

## CONVEYING LOVE FOR ANIMALS TO CHILDREN THROUGH ANIMATED CARTOONS:

NİLOYA

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### ABSTRACT

Animals hold an important place in the world of children, just as humans and nature do. Therefore, depicting animals in animated cartoons makes them significant for children's education. In this study, the animated cartoon series "Niloya," which is broadcast on the children's television channel TRT Çocuk and targets preschool and school-aged children, is examined. The role of animated cartoons in conveying values to children is an undeniable fact. Study investigates the teaching of love for animals to children and traces the relationship between humans and animals through the Niloya animated cartoon series. For this purpose, 37 episodes of the cartoon were selected using purposive sampling technique and analyzed through narrative analysis and descriptive analysis. As a result of the study, scenes depicting friendship between humans and animals were frequently observed in the examined episodes. Topics such as the necessity of extending a helping hand to animals living in need, the social and emotional benefits of pet ownership for children, the sense of getting to know and exploring new animals, and the importance of not harming animals were addressed in the atmosphere of the animated cartoon. Throughout all the analyzed episodes, expressions of love for animals, cooperation, friendship, spending time with them, playing with them, and human support towards animals were evident.

**Keywords:** Animated Cartoon, Children, Love for Animals, TRT, Niloya

## HAYVAN SEVGİSİNİN ÇİZGİ FİMLER ARACILIĞIYLA ÇOCUKLARA

### AKTARILMASI: NİLOYA

### ÖZET

Çocukların dünyasında insanlar ve doğa kadar hayvanlar da önemli bir yere sahiptir. Dolayısıyla çizgi filmlerde hayvanların gösterilmesi bu çizgi filmleri çocukların eğitimi açısından önemli kılmaktadır. Bu çalışmada hedef kitlesi okul öncesi dönem ve okul dönemi çocuklar olan, çocuk temalı yayınlar yapan televizyon kanalı TRT Çocuk'ta yayınlanan "Niloya" çizgi film serisi incelenmektedir. Çizgi filmlerin çocuklar için değerleri aktarma rolü yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. Çalışmada Niloya çizgi filmi aracılığıyla çocuklara hayvan sevgisinin öğretilmesi, insan ve hayvan dostluğu ilişkisinin izleri araştırılmaktadır. Bu amaçla çizgi filmin yayınlanmış 37 bölümü amaçlı örnekleme tekniğiyle belirlenmiştir. Seçilen bölümler anlatı analizi (Narrative Analysis) ve betimleyici analiz yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Çalışma sonucunda incelenen bölümlerde sıklıkla insan ve hayvan dostluğu sahneleri görülmüştür. Çizgi filmin atmosferinde çoğu zaman insanlara muhtaç bir halde yaşayan hayvanlara yardım eli uzatmanın gerekliliği, evcil

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hayvan beslemenin çocuklar üzerindeki sosyal ve duygusal faydaları, yeni hayvanları tanıma ve keşif duygusu, hayvanlara zarar vermemenin önemi gibi konular ele alınmıştır. İncelenen bölümlerin tamamında hayvanlara karşı sevgi, yardımlaşma, dostluk, onlarla vakit geçirme, onlarla oyun oynama ve insan desteği söz konusudur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çizgi Film, Çocuk, Hayvan Sevgisi, TRT, Niloya

## INTRODUCTION

The century, where individuals live together collectively and strive to further improve their living spaces (Külter Demirgüneş, 2016: 55), is an era of communication and education. Today, the level of development of societies is measured by the importance they place on communication and education. Mass media, which facilitates the spread of knowledge, opinions, and behaviors, has both positive and negative effects on societies and individuals. Television, in particular, has become the most influential mass media tool that has left its mark on the current century. Television's influence on society has inevitably extended to the world of children. Children growing up with television spend as much time with this medium as they do with their parents. Television's appeal to both the ears and eyes enhances its effectiveness in terms of children's development and communication. Understanding the effectiveness of mass media tools in children's development and education has assigned television different and significant roles in this field. Television, with its extraordinary advantage of visuals, has taken on more effective functions in children's development, such as conveying values, language use, and peer identification (Can, 1995: 1), for example.

Children spend most of their time watching television. Due to their passive and submissive position in front of the TV, they are indirectly or directly exposed to the influences it exerts (Karaman, 2010: 66). Children, the smallest members of society and the future, are greatly influenced by television, the most effective and widespread mass media tool of our time. The degree of influence from television varies depending on the child's age, development, environmental factors, and the content of the programs they watch (Büyükbaykal, 2007: 32). With television being so influential, it

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conveys different messages to various age groups and audiences. Television brings the outside world into the home, especially during early childhood (Güler, 1989: 166).

In light of the fact that children spend a significant amount of their time in front of the television, increasing and enhancing broadcasts tailored to children, such as animated cartoons, holds great importance (Büyükbaykal, 2007: 35). Animated cartoons are close to children both cognitively and emotionally. Additionally, one of the essential reasons children watch animated cartoons is their ability to identify easily with the characters. Many animal-themed films for children have pedagogical value and contribute to a child's sensitivity. Among television programs, animated cartoons with characters that children find endearing are the most appealing to them (Temizyürek & Acar, 2014: 26). In other words, the effectiveness of animated cartoons is derived from their characters. Characters in animated cartoons often exhibit human qualities, allowing children to identify with them and share their emotions. When examining the historical development of animated cartoons and productions broadcast on television, it is evident that animal characters, such as mice, woodpeckers, ducks, cats, talking dogs, and invincible cheetahs, have been emphasized (Güler, 1989: 173-174). As Derek Ryan puts it, animals, known as the "children of the forest" (2015: 12), revive the warmth between humans and animals that was lost due to zoos in capitalist modern societies (Berger, 2017), thus bringing it back to screens.

The primary functions of animated cartoons, with their target audience being children, include social sharing, teaching, entertaining, showing what is right, and educating while entertaining (Temizyürek & Acar, 2014: 28). In a meeting on "Values Education and Implicit Curriculum" held by the Ministry of National Education (MEB) Curriculum Board on December 28, 2017, it was stated that there are ten values at the core of the curriculum, including justice, self-discipline, friendship, honesty, patience, responsibility, respect, love, patriotism, and altruism (MEB, 2017). Love for animals, closely associated with these values, is particularly linked to the values of altruism, responsibility, and love. Values represent the unwritten verbal rules that constitute society. While school is often seen as the sole means of socialization in values education, peer groups, family, mass media, and civil society organizations are

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sources that nourish values education. Today, animated cartoons broadcast on various channels are capable of fulfilling a role that many educational institutions can accomplish alone (Şahin, 2019: 1), and the diversity of information presented to children through mass media is increasing (Tokgöz, 1982: 5).

Preschool children have characteristics such as curiosity, a desire to learn, egocentrism, the ability to concretize abstract concepts, expecting reciprocity, socialization, and seeking role models among their general traits. Preschool children are inclined to model and eager to learn, and they are influenced by every person and thing they see in their environment. They achieve learning through their innate ability to imitate. In this context, what children see in their environment is as important as what they watch in the media. Incorrect examples can lead children astray, while correct examples can guide them in the right direction. In the transition from childhood to adulthood, which is one of the most important stages of life, people encounter many events that shape their lives. The family environment, environmental conditions, role models, school environment, peer groups, and life events are the most prominent factors that come to mind. However, animated cartoons and books prepared for children also have an impact on children's perception of reality and their outlook on life. During these periods, children engage in imaginative play, embark on journeys with imaginary friends, go on adventures, do things they cannot do in reality, shout, laugh, become heroes, save the world, and dress the poor to teach the rich a lesson, all while interacting with their imaginary companions they meet through animated cartoons and books. Therefore, during the preschool period, which is the most important stage for a child's development and communication, positive messages should be conveyed to children, especially through the animated cartoons they watch (Can, 1995: 2).

In Turkey, there are multiple children's channels, each broadcasting various animated cartoons, whether domestic or foreign. These animated cartoons play significant roles in conveying values, including love for animals (Ufak & Yorulmaz, 2022: 99). This study focuses on the role and importance of animated cartoons in conveying love for animals, which is among national and cultural values, to children.

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Within the scope of this research, the "Niloya" animated cartoon series, broadcast on TRT Çocuk, a domestic television channel exclusively for children, is examined. As animals hold an important place in the world of children (Firat, 2019: 1013), this study investigates the teaching of love for animals to children and explores the relationship between humans and animals through this animated cartoon series. The study aims to contribute to the literature by highlighting the role of animated cartoons in conveying educational and cultural values.

### **1. Animated Cartoons and Children**

A significant portion of elementary school-aged children watch animated cartoons (İlhan & Çetinkaya, 2013: 317). Children often struggle to distinguish between fiction in animated cartoons and reality. For them, television animated cartoons are the most delightful way to learn what is right and ideal (Çakır, 2012: 481-482). Generations growing up with television are just as influenced by this medium as adults. Television and animated cartoons undeniably have a substantial impact on children's development, communication, internalization of societal values, and adaptation to societal culture. Children tend to mirror the qualities of the animated heroes they consider role models in their daily lives, games, attitudes, and behaviors. The various actions and behaviors of animated characters can trigger both positive and negative impulses in children. Scientific research has shown that animated cartoons can lead to an increase in positive social responses in children, while negative stimuli can activate aggressive feelings in them. The role of animated cartoons in conveying and transmitting culture is beyond dispute. One of the most crucial reasons for children accepting what they see in animated cartoons as true is their inability to think abstractly and provide commentary, which is why culture is effectively transmitted through animated cartoons. The production of animated cartoons, which make up the most significant portion of children's programs and capture the attention of children the most, should take these factors into account (Arslan & Yener, 2021: 164).

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Unconventionally considered a branch of live cinema, animated films (Stephenson, 1973: 7), especially simple animated cartoons featuring animals, capture the interest of young children. These programs should be not only entertaining but also educational and instructive. When creating programs, it is essential not only to consider the topics but also to tailor the narratives to the child's age. Subjects should be presented with dynamic plots that emphasize light, color, and sound design. Well-selected animated cartoons not only entertain children but also contribute to their social and personal development and enrich their imagination. Child characters, natural environments, animals, and fantastical adventures featured in animated cartoons are among the key elements that engage children with the screen (Yağlı, 2013: 710). Consequently, it is possible to use animated cartoons that children enjoy watching as an educational tool. Animated cartoons form the first step in visual education. Through entertainment, they can teach children word pronunciation, new concepts, different geographical regions, cultural diversity, various animals, obedience, courage, and many other themes (Demiral et al., 2016: 536).

In recent years, despite the increase in computer and tablet use, television has not lost its old popularity. Multi-dimensional animation technologies continuously produce new animated productions and offer them to children. To attract a larger audience and increase viewer potential, animated cartoons strive to find engaging topics. In these productions, the hero's friends are crucial to meeting viewers' expectations in each episode. These companions can sometimes be humans, but often they are animals. Indeed, the plotlines of these series revolve around the hero and their animal friends. In these productions, consisting of non-real actors, the desired animals can easily be brought to life through technological drawings and movements (Kutlu, 2023: 29).

## 2. Methodology

In this study, the "Niloya" animated cartoon series broadcast on the TRT Çocuk channel is examined. The primary aim of the study, which focuses on the appearances

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of programs targeting children and their narrative features, is to investigate and elucidate the societal value of love for animals through animated cartoons. The portrayal of the human-animal relationship in a narrative form on screens and the presentation of this friendship and companionship as a teaching reflect the significance of the subject.

The study seeks answers to the following questions specifically for "Niloya": Do cartoons have positive effects on children's education? With what narrative elements is the love of animals conveyed to children through cartoons?

While forming the scope of the study, animated series that have become increasingly common on screens in recent years were considered. The "Niloya" animated series was selected as the sample for the study because it appeals to both girls and boys, has a broad audience, and teaches children to love animals, making it particularly relevant for children in their developmental stages. Determining the sample in qualitative research is crucial because it affects the research validity (Mertens, 2019). The chosen animated series, as the subject of the research, primarily addresses the topic of human-animal friendship in detail and reflects an essential dimension of this friendship, which holds social and cultural significance. The 37 episodes of the animated series broadcast on screens were selected using purposive sampling, and they were analyzed using narrative analysis and descriptive content analysis. Descriptive content analysis method means that qualitative and quantitative studies conducted independently from each other in a particular subject or field are examined and organized in depth. Thus, general trends in that subject or area are determined (Ültay et al., 2021: 189).

Narrative analysis, which is an effective method for investigating the internal structures and components of stories, addresses three types of objects; the nature of the events narrated, how individuals perceive the events, and the discourses related to the understanding of events (Edwards, 1997: 271). When storytellers narrate a story, they give it a 'narrative form' to make sense of the subject and use tools in this experience to understand the subject. Storytellers use these narrative tools to express meaning to others (Bamberg, 2012: 3). In this study, the narrative tool under

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examination is the animated cartoon. The expression of meaning is love for animals, and the narrator is the main character of the cartoon, Niloya.

One of the most common and ubiquitous discourse forms, narrative analysis (Cortazzi, 1994: 157), which often presents its contents in a storytelling format, reflects its multidisciplinary usage with biographies, oral history, life history, storytelling, and life narratives (Earthy & Cronin, 2008). This method, which examines and interprets narrative texts filled with sociological information (Franzosi, 1998: 517) and stories that recount people's lives comprehensively, requires the identification of the narrative in terms of cultural event plotlines and main narratives (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006).

In order to analyze the narrator's role in conveying the character Niloya's love for animals, quotes from the series were made and the character's love for animals was described in this way. Scenes of human-animal interaction in animated films, dialogues, messages conveyed through the animals owned and cared for by the narrator character have been examined in detail. In this way, the research questions were clarified.

### **3. Research on the Subject**

When a literature review is conducted, studies related to the subject are summarized as follows:

In the study by Karakuş (2015) titled "Evaluation of Thematic Cartoon Programs Targeted at the Preschool Period in Terms of Their Contribution to Values Education (Niloya Example)," the focus was on the transmission of values in cartoons targeted at children. The study aimed to investigate whether cartoons targeting the preschool period contribute to values education. For this purpose, the cartoon called Niloya, which is aimed at the preschool age group of 2-6 years, was examined in consideration of twenty values included in the Social Studies Curriculum (6th and 7th grades). Document review method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. A total of 18 episodes, determined by the random method, were examined.

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Within the examined episodes, a total of 157 values were identified, and it was observed that examples reflecting values such as "sensitivity, tolerance, love, kindness" were most prominent. Furthermore, it was observed that these values were followed by values such as "solidarity, respect, diligence, responsibility, and altruism."

In the study by Fırat (2019) titled "Children's Reality in Cartoons: The Case of Niloya," examples of children's reality seen in the cartoon Niloya were identified. The aim was to determine in which situations children's reality was more likely to emerge, which topics it was related to, what reasons led to it, and who terminated it. The study adopted a qualitative approach, and data analysis was conducted using content analysis and document examination. In the 20 episodes examined, 23 examples of children's reality were identified (18%). According to the data obtained, children's reality emerges when they encounter something for the first time or when they solve a problem, in situations where concrete thinking prevails or abstract thinking is lacking. This situation is generally attributed to a lack of conceptual knowledge, a lack of scientific knowledge, and a lack of the ability to think abstractly.

In the study by Güder, Ay, Saray, and Kılıç (2017) titled "Examination of Cartoons Watched by Preschool Children in Terms of Gender Stereotypes: The Case of Niloya," the Niloya cartoon was examined in terms of gender stereotypes. A qualitative interpretative research approach was employed, and the research identified that characters in the cartoon conform to appearances and behaviors that align with gender stereotypes. Furthermore, it was found that the cartoon contributes to the reproduction of gender stereotypes. In the cartoon, tasks such as cooking, childcare, and house cleaning were constantly attributed to the mother, while activities such as gardening, driving a car, and taking care of animals were associated with the father and grandfather. In the examined episodes, it was observed that female characters wore clothes in shades of purple and pink, while male characters were dressed in green, blue, and yellow. It was also noted that the toy and game preferences of boys and girls aligned with traditional gender roles. The study concluded that children mostly watch cartoons and identify with the characters.

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In the study by Yağlı (2013) titled "The Role of Cartoons in a Child's Education and Social Development: The Case of Caillou and Pepee," considerations for protecting children from the negative effects of cartoons were identified. The study emphasized the importance of selecting age-appropriate and expectation-appropriate cartoons for children. It also highlighted the need to choose cartoon content that addresses beneficial topics such as understanding nature, family love, altruism, kindness, peace, truth, and tolerance. It particularly emphasized that the speech and behavior of characters in foreign cartoons should not contradict national, societal, and moral values. The study advised against showing cartoons with incorrect attitudes and violence, especially as a method to silence misbehaving children, and recommended that children should have designated times for watching cartoons. It pointed out that excessive cartoon watching during the preschool period could negatively affect academic success and that the behaviors and speech of cartoon characters could have a negative impact on children. Additionally, it warned against allowing children to watch cartoons from different channels, as it could lead to physical and psychological consequences by keeping them sedentary. Lastly, it suggested that authorities should regulate the use of cartoon characters on consumer products, especially food items, as they could have stimulating effects on children, and parents should be vigilant in this regard.

In addition to the aforementioned studies, there are other research works such as "Examination of Sports Elements in Cartoons: Niloya and Kuzucuk Examples" by Yılmaz & Çelik (2018), "The Use of Folklore Elements in Cartoons: The Case of Niloya" by Karaman & Yılar (2020), "Construction of Gender in Cartoons for Preschool Children: The Case of Niloya" (Master's Thesis, Istanbul University, 2018) by Saraç, "Transmission of Values Through Cartoon Songs: The Case of Niloya" by Yolasığmazoğlu (2022), "Presentation of the Institution of Family in Cartoons: The Case of Niloya" (Master's Thesis, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, 2022) by Kaya & Yazgan, "Examination of Niloya Cartoon in Terms of Included Values" by Ufak & Yorulmaz (2022), and "Religious Music Elements in Cartoons: The Case of Rafadan Tayfa and Niloya" by Hacıoğlu (2022). While the examined studies mostly

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focused on the Niloya character in terms of gender stereotypes, some studies primarily analyzed the character's behaviors under the theme of altruism, and themes such as animal friendship were not addressed. This current study, however, specifically examines the messages conveyed by the subject character regarding her love for animals, animal altruism, and animal friendship.

#### **4. Niloya Cartoon**

Until recent years, almost all of the cartoons broadcast in our country were of foreign origin. Growing children get acquainted with foreign cultures through these cartoons. In this case, children encounter negative aspects of foreign culture, thereby falling under the influence of foreign cultures (Arslan & Yener, 2021: 164). To prevent the risk of degenerating Turkish culture, traditions, and customs due to these productions, they are made available in Turkish through dubbing (Temizyürek & Acar, 2014: 27). Niloya, on the other hand, is a local cartoon that is suitable for Turkish culture, allows children to have fun while learning, and is confidently preferred by families. With approximately 5.5 million subscribers on YouTube and its captivating episodes, Niloya has gained the great admiration of the young and old alike. Niloya, whose name means "joy," is simultaneously broadcast on TRT Çocuk (TRT Children) screens and its YouTube channel. Developed in collaboration with psychologists and pedagogues, this local cartoon has become the preferred choice of both children and families thanks to its entertaining songs and educational adventures (Niloya, 2023).

#### **5. Research Findings**

The award-winning cartoon "Niloya," which is the most-watched cartoon on screens (Firat, 2019: 1007), is a cartoon series that frequently addresses the value of love for animals. With its content on topics like love for nature, love for animals, personal development, and environmental protection, the cartoon captures the interest of children, positively influencing their imagination and psychological development. Niloya (Şani, 2022), a little girl who plays with frogs, forms a search and rescue team

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for animals, and spends fun time with her animal friends, was born in a charming village by the river where cheerful birds sing. Raised in a happy and cheerful family, Niloya, who has big eyes, hair tied on the sides, a small nose, and with her closest friends being Tospik the turtle, Mete and her brother Murat, was born and her mother wanted her name to be Nil, but her father suggested the name Oya. While her parents were discussing whether to name her Nil or Oya, her wise grandfather decided to name the adorable character Niloya to make both her mother and father happy. Growing up in a happy and cheerful family, Niloya has become one of the happiest children in the world (Niloya, 2023). In the analysis of the value of love for animals in the cartoon, behaviors such as helping animals, making friends with them, using words of love, hugging, and kissing were evaluated as units. The findings were described, interpreted and interpreted. The themes depicted are:

**Table 1.** Describing The Findings By Theme

Theme Numbering	The names of the themes in the Niloya Cartoon	Sections Where The Subject is Mentioned
Theme 1	Sympathetic Presentation of Animals	"Invisible Animal," "Chasing Dinosaurs," " Adorable Octopus," "Smart Crow,"
Theme 2	Introducing and Endearing Pets	"Goat Skateboard,"
Theme 3	Acquisition of the Feeling of Protecting Animals	"Tospik Search and Rescue Team,"
Theme 4	Strengthening the Feeling of Helping Animals	"Can Sarıkanat Fly?" "Cat House," "My Animal Friends," "Sweet Foal," "I'm Walking Miniş"
Theme 5	Strengthening Animal Love	"Can Miniş stay with us," "Littles' Park" "Pet Ant," "Shepherd Dog"
Theme 6	Animal Friendship and Sensitivity	"Grasshopper Teacher" "Frog Song"

Theme 7	Promoting Human-Animal Friendship	"Bee," "Elephant's Trunk," "Chick Siblings," "Cute Animals," "Chick's Mother," "Ant Respect," "Fish in Shapes," "Tospik Is Missing," "Squirrels," "Ant," "Little Bear," "Caterpillar Surprise," "Calm as a Snail," "Bear in the Cave," "Mischievous Crows," "Mother Leopard."
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### Sympathetic Presentation of Animals

In the episode called "Invisible Animal", love for animals is depicted and animals are shown sympathetically to children. Narrative analysis reveals that the animated series, serving as the "narrative tool," is constructed through the lens of the child's world. In the context of 'meaning expression,' it is observed that Niloya is portrayed as a child constantly engaged with animals. Child's games, songs, and activities are supporting factors that enrich the meaning.

In the examined episode, Niloya, while riding her bicycle, notices being followed. After a short pause, she sees a chameleon in the garden. However, due to the chameleon's constant color-changing, it becomes visible and invisible intermittently. Niloya fails to comprehend this situation. Is the thing she saw an invisible animal? She shares the story of the invisible animal with her brother Mete and her mother, but she cannot show the chameleon to them. Niloya tries to take a photo of the chameleon with an idea that comes to her mother's mind, but it is not as easy as she thought.

Meanwhile, Niloya has another animal with her, her tortoise. When her father, noticing Niloya's sadness, inquires about the reason, Niloya explains that she saw an animal but couldn't show its photo to anyone. During the conversation, the chameleon appears, and Niloya's father catches it in his hand. As her father, engaged in gardening and farming, explains the characteristics of the animal, Niloya's interest and curiosity in animals increase. When she later shows the chameleon to Murat and Mete, they become happy to meet a new animal. Mete says he has never seen such an animal before, while Murat mentions its resemblance to a lizard. The theme of discovering new animals and spending enjoyable moments with them, portrayed in a sympathetic manner through Niloya's instinct to explore, is considered an example of animal affection on screens.

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Another quote extracted from the series to depict Niloya's love for animals is in the episode "Chasing Dinosaurs," where children are shown reading books about dinosaurs, aiming to evoke curiosity and research feelings towards interesting animals. Niloya's curiosity about different animals is illustrated within the narrative through scenes of reading books.

In animated cartoons, characters can be categorized into three groups: humans, animals, and imaginary beings. The prevalence of animal characters in children's films is not accidental. Providing characters with imaginary or animalistic features adds innocence while facilitating the explanation of complex relationships in nature. In cartoons, abstract concepts like companionship, cooperation, justice, tolerance, etc., are concretely demonstrated through the actions of characters (Temizyürek & Acar, 2014, p. 28). The characters show how relationships can be established with animals. Indeed, animals integrated into human life, language, and even thought through domestication or imagination play a crucial role in human life (Timofeeva, 2018).

In the episode "Adorable Octopus," Niloya, along with her brother Murat and mother, comes to the shore for a boat tour. In this episode, with her identity clarifying the 'meaning expression,' Niloya, unable to stay still due to excitement, carries a camera, hoping to see an octopus in the sea. Here, Niloya's role as a narrative character imparts the sense of discovering new animals to children.

The character Niloya, depicted specifically, is a cheerful child who acts on the instinct to discover new animals. When they come to the shore, she notices her father, who fell asleep from fatigue while fishing. Niloya, trying to wake her father up by throwing stones into the boat and calling out, sees the octopus and takes its picture. The octopus, awakening her father, gains Niloya's affection. As emphasized in the title of the episode, the octopus is presented as a cute animal in the animated series. Niloya, experiencing the joy of seeing the octopus, reflects this joy on the screen, expressing the meaning of the cartoon. Like the Chameleon examined in the previous episode, the octopus was shown to be sympathetic to the target audience, children, through the cartoons examined. In addition, taking photographs of animals with a camera in both episodes was evaluated as a positive contribution to children's skills.

Similarly, in the episode "Smart Crow," Niloya searches for the crow that makes a nest for its chicks with a water bowl and wool. Despite crows usually having negative connotations due to their sound, they are portrayed as innocent and affectionate in this cartoon. The examination of dialogues and scenes in the analyzed episodes demonstrate that, within the narrative framework, the animated series utilizes the storytelling tool, with Niloya serving as the narrative agent, and diverse animal characters forming the semantic expressions. This synergy of elements effectively conveys the emotion of affection towards animals to the target audience of children. In the context of narrative analysis, these elements brought together have conveyed animal love to children watching screens.

### **Introducing and Endearing Pets**

The episode "Goat Skateboard" also emphasizes the value of animal love. Niloya, a little preschool girl, is a child who shows her love for animals and nature, as well as her family and friends. In childhood, these bonds of love are crucial. In this episode, Niloya addresses her beloved turtle by saying "Tosbişim". The descriptions the storyteller makes of the animals she owns are important here. Indeed, Niloya addresses her beloved turtle by saying "Tosbişim" to show her affection. On a calm and beautiful day in the village, Niloya and Tospik sit on the grass while her brother Murat skateboards.

When the skateboard hits a tree and stops, there is silence. At that moment, the sound of a tap flowing like "drip, drip" is heard from somewhere nearby. Niloya, finding out where the sound is coming from and calling her brother for help, witnesses the goat getting on the empty skateboard and starting to roam around the village. In this examined episode, Niloya's goat riding the skateboard like a human transforms the subject into a human-animal companionship adventure. While Niloya and Murat chase the goat, they also encounter animals such as rabbits and pigeons. Niloya, at that moment, completes the meaning expression by singing the following song:

"My goat tires me out playing games

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I love this sweet goat  
I know it never stays in one place  
I love it like this  
I can't play without my goat  
I want it to always be with me"

Carefully crafted cartoons contribute significantly to children's social life, cognitive development, and behaviors. Children begin to learn many behaviors and information unconsciously while watching cartoons (Yağlı, 2013, p. 707). The fundamental feature of animation productions is to introduce and endear pets to children. These animals can be fish or turtles in an aquarium, or cats or dogs. In these productions, information about these animals is provided, and various types of pets are presented (Öztekin, 2008, p. 87).

### **Acquisition of the Feeling of Protecting Animals**

In the episode titled "Tospik Search and Rescue Team", the subject is handled through the main character Niloya's turtle, which is shown as a side character. Tospik is a sweet and affectionate turtle who is seen next to Niloya in almost every episode, and is held by Niloya and carried around with her. Her best friend is Niloya and green areas. Tospik, who loves to live right next to the cheerful chirping of Niloya, feels very lucky. She sings songs, swims in the river and plays games with her friend Niloya, who loves and cares for her very much. Although it is difficult for her to keep up with Niloya's speed, Tospik does her best and does not leave her best friend alone (Niloya, 2023).

In this episode examined, Niloya and her friends are playing volleyball in the garden. In the episode, the need to protect animals and the message of helping them is explained through the following example: Tospik, who was playing with the goat, hides under thorny blackberry trees to protect itself. Niloya and the other children are worried about Tospik because the blackberry branches are thorny. In this incident,

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where 'expression of meaning' is emphasized as the necessity of protecting animals, Niloya begins to cry, saying "my dear Tosbisim". Because Niloya always talks to Tospik, takes it around with her, and relaxes with it in its troubled moments.

Her favorite animal is Tospik, but Niloya's love for animals is not limited to Tospik. Niloya interacts with and helps many other animals. In many episodes, he gets along well with both Tospik and other animals, thus instilling his love for animals in the children in front of the screen. Following the incident, the children immediately start making plans by forming a search and rescue team among themselves. Some people run to get their binoculars and some bring their research notebooks. They can't see anything when they look through binoculars. When they shake the branches to get the animal to come out, butterflies fly but nothing changes.

Meanwhile, Tospik escapes by climbing out from behind the trees. With the cartoon, which was the "narrative tool" in the Tospik rescue incident, the audience was reminded of the importance of animal health and the necessity of protecting animals, both ethically, legally and scientifically (Coulon & Nouët, 2019). It is emphasized in these scenes that it is wrong to establish absolute domination over animals, considering that humans are equipped with different and superior qualities than animals (Montaigne, 2022) and that it is a conscientious responsibility not to remain indifferent towards them, and that it is necessary to protect animals.

### **Strengthening the Feeling of Helping Animals**

Similarly, Niloya, the cartoon character who drags children into adventures with new topics in every episode, helps animals in the episode "Can Sarıkanat Fly". In the examined section, while the Sarıkanat and the chicks were being fed, birds came and snatched the feed before the chicks and Sarıkanat and ran away. Impressed by this situation, Niloya realizes that chickens also have wings. Together with Mete, she helps Sarıkanat and tries to teach it how to fly. The efforts in these scenes showed Niloya's love for animals in the context of her 'narrator' features.

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In the "Cat House" episode, where the value of animal love is discussed, Niloya again helps a cat meowing sadly on a windy day. He builds a kennel for the cat with the help of his father so that it will not be negatively affected by the storm. In the episode called "My Animal Friends", Niloya sings for her animal friends in the garden, while in the episode "Sweet Foal ", Niloya has a little foal along with the horse her father bought.

In the cartoon, this baby horse was named "Sweet Foal". In the episode "I'm Walking Miniş", there is a sweet calf, just like the sweet foal. These positive descriptions were used in the cartoon to reinforce love and friendship towards animals. While Niloya was taking Miniş out for a walk, Miniş was happy and showed very excited movements, and Niloya had a hard time keeping up with him. The acquisition of the feeling of helping animals in child development was intended to be reinforced with the efforts of the narrator in these episodes.

### **Strengthening Animal Love**

In the episode "Can Miniş stay with us?", Niloya rolled around in the grass with animals and became friends with them. She had a lot of fun with animals in the world of joy and happiness. In the episode "Littles' Park", Niloya's friend Elif organized a children's meeting. Niloya wanted to attend this meeting with her friends Tospik, Miniş, Sweet Foal and her goat. In the "Pet Ant" section, which contains messages encouraging love for animals, Niloya accepted the ant that entered her room as a guest, and was very happy when this sweet ant came. She named the ant, which she wanted to have as a pet like Tospik, "Nokta" and made a nest for it from a small box.

Among the sections examined, another section that can be cited as an example of animal love is the section called "Shepherd Dog". In this episode, Niloya, who saw a puppy, thought that it was lost and searched for the dog's owner with her friends. The common value seen in the sections examined with the 'expression of meaning' parameter is the love of animals. In all of Niloya's dialogues and behaviors, which are

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considered as a narrative mechanism, messages that strengthen the love of animals are seen. As mentioned above, Niloya naming the ant and building a nest for it can be concretized as examples of this.

### **Animal Friendship and Sensitivity**

In the episode "Grasshopper Teacher" published with the theme of animal friendship, Niloya befriended a grasshopper and taught him a lesson, even though Niloya's family complained about the grasshoppers because they damaged the crops. Explaining her animal sensitivity from the position of 'narrator', Niloya likewise befriended the frogs that came to the river in flocks and croaked non-stop in the "Frog Song" episode, and combined their disturbing sounds with her own voice and turned them into songs. In these sections described above of the local cartoon Niloya, which the little ones watch with fun and learning, it is intended to explain that it is necessary to be sensitive towards animals and love them.

In the context of what is shown, which is very important in movie analysis (Akyıldız, 2023), animals are shown in all the sections examined. In many episodes of the series, she has shown how to establish relationships with animal characters, as a narrator. As a matter of fact, as Simondon (2019) states, life is the same everywhere, it does not matter whether it is an animal or a human, life always repeats similar demands. Based on this, it has been seen that in the episodes examined, the theme of animal sensitivity predominates and the meaning expression is created by animal friendship.

### **Promoting Human-Animal Friendship**

In addition to the episodes examined above, "Bee", "Elephant's Nose", "Chick Brother", "Cute Animals", "Chick Mother", "Ant Respect", "Fish Figures", "Tospik Wanted", "Squirrels", "Ant", "Little Bear", "Calf", "Nightingale Song", "Ant Park", "Caterpillar Surprise", "Calm as a Snail", "Bear in the Cave", "Mischievous Crows"

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and “Mother Tiger” episodes in Niloya cartoon series These are other sections where the themes of animal love and human-animal friendship are discussed.

## CONCLUSION

In the study, events and dialogues that foster and educate love for animals were examined in the "Niloya" animated series, which was chosen as the sample. In the study, which was carried out with the aim of investigating the role of cartoons in the social and emotional development of preschool children and with which elements the value of animal love is conveyed, the cartoon named "Niloya" broadcast on TRT Çocuk channel was analyzed using narrative analysis and descriptive analysis methods, which are among the qualitative research methods.

Niloya establishes a love bond with animals in many episodes of the cartoon series, which is treated as a 'narrative tool', covering different topics. Solving the problems encountered by animals, helping them, having fun, playing games with them, and making friends are among the characteristic features of the hero. These positive features of the 'narrator' serve the 'expression of meaning' that is tried to be constructed.

Cartoons with characters exhibiting such exemplary behavior are considered important television productions in terms of teaching preschool children the love of animals, one of the important social values. In the context of 'narrative tool' in the cartoon "Niloya", the values of affection, gift-giving, tolerance, curiosity, discovery, domestic responsibility, awareness of duty, solidarity, keeping one's word, respecting elders and showing love to young ones, friendship, friendliness and love for animals have been given priority.

In the sections examined, Niloya sang children's songs that complement the 'expression of meaning' and 'narrator' element. For example, in the episode titled "Goat Skateboarding", the lyrics of the song she sang for her goat gave the character an image of animal love in the context of 'expression of meaning', while strengthening the message of animal sensitivity as a 'narrator' feature.

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Among the values listed while preparing the scenario, the most important effort was to encourage human and animal friendship, and the emphasis on giving a helping hand to animals in need was repeated throughout the series. Niloya, who is depicted as a girl who loves animals in the context of 'expression of meaning' in every episode of the series, provides verbal, physical and psychological support towards animals.

For example, in the episode called "Sweet Foal" of the cartoon, there are affectionate expressions towards the animals, in the episode called "Tospik Search and Rescue Team", physical assistance to the turtle that got lost under the trees, and in the episode "Shepherd Dog", psychological support is noted in the effort to reunite the puppy thought to be lost with its family. The 'narrator' protagonist's relationship with animals is described in terms of cooperation, sensitivity towards them, establishing friendship with them and protecting them.

In addition, in the cartoon where animals were included in the story with the protagonist, some fears of animals in some segments of society were alleviated, and animals were shown more sympathetically in the context of 'expression of meaning'. This approach, which presents the 'expression of meaning' in a positive form in the context of the scenario, made even scary animals seem benign. For example, it has been explained that fear-inspiring animals such as octopuses can at least be photographed by activating the instinct of discovery. Taking photographs as her characteristic 'narrator' feature, Niloya built her love for animals with these elements and tried to reinforce it in the world of children, who are the audience.

When evaluating the potential of animated series to influence and guide children in developing positive behaviors in the desired direction, it can be observed that in each episode of the animated series, the 'narrator' mechanism presents scenes exemplifying animal friendship to serve as examples for children. Through cartoons crafted in this manner, children acquire the understanding of refraining from causing harm to animals and fostering friendships with them. The visual depictions in the analyzed segments effectively convey the message that these creatures, often in a more fragile state than humans, require protection, care, and affection. Hence, the examined

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cartoon is regarded as a successful production in instilling a love for animals in children.

As a result of the study investigating the narrative elements through which the love of animals is conveyed in cartoons, the Niloya series as a 'narrative tool', the Niloya character as a 'narrator' mechanism, and the animals frequently included in the plots as 'expression of meaning', were evaluated as integrative factors in conveying the love for animals. As a result, it is thought that Niloya and similar productions instill the love of animals into the psychological worlds of children, who are the future of society, and thus contribute to the formation of a healthier and more sensitive society. Producers and parents have responsibilities in this regard. In future studies, researchers are advised to focus on other values that can be identified in the "Niloya" cartoon, which has a rich content.

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