted as animals.

In the books we examined in our study, although challenging behaviors occurred both indoors and outdoors, they were mostly dealt with indoors at home and outdoors mostly in gardens or parks. Moulton et al. (2011) emphasized that the bullying behaviors in children's picturebooks are most often depicted as taking place in school and in the neighborhood environment. We believe the variety of spaces described in the books is important for highlighting the opportunities for children to identify and produce solutions. Challenging behaviors can be exhibited anywhere, not just in the classroom and home environment.

Although the reasons for the challenging behaviors in some of the books we examined were presented in the books themselves, we note that there were books in which the reasons were not explained in all categories. Because it is through books that most children start to get to know the realities of life and themselves (Ural, 2013), the reasons for the behaviors are important for establishing the identification of such behaviors.

A study of lying determined that lies often are told to hide a negative situation (Popliger et al., 2011). In our study, we noted that characters lied because they were afraid and wanted to get rid of problems. For most of the characters, the reason why they lied was not clear.

In the books we considered in our sample, the feelings of the characters who experienced uncontrolled anger was not shown as negativity. Anger reactions are common in young children. This condition is generally found to be developmentally normal (Potegal et al., 1996). In addition, strategies to manage anger were explained in the books, and most of the characters gained the ability to control their anger.

In some books, however, there was no solution to the challenging behavior or for the survivor to learn to cope with the behavior. Heath et al. (2011) drew attention to the fact that some books on bullying behaviors contain faulty strategies for a solution. In our opinion, the inability to solve a challenging behavior exhibited in the books, and the fact that the correct behavior was not included, is an important deficiencys.

In addition to the prevention and elimination of challenging behaviors in the preschool period, experts should support preventive treatments (Basten et al., 2016) and help children develop self-control and social skills. Helping a child understand their thoughts and feelings about their behavior, and communicating effectively with others in their environment, helps reduce challenging behaviors (Ezmeci & Akman, 2023). The development of social problem-solving skills enables children to acquire strategies to cope with problem situations they will encounter in daily life, to produce solutions, and to become aware of their own emotions and those of others (D'Zurilla et al., 2003; Green et al., 2008).

Examining the studies and activities in Turkish culture will help to understand the course of children's literature in Turkey. In a study conducted by Ülker Erdem et al. (2017) examining picture books prepared for preschool children aged 3-6, it was concluded that negative emotions were frequently included in these books. It was determined that sadness was given more importance, followed by fear and anger. It was determined that peer or parental support was sought to cope with these emotions in the books. Topcu (2019) examined picture books for children in the preschool period in terms of psychological resilience and concluded that books, especially in neighborhoods with low socioeconomic levels, were insufficient to support children's psychological resilience levels. In the study conducted by Kılınçcı and Can (2020), 56 picture books borrowed the most from public libraries for children aged 3-6 in a year were examined. It was determined that the characters in the books were insufficient in children's acquisition of social and emotional skills. In addition, a project called "365 DAYS STORY" was initiated by the Ministry of National Education in 2020 in order to read stories to children every day, starting from an early age. In this context, teachers were asked for support in writing and illustrating stories for children aged 0-6. Today, these books are delivered to schools (Ministry of National Education, 2020). With all these studies and policies, it can be considered that picture storybooks used in preschool should be improved both in terms of quality variables and used more effectively.

In general, when we examined the booksin our study, we observed that after the challenging behaviors were resolved, the characters were socially accepted by their friends, developed methods to control their anger, and continued efforts to compensate for their mistakes. All these show that the reflection on challenging behaviors in picturebooks tends to be handled in a solution-oriented manner.

5. LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this study is that our sample of 41 books may not represent all possible variations of challenging behavior. We have examined the emergence and resolution of challenging behaviors, but potential cultural factors that may influence the interpretation of these behaviors have not been explored. Finally, we shoul have search for additional supporting materials, such as teacher guides or supplementary activities in our analysis. Despite these limitations, our study contributes to the existing literature by examining challenging behaviors, the solutions offered, and their reflections on life.

6. SUGGESTIONS and FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies should deal separately with various challenging behaviors and study them in more depth. Researchers can focus on how books that address challenging behaviors depict the processes of behavior and what they pay attention to. The sample size can be expanded by considering a wider variety of picturebooks. In addition, a cross-cultural analysis can be made of how the challenging behaviors in these books are perceived and used in various cultural contexts. Applied research can be conducted on how these books are used in educational settings and their effects on children's behavior.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

1. GİRİŞ

Resimli kitaplar, çocukların dünyayı anlama süreçlerini destekleyen kelime ve tasarım öğelerini bir araya getirir. Erken yaşta bu kitaplara gösterilen ilgi, ileriki yıllardaki gelişimlerine de olumlu katkıda bulunur. 5-9 yaş arası çocuklar üzerinde yapılan bir çalışmada, resimli kitap okuma becerisinin kelime dağarcığı, üstbilişsel bilgi ve görev yönelimi gibi alanlarda gelişim sağladığı belirlenmiştir (Lepola vd., 2020). Çocuk edebiyatı, bireyler arası iletişim, iş birliği yapma ve duyguları anlama becerilerinin gelişimine katkı sağlar (Dermata, 2019). Sosyal ve duygusal gelişim açısından resimli kitaplar önemli bir rol oynar (Coper, 2007). Çocuklar, doğal ve toplumsal çevreleriyle ilgili konuları resimli kitaplar aracılığıyla kavrayabilir, bu kitaplar kişisel gelişimlerini ve sosyalleşme süreçlerini etkileyebilir (Ural, 2013). Problem odaklı çocuk kitapları, çocuğun gerçek yaşam deneyimlerini yansıtarak sorunlarla başa çıkma becerilerini geliştirir (Lukens et al., 2013). Zorlayıcı davranışlar, çocukların sosyal etkileşimlerini olumsuz yönde etkileyebilir ve müdahale gerektirebilir (Brock & Beaman-Diglia, 2018). Erken çocukluk döneminde benmerkezci düşünme baskın olup, soyut olaylar tam olarak kavranamaz (Wadsworth, 2015). Bu nedenle, zorlayıcı davranışların çözümünde resimli kitaplar etkili bir araç olarak kullanılabilir (Harper, 2016). Türkiye'de çocuklara okuma kültürü kazandırma sürecinde ebeveynler ve eğitimciler önemli bir rol oynar (Işıkoğlu Erdoğan, 2016). Bu bağlamda, zorlayıcı davranışları ele alan nitelikli resimli kitapların içeriği büyük önem taşımaktadır (Russell & Anderson, 1994)."

Literatürün incelenmesi sonucunda, erken çocukluk döneminde zorbalık ve saldırganlık gibi zorlayıcı davranışları ele alan çocuk resimli kitaplarının incelendiği, ancak bu davranışların bütüncül bir şekilde ele alındığı bir çalışmanın yapılmadığı görülmüştür. Bu bağlamda, bu araştırmanın amacı, 3-8 yaş arası çocuklara yönelik zorlayıcı davranışları ele alan resimli kitapları incelemektir. Araştırmada aşağıdaki beş soruya yanıt aranmıştır:

1- Çocuk resimli kitaplarında ele alınan zorlayıcı davranış türleri nelerdir?

2- Çocuk resimli kitaplarında zorlayıcı davranış sergileyen ve bu davranışlara maruz kalan karakterlerin cinsiyet ve rolleri nedir? Zorlayıcı davranışların gerçekleştiği ortamlar nelerdir?

3- Çocuk resimli kitaplarında zorlayıcı davranışların nedenleri ve çözüm yolları nelerdir?

4- Çocuk resimli kitaplarında zorlayıcı davranışlara çözüm bulan veya çözüm öneren karakterler kimlerdir?

5- Zorlayıcı davranışların çözülmesinin ardından çocuk resimli kitaplarındaki karakterlerin yaşamlarına yansıyan etkiler nelerdir?"

2. YÖNTEM

Bu çalışma, araştırma sorularını yanıtlamak amacıyla içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. İçerik analizinde veri, araştırmacıların betimleyici açıklamaları, kodlamaları ve eleştirilerinden oluşur (Krippendorff, 2018). Bu bölümde araştırma süreci detaylandırılmıştır.

Araştırma Tasarımı: Çalışma, okul öncesi dönemde zorlayıcı davranışları ele alan çocuk resimli kitaplarını nitel bir araştırma modeli ile derinlemesine analiz etmeyi amaçlamıştır (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Bu bağlamda, resimli kitapların zorlayıcı davranışları nasıl işlediği, çözüm önerileri ve davranışların nedenleri ele alınmıştır.

Kitap Seçim Süreci: Çalışmada, 3-8 yaş grubuna yönelik, tekrarlayan ve çevreye zarar veren davranışları içeren 160 çocuk kitabı incelenmiş, 41 kitap örneklem olarak seçilmiştir.

Veri Toplama: "Zorlayıcı Davranış Kitap İnceleme Formu" oluşturularak, kitaplar bağımsız olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Uzman görüşleri doğrultusunda form, 19 alt başlık içerecek şekilde düzenlenmiştir.

Kodlama ve Analiz: Veriler, nitel veri analizinde kullanılan tümevarımsal ve tümdengelimsel analiz yöntemleriyle incelenmiştir (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Kitaplara B1, B2…B41 şeklinde kodlar atanmıştır. Tematik analiz sürecinde, zorlayıcı davranış türleri 14 farklı kodda incelenmiş, son olarak 9 koda indirgenmiştir. Davranışların gerçekleştiği ortamlar, nedenler ve çözümler temalar altında ele alınarak doğrudan alıntılarla desteklenmiştir.

3. BULGULAR, TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bu araştırmada, çocuk resimli kitaplarında ele alınan zorlayıcı davranışlar incelenmiştir. 41 kitaplık örneklemde yalan söyleme, alay etme, zorbalık ve kontrolsüz öfke en sık işlenen zorlayıcı davranışlar olarak belirlenmiştir. Davranışların genellikle erkek karakterler tarafından sergilendiği ve kız karakterlerin bu davranışlara daha fazla maruz kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir. Zorlayıcı davranışlar iç ve dış mekanlarda ortaya çıkmakta; iç mekanlarda en sık ev ortamında, dış mekanlarda ise park ve bahçelerde gözlenmektedir. Davranışların nedenleri arasında korku, kıskançlık, güvensizlik, öfke gibi duygular yer almakta; çözüm önerileri ise özür dileme, gruba oyunla katılma ve sosyal becerilerin kazanılması şeklinde sunulmaktadır. Bazı kitaplarda zorlayıcı davranışların çözümü karakterlerin kendi çabalarıyla sağlanırken, diğerlerinde aile bireyleri veya uzmanların desteğiyle çözüm bulunmuştur. Çözüm sonrasında ise karakterlerin sosyal kabul gördüğü ve hata telafi çabaları sergiledikleri gözlemlenmiştir.

Araştırma bulguları, erken çocukluk döneminde zorlayıcı davranışların yönetimi ve çözümünde çocuk kitaplarının önemli bir araç olabileceğini göstermektedir. Yalan söyleme, alay etme, zorbalık ve öfke gibi zorlayıcı davranışların çocuk resimli kitaplarında sıkça işlenmesi, bu davranışların çocuklar için tanınır ve anlaşılır hale getirilmesi açısından değerlidir. Oppliger ve Davis (2016) de çocuk kitaplarında zorbalık, fiziksel ve sözel saldırganlık gibi davranışların yer aldığını belirlemiş, bu çalışmayla paralellik göstermiştir.

Kitaplarda zorlayıcı davranış sergileyenlerin genellikle erkek, maruz kalanların ise kız karakterler olması, davranışların cinsiyet üzerinden temsiline dair önemli ipuçları sunmaktadır. Çeşitli çalışmalarda (Wiseman & Jones, 2018) erkek çocukların zorbalığa daha sık başvurduğu görülmekle birlikte, bu araştırmada zorlayıcı davranışların cinsiyete dayalı olarak belirli bir gruba atfedilmemesi gerektiği de vurgulanmaktadır. Hayvan karakterlerin de bu davranışları sergilediği göz önüne alındığında, zorlayıcı davranışların çeşitli rollerde tanımlanabileceği anlaşılmaktadır.

Çalışmada ayrıca zorlayıcı davranışların hem evde hem de okul dışında yer alan ortamlarda sergilenmesi, çocukların sosyal öğrenme fırsatlarına erişiminde farklı alanların önemini vurgulamaktadır. Farklı ortamların tanımlanması, çocukların zorlayıcı davranışlara karşı çözüm üretme fırsatlarını artırmaktadır. Bazı kitaplarda zorlayıcı davranışların çözümsüz kalması veya hatalı çözüm önerilerinin

sunulması ise çocukların doğru davranış modellerini öğrenme sürecini olumsuz etkileyebilir (Heath vd. , 2011). Dolayısıyla, kitapların içerik kalitesinin artırılması, davranış çözüm sürecini doğru yönlendirmek açısından önemlidir.

Genel olarak, araştırmanın bulguları, zorlayıcı davranışların çözümünde sosyal beceri kazanımı, özür dileme ve gruba oyunla katılma gibi yaklaşımların önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu durum, çocukların sosyal problem çözme yeteneklerini geliştirme sürecinde kitapların işlevselliğini desteklemektedir.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

"This study only examined published children's picturebooks and no data was collected from human participants. Therefore, the research does not require ethics committee approval."

CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCHERS

The contribution percentage of the 1st author to the research is 50%, and the contribution percentage of the 2nd author to the research is 50%.

Author 1: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, analysis, investigation, resources, original draft, writing & editing, visualization.

Author 2: Conceptualization, methodology, validation, analysis, investigation, resources, original draft, writing & editing, visualization.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).