

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FIELD EDUCATION



Analysis of Children's Literature Books According to Critical Thinking Dimensions¹

Meral Öncü

MNE, Eskişehir Ahmet Sezer Middle School
Orcid id: 0000-0002-1820-8199

Hilmi Demiral²

Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Faculty of Education, Dep. Of Turkish Language
Orcid id: 0000-0001-6289-3738

ABSTRACT

The scope of this research involves an investigate and interpret the award-winning children's books in terms of including critical thinking skills. The method of the research was determined as the document analysis method in this thesis. The data from the award-winning children's books were analyzed and interpreted according to the cognitive and affective strategies of critical thinking skills 35 dimensions of critical thinking developed by Paul et al. were used as the scale of the research during the Analysis. Award-winning children's books selected as the scope of the thesis were examined in terms of critical thinking dimensions. According to the final analysis, it was determined that these books include most of the dimensions in the cognitive and affective strategies of critical thinking. As a conclusion, the analysis revealed that the award-winning children's books were appropriate in quality and quantity in terms of including critical thinking skills. As a suggestion, others award-winning books can be studied for the further searches.

Key Words: Critical thinking, language skills, children's literature books

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 08.03.2026

Published online:
29.03.2026

¹ This article is made from a master's thesis entitled " *An Examination of Children's Literature Books in the Context of Critical Thinking*, " prepared at the Institute of Educational Sciences, Eskişehir Osmangazi University.

² Corresponding author:
Asoc. Prof.
hilmidemiral@ogu.edu.tr
0535 2255 02 25

Çocuk Edebiyatı Kitaplarının Eleştirel Düşünme Boyutlarına Göre İncelenmesi

Meral Öncü

MEB, Eskişehir Ahmet Seazer Ortaokulu

Hilmi Demiral³

Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Türkçe Eğitimi ABD.

ÖZET

MAKALE BİLGİSİ

Özetin Araştırmanın amacı çocuk edebiyatı eserlerini eleştirel düşünme boyutlarına göre incelemektir. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden betimsel nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Doküman incelemesi yoluyla elde edilen veriler eleştirel düşünme becerisinin duyuşsal ve bilişsel boyutlarına göre betimsel analiz yöntemiyle yorumlanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Paul ve arkadaşları (1990) tarafından oluşturulan eleştirel düşünmenin 35 boyutunu içeren form veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Bu kaynakta geçen "dimension" ve "strategies" kavramları aslına uygun olarak çevrildiği için bazen "boyut" bazen de "strateji" kelimesiyle karşılanmıştır. Araştırmanın veri kaynaklarına 2011-2022 yılları arasındaki TUDEM edebiyat ödüllü çocuk kitapları dâhil edilmiştir. Bu eserler eleştirel düşünmenin 3 ana başlıkta yer alan 35 maddesine göre incelenmiş, bahsi geçen eserlerin eleştirel düşünmenin bilişsel ve duyuşsal alandan oluşan 35 stratejisini de içerdiği tespit edilmiştir. Bu kitaplardan başka diğer çocuk edebiyatı kitapları da eleştirel düşünmenin 35 boyutuna göre çalışılarak alanyazınına kazandırılabilir.

Alınma

Tarihi:08.03.2026

Çevrimiçi yayınlanma

tarihi: 29.03.2026

Anahtar Kelimeler: Eleştirel düşünme, dil becerileri, çocuk edebiyatı

Introduction

The 21st century is characterized by a digital revolution progressing at an unprecedented pace in technology (Beers, 2011). In this era, access to information has become easier, yet the process of discerning the quality of information has become complex. It is imperative for individuals in this new order not only to acquire information but also to possess competencies to know where, how, and for what purpose to use information, to adapt flexibly to changing technological conditions, and to generate innovative solutions (Boyacı et al., 2019). These competencies, referred to as "21st-century skills" (P21, 2019), encompass a wide range from native language literacy to financial literacy, and from global awareness to digital citizenship. As emphasized in OECD (2008, 2018) reports, proficiency in the native language and reading skills constitute the fundamental cornerstone of all these skills. This is because an individual's ability to analyze complex problems and make sense of technological outputs depends primarily on their ability to accurately decode texts presented in their native language. Although Turkey closely follows these global trends and structures its curricula with a "skill-based" approach (Ministry of National Education [MEB], 2018), international indicators such as PISA results (MEB, 2019) show that there is still a

³ Sorumlu yazar iletişim bilgileri:

Doç. Dr.

hilmidemiral@ogu.edu.tr

0535 2255 02 25

significant distance to be covered in the metacognitive levels of Turkish students' reading comprehension skills (inference, evaluation, and critical analysis). This situation demonstrates that the act of reading should be treated not merely as a mechanical process but as a practice of critical thinking.

Thinking is the process of perceiving and making sense of the external world, shaped through human will and language (Yılmaz, 2021). Today, the thinking process is viewed not just as a cognitive "input-output" operation, but as a holistic structure that includes attitudes, values, and affective responses. The survival of the individual amidst the information pollution created by the information age is only possible through "higher-order thinking" skills. Higher-order thinking refers to processes where existing information is used in new contexts, complex problems are analyzed, and inferences are passed through a logical filter (Doğanay, 2021). Critical thinking, situated at the center of this process, is the reasonable and reflective mode of thinking an individual employs when deciding what to believe or do (Ennis, 1985). Since the "Socratic questioning" method in ancient Greece, critical thinking has been a philosophical stance based on the individual monitoring their own mental processes and "thinking about thinking" (Aydın & Pehlivan, 2019). Critical thinking is essential today for being aware of elements that may hinder thinking, moving beyond patterns that create generalizations in our lives, and seeing the unseen (Çalışkan, 2019). According to Richard Paul (1990), critical thinking is rethinking one's own thoughts to improve the quality of thought; according to Matthew Lipman (1988), it possesses a dynamic that is influenced by its environment, based on specific principles, and capable of self-correction toward reaching a good judgment (Aybek, 2018). In other words, it signifies a process where thought occurs deeply and actively. According to Kıralp (2021), it is a reasoning process with its own systematicity that enhances the quality of thinking; according to Eğmir (2018), it is a thinking system that provides self-discipline and self-regulation in the individual's thinking process; and according to Halpern (1999), it represents more than the successful use of the right skill in an appropriate context. At the heart of critical thinking, certain mental skills possessed by a strong critical thinker are vital in reaching a decision for a purpose (Facione, 2011). Critical thinking is a skill that requires inquiry, and at its core lies the ability to ask the "why" question. Without inquiry, there is no critical thinking (Erdem & Yazıcıoğlu, 2015). Critical thinking also involves many attitudes such as being open to learning information, not hesitating to question information, defending a view based on evidence, ensuring the reliability of information, and approaching different information and emotions with empathy (Doğanay, 2021).

Although there is a consensus in the literature on what critical thinking skills are, different approaches exist regarding how to classify these skills. The cognitive taxonomy developed by Bloom and colleagues (1956) and later updated associates critical thinking with the higher levels of the hierarchy: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation processes. In contrast, Robert Ennis (1985) brings critical thinking to a more pragmatic level, explaining it through 12 basic abilities such as "focusing, analyzing, questioning, judging credibility, and making inferences." The Delphi Project, conducted by Peter Facione (2011) through expert consensus, classified critical thinking into six core cognitive skills and the affective dispositions accompanying these skills. Each approach guides educators by emphasizing a different dimension (logic, process, or disposition) of critical thinking.

Richard Paul and colleagues (1990), who form the main theoretical basis of this research, addressed critical thinking through one of the most comprehensive and micro-level classifications in the literature. These 35 dimensions provide a criterion for analyzing not just what a text says, but how it makes one think and which mental strategies it triggers. The reason for choosing the classification of Paul and colleagues -unlike other existing models- is that it offers detailed opportunities regarding both the inner world of characters (affective) and logical construction (cognitive) in text analysis. Paul's model differs from others in that it does not view critical thinking solely as a cognitive "technique"; it integrates it with affective virtues.

In research regarding critical thinking and its dimensions in the literature, Paul et al. (1990) examined critical thinking in detail across cognitive and affective domains, stating that critical thinking consists of 3 main dimensions and 35 sub-strategies. According to the study by Paul and colleagues, critical thinking is grouped into 35 dimensions as affective and cognitive strategies. Affective strategies consist of 9 strategies from A1 to A9, cognitive strategies-macro skills consist of 17 strategies from B10 to B26, and micro skills consist of 9 strategies from B27 to B35. The 35 dimensions of critical thinking utilized in the examination of the books determined within the scope of this research are provided below in three tables. The concepts of "dimension" and "strategy" in the table and throughout the research have been translated as they appear in the study by Paul et al. (1990), where "dimensions" is rendered as "boyut" and "strategies" as "strateji."

The 21st century is characterized by a digital revolution progressing at an unprecedented pace in technology. In this era, while access to information has become easier, the process of discerning the quality of information has grown increasingly complex. In this new order, it is imperative for individuals not only to acquire information but also to possess competencies such as knowing where, how, and for what purpose to use information, adapting flexibly to changing technological conditions, and generating innovative solutions. These competencies, referred to as "21st-century skills," encompass a wide range of areas from mother-tongue literacy to financial literacy, and from global awareness to digital citizenship. As emphasized in OECD reports, the fundamental cornerstone of these skills consists of mother-tongue proficiency and reading skills. This is because an individual's ability to solve complex problems and make sense of technological outputs primarily depends on their capacity to accurately analyze texts presented in their native language. Although Turkey follows these global trends closely and structures its curricula with a "skill-based" approach, international indicators such as PISA results demonstrate that there is still a significant distance to cover in the higher-order cognitive levels (inference, evaluation, and critical analysis) of Turkish students' reading comprehension skills. This situation indicates that the act of reading should be treated not merely as a mechanical process, but as a practice of critical thinking.

Table 1. Critical Thinking 35 Dimension: A. Affective Strategies

1	Thinking independently
2	Developing insight into egocentricity or sociocentricity
3	Exercising fair-mindedness
4	Exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts
5	Developing intellectual humility and suspending judgment
6	Developing intellectual courage
7	Developing intellectual good faith or integrity

8	Developing intellectual perseverance
9	Developing confidence in reason

The affective dimension of critical thinking is associated with the cognitive dimension in terms of demonstrating that thoughts also give rise to emotions.

Table 2. Critical Thinking 35 Dimension: B. Cognitive Strategies Macro-Skills

10	Refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications
11	Comparing analogous situations: transferring insights into new contexts
12	Developing one’s perspective: creating or exploring beliefs, arguments, or theories
13	Clarifying issues, conclusions, or beliefs
14	Clarifying and analyzing the meanings of words or phrases
15	Developing criteria for evaluation: clarifying values and standards
16	Evaluating the credibility of sources of information
17	Questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions
18	Analyzing or evaluating arguments, interpretations, beliefs, or theories
19	Generating or assessing solutions
20	Analyzing or evaluating actions or policies
21	Reading critically: clarifying or critiquing texts
22	Listening critically: the art of silent dialogue
23	Making interdisciplinary connections
24	Practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying and questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives
25	Reasoning dialogically: comparing perspectives, interpretations, or theories
26	Reasoning dialectically: evaluating perspectives, interpretations, or theories

In cognitive strategies-macro skills, higher-order thinking -such as in-depth questioning, analyzing, evaluating, interdisciplinary approaches, and reasoning- comes to the fore.

Table 3. Critical Thinking 35 Size: C - Cognitive Strategies Micro-Skills

27	Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice
28	Thinking precisely about thinking: using critical vocabulary
29	Noting significant similarities and differences
30	Examining or evaluating assumptions
31	Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts
32	Making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations
33	Evaluating evidence and alleged facts
34	Recognizing contradictions
35	Exploring implications and consequences

The most critical period during which the foundations of critical thinking skills are laid is childhood and early youth. During this period, one of the primary tools contributing to an individual's cognitive and affective development is works of children's literature. A high-quality work of children's literature is not merely a text providing didactic information; it is a rich stimulus where the child questions the motivations of characters, establishes complex cause-and-effect relationships between events, and imagines alternative realities (Sever, 2013). The relationship between

children's literature and critical thinking stems from the nature of the act of "reading." As the reader fills in the gaps in the text and confronts the ethical dilemmas of the characters, they are effectively practicing the affective and cognitive strategies emphasized by Paul. While the problem-solving methods of the characters in these works provide models for the child's own life challenges, the language and narrative structure used by the author initiate the child's "thinking about thinking" (metacognition) process. Consequently, children's literature is an application field where critical thinking skills "come to life."

It is a necessity to introduce children to works that are appropriate for their age and developmental characteristics and possess high aesthetic and intellectual value. However, the extent to which children's books available on the market support these skills is not always clear. In particular, award-winning works are prioritized by educators and parents as they represent a certain literary quality and expert approval. The question of which dimensions of critical thinking these works—featured in prestigious selections such as the TUDEM Literature Awards—offer to children and which strategies they employ more intensively carries great importance for both children's literature theory and educational practices. When the literature is reviewed, it is observed that children's books are generally analyzed using general classifications such as Bloom's taxonomy; however, the scarcity of studies focusing on the reflections of the 35-dimension microscopic framework provided by Paul and colleagues in children's literature is noteworthy.

This research aims to fill this gap in the literature by conducting an in-depth analysis of works that received the TUDEM Literature Award between 2011 and 2022, based on the 35 dimensions identified by Paul et al. (1990). The results of the research may serve as a quality guide for authors, a standard criterion for publishers, and a conscious book selection guide for teachers. In this regard, by revealing the extent to which works of children's literature reflect the dimensions of critical thinking, the study may provide a foundation for future children's literature production and the development of children's thinking skills.

In this context, the purpose of the research is to "examine works of children's literature according to the 35 dimensions of critical thinking skills." To achieve this goal, answers to the following questions were sought:

How do the selected award-winning works of children's literature reflect;

1. the dimensions of critical thinking in general?
2. the affective strategies dimension of critical thinking?
3. the cognitive strategies: macro-skills dimension of critical thinking?
4. the cognitive strategies: micro-skills dimension of critical thinking?

Methodology

Research Model

A descriptive qualitative research method was employed in this study. Document analysis, which is frequently used in descriptive qualitative research, is based on the analysis of written sources related to the phenomena and events at the focus of the study (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, pp. 189-190). Since the sources used in document analysis are related to the research problem, they can be

selected accordingly. Therefore, in document analysis, all types of books, materials, files, documents, etc., related to education constitute examples of usable data sources. Document analysis refers to a systematic process for examining and evaluating printed materials (Özkan, 2019, p. 3).

Data Sources

In this research, works that received the TUDEM Literature Award were examined as the data source. The reasons for selecting these works include TUDEM's objective since 2002 to bring contemporary and original works to our children's and youth literature, its role in bringing together numerous authors and illustrators across all literary genres with readers, and the presence of a distinguished jury composed of many competent and well-known writers, academics, and critics in the field of literature. There is a total of 36 works available as data sources for the research. While selecting these works, care was taken to include only one representative sample from works containing the same theme; furthermore, considerations were made regarding the fact that some works were not published despite winning an award, some works such as picture books were not suitable for the age criteria, and some works belonged to adult literature. Table 4 presents all the works that received the TUDEM Literature Award between 2011 and 2022.

Table 4. *Data sources.*

No	Title of the work	The author	Year	Type	Themes	Age Group
1	Almarpa'nın Gizemi	Koray Avcı Çakman	2011	Novel	Myth, Legends	10+
2	Tapınağın Sırrı	Zehra Tapunç	2011	Novel	Myth, Legends	10+
3.	Bilmecenin İzinde Maceranın Peşinde	Dursun Ege Göçmen	2011	Novel	Friendship, solidarity	10+
4.	Uzaylı Komşu	İclal K. Dikici	2012	Story	Front judgments, communication	10+
5.	Gülen Sakız Ağacı	Koray Avcı Çakman	2012	Story	Environment consciousness, creativity	10+
6.	Eyfel'i Kim Yedi?	Özlem K. Sözbilir	2012	Story	Dream power, adventure	9+
7.	Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü	Figen Gülü	2013	Novel	Decision giving	10+
8.	Atla	Mercan Aytuna	2013	Novel	Friendship, solidarity	9-12
9.	Kibele'nin Gölgesinde	Yasemin Y. Gündoğan	2013	Novel	Decision giving	10+
10.	Karakura'nın Düşleri	Hanzade Servi	2014	Story	Dream power, adventure	10+
11.	Kabile	Alper K. Bilir	2014	Story	-	-
12.	Efendi'nin Mahzeni	Ali Benice	2014	Story	-	-
13.	Kuş Olsam Evime Uçsam	Güzin Öztürk	2015	Novel	Front judgments, communication	9-12
14.	Kayra:5000 Yıl Öncesine Düşen Yıldız	Bengi, Yıldız, İpek Kurt	2015	Novel	-	-
15.	Taş Devri Çocukları	Zehra Tapunç	2015	Novel	-	-
16.	Nice Nine'nin Zeytini	Şafak Okdemir	2016	Story	Nature And person	6-10
17.	Öykü Adında Öyküler	Ali Benice	2016	Story	-	-
18.	Atıştırılmalık Öyküler	Elif Y. Toğay	2016	Story	Growth and maturation	7-8
19.	Araf'ta Zaman	Halil İbrahim Polat	2017	Novel	-	-
20.	Yelkovan	Sevda İpek Suda	2017	Novel	-	-
21.	Minşar Uykuları	Melih Yılmaz	2017	Novel	-	-
22.	Selin Beni Terk Etti	Fatih Debbağ	2018	Novel	Growth and maturation	10+
23.	Kar Kurdu ve Canavar	Güzin Öztürk	2018	Novel	Bullying, struggle	10+
24.	Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın Orkestrası	Dursun Ege Göçmen	2018	Novel	Peer bullying, solidarity	10+
25.	Bay Erdal'ın Tehlikeli Alakaları	Cem Aydoğan	2019	Novel	-	-

26	Miras	Canan Özdek	2019	Novel	-
27	Tanrı Küçük Tahta Parçalarını Sevmezdi	Pınar Seyhun	2019	Novel	-
28	Düşünme(me) Oyunu	Sevtap Aayhan	2020	Novel	Growth and maturation
29	Defne ve Diğer Baş Belaları	Serdar Uslu	2020	Novel	Friendship, solidarity
30	Arkadaşlar Arasında	Fatih Debbağ	2020	Novel	Peer bullying, solidarity
31	Benim Adım Maya	Gonca Mine Çelik	2021	Pic. book.	-
32	Doğadaki İzleriniz	Meryem Ermeýdan, Melike Tan	2021	Pic. book.	-
33	Prences Olmak	Gizem Karagöz, Nurtaç Ş. Akçelik	2021	Pic. book.	-
34	Udu Tanrısı, Eşlikçi ve Lale	Sevtap Ayhan	2022	Novel	-
35	Senden Tembeli Var	Tuba A. Deli	2022	Novel	-
36	Atımın Kuyruğu	Serhan Ok	2022	Novel	-

Among these works, a total of nine children's literature works -comprising three short stories and six novels- were selected by taking the aforementioned criteria into account. These selected works are presented in Table 5. The works to be used in the research were selected based on whether they received a TUDEM Literature Award in the categories of children's novels or short stories, were published works appropriate for the age level, and represented only one sample from books containing the same theme.

Table 5. Selected Works

No	The work Ordinary	The author	Year	Type	Themes	Age
1.	Almarpa'nın Gizemi	Koray Avcı Çakman	2011	Novel	Legends, Myths	10+
2.	Bilmecenin İzinde Maceranın Peşinde	Dursun Ege Göçmen	2011	Novel	Friendship, solidarity	10+
3.	Uzaylı Komşu	İclal K. Dikici	2012	Story	Prejudices communication	,10+
4.	Gülen Sakız Ağacı	Koray Avcı Çakman	2012	Story	Environment consciousness, creativity	10+
5.	Eyfel'i Kim Yedi?	Özlem K. Sözbilir	2012	Story	Dream power, adventure	9+
6.	Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü	Figen Gülü	2013	Novel	Decision giving	10+
7.	Selin Beni Terk Etti	Fatih Debbağ	2018	Novel	Growth and maturation	10+
8.	Kar Kurdu ve Canavar	Güzin Öztürk	2018	Novel	Family relationships, struggle	10+
9.	Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın Orkestrası	Dursun Ege Göçmen	2018	Novel	Peer bullying, solidarity	10+

The works selected for the research consist of award-winning short stories and novels in the field of children's literature that represent diverse themes.

Data Collection Tools

Among the researchers who have studied critical thinking skills in the literature, Ennis (1996) examined critical thinking in terms of critical dispositions; Facione et al. (1995) drew attention to seven factors in critical thinking (open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, systematicity, analyticity, self-confidence, maturity, and truth-seeking) and attempted to explain critical thinking through the dimension of dispositions. Since Paul and colleagues examined critical thinking in detail not only

through the disposition dimension but also through both cognitive and affective dimensions, the works in this study were analyzed according to the critical thinking strategies and the 35 dimensions of Paul et al. (1990).

The data for this research, in which children's literature works were examined according to the 35 dimensions of critical thinking skills, were obtained using the form provided in the table below. While reading the selected children's literature books, the presence of each strategy included in this form within the books was recorded in the relevant row, and subsequently, the coding process was conducted.

35 Dimensions of Critical Thinking			Pre.	Abs	Part.
A. Affective Strategies	1	Thinking independently			
	2	Developing insight into egocentricity or sociocentricity			
	3	Exercising fair-mindedness			
	4	Exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts			
	5	Developing intellectual humility and suspending judgment			
	6	Developing intellectual courage			
	7	Developing intellectual good faith or integrity			
	8	Developing intellectual perseverance			
	9	Developing confidence in reason			
B. Cognitive Strategies: Macro-Abilities	10	Refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications			
	11	Comparing analogous situations: transferring insights into new contexts			
	12	Developing one's perspective: creating or exploring beliefs, arguments, or theories			
	13	Clarifying issues, conclusions, or beliefs			
	14	Clarifying and analyzing the meanings of words or phrases			
	15	Developing criteria for evaluation: clarifying values and standards			
	16	Evaluating the credibility of sources of information			
	17	Questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions			
	18	Analyzing or evaluating arguments, interpretations, beliefs, or theories			
	19	Generating or assessing solutions			
	20	Analyzing or evaluating actions or policies			
	21	Reading critically: clarifying or critiquing texts			
	22	Listening critically: the art of silent dialogue			
	23	Making interdisciplinary connections			
	24	Practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying and questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives			
	25	Reasoning dialogically: comparing perspectives, interpretations, or theories			
	26	Reasoning dialectically: evaluating perspectives, interpretations, or theories			
C. Cognitive Strategies: Micro-Skills	27	Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice			
	28	Thinking precisely about thinking: using critical vocabulary			
	29	Noting significant similarities and differences			
	30	Examining or evaluating assumptions			
	31	Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts			
	32	Making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations			
	33	Evaluating evidence and alleged facts			
	34	Recognizing contradictions			
	35	Exploring implications and consequences			

(Paul et al., 1990)

The 35 dimensions included in the data collection tool were identified and marked by the researcher during the reading of the works; subsequently, the relevant sections from the books were excerpted and included in the findings section.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data of the research were collected through descriptive analysis. To this end, the selected books were examined based on the 35 dimensions of critical thinking (Paul et al., 1990), and the data were interpreted according to the extent to which the works incorporated these dimensions.

In qualitative research, coding is the process of extracting meaningful units from data gathered under the same theme (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018, p. 243). The researcher created codes for the data collected under the same category and established these codes by associating them with the categories. Several examples of how the research codes were generated are presented below:

"Thinking independently" pertains to the individual's autonomous thinking; thus, the code was designated as "*being aware of thought*." since being a fair-minded thinker involves thinking by putting oneself in others' shoes, the code was assigned as "*reviewing the perspective*." Within cognitive strategies, refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications involves critical thinkers refraining from simplifications and generalizations in their interpretations; therefore, the code for this category was determined as "*avoiding generalization*." In developing a personal perspective -specifically in creating beliefs, arguments, or theories, or clarifying beliefs- critical thinkers recognize that their own way of thinking, as well as other perspectives, are prone to error; thus, the code for this category was designated as "*developing a perspective*." In comparing ideals with actual practice within cognitive strategies, critical thinkers acknowledge that every idea may not be true in reality; hence, the code for this category was given as "*comparing ideas with experiences*." Finally, in thinking precisely about thinking through the use of critical vocabulary, critical thinkers distinguish between key terms, assumptions, inferences, and contradictions; accordingly, the code for this category was assigned as "*making inferences*." The examples provided above are intended to explain how the researcher generated the codes. Other categories and their respective codes were created in the same manner.

Reliability

The research was guided by the principles of Lincoln and Guba to ensure both the reliability and validity of the results. In qualitative research, researchers may employ various techniques to ensure validity and reliability. According to Lincoln and Guba, the factors determining the rigor of research are internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. The alignment of findings with reality ensures credibility (internal validity); the applicability of findings to other contexts ensures transferability (external validity); the attainment of the same findings by the same participants ensures dependability (reliability); and the reflection of participants' experiences and thoughts while keeping the findings independent of the researcher's subjectivity ensures confirmability (objectivity) (Arastaman et al., 2018, p. 48). In this context, direct quotations were included to ensure internal validity -credibility- in the research.

Another method used for validity, which expresses the credibility of research in qualitative studies, is inter-coder reliability. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), when coding is conducted by two individuals using the same data set, definitions become clearer. To this end, after the researcher developed the codes suitable for the data set with a curriculum development expert, the codes were

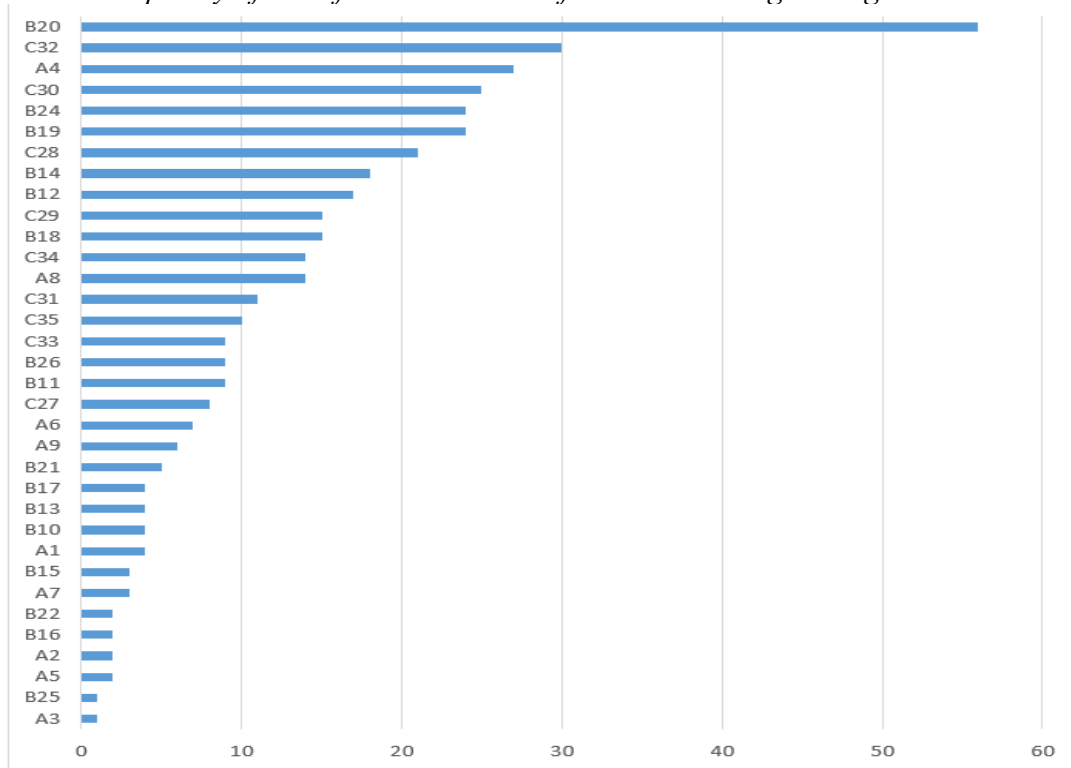
checked by a Turkish education expert and another curriculum development expert to ensure reliability. The codes were reviewed in light of the data, and codes that lacked consensus or required improvement were refined.

For the verification of data, the codes, categories, and findings were re-checked by the researcher; furthermore, the books were re-read according to the same categories by another Turkish language teacher who is an expert in the field, and the findings obtained were compared with those of the researcher. According to the calculation made considering the Miles and Huberman model, the reliability of the research was calculated as 95%. According to Miles and Huberman, this ratio must be at least 80% to measure internal validity; the reliability of this research exceeded this threshold.

Findings

In this section, the findings obtained from the works are presented in tables, with relevant explanations provided below each table. Nine works that received the TUDEM Literature Award were examined according to the 35 dimensions of critical thinking; the findings derived from the works were displayed in separate tables for each strategy, and their descriptive analyses were conducted. Before proceeding to the critical thinking data, the frequencies regarding the distribution of the 35 dimensions of critical thinking across the works are presented in the figure below to demonstrate the general distribution of the three main dimensions of critical thinking.

Figure 4.1 Frequency of use of 35 dimensions of critical thinking strategies in selected works



When the figure above is examined, the most frequently encountered strategy in the works is "analyzing actions or policies," designated with the code B20. This is followed by "making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations" designated with the code C32, and other strategies. The least frequently encountered strategy is "being a fair-minded thinker" designated

with the code A3. In the figure, the strategies are ranked from the most frequently used to the least frequently used in the works.

Table 4.1. Frequency of critical thinking dimensions in the works.

	Title of the work	In dim. A	In dim. B	In dim. C	Total freq.
1	Gülen Sakız Ağacı	9	31	23	63
2	Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın Orkestrası	8	32	15	55
3	Uzaylı Komşu	16	17	17	50
4	Eyfel'i Kim Yedi?	5	23	16	46
5	Almarpa'nın Gizemi	6	20	17	43
6	Bilmecenin İzinde Maceranın Peşinde	4	20	15	39
7	Selin Beni Terk Etti	8	17	13	38
8	Kar Kurdu ve Canavar	4	16	16	36
9	Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü	6	18	11	35

Since the examined works are in the genres of short stories and novels and are predominantly plot-driven, it can be stated that critical thinking cognitive strategies—both macro and micro-skills—are predominantly observed. The lower frequency of affective strategies in Dimension A may stem from the limited psychological descriptions of characters in the works and the fact that their attitudes and behaviors are not directly conveyed within the narrative.

4.1. Findings Related to Affective Strategies

In this section, the findings obtained from the nine award-winning children's works subject to the research were examined according to the extent to which they incorporate the nine strategies within the affective strategies level of the critical thinking dimension, and the identified findings are presented in tabular form. A frequency table based on the usage frequency of the analyzed findings in the works has been included, and the data are presented in a distribution graph.

Table 4.2 presents the frequency table for the nine strategies in the affective dimension. This table includes a total of 66 instances of affective strategy content obtained from the books. The strategies are organized according to their frequency of use within the works.

Table 4.2 Frequency distribution of affective strategies in critical thinking skills

Affective Strategies	Book	f
A.1 Thinking independently	3	4
A.2 Developing insight into egocentricity or sociocentricity	2	2
A.3 Exercising fair-mindedness	1	1
A.4 Exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts	9	27
A.5 Developing intellectual humility and suspending judgment	2	2
A.6 Developing intellectual courage	5	7
A.7 Developing intellectual good faith or integrity	2	3
A.8 Developing intellectual perseverance	7	14
A.9 Developing confidence in reason	4	6
		66

When Table 4.2 is examined, it is observed that the most frequently used stage among the affective strategy levels in the works is "*exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts*". This stage is followed respectively by the skills of "*developing intellectual perseverance*", "*developing intellectual courage*", "*developing confidence in reason*", "*thinking independently*", "*developing intellectual good faith or integrity*", "*developing intellectual humility and suspending judgment*", "*developing insight into egocentricity or sociocentricity*" and finally, "*exercising fair-mindedness*". Since affective strategies reflect independent thinking, the autonomous thought of individuals is also prominent in the works.

Among the affective strategies, it is observed that the strategy of "*exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts*" is represented in all nine books. This situation indicates that the examined works reflect the bond between the characters' emotions and thoughts to the reader. Similarly, the strategies of "*developing confidence in reason*" and "*exploring thoughts underlying feelings*" were also observed with high frequency. These findings suggest that authors aim to create emotional awareness in the reader within the context of reason, emotion, and thought through their characters. On the other hand, the reason for the low occurrence of the "*developing intellectual humility*" strategy may be that the works are written according to the principle of "*suitability for the child*" (pedagogical suitability), where characters prioritize their own ideas and leave alternative questioning to the child readers. When these findings are evaluated as a whole, it is concluded that the affective dimension of critical thinking is strongly incorporated in the vast majority of the nine books examined; however, strategies requiring higher-level cognitive maturity, such as self-criticism and "*suspending judgment*" are less represented.

Some examples of affective strategy dimensions are given below:

There's no need, I know why you're here and I have no intention of changing my mind. (A1, *Being Aware of Thought*; Uzaylı Komşu, p. 11)

Of course, everyone can make mistakes sometimes. After all, I'm only human. And I realized I was wrong when I got off the bus and saw Berkay waiting for me at the school gate. (A2, *Restructuring Thought*; Bilmecenin İzinde Maceranın Peşinde, p. 51)

My mother examined the vase with admiration, as if it were the eighth wonder of the world. I wondered what she saw in it that I didn't, so I picked up the vase and examined it carefully myself. (A3, *Reviewing the point of view*; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p. 55)

I was ashamed of lying to my father and the nurse, but the real reason for my shame was that I had taken the photograph from my great-aunt so forcefully. (A4, *Awareness of Feelings and Thoughts*; Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü, p. 72)

I think this is one of the mistakes I made. Forming an opinion about someone without knowing them well enough. This also led me to form a wrong opinion. (A5, *Breaking Down Prejudice*; Selin Left Me, p.79)

"I think you're being unfair," said Aylin. "Is it right to suspect him just because he's a little different from other people?" (A6, *Not being afraid to think differently*; Almarpa'nın Gizemi, p. 57)

"Ms. Guide," said Birindar. "I want to become human again, I want to learn to love." (A7, *Improving thought and behavior*; Kar Kurdu ve Canavar, p. 94)

I couldn't risk leaving the group, but at that moment I made up my mind: I was going to come here. (A8, *Determination to carry out the action*; Eyfel'i Kim Yedi? p. 44)

This is probably your problem. I'm sure you'll find a way to solve it." He seemed fair. (A9, *Willingness to find a solution*; Selin Beni Terk Etti, p.33)

It can be stated that the works reflect critical skills to the readers through the inquisitive, divergent, reconstructive, and solution-oriented thinking highlighted via the characters within the dimension of affective strategies. The reason for the predominant use of the stage

"exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts" is that the characters in the works frequently convey their emotions and thoughts to the reader and offer interpretations by associating the events they experience with real life. The reason for the least frequent appearance of the "being a fair-minded thinker" stage is that less space is given to the empathetic approaches of the characters in the works.

Affective strategies represent the attitude and behavior dimensions of critical thinking skills. These details provided regarding the characters, as well as their feelings and thoughts, also reflect the psychological portraits of the characters.

4.2. Cognitive Strategies: Findings Related to Macro Skills

In this section, the findings obtained from the nine award-winning children's works subject to the research were examined according to the extent to which they incorporate the 17 strategies within the cognitive strategies: macro-skills level of the critical thinking dimension, and the identified findings are presented in tabular form. The findings obtained at the end of the examination were interpreted according to the cognitive strategies: macro-skills level of critical thinking; descriptive analyses of the findings were included. A frequency table based on the usage frequency of the analyzed findings in the works has been included, and the data are presented in a distribution graph.

Table 4.3 presents the frequency table for the subcategories of the cognitive strategies: macro-skills level. This table includes a total of 197 instances of cognitive strategy-macro skills obtained from the books. These are specified in the table according to their frequency of use within the works.

Table 4.3. *Frequency distribution of critical thinking skills cognitive strategies - macro skills.*

Cognitive Strategies - Macro Skills	Book p.	f
B.10 Refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications	4	4
B.11 Comparing analogous situations: transferring insights into new contexts	7	9
B.12 Developing one's perspective: creating or exploring beliefs, arguments, or theories.	7	17
B.13 Clarifying issues, conclusions, or beliefs.	3	4
B.14 Clarifying and analyzing the meanings of words or phrases.	6	18
B.15 Developing criteria for evaluation: clarifying values and standards.	1	3
B.16 Evaluating the credibility of sources of information.	2	2
B.17 Questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions.	2	4
B.18 Analyzing or evaluating arguments, interpretations, beliefs, or theories.	6	15
B.19 Generating or assessing solutions.	7	24
B.20 Analyzing or evaluating actions or policies.	9	56
B.21 Reading critically: clarifying or critiquing texts.	3	5
B.22 Listening critically: the art of silent dialogue.	1	2
B.23 Making interdisciplinary connections.	-	-

Cognitive Strategies - Macro Skills	Book p.	f
B.24 Practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying and questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives.	7	24
B.25 Reasoning dialogically: comparing perspectives, interpretations, or theories.	1	1
B.26 Reasoning dialectically: evaluating perspectives, interpretations, or theories.	5	9
		197

When Table 4.3 is examined, it is observed that the most frequently used stage among the cognitive strategy: macro-skills in the works is the skill of "analyzing or evaluating actions or policies." This can be attributed to the fact that the works are predominantly plot-driven and convey their subjects through action-based narratives. This is followed by the skill of "generating or assessing solutions". This skill is based on the characters being solution-oriented when faced with problems. This is followed by the strategy of "practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying or questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives". This situation stems from the inquisitive nature of the characters in their mutual dialogues.

Upon examining the "*Cognitive Strategies: macro-skills*," which constitute the second dimension of critical thinking, it is observed that the strategy of "*analyzing or evaluating actions or policies*" is represented in all nine books. This indicates that the characters in the examined works reflect their thinking and evaluation characteristics to the reader through events. Similarly, the strategies of "*generating or assessing solutions*" and "*Socratic discussion*" were also frequently observed. These findings demonstrate that characters employ the act of inquiry -specifically, making the reader think while they themselves are thinking.

Critical thinking skills are some examples of cognitive strategies -macro skills- as listed below:

- Every joke is a bit of fantasy, every fantasy a bit of fiction, and every fiction a bit of truth! (B10, Avoiding Generalizations; Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın, p. 119)
- Walking with the dirty and the others, he felt like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. (B11, Comparison; Eyfel'i Kim Yedi, p. 54)
- It was his daughter's words that opened his eyes. If he hadn't felt remorse and wished to become human again, purple flowers would have covered his arms, his back would have hunched, his face would have disappeared, and he would have turned to darkness. (B12, Perspective Development; Kar Kurdu ve Canavar, p. 93)
- My mother said: "Childhood means comfort, it means not having to shoulder the responsibilities that adults carry. It means having everything you need." (B13, Clarifying the Subject; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p.10)
- I showed him the text, and he translated it immediately: "Fairy tales are true. Every time this text is read, I return to my princely kingdom for a while." (B14, Word or sentence analysis; Eyfel'i Kim Yedi, p. 51)
- There are very few people left who talk about books anymore, my son, that's why I like him so much. (B15, Establishing Cause-and-Effect Relationships, Uzaylı Komşu, p. 83)
- I researched it online, and apparently there are colorful coral reefs there. (B16, Verifying Information; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p. 85)
- "The air smells wonderful," my grandmother used to say. I always wondered if the air could smell? (B17, Inquiry; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p.35)
- "What does that mean, my son? Childhood means comfort. Oh, everything's handed to you on a silver platter! No worries about how to make ends meet at the beginning of the month, no financial troubles..." (B18, Interpretation; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p. 8)

We must act in a friendly manner again and insist that he take us to Dalyan. This is the only way we can solve this mystery, as we have discussed before.” (B19, Finding a Solution; Almarpa'nın Gizemi, p. 54)

Mrs. Meral was looking at me carefully. After what my father had told her, she must have been worried about me too. (B20, Evaluating the Action; Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü, p. 115)

straight to Mizgin's room. They approached her desk. "We know who the monster is! Tell him to find us!" (B21, Text Analysis; Kar Kurdu ve Canavar, p. 92)

But as I gazed at the splendor of the scene, a faint voice inside me whispered, 'Why not?' (B22, Review; Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasin, p. 98)

I don't know if a person ever gets tired of loving. And why would you love someone so much that you'd get tired of it? (B24, Questioning; Selin Beni Terk Etti, p.9)

"Do flowers ever talk?" Of course they do! But I don't hear their voices. How can you hear them? Do you think everyone speaks with their tongues? These speak with their leaves and branches... I heard them, I heard them! I heard them too... (B25, Exploring Perspectives; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p. 107)

"Your monster..." he said. "I thought it was like mine; I couldn't have imagined it could be a real person." (B26, Gaining Perspective; Kar Kurdu ve Canavar, p. 57)

The fact that characters in these works exhibit qualities such as questioning, generating solutions, comparing, and developing perspectives is significant in terms of reflecting the characteristics of a critical individual. It is observed that characters engage in more evaluation during the action-oriented parts of the books. The combination of evaluating actions and characters resorting to various paths for problem-solving highlights the skill of generating and assessing solutions. Furthermore, it is frequently observed that characters reflect on the subject through inquiry, thereby encouraging the reader to think as well.

4.3. Cognitive Strategies: Findings Related to Micro-Skills

In this section, the data obtained from a total of nine award-winning children's works - comprising six novels and three short stories- were examined according to the extent to which they incorporate the nine items within the cognitive strategies: micro-skills level of the critical thinking dimension, and the identified findings are presented in tabular form. A frequency table based on the usage frequency of the analyzed findings in the works has been included, and the data are presented in a distribution graph.

***Table 4.4.** Frequency distribution of critical thinking skills cognitive strategies - micro-skills*

Cognitive Strategies - Micro-Skills	Book p.	f
C.27 Comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice.	3	8
C.28 Thinking precisely about thinking: using critical vocabulary.	8	21
C.29 Noting significant similarities and differences.	3	15
C.30 Examining or evaluating assumptions.	9	25
C.31 Distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts.	5	11
C.32 Making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations.	9	30
C.33 Evaluating evidence and alleged facts.	7	9
C.34 Recognizing contradictions.	8	14
C.35 Exploring implications and consequences.	4	10
		143

When Table 4.4 is examined, it indicates that the characters in the analyzed works make reasonable and logical inferences in their thinking processes, remain free from contradictions, distinguish between right and wrong, and are capable of evaluating outcomes. When these findings are evaluated as a whole, it is concluded that critical thinking is a logical and reasonable form of thinking.

Some examples of cognitive strategies-micro-skills dimensions are given below:

- If the cat wasn't the neighbor's cat, Hasan wouldn't call it a witch again. (C27, Comparing Ideas with Life; Uzaylı Komşu, p. 54)
- If she didn't need to convince me of something, she would call me Deniz, not 'sweetheart'. That meant I had already lost from the start. (C28, Don't Draw Inferences; Selin Beni Terk Etti, p. 32)
- My grandmother had the answer ready from yesterday: "Just as Emine is a cat name, Şakir is a scarecrow name." (C29, Comparison; Gülen Sakız Ağacı, p.103)
- My father might have been angry that I'd entered this room without permission, but he would have forgiven me once he saw how beautiful the birthday present was. (C30, Evaluating Assumptions; Amber'in Zaman Kapsülü, p. 15)
- What else could all this be but an illusion?" (C31, Reasoning; Eyfel'i Kim Yedi, p. 95)
- "I don't know, but he certainly didn't do anything normal!" (C32, Reasonable Inference; Almarpa'nın Gizemi, p. 79)
- When the folk song ended, I stood up and bowed to the stage, feeling very confident. I thought I would definitely be chosen for the orchestra... but I had rejoiced too soon. (C33, Interpretation According to Evidence; Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın, p.81)
- I truly admire the logic of these grown-ups! When it suits them, they cite others as examples, and when it doesn't, they say, "What do others have to do with you!" (C34, Noticing Contradictions; Bilmecenin İzinde Maceranın Peşinde, p. 35)
- I felt my eyes welling up as everyone laughed at me. (C35, Establishing cause-and-effect relationships; Vur Patlasın Çal Oynasın, p. 8)

In cognitive strategies: micro-skills, higher-order thinking skills such as comparison, making inferences, and evaluation are observed. Logical reasoning, establishing cause-effect relationships, and interpretation are prominent. This situation highlights advanced thinking techniques through the characters.

Result and Discussion

In this section, the results and discussions derived from the research are presented, and recommendations for the utilization and development of critical thinking abilities are offered.

5.1. Result

The works subject to the research were examined according to the 35 dimensions of critical thinking, the most and least frequently used strategies were identified.

In the examined works, among the affective strategies, the item "*exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts*" was encountered most frequently. This strategy reflects the conscious attitude and demeanor exhibited by critical thinkers. Affective strategies also reflect the power of independent thinking. It was observed that the examined works reflected this through their protagonists.

Among the nine books analyzed, within the cognitive strategies: macro-skills, the item "*analyzing or evaluating actions or policies*" was encountered most frequently. This suggests that the works reflect the skill of evaluation, which is at the higher level of thinking. The least frequently encountered strategies were clarifying issues, conclusions, or beliefs; deep questioning; and developing criteria for evaluation. Within the books, only the item "*making interdisciplinary connections*" was not encountered among the cognitive strategies: macro-skills. Apart from this, the works incorporate the other dimensions of critical thinking.

In the examined works, within the cognitive strategies: micro-skills, the item "making plausible inferences, predictions, or interpretations" was encountered most frequently. Micro-skills pertain to the sense-making dimension of thinking. The least frequently encountered strategies were "distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts" and "exploring implications and consequences."

At the end of the research, it was concluded that cognitive strategies: macro-skills were utilized the most. This indicates that the works support higher-order thinking. This is followed by cognitive strategies: micro-skills and affective strategies, respectively. Consequently, it can be stated that the works reflect and support critical thinking.

5.2. Discussion

Macro-skills are skills related to organization within the thinking process (Akinoğlu, 2003). It can be stated that these skills overlap with the cognitive skills expected to be acquired by 21st-century individuals. According to Gelen (2017), these skills, developed within the framework of 21st-century skills—which are accepted on international platforms and supported by various institutions—also explain the necessary components for 21st-century curricula and instruction. When examining these skills described under critical thinking and problem-solving, it is observed that they include thinking skills that support macro-skills, such as effective reasoning; analyzing and evaluating arguments, claims, and beliefs; establishing relationships between views and information; making interpretations based on analysis; asking questions involving different perspectives; and generating solutions.

The frequent use of "evaluating actions or policies" -which is one of the higher-order thinking stages and falls under the evaluation level- by the characters in the examined works indicates that these works support critical thinking skills. Kanmaz (2019), who conducted a similar study on children's and youth books in the literature, also encountered this stage most frequently in the works examined. These findings obtained by Kanmaz (2019) overlap with the findings of this research.

Affective strategies are strategies related to the power of independent thinking (Akinoğlu, 2003). These strategies primarily reveal the attitudes and dispositions of individuals. Since critical thinking is an autonomous form of thinking, it refers to the individual's self-directed thinking.

The reason why the strategy of "*exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts*" was encountered most frequently in the works can be attributed to the characters making more interpretations and conveying their emotions and thoughts more frequently to the reader in response to the situations and events they experience, especially when the themes are associated with real life. In a similar study conducted by Canbaz (2021) in the literature, this stage was encountered most frequently among the affective strategies of critical thinking. Furthermore, it was determined that the characters in the works generally exhibit attitudes and demeanors that are open to discussion, problem-solving oriented, inquisitive, and capable of analyzing events.

Cognitive strategies: micro-skills are related to the sense-making dimension of thinking. These skills form the foundation of thinking skills (Akınoğlu, 2003). These skills involve distinguishing between ideas and reality, identifying significant similarities and differences, examining and evaluating assumptions, distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts, making plausible inferences and interpretations, evaluating evidence and alleged facts, exploring implications and consequences, thinking precisely, and recognizing contradictions. In the examined works, findings regarding all dimensions of micro-skills were encountered. The reason why micro-skills, which form the basis of thinking, were utilized less frequently than macro-skills can be attributed to the greater emphasis placed on macro-skills to support the readers' higher-order thinking skills.

Studies in the literature that examine works based on critical thinking dimensions also support the finding that cognitive macro-skills are used more frequently (Canbaz, 2021). Similarly, a study conducted on the "*Piccolo Filosofo*" (Çıtır Çıtır Felsefe) book series, which is a philosophy series written for children, revealed that macro-skills were utilized more than micro-skills. This finding supports the result of the current research regarding the predominant use of macro-skills over micro-skills.

It is thought that the award-winning children's works subject to this research will contribute to critical thinking skills in many aspects. The examined books incorporate most of the cognitive and affective levels of critical thinking strategies; thus, these works can serve as resources for teachers to create inquisitive, democratic, and discussion-oriented classroom environments through appropriate questioning.

Similar studies can be found in the literature. Tekşan (2013) argues that high-quality children's works are effective in fostering critical thinking skills in Turkish language courses. In his study, by examining the stories of Ömer Seyfettin, he demonstrated that different texts provide students with diverse perspectives. He states that methods such as comparison, reasoning, and questioning conducted through these texts are effective in the acquisition of critical thinking skills.

Mete (2021) conducted a study on the critical thinking skills and reading habits of secondary school students. In this research, a significant relationship was found between the critical thinking skills and reading habits of eighth-grade students. It is stated that as reading habits increase, critical thinking skills also improve.

Karatay (2015), in a study titled the "Literature Circles Book Review Model" for developing critical thinking and reading habit skills, indicates that literary works are indispensable tools. It is noted that this proposed model facilitates the development of students' collaborative learning skills alongside their critical thinking skills. Karatay emphasizes that students' sharing and discussing their knowledge, experiences, interpretations, and thoughts through the books they read enables them to think independently, recognize problems, and acquire the ability to generate diverse solutions. Since the analysis, evaluation, and inferences made regarding the work in such a discussion environment are fundamental principles of critical thinking, these skills are also acquired indirectly through the discussion method. This research supports the notion that children's literature works in a classroom setting are effective in fostering critical thinking skills in students.

In their study investigating the suitability of texts in primary education Turkish textbooks for critical thinking education, Baçoğlu and Mutlu (2011) stated that critical thinking is an original form of thought that develops in a free environment. The research indicated that the texts in 6-7- 8th grade Turkish textbooks were weaker at the 7th-grade level compared to the others. Furthermore, while the 6-8th grade textbooks contained more evidence-based texts, the presence of contradictions in some texts within the 7th-grade books demonstrates that textbooks alone are insufficient for Turkish lessons to develop thinking skills. This situation supports the importance of utilizing children's books to introduce students to high-quality texts.

According to Yaralı (2020), it is vital to develop and support children's critical thinking skills in daily life. Supporting communication skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking; enabling children to compare every dimension of thought from different perspectives; and contributing to their problem-solving skills will enrich their world of thought and pave the way for free thinking. Critical thinking is an achievement that develops over time. The key here is to discover the areas that interest the child during the education-teaching phase and enable them to express their feelings and thoughts regarding these areas. Therefore, activities that enrich perspectives—such as asking open-ended questions that provoke thought, seeking different solutions to a problem, and conducting group work while facilitating communication among children—contribute to their ability to view events from multiple angles. Especially during the secondary school period, when children's abstract thinking develops further, texts open to discussion that are appropriate for their age level will enrich their power of reasoning on a subject. This view makes children's books valuable in terms of allowing children to talk and discuss, particularly regarding long-form works.

Recommendations

6.1. Recommendations for Researchers

The most crucial condition for raising individuals who think critically is to provide them with a democratic and critical environment in which they can express their ideas without hesitation, engage in inquiry, and discuss different perspectives. The school is the most conducive setting for students to implement this. As a subject in which students can develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, the Turkish language course is inherently qualified to provide a critical thinking environment. Based on the findings, results, and discussion sections of the research, the following recommendations can be proposed:

- Introducing students to high-quality and diverse works of children's literature, such as those examined in this study, is valuable both for their acquisition of reading habits and for their ability to question what they read.
- Similar studies can be conducted on other award-winning children's literature works to contribute to the existing literature.
- The specific dimensions emphasized within the context of critical thinking in award-winning works can be revealed and these results can be shared.
- Works can be analyzed in terms of themes, characters, and plot structure within the framework of critical thinking.
- The contribution of literary works to the Turkish Language Curriculum can be demonstrated in terms of critical thinking dimensions.
- Studies can be conducted to evaluate these works as potential supplementary resources to be recommended at the end of units by associating the themes in the books with the themes in the Turkish Language Curriculum.
- The proliferation of such studies is important in terms of setting an example for students and parents in the selection of source books.

6.2. Recommendations for Teachers

- Children's books can be selected by taking the themes in the Turkish Language Curriculum into consideration.
- Activities related to these books can be prepared to support students' critical thinking skills.
- Research on children's literature can be conducted to introduce students to high-quality literary works.
- To implement critical thinking in lessons, students can be provided with an environment where they can present their thoughts freely.
- A democratic atmosphere can be established within the classroom to encourage students to discuss books from a critical perspective and to approach diverse ideas with tolerance.

6.3. Recommendations for the Ministry of National Education

- In textbooks used within the scope of school curricula, more emphasis can be placed on texts that address affective and cognitive macro-skills.

- Texts that lack a focus on critical thinking skills can be identified and updated with new, relevant materials.
- To help students acquire a critical thinking perspective, elective critical thinking courses can be introduced, and resource books containing sample texts and activities for these courses can be prepared.
- Seminars and in-service training programs regarding critical thinking and its instruction can be organized for teachers.
- To facilitate the implementation of critical thinking in classrooms, resource books featuring activity pages suitable for students' age levels can be diversified and increased.
- Children's literature authors can be encouraged to write works that incorporate critical thinking strategies.
- Publishing houses that focus on children's literature can be incentivized to increase the number of publications that include critical thinking strategies

References

- Akinoğlu, O. (2003). Critical thinking as an educational value. *Journal of Values Education*, 1(3), 7-26.
- Arastaman, G., Fidan, İ. Ö., and Fidan, T. (2018). Validity and reliability in qualitative research: a theoretical review. *YYU Faculty of Education Journal*, 15(1), 37-75.
- Aydın, A., & Pehlivan, MB (2019). *Critical Thinking: Social Sciences and Communication Perspective*. Istanbul: Der Publishing House.
- Baltacı, A. (2017). Miles- Huberman model in qualitative data analysis. *Ahi Evran University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 3(1), 1-14
- Başoğlu, N., and Mutlu, B. (2011). Suitability of the texts in primary school Turkish textbooks for critical thinking education. *Kastamonu Education Journal*, 20(3), 983-998.
- Beers, S.Z. (2011). 21st Century Skills: Preparing students for their Future. Retrieved from https://www.yinghuaacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/21st_century_skills.pdf
- Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objects: the classification of educational goals, Handbook I: The cognitive domain*. New York: David McKayCompanyInc.
- Boyaçlı, Ş. D.B., & Özer, M.G. (2019). The future of learning: Turkish language curriculum from the perspective of 21st-century skills. *Anadolu Journal of Educational Sciences International*, 9 (2), 708-738. doi : 10.18039/ajesi.578170.
- Canbaz, B. (2021). *An examination of the "Crispy Philosophy" book series in terms of critical thinking skills* (Unpublished master's thesis). Bahçeşehir University, Istanbul.
- Çalışkan, M. (2019). Teaching Critical Thinking. *Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 114-134.

- Doğanay, A. (2021). Teaching Higher-Order Thinking Skills. In A. Doğanay (Ed.), *Teaching Principles and Methods* (13th Edition) (pp. 327-384). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Erdem, A.R., and Yazıcıoğlu, A. (2015). The relationship between problem-solving skills and critical thinking skills of prospective teachers. *OPUS-International Journal of Social Research* , 5(9), 27-41. [The Relationship Between Problem-Solving Skills and Critical Thinking Skills of Prospective Teachers | Arastirmax - Scientific Publication Index](#) .
- Eğmir, E. (2018). *Teaching Critical Thinking Skills: A Program Design for Middle School Students*. Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Ennis, R.H. (1985). *A Logical Basis for Measuring Critical Thinking Skills*. Educational Leadership.
- Facione, P.A., (2011). Critical Thinking: What it is and why it counts. Insight assessments, 2007 (1). (pp. 1-23). [what_why98-with-cover-page-v2.pdf](#) (accessed from dlwqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net).
- Gelen, İ. (2017). P21-21st Century Skills Frameworks in Programming and Teaching (US Applications). *Interdisciplinary Educational Research Journal*, 1 (2), 15-29. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/jier/issue/33877/348852>
- Güneş, F. (2021). What is Thinking? How is it Taught? In EK Memiş and A. Kaçar (Eds.), *Critical and Analytical Thinking*. (1st Edition) (pp. 1-25). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Halpern, D.F. (1999). Teaching for critical Thinking: Helping college students develop the skills and dispositions of a critical Thinker. *New directions. for teaching and learning*, 1999(80), 69-74.
- Huitt, W. (1998). Critical thinking: An overview. *educational psychology interactive*, 3 (6), 34-50. [Educational This information was obtained from Psychology Interactive: Critical Thinking \(edpsycinteractive.org\)](#) .
- Karatay, H. (2015). Literature circle for developing critical thinking and reading habit skills: book criticism model. *National Education Journal*, 45(208), 6-17.
- Kıralp, Ş. S.F. (2021). Critical Thinking. In S. Çelenk (Ed.), *Teaching Principles and Methods* (4th Edition) (pp. 275-290). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Lipmann, M. (1988). *Critical Thinking: What Can It Be? Resource Publication, Series 1 No. 1*. (pp. 4-6) Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED352326> .
- Ministry of National Education, (2019). PISA 2018 Turkey Preliminary Report. Retrieved from [03105347_PISA_2018_Turkiye_On_Raporu.pdf \(meb.gov.tr\)](#) (pp. 16-46).
- Mete, G. (2021). Examination of the Critical Thinking Skills of Middle School Students. *Journal of Mother Tongue Education*, 9(2), (pp.492-509). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.16916/aded.887592> .

- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. (2nd ed.). thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- OECD, (2008). 21st Century Skills: How can you prepare students for the new global economy? (<https://www.oecd.org/site/educeri21st/40756908.pdf>).
- Özkan, U.B. (2019). *Document Review Method for Educational Sciences Research*. Ankara: Pegem Akademi. (3-7).
- Paul, R. WAJA Binker, Jensen, K. & Kreklau, H. (1990). *critical thinking Handbook: 4th-6th Grades. A Guide for Remodeling Lesson Plans in Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science*. Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.
- Schafersman, S. D. (1991). *An Introduction to Critical Thinking*. (pp. 1-13). Retrieved from <http://www.freeinquiry.com/critical-thinking.html> ([smartcollegeplanning.org](http://www.smartcollegeplanning.org)) .
- Sever, S. (2013). *Children's Literature and Reading Culture*. TUDEM Publications.
- Sönmez, V. (2021). Teaching Critical Thinking. In KE Memiş and A. Kaçar (Eds.), *Critical and analytical thinking* (1st ed.) (116-130). Ankara: Pegem Akademi.
- Tekşan, K. (2013). The place of Ömer Seyfettin's stories in developing critical thinking in Turkish language teaching. *Journal of Mother Tongue Education*, 1(2), (pp. 55-74).
- Yaralı, K.T. (2020). Developmental Aspects of Critical Thinking and Supporting Critical Thinking in Children. *Pamukkale University Faculty of Education Journal*, 48, (pp.454-479).
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2018). *Qualitative Research Methods in Social Sciences* (11th Edition). Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Yılmaz, K. (2021). *Critical and Analytical Thinking* (4th Edition). Ankara: Pegem Akademi. (pp. 5-6).

Extended Summary (TR)

Amaç: Bu araştırmanın amacı, çocuk edebiyatı eserlerini eleştirel düşünme boyutlarına göre incelemektir.

Yöntem: Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma desenlerinden betimsel nitel araştırma yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında belirlenen çocuk kitapları, eleştirel düşünmenin 35 boyutu açısından incelenmiştir. Analiz sürecinde, Paul ve diğerleri (1990) tarafından geliştirilen ve araştırmanın veri toplama aracını oluşturan "Eleştirel Düşünmenin 35 Boyutu" temel alınmıştır. Araştırma soruları çerçevesinde elde edilen veriler, ilgili kavramsal yapıya göre çözümlenmiş; eserlerin bu boyutları ne ölçüde içerdiği tespit edilerek betimlenmiştir.

Bulgular: İncelenen çocuk edebiyatı eserlerinde, duyuşsal stratejiler kapsamında en sık başvurulan alt boyutun "*duyguların altında yatan düşünceleri ve düşüncelerin altında yatan duyguları keşfetme*" olduğu saptanmıştır. En az rastlanan duyuşsal stratejiler ise "*entelektüel tevazu geliştirme ve yargıyı askıya alma*", "*benmerkezciliğe veya toplummerkezciliğe ilişkin içgörü geliştirme*" ve "*adil düşünür olma*" olarak belirlenmiştir. Bilişsel makro beceriler içerisinde en sık kullanılan basamağın "*eylemleri veya politikaları analiz etme veya değerlendirme*" olduğu görülmüştür. Bu grupta en az gözlemlenen beceriler; "*bilgi kaynaklarının güvenilirliğini değerlendirme*", "*sessiz diyalog sanatı olarak eleştirel düşünme*" ve "*diyalektik akıl yürütme: bakış açılarını, yorumları veya teorileri karşılaştırma*"dır. Bilişsel mikro becerilerde ise en sık "*makul çıkarımlar, tahminler veya yorumlar yapma*" basamağına rastlanırken; "*kanıtları ve iddia edilen olguları değerlendirme*" ile "*idealleri gerçek uygulamalarla karşılaştırma*" becerilerinin en az düzeyde kullanıldığı tespit edilmiştir. Genel analiz sonuçları, bu kitapların eleştirel düşünme stratejilerinin bilişsel ve duyuşsal boyutlarının büyük bir kısmını kapsadığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Sonuç ve Öneriler: Araştırma sonucunda, eleştirel düşünmenin 35 boyutunu oluşturan kategoriler arasında en yüksek kullanım oranının bilişsel-makro becerilerde olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bilişsel-makro beceriler ile 21. yüzyıl becerileri arasındaki ilişki göz önüne alındığında, incelenen eserlerin bu becerilerin kazandırılmasında etkili olacağı düşünülmektedir. Eserlerdeki karakterlerin genel olarak üst düzey düşünme becerilerinden biri olan "*değerlendirme*" basamağını sıklıkla yansıttığı görülmüştür. İncelenen dokuz kitapta makro beceriler arasında yer alan "*disiplinler arası bağlantı kurma*" boyutuna ise rastlanmamıştır. Düşünmenin anlamlandırma boyutuyla ilgili olan ve düşünme becerilerinin temelini oluşturan bilişsel-mikro beceriler, makro becerilerden sonra en sık başvurulan ikinci kategori olmuştur. Bunları, bağımsız düşünebilme gücüyle ilgili olan duyuşsal stratejiler izlemektedir. Bu stratejilerin; duygular ve düşünceler arasında bağ kurma, sorgulama ve özerk düşünme gibi eleştirel düşünmenin duyuşsal yönünü başarıyla ortaya koyduğu belirlenmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, çocuk kitaplarının eleştirel düşünme becerilerini içermesi açısından nitelikli ve yeterli olduğu söylenebilir. Karakterlerin olaylara karşı tutum ve yaklaşımlarıyla bu becerileri somutlaştırdıkları; sıklıkla sorgulama yaptıkları, öz-değerlendirme (yürütücü biliş) yoluyla düşüncelerini yeniden yapılandıkları, önyargıları yıktıkları ve mantıklı çıkarımlarda buldukları müşahede edilmiştir.

Bu sonuçlar ışığında; diğer çocuk edebiyatı eserleri de eleştirel düşünmenin 35 boyutu çerçevesinde incelenerek literatüre katkı sağlanabilir. Gelecek araştırmalarda, ödüllü kitapların Türkçe dersleri için tema ve ileti açısından dikkate alınarak kaynak olarak önerilebilir. Ayrıca, Türkçe dersi öğretim programındaki temalarla uyumlu kitaplar seçilerek, öğrencilerin eleştirel düşünme becerilerini destekleyecek etkinlik odaklı uygulama çalışmaları tasarlanabilir.