

The Analysis of Illustrated Story Books for Children Aged 3-6 in Terms of Protection Rights

3-6 Yař Çocuklarına Yönelik Resimli Hikâye Kitaplarının Korunma Haklarına Göre Analizi

Duygu YALMAN POLATLAR* | Muhammet Ü. ÖZTABAK*

Abstract

This study aims to analyze illustrated story books for children aged 3-6 in terms of the protection right found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One of the qualitative research methods, document analysis was used, and the data were decoded through descriptive analysis method. The data set of the research was determined using criteria sampling method out of the best-selling illustrated story books of the publishing houses that participated in Istanbul Book Fair. Upon contacting 30 publishing houses, 102 books were included in the data set. In order to find the messages given directly or indirectly in the illustrated story books, the sentences and pictures were analyzed. "Protection rights" was based on as the main category in this analysis. The most supported rights found in the books were "The best interests of the child", "Getting informed and protected against harmful publications", and "Physical protection", while the most violated rights were "The best interests of the child", "Getting treated equally and protected against discrimination", and "Child's right of being a child", respectively. Therefore, illustrated story books act as a guide to children in this critical period they are in.

Keywords: illustrated story book, children's literature, children's rights, protection rights, best interests of the child



*Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi, Temel Eğitim Bölümü, Okul Öncesi Öğretmenliği A.B.D.
duyguyalman@gmail.com,
Orcid: 0000-0002-9030-5814

** Doç. Dr., Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf Üniversitesi, Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü, Rehberlik ve Psikolojik Danışmanlık A.B.D.
muhammetoztabak@gmail.com,
Orcid: 0000-0003-4923-2163

Gönderilme Tarihi / Received Date:

18 Ağustos 2023

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted Date:

9 Ekim 2023

Atıf/Citation: Yalman Polatlar D. Öztapak M. (2023). The Analysis of Illustrated Story Books for Children Aged 3-6 in Terms of Protection Rights
doi.org/10.30767/diledeara.1346091

Copyright © 2023

Dil ve Edebiyat Arařtırmaları
tded.org.tr | 2023

Öz

Bu çalışmada, 3-6 yaş çocuklarına yönelik resimli hikâye kitaplarının Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesinde yer alan korunma hakkına göre analizi amaçlanmıştır. Nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman incelenmesi kullanılmış ve veriler betimsel analiz yöntemi ile çözümlenmiştir. Araştırmanın veri seti, İstanbul Kitap Fuarına katılan yayınevlerinin, en çok satan resimli hikâye kitapları arasından ölçüt örnekleme yöntemiyle belirlenmiştir. Belirlenen 30 yayınevi ile görüşülerek 102 kitap veri setine dahil edilmiştir. Resimli hikâye kitaplarında doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak verilen mesajları bulmak amacıyla kitapta yer alan cümleler ve resimler çözümlenmiştir. Verilerin çözümlenmesinde "korunma hakları" ana kategori olarak esas alınmıştır. İncelenen kitaplarda en fazla desteklenen haklar sırasıyla "Çocuğun yüksek yararı", "Bilgi edinme ve zararlı yayınlara karşı korunma" ve "Fiziksel koruma"; en fazla ihlal edilen haklar sırasıyla "Çocuğun yüksek yararı", "Eşit muamele görme ve ayrımcılıktan korunma" ve "Çocuğun çocuk olma hakkı" olarak tespit edilmiştir. Çocukların bu kritik döneminde, resimli hikâye kitaplarının çocuklara rehberlik etme özelliği bulunmaktadır. Bu sebeple çocuk kitaplarında yer alan resimler, metnin konusu ve kurgusu, metni anlatma şekli ve verdiği alt mesajlarla korunma haklarına vurgu yapılması büyük önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: resimli hikâye kitabı, çocuk edebiyatı, çocuk hakları, korunma hakları, çocuğun yüksek yararı

Extended Summary

Illustrated children's books include many features that might directly or indirectly affect and shape children's life, which can be both positive and negative for them. From a positive perspective, heroes in tales written considering children's rights and according to the principle of suitability for children can make the child become aware of his own rights (Turan, 2011). Children are certainly aware of the concept of right, they know their rights, and they can interpret literature that aims to empower them (Deszcz-Tryhubczak, 2016). As children's literature plays a strong role in envisioning childhood, it is a vital task to analyze the childish and child-centered features of texts. Making such analysis looking from the perspective of children's rights provides a conceptual framework (Superle, 2016). This research aims to analyze the inclusion of protection rights in illustrated story books in Türkiye for children aged 3-6. Within this scope, the analysis focused on the extent to which negligence, abuse, and exploitation aspects of protection rights are included in the books.

What are the expressions about supporting protection rights in illustrated story books?

What are the expressions about violating protection rights in illustrated story books?

What are the comparison results of the expressions about supporting and violating protection rights in illustrated story books?

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) aims to determine universal values for children's protection and to protect them from any kind of negligence, abuse, and bad treatment. One other goal of the convention is to form a framework for programs that will help children improve their potential and skills (Akyüz, 2000). CRC regards the child as separate from adulthood because of being particularly vulnerable, thus deserving special protection, and at the same time similar but inferior to adulthood in terms of capacity for agency and entitlement to autonomy, subjecthood, and voice (Deszcz-Tryhubczak, 2016). Children's books are important tools that activate children's imagination, helping them gain mental flexibility, and making them feel good. Thanks to these works, children can observe other people's lives, experiences, and various ethical conflicts, and in this way, they can learn to see things from others' perspectives (Koc & Buzzelli, 2004; Mendoza & Reese, 2001). The method used in this research is "document analysis", which is one of the qualitative research methods. During the process of choosing the books, the publishing houses selling children's books in İstanbul Book Fair were asked which story books were preferred the most, and the suggested ones were included in the data set. Criteria sampling method was used in forming the data set. According to the criteria determined for the chosen books, the books had to be illustrated story books written for children aged 3-6, and they had to be on the best-seller list of the publishing houses. "Document analysis" was used in analyzing the data. The most supported rights in the 102 story books analyzed are "The best interests of the child" (20), "Getting informed and protected against harmful publications" (14) and "Physical protection" (6), whereas the most violated rights are "The best interests of the child" (11), "Getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination" (5) and "Child's right to be child" (4), respectively.

Protection rights include rights closely related to the child's safety. In the most preferred books, the rate of protection rights was found to be 66%. This result shows that the field of pre-school children's literature has become more conscious in recent years in terms of the importance of child's protection. In order for this situation to improve, employees

working in the field of Children's Literature have major responsibilities. In Dağlıoğlu and Çakmak's (2009) research, where they analyzed 174 books, 52 (29,8%) translated books are included. In this research, out of the total 102 books in the data set, 28 (27,4%) of them are translated books. Despite the time period between both studies, the rate of translated books is close to each other. This shows that the percentage of translated books among illustrated children's stories is still too high to ignore. When related research is analyzed, it is found that the frequency of protection rights in the books is less than other rights and that the most included ones are vital and developmental rights. The suggestion of the books not suitable for the age range shows that the publishing houses that publish books for this age period need expert support related to children's literature. For this reason, it can be suggested that some in-service training be organized for the employees working in publishing houses. A qualitative study can be conducted with publishing house editors; their viewpoints, attitudes, basic information etc. on children's literature can be learned, and enlightening trainings can be offered.

Introduction

Children's literature is the type of literature that narrates children and their world, their interests, feelings and opinions. It is impossible to ignore that the works of children's literature have a vital effect on children. The key to becoming a part of the fictional world is to identify with the character (Karataş, 2014). It is in early childhood period that one forms an emotional bond and attachment with books (Deretarla Gül, 2013). When the child reads or is read a written work, the heroes, their points of view towards things that happen, the given messages there becomes an element of identification for the child (Sever, 2002).

Since they are born, children have equal personality rights with adults. Thus, the term "everyone" used in declarations, conventions and constitutions includes children, as well (Akyüz, 2016). Children's rights can be classified in the CRC as follows (Akyüz, 2000):

Living Rights: They are the rights of children to live, to have suitable living standards, to meet their basic needs, such as medical care, food, shelter.

Development Rights: They are the rights of children to get education, which is necessary to realize themselves at the maximum level, to play and rest, to get informed, to have the freedom of religion, conscious and opinion.

Protection Rights: They are the rights of children to be protected against any kind of negligence, abuse and exploitation. These rights help protect children in the judicial system, in armed conflict, and in matters such as child labor, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, drug addiction, and special care for refugee children.

Participation Rights: They are the rights that aim to help children gain an active role in the family and in the society. These are the rights of children to state their opinions, to participate in the decisions that affect them, to set up an association and get together peacefully.

CRC aims to determine universal values for children's protection and to protect them from any kind of negligence, abuse, and bad treatment. One other goal of the convention is to form a framework for programs that will help children improve their potential and skills (Akyüz, 2000). From birth to adolescence, the child might come across negligence, abuse, exploitation and

many harmful factors. Therefore, in the related regulations, the principle of the best interests of the child has been taken into consideration in order to make sure the child is safe and sound, his best interests are provided, and he is aware of his own rights as he gains personality.

In the third article of the CRC is the expression “the best interests of the child”. According to this article, the best interests of the child, in other words, his safety is the basic concern in all the child-related activities conducted by judicial bodies or administrative authorities, courts, public or private charity organizations (Akyüz, 1991). Children’s books are important tools that activate children’s imagination, helping them gain mental flexibility, and making them feel good. Thanks to these works, children can observe other people’s lives, experiences, and various ethical conflicts, and in this way, they can learn to see things from others’ perspectives (Koc & Buzzelli, 2004; Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Besides their positive effects, children’s books have negative effects, as well. It is important to follow the policy of protecting children so as to minimize these negative factors. The protection rights found in the CRC include these policies. There are seven articles where the word protection appears. These articles are; protection from kidnapping (article 11), protection of privacy (article 16), protection from violence (article 19), harmful work (article 32), harmful from drugs (article 33), protection from exploitation (article 36), protection in war (article 38). Protection rights are the rights that make sure the child is protected from any kind of negligence, abuse, and exploitation. These rights help protect children in the judicial system, in armed conflict, in work life, and in matters such as physical, emotional and sexual abuse, drug addiction, and special care for refugee children (Türkyılmaz & Kuş, 2014). In brief, the rights that include protecting the child from any kind of harmful factors are analyzed within this scope.

CRC regards the child as separate from adulthood because of being particularly vulnerable, thus deserving special protection, and at the same time similar but inferior to adulthood in terms of capacity for agency and entitlement to autonomy, subjecthood, and voice (Deszcz-Tryhubczak, 2016). Illustrated children’s books include many features that might directly or indirectly affect and shape children’s life, which can be both positive and negative for them. From a positive perspective, heroes in tales written considering children’s rights and according to the principle of suitability for children can make the child become aware of his own rights (Turan, 2011). Children are certainly aware of the concept of right, they know their rights, and they can interpret literature that aims to empower them (Deszcz-Tryhubczak, 2016). From a negative perspective, however, books are materials with a feature of being educational tools for children, and they can carry within themselves the potential to leave negative marks on children’s lives. As children’s literature plays a strong role in envisioning childhood, it is a vital task to analyze the childish and child-centered features of texts. Making such analysis looking from the perspective of children’s rights provides a conceptual framework (Superle, 2016). Therefore, in order to protect the child from any negativity that could affect him, illustrated children’s books must be based on the principle of the best interests of the child, which is one of the basic principles of the CRC. This research aims to analyze the inclusion of protection rights in illustrated story books in Türkiye for children aged 3-6. Within this scope, the analysis focused on the extent to which negligence, abuse, and exploitation aspects of protection rights are included in the books.

What are the expressions about supporting protection rights in illustrated story books?

What are the expressions about violating protection rights in illustrated story books?

What are the comparison results of the expressions about supporting and violating protection rights in illustrated story books?

Method

Research Model: The method used in this research is “document analysis”, which is one of the qualitative research methods. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents both printed and electronic (computer-based and internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Atkinson and Coffey (1997) refer to documents as ‘social facts’, which are produced, shared, and used in socially organised ways. Since this research focuses on illustrated story books, document analysis method was chosen.

Merriam (2009) states the phases of document analysis as follows: (1) Finding the suitable documents, (2) checking the originality of the documents, (3) creating a system about coding and cataloguing and (4) carrying out data analysis.

Data Set: During the process of choosing the books, the publishing houses selling children’s books in İstanbul Book Fair were asked which story books were preferred the most, and the suggested ones were included in the data set. Criteria sampling method was used in forming the data set. According to the criteria determined for the chosen books, the books had to be illustrated story books written for children aged 3-6, and they had to be on the best-seller list of the publishing houses. In total, 111 illustrated story books were included in the data set. However, 13 books (11,3%) that came from the publishing houses were taken out of the list. The research was conducted with 102 books. Book titles are coded as K1, K2, K3, etc.

Data Analysis: “Document analysis” was used in analyzing the data. Document analysis is a type of qualitative data analysis that includes summarizing and interpreting of the data obtained through various data collecting techniques. This summary and interpretation is carried out according to the themes determined beforehand (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Two researchers separately analyzed the 102 books by coding them according to the protection rights category found in the CRC. For reliability, the coding of the researchers were calculated using the following formula: $(\text{Consensus} / (\text{Consensus} + \text{Dissensus})) \times 100$ (Miles & Huberman, 1994). According to this calculation, the reliability of the research is 87%.

In qualitative research, some concepts are suggested instead of others, such as; “credibility” for “internal validity”, “transferability” for “external validity”, “dependability” for “internal reliability”, “confirmability” for “external reliability” (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is important in terms of external validity that the obtained data be recorded in detail and the results be divided into categories and subcategories so that the reader can understand them (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). In order to make sure there is external validity, the data obtained in this research were divided into categories and subcategories. External validity was supported in this research with the help of direct quotes from the texts.

According to Kirk and Miller (1986), internal validity in qualitative research means the researcher observing the researched topic as objectively as possible. Thus, in order to make sure there is internal validity, the researchers coded the same texts twice at different times. In this way,

the effect of the researchers' subjective perception on the data was diminished.

Findings

This part of the research includes positive examples and violations about protection rights in the story books, and the comparison of these examples and violations.

Table 1. *Positive Findings About Protection Rights*

Protection Rights	Book Code	f
Getting informed and protected against harmful publications	K3, K11, K12, K38, K42, K45, K51, K67, K72, K77, K84, K92, K93, K112	14
Getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination	K77, K84, K102, K113	4
Private life and protection of communication	K56, K62, K84, K85	4
Game, resting and spending free time	K34, K56, K69, K85	4
Child's right to be a child	K4, K57, K71	4
Physical protection	K29, K48, K71, K84, K90	6
The best interests of the child	K16, K42, K44, K45, K46, K55, K58, K59, K60, K62, K71, K77, K83, K94, K101, K111	20
Expression of opinion	K3, K31, K109	3
Living in a healthy and balanced environment	K4, K21, K90, K111	4
Child's right to be raised by his parents	K6, K19, K76, K84	4

Table 2 shows that the most common positive examples about protection rights in the books are "The best interests of the child" (20), "Getting informed and protected against harmful publications" (14), and "Physical protection" (6), respectively.

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the positive expressions related to the best interests of the child are the warnings and advice about the protection of children against various dangers. The positive expressions in the books about the principle of The Best Interests of the Child, found in the article 3/1 of the CRC, are as follows:

"To the comet:

- Can't we just get a little closer to Venus?, he asked.
- Nope... No! It is still too hot; getting close to it is dangerous." (K42)

"You have come to the wrong address Little Red Riding Hood, said Mr. Rabbit. Your grandma has moved. But come in immediately! You shouldn't be wandering around the forest. The wolf has come back." (K46)

“Then she suddenly remembered the advice she had given to the children: Wasn’t it she, herself, that told them not to open the door to anyone?... And there they were, doing what she said and not opening.” (K60) “For once, try watching the storm through the window, with your ears closed. When you are able to watch the storm without fear, you will understand what a wonderful thing it is.” (K71) Dogs love biscuit. But unfortunately, sweet foods are harmful to them. That’s why, if you meet Pöti one day, don’t give him sweet biscuit, ok?” (K77) “Be careful! Don’t get eaten by big fish and seagulls, warned their mum.” (K83) “His mum said, ‘If you want, you can also go where your friends are. But provided that you won’t get out of the garden...’” (K101)

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the positive expressions related to the right of getting informed and protected against harmful publications are the things that children are curious about, such as games and toys, nature and living things around us, and health. The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Getting Informed and Protected Against Harmful Publications, found in article 17 of the CRC, are as follows:

“St. Bernard is a huge dog. He is especially very good at in emergency rescue operations in the mountains. With his extraordinary intuition, he can even find people trapped under avalanche.” (K11). With their fascinating manes, male lions are watching around carefully. Meanwhile, female lions are taking care of their cubs. Lions are carnivorous animals. Especially female lions go hunting.” (K12) “His dad told what happened in the sky. The white object he thought of as a ball was the Moon. It revolved around the Earth, without falling at all in the Space. It didn’t always look like a circle.” (K51) “I was a kind of air before. As I rose in the sky, the cold weather turned me into a water drop first, and then into a soft snowflake...” ,

(K72) “Wise Germ said boastfully: ‘I was at Ayşe’s hand. I got into her mouth while she was eating cookies with her dirty hand. When I reached the stomach, I entered the blood.’” (K112)

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the positive expressions related to the right of physical protection are the warnings about protecting their health and themselves against vital dangers. The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Physical Protection, found in the CRC, are as follows:

“His mum put protective sun cream on Kerem’s body and face. ‘Put on your hat. Otherwise, you will get sunstroke.’ she warned him.” (K29) “But Deniz was scared to get into this huge, deep water. Yet, he was wearing his arm floats; there was nothing to be scared of; his mum was beside him, after all.” (K48) “Be careful, there might be a poisonous spider in the hole.” (K71)

“Be careful”, his mum warned Little Polar Bear. ‘It’s dangerous here. The ice is thin, and it might be hard for us to get back out or swim if we fall into the water.’” (K90)

In addition, some examples of positive messages about the other rights in Table 2 can be found below. The positive expressions in the books about the Right of Getting Equal Treatment and Protection Against Discrimination, found in article 2 of the CRC, are as follows:

“There are people who find her a little weird because her eyes are different in color. But that’s nonsense because being different is nice!” (K77) “You have very good friends, and they love you so much. Friends don’t care about each other’s appearance. That you have spots

instead of stripes does not make you loved less. Look at yourself; how beautiful you are, said her mum” (K113)

The positive expressions in the books about the Right of Private Life and Protection of Communication, found in article 16/1 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Then he started reading his book. At that moment, the balloon said to him: “I want to play.” He cat didn’t hear what the balloon said.” (K62)“And nobody listened to her as usual... Her parents were laughing so much that they didn’t even see the purple rhino that was passing near them... They hadn’t listened to her again... Still, she didn’t say anything to them. As if they would listen even if she said... Her parents carefully listened, listened, and listened to Begüm until her last words.” (K84)

The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Game, Resting and Spending Free Time, found in article 31 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Seeing the two friends having fun, other children wanted to join this game. All the class started drawing together.” (K56)“When Rüya finished her breakfast, her mum took her to the park. She rode on the swings. She played with children on the sand.” (K69)

The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right to Be a Child, one of the basic principles of the CRC, are as follows:

“Çiçek said ‘Teacher, you were right.’ I will never tickle the tigers anymore. But then... she thought: What harm is there in poking the polar bear a little?’” (K57)“There is no harm in feeling scared of some things.” (K71)

The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Living in a Healthy and Balanced Environment, found in article 24 of the CRC, are as follows:

“In a very short time, the city got back to its old, noisy life. But the city dwellers weren’t happy with this, at all... ‘You taught us what it means to live in silence’, they said.” (K21) “Our world is changing; that’s why we have to do our best to survive” (mother polar bear is talking to her child about global warming) (K90)

The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Getting Raised by His Parents, found in article 5 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Mıkır was wandering among walnut trees to find food; when she found a walnut among the dry branches, she was joyfully taking it to her child Tıkır.” (K76) “No, said his dad... She needs to go near her family, not to the zoo.” (K84)

The positive expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Expressing His Opinion, found in article 13/1 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Little hands rose in the air to reply. The teacher let each of them speak. She listened to each of them carefully.” (K31)“Finally, they sat under the tree and thought how they could pluck the apple; they talked and discussed for hours.” (K109)

Table 2. *Negative Findings About the Negligence, Abuse, and Exploitation Sub-Themes of Protection Rights*

Protection Rights	Book Code	f
Getting informed and protected against harmful publications	K54, K113	2
Getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination	K1, K2, K17, K22, K100	5
Private life and protection of communication	K10, K17	2
Game, resting and spending free time	K79	1
Child's right to be a child	K1, K2, K35, K75	4
	K48, K84	2
The best interests of the child	K1, K2, K19, K38, K40, K53, K63, K71, K80, K108, K114	11
Torture and humiliating behavior	K23, K67	2

Table 3 shows that the most common violations about protection rights in the books are “The best interests of the child” (11), “Getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination” (5), and “Child’s right to be a child” (4), respectively.

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the negative expressions related to the best interests of the child are the abstract expressions that children will have difficulty understanding, the expressions that will lead children to do dangerous things, and the disharmony between the text and the visuals, which will prevent the message to be clearly understood by children. The negative expressions in the books about the principle of The Best Interests of the Child, found in the article 3/1 of the CRC, are as follows:

There is text-visual disharmony on the page where the sentence is “However, he gained everyone’s admiration with his success in gravity-free zone training”, while in the visual, the child puts his teddy bear into the washing machine (K19)

The child got out of bed, went down the stairs by the window. Wearing his pyjamas, his torch and panda in his hand, started walking in the streets (K40)

“I won’t eat!, I shouted. Dad said, ‘Leave the table and go to your room.’ I didn’t understand a thing!” (K53)

“My heart also waters all of my organs with water of life” (use of abstract concepts) (K1, K2)

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the negative expressions related to getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination are cases of discrimination due to gender, job, and appearance. The negative expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Getting Equal Treatment and Protection Against Discrimination, found in article 2 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Children who became men” (The cover of the book includes gender discrimination in favor of males) (K1, K2)

“But she found herself too ugly and rude to be friends with these elegant birds. All of a sudden, she saw her reflection in the water. Oh my! She noticed that she had turned into a beautiful swan. She joined the flock of swans and lived happily ever after.” (K17)

“Even a turtle makes a lifeguard. Croak... And look at me. I fly lazily. And once in a while, I croak.” (K1, K2)

It can be seen in the books that the common points among the negative expressions related to the child’s right to be a child are the inclusion of phenomena that are not suitable for the child’s age and life. The negative expressions in the books about the Child’s Right to Be a Child, one of the most basic principles of the CRC, are as follows:

“In fact, mum has told me that I grew up, I can choose the food I’ll eat, and they will let me only eat what I want.” (K35)

“She put on the blue ribbon, too and started waiting in her nest, number 18, for the crow that would be her spouse. (K75)

In addition, some examples of negative messages about the other rights in Table 3 can be found below. The negative expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Getting Informed and Protected Against Harmful Publications, found in article 17 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Nowadays, there is something wrong with mum; her belly is getting bigger and bigger. As if she is hiding a huge ball inside!... Your brother will be born in 2 months, and he will be with us.” (No information is given to the child of the mother who is in the 7th month of her pregnancy) (K54)

The addition of two pages of advertisement at the end of the story book (K113)

The negative expressions in the books about the Right of Private Life and Protection of Communication, found in article 16/1 of the CRC are as follows:

“The parrots, who are not separated from each other even a single minute, got into a deep conversation.

- I can’t stand those canaries!

- Never mind darling, we will talk louder than them.” (K10)

The negative expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Protection Against Torture, Humiliation, and Deprivation of Freedom, found in article 37 of the CRC, are as follows:

“When it was the day the witch would eat Hansel, she put the boiler where she would cook Hansel on the fire, but Gretel took advantage of the momentary distraction of the witch and pushed the witch into the boiler.” (The negative visualization of the underlined words) (K23)

“While the wolf was getting down the chimney, the water in the boiler had already boiled a lot. The wolf slid down the chimney and found himself in the boiler full of boiling water.” (All these negative actions are displayed in the visuals) (K67)

The negative expressions in the books about the Child’s Right of Game, Resting, and Spending Free Time, found in article 31 of the CRC, are as follows:

“Duru watched TV more comfortably. She went online more.” (K79)

Some of the books analyzed include both positive and negative expressions at the same time. In Table 4, the results obtained through the findings were sorted out, and a comparison was made.

Table 3. *The Comparison Between Expressions About Violating and Supporting Protection Rights*

	Translated Books		Turkish Books		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
The ones with positive expressions only	16	15,68	51	50	67	65,68
The ones with negative expressions only	7	6,87	22	21,56	29	28,44
The ones with both positive and negative expressions	5	4,90	1	0,98	6	5,88
Total	28	27,46	74	72,54	102	100

Table 4 shows that positive expressions (65,68%) in the books are more than negative ones (28,44%), and both positive (50%) and negative (21,56%) expressions are seen in Turkish books more when compared to translated books.

Results and Discussion

In literary texts, there is not one single and absolute truth offered for the reader to believe. Similarly, in children's literature, "the approach of the writer which would lead his text, and as a result, his reader to one single understanding with the guidance of the writer himself spoils the quality and aesthetic integrity of the text. Such books have single meaning, and they are superficial and authoritarian since they force the reader to come up with one single thought" (Dilidüzgün, 2000, p. 256). According to Karaman Kepenekçi (2000, p. 29), this suggestion, which is important in terms of human rights, is about abolishing expressions that injects hostility, aggression, and discrimination into the books." From this perspective, it can be understood that story books must be prepared taking these sensitivities into consideration.

Families take book suggestions seriously assuming that employees in the publishing houses are more knowledgeable. However, books not suitable for the age range (11,3%) were suggested according to the feedback taken from publishing houses, which might indicate that the employees in the publishing houses do not have enough knowledge about the developmental periods of children. Considering that the data set in this research were formed after asking the bookstores about the best-selling works, it creates doubts as to what the book buyers (families, children, or families together with their children) primarily search for in the books. Briefly, reflecting children's rights into the stories from an integrative perspective will be more effective in that children can form in their minds schemas related to their own rights. The most supported rights in the 102 story books analyzed are "The best interests of the child" (20), "Getting informed and protected against harmful publications" (14) and "Physical protection" (6), whereas the most violated rights are "The best interests of the child" (11), "Getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination" (5) and "Child's right to be child" (4), respectively.

Protection rights include rights closely related to the child's safety. In the most preferred books, the rate of protection rights was found to be 66%. This result shows that the field of pre-

school children's literature has become more conscious in recent years in terms of the importance of child's protection. In order for this situation to improve, employees working in the field of Children's Literature have major responsibilities.

In Dađlıođlu and akmak's (2009) research, where they analyzed 174 books, 52 (29,8%) translated books are included. In this research, out of the total 102 books in the data set, 28 (27,4%) of them are translated books. Despite the time period between both studies, the rate of translated books is close to each other. This shows that the percentage of translated books among illustrated children's stories is still too high to ignore.

The Principle of the Best Interests of the Child is found in the CRC both as a general principle and as an umbrella right valid for the whole convention. With the complete application of this principle, a significant improvement will take place in the status of children. This principle must be a guide for decision makers in situations related to or affecting children. An effective stimulant in the formation of personality structure, children's books are thought to have a major responsibility in applying the provisions of the CRC.

The second most encountered right in the findings is Child's Right of Getting Informed and Protected Against Harmful Publications (Article 17 of CRC). As for this right, 14 positive and 2 negative expressions were found in the books. Among all the rights in the CRC, the right that can be most easily conveyed to children is the Child's Right of Getting Informed. This might be the reason for the fact that Child's Right of Getting Informed was found to be the most supported right in the analyzed books after the Principle of the Best Interests of the Child. However, children in pre-school period might easily get distracted due to the information-oriented approach in some illustrated story books.

For this reason, taking children's developmental features into consideration, writers of children's books should produce works that will help children perceive the given messages indirectly, intuitively, with feelings of enjoyment and love. Thanks to this, children in pre-school period might develop a more positive approach towards books.

Children's literature is an aesthetic tool that tells children about human nature, that makes them sense it, and that helps them know about life. This tool is supposed to contribute to children's developmental processes and their internalization of democratic culture. Thus, works of literature must create sensitivity in children to attitudes, behavior, and actions which are against human nature. They must also train children's feelings and opinions with cases-examples suitable for children. For this to happen, it is important that literature actively use its functions, such as making readers feel and sense (Sever, 2002).

Among the analyzed books, 6 of them were found to include the right of physical protection. These expressions are about adults protecting children against dangerous animals in the immediate environment and warning them to take measures so as not to have accidents.

In Bađçeli Kahraman et al. (2020) study, where they analyzed children's rights in the best-selling children's books, the least included right was found to be the protection right. Similar studies reveal that protection right of the child is not included enough (Büyükalın & Harmankaya, 2019; Karaman Kepenekçi & Aslan, 2011). Unlike other research results, positive expressions about protection right are included more in this research. It is pointed out that adult writers should give more time and opportunity for children to express themselves when constructing their stories. Af-

ter all, it is stated in the body of literature that children's rights can be conveyed to children more effectively through stories, visuals, and games (Hassi et al., 2015).

CRC aims to make sure children's rights of living, development, protection, and participation are applied. It also aims to determine universal measures and principles for the protection of children and protect them against any kind of negligence, abuse, and mistreatment (Akyüz, 2016). It can be said that in the background of the stories adult write for children, there are various sources, such as past, future, and imaginary worlds. As Hunt (1994) also emphasizes, writers might transfer the negative approach, behavior, and atmosphere they went through in their childhood. While most of the encountered positive expressions belong to "the best interests of the child", the negative expressions found the most are again about this principle, which reminds us to think about the starting points of the writers once again. All fiction could be discounted, but what needs to be emphasized is that children's literature, and that such power cannot be neutral or innocent, or trivial. This is especially true because the books are written by, and made available to children by, adults. Equally obviously, the primary audience is children, who are less experienced and less educated into their culture and adults. This does not mean that the texts are "less experienced" as well; on the contrary, it means that they are part of a complex power-relationship (Hunt, 1994, p. 3).

Findings of the research reveal that there are more negative expressions (28%) than positive ones (66%) in the books analyzed. All of these negative expressions are under the aspect of "negligence and harmful factors". That there are no positive expressions under the aspect of "abuse and exploitation" has raised question marks. Nevertheless, in a study carried out about child abuse, the results show that 95% of the time children are abused by their parents (Kara et al., 2004). Whether deliberate or not, these mistakes increase more the possibility of children in our country being abused. In Türkiye, emotional abuse ranks first (78%) (Yarar & Yarış, 2011). The task of educationalists taking part in studies related to pre-school period is to be able to convey both to families and to children what is right and what is wrong about abuse and exploitation. From this perspective, illustrated books written for pre-school period must especially inform children about these topics, which is something to be taken into consideration within the scope of "the best interests of the child". According to Akyüz (2000, p. 25), CRC is a legal text that regulates children's rights with an integrative understanding. All the rights generally connected to human rights are granted to children in this contract. However, the standards, generally applicable to all people, are increased when children are considered. In her study, Özyer (2003) divided the violence in the books into two groups as 'children's books where violence is shown as something positive without awareness' and 'children's books where violence is shown as something positive deliberately'. Özyer's (2003) categorization of 'children's books where violence is shown as something positive without awareness' is parallel to the aspect of "negligence and harmful factors" in this research. In addition, the aspect of "abuse and exploitation" matches Özyer's (2003) category of 'children's books where violence is shown as something positive deliberately'. In the research where Güzelyurt (2020) analyzed illustrated children's books about protection against sexual abuse and about education, she concludes that education and protection against sexual abuse is included in the books without first introducing the body, adding that the books are not at the desired level as there is no step-by-step introduction. That no expressions about the protection right are included can prevent the child from getting the right information in the right way.

Considering research analyzing how and to what extent protection rights are included in illustrated story books, it is found that four main categories of children's rights are generally analyzed.

It should be noted that the extent to which positive expressions about the protection right are included is ranked considering the frequency of other rights being mentioned. The difference of this research is the deep analysis of protection rights by dividing them into their sub-dimensions.

Alpay and Tuna (2012) analyzed 95 story books chosen by administrators, teachers and parents in independent kindergartens in terms of children's rights. The results reveal that the most common rights included in the books are developmental rights, vital rights, and protection rights, respectively. Karaman Kepenekçi (2010) aimed to determine how and to what extent children's rights are included in the stories in 100 Basic Works, recommended by the Ministry of National Education for primary school children. The results show that the most common rights included in the books are developmental rights, vital rights, protection rights, and participation rights, respectively. Türkyılmaz and Kuş (2014) found that vital rights, developmental rights, protection rights, and participation rights are included respectively in the most read 10 books out of 100 Basic Works. Sarı (2009) analyzed 200 books registered into a children's library for 3 months in terms of children's rights. In this analysis, findings reveal that children's rights are not included in 92 books; 108 books include developmental rights, vital rights, protection rights, and participation rights, respectively. Turan (2011) analyzed the suitability of the book titled "A Tale for Each Day" to children's rights and concluded that there are mostly positive expressions about children's rights, but at the same time some examples violating children's rights also appear in the book. In the positive expressions, developmental rights, protection rights, vital rights, and participation rights are included, respectively. In another study, Karaman Kepenekçi and Aslan (2011) analyzed works of pre-school children's literature in terms of their presentation level of children's rights. The results show that the most included topics are about developmental and vital rights, whereas the least included ones are about participation and protection rights. Büyükalan and Harmanakaya (2019) analyzed children's rights in the data obtained through the visuals and texts in illustrated children's books that received various awards between 1963 and 2018. Similarly, it is found that these books also include vital and developmental rights the most, while the least included ones are protection and participation rights. Kahraman et al. (2020) analyzed children's rights in 64 illustrated children's books of the most preferred publishing houses in the category of illustrated children's books on book sale websites in Türkiye, in 2019. The findings reveal that more expressions are included about children's participation rights and vital rights, whereas fewer expressions are included about developmental rights and protection rights. When related research is analyzed, it is found that the frequency of protection rights in the books is less than other rights and that the most included ones are vital and developmental rights. In today's world, where the concept of child and childhood has increasing value, the sensitivity focus in the expressions about rights reflected in books seems to be on the child getting a place in the world and developing. The fact that these mentioned rights are inclusive does not mean that the sub-aspect of protection is less important. Thus, people preparing books for children must consider children integratively as they put the focus on them.

Rights are invisible and inter-dependent. Human rights—for that is what children's rights include the whole range of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. Denying certain rights undermines other rights (Freeman, 2007). Todres and Higinbotham (2016, p. 20) "the imaginative and creative space of children's literature is a critical and dynamic domain to preserve for children". It appears unquestionable that recognizing children's rights means committing to safeguarding the well-being of children. Yet children's rights remains a highly contested subject. One primary reason for this is that the concepts of "childhood" and "the child" are themselves

the subject of much debate. Defining and scrutinizing children's rights is not simply about understanding children's needs and privileges; it also requires us to confront our understanding of what it means to be a child (Saguisag & Prickett, 2016).

Suggestions

The following suggestions can be made in the light of the findings:

The suggestion of the books not suitable for the age range shows that the publishing houses that publish books for this age period need expert support related to children's literature. For this reason, it can be suggested to establish various training centers to meet these needs of publishing houses. If writers of children's literature cooperate with child development experts, pedagogues, or pre-school education experts, it will lead to the production of books with more quality. The most recurrent expressions in the research that are both positive and negative belong to the principle of the best interests of the child. More emphasis can be put on the less recurrent expressions in the book, such as expression of opinion, getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination, private life, and protection of communication. The most negative expressions in the books are about the categories of the right of getting equal treatment and protection against discrimination, and the right to be a child. Experts in the field must be informed about this situation, and necessary studies about raising awareness must be carried out.

References

- Akyüz, E. (1991). In the light of the principle of child safety: Children in need of protection. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences*, 24(2), 709-734.
- Akyüz, E. (2000). *Protection of the rights and safety of the child in national and international law*. National Education Publishing House.
- Akyüz, E. (2016). *Child law*. Pegem Pub.
- Alpay, B., & Tuna, C. (2021). Investigating preschool story books in terms of children's rights. *Adnan Menderes University Faculty of Education Journal of Education Sciences*, 12(1), 1-14.
- Atkinson, P. A., & Coffey, A. (1997). Analysing documentary realities. D. Silverman (Ed.) In *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice* (pp. 45-62). Sage Pub.
- Bağçeli Kahraman, P. B., Kartal, T., & Yıldız, S. (2020). Child rights in illustrated children's books. *Journal of Children's, Literature & Language Education*, 3(2), 138-163.
- Büyükalın, F. S., & Harmankaya, T. (2019). In awarded children's picture study books examination of child rights. *National Education Journal*, 48(1), 769-791.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). CA: Sage.
- Dağhoğlu, E. H., & Çakmak Ç. Ö. (2009). Examination of story books produced towards preschool children regarding elements of violence and horror. *Turkish Librarianship*, 23(3), 510-534.
- Deretarla Gül, E. (2013). Gaining reading habits in pre-school children. M. Gönen (Ed.). In *Children's Literature* (pp. 305-314). Eğiten Kitap Pub.
- Deszcz-Tryhubczak, J. (2016). Using literary criticism for children's rights: Toward a participatory research model of children's literature studies. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 40(2), 215-231.
- Dilidüzgün, S. (2000). Literary quality in children's books. S. Sever (Ed.) In *I. National Children's Books Symposium: Problems and Solutions*. Ankara University Faculty of Educational Sciences and TÖMER Language Teaching Center Publication.
- Elo, S., & Kyngas, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107-115.

- Freeman, M. (2007). *Law in society: Reflections on children, family, culture and philosophy: Essays in honour of Michael Freeman*. Alison Diduck, Noam Peleg, Helen Reece (Eds.). Brill Nijhoff Pub.
- Güzelyurt, T. (2020). Sexual education and prevention of sexual abuse in pre-school period: An examination of illustrated children's books. *International Journal of Children's Literature and Education Researches (CHEDAR)*, 4(1), 54-69.
- Hassi, M. L., Niemelä, H., Paloniemi, A., Piekkari, J., & Wolde, K. (2015). Drama in child rights education - Developing a pedagogical model. *The European Journal of Social & Behavioural Sciences*, 14(3), 291-307.
- Hunt, P. (1994). *An introduction to children's literature*. Oxford University Press.
- Kahraman, P. B., Kartal, T., & Yıldız, S. (2020). Child rights in illustrated children's books. *Journal of Children's, Literature & Language Education*, 1(1), 138-163.
- Karataş, E. (2014). The concept of "character" in children's literature. *Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Researches*, 33, 60-79.
- Karaman Kepenekçi, Y. (2000). *Human rights education*. Anı Pub.
- Karaman Kepenekçi, Y. (2010). An analysis on children's rights in stories recommended for children in Turkey. *Journal of Peace Education*, 7(1), 65-83.
- Karaman Kepenekçi, Y., & Aslan, C. (2011). *Children's rights in books addressing the preschool period*. Ankara University Printing House.
- Kirk, J., & Miller, M. L. (1986). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research*. CA: Sage.
- Koc, K., & Buzzelli, C. A. (2004). The moral of the story is...: Using children's literature in moral education. *Young Children*, 59(1), 92-97.
- Lincoln Y. S., & Guba E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- Mendoza, J., & Reese, D. (2001). Examining multicultural picture books for the early childhood classroom: Possibilities and pitfalls. *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 3(2), 1-33. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED458040.pdf>
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed). CA: Sage.
- Özyer, N. (2003). Violence affirmed in children's books. S. Sever (Ed.). In *Violence Reflected on Children's Literature and Pediatrics Symposium* (pp. 112-120). Osmangazi University Press.
- Saguisag, L. & Prickett, M. B. (2016). Introduction: Children's rights and children's literature. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 40(2), 5-7.
- Sarı, T. (2019). Investigation of children's books in children's libraries in terms of children's rights: The case of Ankara [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Aydın Adnan Menderes University.
- Sever, S. (2002). Violence reflected in children's books. *Ankara University Journal of Faculty of Educational Sciences*, 35(1-2), 25-37.
- Superle, M. (2016). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: At the core of a child-centered critical approach to children's literature. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 40(2), 144-162.
- Şirin, M. R. (2000). Children's literature in 99 questions. Çocuk Vakfı Pub.
- Todres, J., & Higinbotham, S. (2016). *Human rights in children's literature: Imagination and the narrative of law*. Oxford University Press.
- Turan, S. (2011). Analysis of children's rights in the context of fairy tales: Everyday a Fairy Tale a study on named book [Unpublished Master Thesis]. Ankara University.
- Türkyılmaz, M., & Kuş, Z. (2014). Analysis of children's rights in 100 basic literary books. *International Journal of Eurasia Social Sciences*, 5(15), 39-63.
- Yarar, F., & Yarış, F. (2011). Primary care approach in child abuse and neglect. *Turkish Journal of Family Practice*, 15(4), 178-183.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2013). *Qualitative research methods in the social sciences* (9th Ed.). Seçkin Pub.