

# An analysis of values in children's picture books in Turkish for 5-6 year-old children

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**Abstract.** This study aims to examine the values of wisdom, tolerance, benevolence, happiness, courtesy, respect, love and responsibility in the children's books published in the years between 2000 and 2007 and in 2014 written in Turkish for 5-6 year old children. It is designed in content analysis pattern of qualitative research. A descriptive model of quantitative research methods was used to determine the frequency of values in picture books. The sample of the study consists of 40 children's picture books which are translated into Turkish and written in Turkish for the 5-6 age group determined by the criterion sampling strategy. The researcher developed a checklist as a data collection tool which is values checklist. As a result of the research, there are 46.80% values in the children's picture books published between 2000 and 2007; 53.20% values published in 2014, in analyzed picture books. It is found that children's picture books, those translated into Turkish and those written in Turkish differ in terms of inclusion of values. Regarding results of the study, it is necessary to give more importance to the value of wisdom and tolerance in the children's picture books and to transfer the values through positive examples toward proper behavior.

**Keywords:** Pre-school Education, Children's Picture Books, Values, Values Education, Children's Literature.

## 1 Introduction

Value is defined as the totality of material and spiritual elements that encompass the social, cultural, economic and scientific values of a nation [1]. Values are moral principles that are abstract. Behaviors are the things that make values concrete. Values are not only universal, but also show a change between societies. The meaning of value is not the same in all the societies. For instance, behaviors that are considered to be indicator of value of respect vary from one country to another [2].

Value transfer can be expressed as a process of involving the entirety of life through culture, education, children's literature and parents [3, 4, and 5]. Values education includes

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all education degrees from pre-school to high school and from primary school to university.

Pre-school education, defined as pre-school education, is as important as the food consumed by children and is seen as one of the educational features of developed societies [6]. It is important to add values to children in the preschool period, which is an important place in the life of the individual. Preschool children should be given values of responsibility, sharing, patience, happiness, honesty, respect, love, peace and cooperation [7]. Children's literature positively influences the transfer of values with favorable examples [8]. Values are transmitted to children through children's books. It is thought that the products of a nation's children's literature are related to how the nation wants a future and a generation [9].

In this context; it was necessary to examine the pictures of children's books in terms of values. In the children's picture books for children ages 5 to 6, the main problem of this research is which values are tried to be given to children and whether these values are appropriate for children's age and developmental needs.

This research was conducted in order to determine whether children's books written in Turkish for 5-6 year old children are different in terms of friendship, success, wisdom, tolerance, benevolence, happiness, courtesy, respect, love and responsibility. This research will shed light on the role of valuing children's books and the values mentioned in children's books to academics, authors, writers and publishers interested in pre-school education and children's picture books, teachers and parents.

## 2 Methods

This research which is designed in the content analysis pattern of the qualitative research aims to examine the values of friendship, success, wisdom, tolerance, benevolence, happiness, courtesy, respect, love and responsibility in the children's picture books written between 2000-2007 in Turkish and published in 2014 for 5-6 age years. A descriptive model of quantitative research methods was used to determine the proportion of values in books.

The sample of the research consists of 40 children's books written in Turkish between the years 2000-2007 and in 2014, for the 5-6 age group determined by criterion sampling strategy. The division of the children's picture books by category and book type feature is shown in Table 1:

**Table 1.** Division of the children's picture books reviewed according to book type feature

Picture Books	Turkish	Translated	Total	%
2000-2007	10	10	20	50
2014	10	10	20	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 1, the distribution of the children's picture books according to the years they have been published and according to the book's type are as follows: A total of 40 picture children books (n = 10) and translated (n = 10) were included in the books published between 2000-2007, including Turkish books (n = 10) and translated books (n = 10) in the books published in 2014.

The researcher has developed the "Values Checklist" by reading the field text to examine the children's picture books. The "Values Checklist" has been reviewed by 1 specialist, 1 academician and 1 teacher on the field. The necessary corrections are made and the encoder reliability is calculated. Encoder reliability was found as 72%. In the initial

phase of the study, the coding reliability is 70% and the results above this are reliable [10]. Accordingly, it can be said that the values determined correspond to a great extent. The checklist consists of two parts. The first part contains general information about the book, and the second part contains the values in the book. Children's picture books included in the scope of the study were read. Each value in the books is noted in the list. "Value Checklist" contains 10 basic values which are friendship, success, wisdom, tolerance, benevolence, happiness, courtesy, respect, love and responsibility. The data were collected by document collection and review technique.

The values in the children's picture books were evaluated according to the "Value Checklist" developed by the researcher. Findings related to the values in children's picture books have been given the meaning and interpreted with the support of the area literature. Children's picture books were analyzed by content analysis. Different categories (codes) have been created according to the value of the examined value in the books. The value of friendship is coded in three different ways: peer friendship, imaginary friendship and both. Value of wisdom is categorized in two different ways: criticism and self-criticism. Value of benevolence is coded in two different ways: shared and assisted. Value of respect is coded in two different ways: respect for elders and respect for differences. Value of love; human love, environment love and nature love, animal love, book love and art love are categorized in five different ways. In the quantitative dimension of the study, a percentage-frequency analysis was used to determine the frequency with which the values were included.

### 3 Results and Discussion

Some of the raw data for the values examined in the children's picture books are given below.

*"In the end, Ibo, who could not be separated from the ball, also joined the children and started playing the ball with their friends until late hours."*(Peer friendship, Ak, 2014, Book of Balls, p.16)

*"After that day the daylights did never stop. They always worked."*(Sedulity, Cengiz, 2014, From the Book of Hardworking Day Lights, p.12).

*"I've been watching you for weeks. What you do is not nice. And you have not grown. You were alone. Give up this feeling."*(Criticism, Freelance, 2007, from the book of Resentful Sunflower, p.14).

*"Her mother was very sad when she heard this. But still she was not angry with her little beast."*(Tolerance, Callier, 2014, No, No, No, Me What!, p.14) .

*"Finally, Daisy had to climb the trees and help them get out."*(Aid, Lindenbaum, 2006, from the book of Daisies and Wolves, p.22).

*"They played games together in joy, laughed and giggled."* (Happiness, Ercan Bilgic, 2014, From the Book of When Itir the Run, p.21).

*"Please welcome," he said. They entered the house together."*(Courtesy, Firat, 2005, from the book of the magical book, p.3).

*"It's good that they are all different, or how would I distinguish my brother from the others?"* (Respect for differences, Akal, 2014, From the Book of Stranger Friends of My Brother, p.36).

*"After a while, they used to come to a river with forests. 'I have no trees left to climb.' said orangutan to the ones on the boat. The forest is disappearing."*(Environment and nature love, Preston Gannon, 2014, Book of Journey to Home, p.15).

*"The responsibility for dealing with animals that want to be loved will be our sweet friend, Lea's!"*(Responsibility, Kay, 2014, from the book of Sweet Friends, p.5).

Findings regarding the ratio of the number of sentences related to "Values" in the

children's picture books to the total number of sentences are as follows:

**Table 2.** Percentage of number of sentences related to "values" in children's picture books to total number of sentences (N = 2698, Total sentence count)

Values	2000-2007				2014				Book Type				Total	
	Turkish		Translated		Turkish		Translated		Turkish		Translated			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Friendship	15	0.55	15	0.55	18	0.66	10	0.38	33	1.22	25	0.92	58	<b>2.14</b>
Success	17	0.64	4	0.14	15	0.55	10	0.38	32	1.19	14	0.52	46	<b>1.71</b>
Wisdom	14	0.51	6	0.22	1	0.03	0	0.00	15	0.55	6	0.22	21	<b>0.77</b>
Tolerance	0	0.00	1	0.03	0	0.00	2	0.07	0	0.00	3	0.11	3	<b>0.11</b>
Benevolence	4	0.14	11	0.40	12	0.45	10	0.38	16	0.59	21	0.78	37	<b>1.37</b>
Happiness	16	0.60	0	0.00	21	0.78	5	0.18	37	1.38	5	0.18	42	<b>1.56</b>
Courtesy	30	1.12	9	0.33	6	0.22	29	1.08	36	1.34	38	1.41	74	<b>2.75</b>
Respect	10	0.38	0	0.00	5	0.19	4	0.14	15	0.57	4	0.14	19	<b>0.71</b>
Love	46	1.70	44	1.63	57	2.11	76	2.82	103	3.82	120	4.44	223	<b>8.26</b>
Responsibility	20	0.75	1	0.03	2	0.07	16	0.59	22	0.81	17	0.63	39	<b>1.44</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>6.37</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>5.07</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>6.01</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>11.46</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>9.37</b>	<b>2698</b>	<b>20.83</b>

Compared to the total number of sentences (N = 2698) in the children's picture books according to Table 2, the total sentence rate for the "values" is 20.83%. Findings related to the ratio of the number of sentences related to "Values" in the children's picture books to each value are as follows:

**Table 3.** Division of number of sentences related to "values" in picture children's picture books by each "value" (N = 562, number of sentences related to total "values")

Values	2000-2007				2014				Book Type				Total	
	Turkish		Translated		Turkish		Translated		Turkish		Translated			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Friendship	15	25.87	15	25.87	18	31.03	10	17.23	33	56.90	25	43.10	58	<b>100.0</b>
Success	17	36.96	4	8.69	15	32.61	10	21.74	32	69.57	14	30.43	46	<b>100.0</b>
Wisdom	14	66.67	6	28.57	1	4.76	0	0.00	15	71.42	6	28.58	21	<b>100.0</b>
Tolerance	0	0.00	1	33.33	0	0.00	2	66.67	0	0.00	3	100.00	3	<b>100.0</b>
Benevolence	4	10.82	11	29.73	12	32.43	10	27.02	16	43.24	21	56.76	37	<b>100.0</b>
Happiness	16	38.09	0	0.00	21	50.00	5	11.91	37	88.09	5	11.91	42	<b>100.0</b>
Courtesy	30	40.55	9	12.16	6	8.10	29	39.19	36	48.65	38	51.35	74	<b>100.0</b>
Respect	10	52.64	0	0.00	5	26.31	4	21.05	15	78.95	4	21.05	19	<b>100.0</b>
Love	46	20.63	44	19.73	57	25.56	76	34.08	103	46.18	120	53.82	223	<b>100.0</b>
Responsibility	20	51.29	1	2.57	2	5.12	16	41.02	22	56.41	17	43.59	39	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>30.61</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>16.19</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>24.37</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>28.83</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>54.99</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>45.01</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>100.0</b>

According to Table 3, in the children's books with pictures, there are more places in the Turkish books (54.99%); "Books" published between 2000 and 2007 included more "values" (30.61%); It is seen that in the books published in 2014, "values" were given more space in the translated books (28.83%).

**Table 4.** Friendship value in children's picture books

	<b>Turkish</b>	<b>Translated</b>
<b>Friendship</b>	Interpersonal bonds that break and reinforce.	Friendly behavior and tips for making friends.
	Resentful and touchy characters	The characters who know the value of the relationship
	Understanding the value of friendship by making mistakes	Having good time, invite-be invited.

In Table 4, there are cases which the friendship value is included the children's picture books.

**Table 5.** Success value in children's picture books

	<b>Turkish</b>	<b>Translated</b>
<b>Success</b>	Working non-stop, performing daily tasks	Production, working, getting tired, having rest, collaborate
	Artistic designs and associations with productions	Association with self-confidence
	Frequent repetition of work	Emphasis on effort and struggle

In Table 5, there are examples of the value of success in children's picture books.

**Table 6.** Wisdom value in children's picture books

	<b>Turkish</b>	<b>Translated</b>
<b>Wisdom</b>	Using thinking skills with the help of others	Demonstrate the ability to ask questions
	Self-criticism, being aware of her/his mistakes, inner settlement	Questioning

Table 6 shows the wisdom value of children's picture books.

**Table 7.** Tolerance value in children's picture books

	<b>Turkish</b>	<b>Translated</b>
<b>Tolerance</b>	-	Patience
	-	Acceptance
	-	Respect for different likes

In Table 7, there are cases where the children's picture books include tolerance value.

**Table 8.** Benevolence value in children's picture books

	<b>Turkish</b>	<b>Translated</b>
<b>Benevolence</b>	Helping	Asking Help
	Sharing	Helping animals
	Helping People	Helping People

Table 8 shows the benevolence value of children's picture books.

**Table 9.** The Happiness value in children's picture books

Happiness	Turkish	Translated
	Verbal expression of happiness	Reflection of happiness in behaviors
Emotional awareness	Tips for happiness	

Table 9 shows the happiness value of children's picture books.

**Table 10.** The courtesy value of children's picture books

Courtesy	Turkish	Translated
	Words of greeting and farewell	Expressing liking

Table 10 shows the courtesy value of children's picture books.

**Table 11.** Respect value in children's picture books

Respect	Turkish	Translated
	Refuse difference and regret	Respect, listen to the adult promises
To see difference as a threat.	Embracing difference, emphasizing the positive aspects of difference.	

In Table 11, there are cases where the children's picture books have the respect value.

**Table 12.** Love value in children's picture books

Love	Turkish	Translated
	Be aware of natural beauties and not to harm	Environmental problems, resources which are running out, protecting environment and saving
Love words for animals	Damages to animals and animals' habitats	
Feeding cat, fish and bird	Feeding cat and dog	
Asking for reading, liking artists and works of art	Love of mother and sibling.	

Table 12 shows the love value of children's picture books.

**Table 13.** Responsibility value in children's picture books

Responsibility	Turkish	Translated
	Division of labor	Division of labor
Division of duties within the family	Reminding the tasks to the heroes	
Complaint from duty	Undertaking the consequence of behavior, regretting, trying to make up for the mistake	

In Table 13, there are cases where the children's picture books have the responsibility value.

Wright [11] examined the books of moral education which were published in the recent years of 19th century and the beginning of 20th century. Within the scope of the research, moral texts, moral books, programs supporting moral education and bedside books used in moral education were examined. Ethical education is discussed from the values of

obedience, patriotism and tolerance. The contents of the lessons were examined in the primary education programs and values tried to be given to children were stated as obedience, patriotism and tolerance values. The same values are mentioned in moral books. Although value of obedience is a common theme of ethical values, it is stated that there is no inclusive education for young people and children. It is stated that the value of tolerance is not included in the examined books; the value of patriotism is handled by many writers; tolerance value is frequently mentioned in the books. However, it was stated that only two authors included titles to cope with differences, differences and different thoughts. The results of the research are similar in terms of respect to differences with Wright's work. It is divided in terms of tolerance. This study also examined the value of respect for differences as a subcategory of respect value. In this study, there was less place for tolerance in books published between 2000-2007; it was found that domestic books did not include tolerance value. There are more places in the books published between 2000-2007 and in the domestic books for the respect for the differences; in translated books, and in books published in 2014, there was less place for respect for differences.

Gönen and Güler [12] studied 80 stories of story books published between 1995 and 2010, prepared for children between 2 and 12 years, in the research called as Environment and the Place of Environment in the picture storybooks. According to the results of the research, 80% of the books are the main theme for the environmental theme. The books contain 22.5% of the concepts related to environment and the terms of environment. The concepts related to the environment and the terms of environment have been found to be included in children's picture books over 6 years of age. Gönen and Güler have found that 80% is the main theme for the concept of environment. In this study, it was found that 81.33% of books in the sub-categories of environment and nature love were printed in 2014. The results of the research are similar with the study of Gönen and Güler in terms of the love of environment and nature which are subcategory of love value.

Akyol [13] examined the value contained in domestic and foreign children's picture books which are written in Turkish for pre-school children in Turkey. In the research which consists of a total of 250 children's books both Turkish and foreign, a check list developed by the researcher was used. In the control list, 24 values belonging to the categories of personal, interpersonal and social values are included. In the study it was found that the values of happiness, kindness, sensitivity, love, friendship, cooperation in the categories of personal and interpersonal values in children's picture books are high; the values of humility, sincerity, honesty, freedom, respect and harmony are low. The research results are similar in terms of love which has been mentioned the most to respect which has been mentioned the least. It differs in terms of the values of wisdom and tolerance the ones that in mentioned least. In this research, the values that are at least involved are the values of wisdom and tolerance.

Dirican [14] reviewed the picture story books published for children in the age group of 3-6 in terms of some basic values. In the study of 135 children's books written by Turkish authors by content analysis, it was found that the texts of the books had a value of 28.69% and the picture parts had a value of 53.04%. It is seen that in the text part, love, sharing, friendship, happiness and courtesy are the most common values; courage, leadership and peace are least mentioned values. It was found that in the division of values in picture books sharing, love, happiness, friendship and helpfulness are included most; respect, cleanliness, courtesy, empathy and diligence are included as in a middle level. In the text part, it is determined that love value is mentioned the most, in the picture part value of sharing is mentioned and value of peace is mentioned the least in both parts. When the results of the research are compared, it is mentioned that there is one-to-one correspondence in terms of value of love. In this study, love value was found to be mentioned the most. In this study, sharing, friendship, courtesy and happiness have been

mentioned as well. The happiness value has been mostly included in domestic books published in 2014. Dirican has found that courage, peace and leadership values are mentioned at least. In this study, the values mentioned the least are the values of wisdom, tolerance and respect. In this study, The 28.69% value ratio found in the texts is similar to the 25.46% value published in books published in 2014. Another aspect of this study that distinguishes Dirican's work is in the books published between 2000-2007, the value ratio is 17.25%; the value ratio in domestic books is 54.99%.

Çalışkan [15] studied the literary works of world literature on the list of 100 Basic Works selected by the Ministry of Education for primary school students in terms of value education. Respect for friendship, family, love, perseverance, diligence, personal development, compassion, benevolence, sacrifice, honesty, freedom, responsibility, justice, social ethics, solidarity, peace, equality, being against to injustice, missing, neighborliness, tolerance, apology, goodness, foresighted, austerity were found in works. The "love of nature" is mentioned as sub value of love in the determinations made. Within the value of friendship, non-identical species emphasize the strong bond between each other; it is stated that the family is described as an institution that continuously supports each other on the good and bad days that are supported in difficult times. The research results are similar in terms of friendship, love, diligence, helpfulness, responsibility, tolerance and goodness. Another similar aspect is that as a subcategory of love value, in this work, the value of environment and nature love has been determined as a value included in the books. Another similar aspect is the way in which friendship and family values are transferred. Family value was associated with the value of human love, which is the subcontract of love value in this study. In this study, it is seen that friendship is included as an imaginary friendship and the value of human love is included in translated books in terms of mother and sister love, and father love is not included. In the first years of life, mother's love may have been included in children's picture books because the children's basic needs are often met by their mother.

Gilmore and Howard [16] examined children's books in terms of supporting of diversity and disability. As a result of the research, 50 children's books are proposed to guide children from different ages and to develop respect and empathy for differences in children. In the study, the messages given in books are mentioned with examples. Some of these messages were stated as everyone is unique, some of them are weak spots and strong spots, and we do not need to compare ourselves with others. The research results are similar in terms of respect to differences through the work of Gilmore and Howard. This study also examined the value of respect for differences as a subcategory of respect value. It has been found that respect for differences was mentioned more in the books published between 2000-2007, and the domestic books. Studies that are similar in terms of mentioning about respect for differences however differs mentioning about the same value. In this study it has been determined that there are examples in the domestic books which may damage the value of respect for differences. The differences are not based on respect for differences attitudes, but on people who are aware of their mistake(s).

## 4 Conclusions

In children's picture books, values were mentioned less in books published between 2000-2007 (46.80%) and it was mentioned more in books published in 2014 (53.20%). In the children's picture books, the values were mentioned more in Turkish books (54.99%) and in translated books they were mentioned less (45.01%). Compared to the total number of sentences in the children's picture books published between 2000-2007, the total sentence rate of the value expressing sentences is 21.55%. Tolerance values are not included in the children's picture books published between 2000-2007. In the pictures of domestic children's

books printed between the years of 2000-2007, the value of love was included in the sub-category of art love in maximum; at least in the category of animal love subcategory; it was found that the human love subcategory was not included. In the pictures of domestic children's books published between 2000-2007, there is no sub-category of sharing value of benevolence; was found to be included in the subcategory of helping.

Compared to the total number of sentences in the children's picture books published between 2000-2007, the total sentence rate of the expressing values is 12.53%. Translated children's picture books published between 2000 and 2007 the love value was mentioned most and tolerance and responsibility values are mentioned at least. Values of happiness and respect were not included in the children's picture books published between 2000-2007. In the children's picture books published between 2000 and 2007, the value of love was included in the category of animal love in the sub category; there is a little space for the sub-category of human love; environment and nature love, book love and art love subcategories were not included.

Compared to the total number of sentences in the children's picture books published between 2000-2007, the total sentence rate of the expressing values is 17.25%. Children's picture books published between the years 2000-2007 included the love value most land at least the value of tolerance. In the children's picture books published between 2000-2007, the value of love was included most in the category of animal love in the sub category of love; at least in the sub-category of human love was found. Compared to the total number of sentences in the books in the pictures of domestic children's books published in 2014, the total sentence rate of the expressing values is 20.78%. In the Turkish children's picture books published in 2014, the most mentioned value is love, the least value is wisdom, and the value of tolerance were not included. In the domestic children's picture books published in 2014, the value of love was mostly included in the sub-categories of environment and nature love; book love sub-category has been given little space; human love and art love subcategories were not included. In the children's picture books published in 2014, the value of wisdom was included in the sub-category self-criticism; criticism was not included in the sub-category; it was not included in sub-category of criticism.

Compared to the total number of sentences in the books in the translated children's picture books published in 2014, the total sentence rate of the expressing statements is 31.45%. In the children's picture books published in 2014, the value of love was mentioned at least and the value of tolerance and wisdom was not included. In the translated children's picture books published in 2014, the value of love was included most in animal love in the sub category; the value of love was mentioned at least in the sub-category of human love; book love and art love were not included in the subcategories.

Compared to the total number of sentences in books in children 's picture books published in 2014, the total sentence rate of the expressing values is 25.46%. In children's picture books published in the year 2014, the most mentioned value was love and at least the value of wisdom was included. In the children's picture books published in 2014, the value of love was included in the categories of animal love and environment and nature love subcategories; it has been determined that the love value was mentioned at least as a sub-category of human love. It has been determined that in domestic and translated children's picture books, there is a need to relate values in terms of availability. While the value of friendship is conveyed through negative examples in domestic books, there are positive examples of friendship in translated books. While the value of success is associated with division of tasks, artistic design and productivity in domestic books, translated books are associated with the value of effort, struggle and self-confidence. Tolerance in the translated books is conveyed with patience, acceptance and respect for different tastes and it is seen that the value of tolerance is not included in the domestic books. The value of benevolence is associated with sharing in domestic books, while translated books are

associated with reluctantly help.

While the happiness value is conveyed through the acts and behaviors of the heroes in the translated books, it is conveyed in domestic children's books by expressing that heroes are happy. The value of courtesy is conveyed in domestic children's books mostly through words used during greetings and farewells, and in the translated children's books is conveyed by expressing likeness. Respect for differences, which are subcategories of respect, are conveyed through characters that embrace differences entirely in translated books and in the domestic books, conveyed through the characters that are disturbed by difference beforehand, and who recognize and regret the mistake afterwards.

Tolerance value should be included in children's picture books. It is thought that in the children's picture books, values of benevolence, respect and animal love should be mentioned more. The value of wisdom should be described in a way that includes the value of criticism. Children should see the heroes who question, not the heroes who obey unconditionally in books. The establishment of an independent committee or commission dedicated to the study of children's picture books can contribute to the achievement of children's books that are qualified and appropriate for their development. It is thought that it is better to explain about heroes in children's picture books in ways that do not damage their values, and to convey values through positive examples and with an idea of correct behavior.

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