

The Acquaintance Level of Turkish Prospective Teachers with Qualified Works of Children's Literature

Erkan Çer¹ & Ertuğrul Şahin²

¹ Department of Turkish Education, Faculty of Education, Amasya University, Turkey

² Department of Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Faculty of Education, Amasya University, Turkey

Correspondence: Ertuğrul Şahin, Department of Guidance and Psychological Counseling, Faculty of Education, Amasya University, Turkey. Tel: 90-358-252-6230. E-mail: ertugrulsahn@gmail.com

Received: May 22, 2016

Accepted: June 3, 2016

Online Published: June 20, 2016

doi:10.5539/jel.v5n3p205

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/jel.v5n3p205>

Abstract

The aim of this cross-sectional study is investigate to what extent acquainted prospective Turkish teachers are with qualified works of children's literature. A convenience sample of 146 university students studying at the Turkish teaching department at a university in the Central Black Sea Region completed a questionnaire to determine the qualified works of children's literature about which the students knew. Firstly, books which were assessed as quality by students for primary and secondary school pupils were classified using frequencies and percentages. In the second stage of the analysis, appropriate books suiting the definition of quality books for children were selected according to Çer's (2016a, 2016b) suggestions, and the foreknowledge levels of each student for quality books were determined. The Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis H test were performed to examine gender and grade level differences in foreknowledge levels. Results of this study showed that the level of foreknowledge of Turkish prospective teachers about quality books for children for primary and secondary school students was quite low. Additionally, being female and grade level is associated with qualified works of children's literature which the students knew. Such that, female prospective teachers significantly more acquainted with quality books for secondary school than males and the junior and senior students were significantly more acquainted with books for primary school than the freshmen and sophomore students. Senior students were also significantly more acquainted with books for secondary school than the freshmen, sophomore and junior students.

Keywords: prospective Turkish teachers, quality works of children's literature, Turkey

1. Introduction

Works of children's literature should present the reality of human beings and life to children with verbal and visual themes of artistic quality, which activate children's worlds of emotion and ideas by an approach appropriate for their language development and their comprehension levels and which also prioritizes their needs. These works are one of the first instruments that help them sense the beauty of their mother tongue, and introduce them to the aesthetic language of colors and lines beginning in their early years. Furthermore, considering the basic functions of these works, such as instilling in children the desire for and habit of reading, opening the gates of the world of literature by making them gain sensitivity and awareness for language, they are necessary instruments for children's developmental processes. In this respect, the ultimate goal of literature of this kind is to help children use their sensitivity by giving them the responsibilities of imagining and thinking as well as improve their aesthetic taste levels and enhance their higher order thinking abilities. The most basic function of children's literature is to create a living space for children so that they can become part of the culture of reading (Aslan, 2013; Dilidüzgün, 2007; Sever, 2007, 2013).

Works of children's literature should give child readers the opportunity for learning about life and themselves and discerning the nature of humanity. They should also learn to use their senses to understand the aesthetic sides of visual qualities and language (Çer, 2016b, 2016c) because quality texts are supposed to render their lives meaningful by helping children develop emotionally and improve their thinking skills by presenting a visual and verbal world. They should also learn to evolve socially; discern human relationships; and develop their experiences (Anderson, 2013; Hunt, 2005; Lukens, Smith, & Coffel, 2013; Russell, 2009; Sawyer, 2012; Wolf,

2004). This makes it possible for the child reader to become sensitive to what is beautiful, aware of and improve his self-respect, as well as increase his aesthetic interest, and recognize his feelings and thoughts.

Since childhood is the subject of children's literature (Şirin, 2007), books to be presented to children should primarily be appropriate for their nature, interests, needs, perspectives, and language and sense capacities (Çer, 2014, 2016a, 2016c). Reflecting this conception in the design, content and educational attributes of books should not only remove the hindrances between the book and the child but also help him develop the habit and love of reading. In addition, certain qualities of books, such as polysemy, fiction, inclusion of covert meaning, non-authoritative narration attributes, and aesthetic integrity (Dilidüzgün, 2000), may help children take on thinking and imagining responsibilities in a fictional world which is nourished by the reality of life. This will also allow children to learn about what it is to be a human being, life, and nature with an approach integrating what is real and what is fictional in the world of literature, but also may make them discern the contrasts and similarities between themselves and others. Thus, the child may make self-regulations considering the plenitude of texts of literary quality with which he interacts. Prioritizing aesthetic concerns in images formed by colors, lines, and words may develop the awareness of sensitivity expected to emerge within the child. Since being sensitive means understanding emotions and developing sensitivity (Bakırcıoğlu, 2012), the development of this skill may depend on the fact that artistic perception reaches the child beginning from his early years. Since artist sensitivity helps the child improve his behaviors by reflecting on his senses in this period, it may help him use aesthetic tastes while he turns to the consideration of himself and he senses the reality of life and being human.

The child's interaction with the book may both help him gain linguistic skills efficiently and make him evolve and transform his ability to communicate (Ahrens, 2011). Research examining the relationship between books for children and linguistic skills generally proposes that children's comprehension and explanation skills, abilities to express themselves, and vocabularies are enhanced by reading such books. They also help children discern the process of language, understand grammatical rules better, use adjectives and adverbs in daily usage more, and accelerate their conceptual development (Arnold & Whitehurst, 1994; Aslan, 2007a; Barbara, 1993; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994; Wasik & Bond, 2001). Also, the fact that the child is aware of his emotions, thoughts, and behaviors by participating in the adventure which the character has may enhance his self-respect, personality, egocentric emotions, socialization, attitudes, and behaviors when confronting problems. Therefore, in their early years, allowing children to meet books of literary quality which are appropriate for their developmental level may contribute to their personal development.

Children's books also help their emotional life. Firstly, the child reader discerns that every human being has their own emotions and this is natural. Besides, the child reader gets the chance to learn about himself and the mysterious creature called "the human being" by listening to what is told to him or through reading. Secondly, he can cope with negative feelings such as fear, envy, rage, and hatred by being able to control his emotions. Lastly, it leaves him alone with various life stories so that he can perceive himself as an individual (Çılgin, 2007). The child primarily requires the character which he identifies with to realize, know, and become aware to be able to engage in self-regulation for his own emotions because the child establishes relationships with the entities he believes in (Pringle, 1986; Thompson, 1999). This relationship clearly displays the child's need for books of literary quality.

The contribution of quality works of children's literature to the child's developing his power of imagination; to increasing his desire of reading; to introducing him to people with strong and weak sides, conflicts, and contradictions; to gaining sensitivity by helping in disciplining emotions; to arousing love and awareness of the mother tongue; to learning about enjoyment, entertainment, having love for life; to enriching his inner world; to developing his sense of identity; to gaining aesthetic taste by being sensitive to what is beautiful; to improving comprehension and explanation skills and vocabulary, and to engage in higher order thinking responsibility is undeniable (Aslan, 2007b; Dilidüzgün, 2004; Gülyüz, 2013; Gültekin, 2009; Nas, 2004; Oğuzkan, 2006; Sever, 2009; Yalçın & Aytaş, 2005). When this contribution of quality works of children's literature is taken into consideration, they should be included in the child's life as a vital stimulus. This is firstly the responsibility of his parents and then of teachers working in education institutions.

Children's literature is also part of important native tongue teaching activities (Gülyüz, 2003) because children's books help students improve their emotional worlds and ideas, as well as learn to think creatively, all of which improve their language skills (Çer, 2014). The child who interprets facts, phenomena, and situations he encounters with an artistic perspective makes use of the creative expression varieties, elaborateness, and properties of the Turkish language. In this respect, quality books for children help develop the four basic

language skills. They also help the child's expression skills and sensitivity in discerning grammatical structures (Aslan, 2011).

Modern literature for children should be part of a learning framework that cares about children, puts them first, and is concerned with addressing the children's environment and circumstances as well as responding to their needs (İpşiroğlu, 2011). Moreover, just as in adults' books, the primary concern of the author in children's books is to produce an artistic work which is appropriate for children, instead of teaching certain moral values or ideological statements and beliefs (Aslan, 2008, 2014; Çer, 2016c). In other words, approaches by which the child imagines, thinks freely, learns how to decide and how to cope with violence, reveals his creativity, and which supports his entrepreneurship, but does not exploit his feelings, are supposed to be preferred because the child, through such approaches, gains sensitivity to being human, life, and nature with the help of his affective and cognitive capacity. This approach is also the basis of producing intellectual and sensitive individuals who are prioritized by a democratic society. For this reason, anything at odds with the child's own world should not be reflected in children's books beginning in the early years. The purpose of this study was to investigate to what extent prospective Turkish teachers are acquainted with quality books of children's literature. It was hypothesized that prospective Turkish teachers' level of foreknowledge would be low related to quality books for children for primary and secondary school students.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This research was a cross-sectional study in which prospective Turkish teachers' levels of acquaintance with quality works of children's literature and the related differences between gender and grade levels for these were examined.

2.2 Participants

Participants included 146 undergraduates studying at the Turkish teaching department at a university in the Central Black Sea region of Turkey. They were selected using convenience sampling. Approximately 30% of the students ($n=44$) were male and 70% ($n=102$) were female, which reflected the gender division in this department. The ages of the students ranged from 18 to 25, and the mean age of participants was 20.35 ($S.D$: 1.39). In terms of grade levels, approximately 32% ($n=47$) of the students were sophomores, 30% ($n=43$) were juniors, 28% ($n=41$) were freshmen, and 10% ($n=15$) were seniors. No other information concerning the students' demographic attributes was collected.

2.3 Measures

A study questionnaire consisting of sociodemographic questions and a two-item questionnaire to find out the number of quality works of children's literature were used as the data collection instruments.

Sociodemographics: Participants were asked to provide information about their gender, age, and grade level.

Quality Books of Children's Literature Questionnaire (QBCLQ): A two-item QBCLQ was applied to the students to find out the number of quality works that they know for children's literature at the primary and secondary school level. A six-step process suggested by Anderson and Arsenault (1998) was followed in developing this questionnaire. Relevant questions were determined in the first step. Scientific articles about this topic and previous studies in the literature were utilized to determine the questions. In the second step, the questionnaire items were drafted. They were carefully prepared to be clear and understandable and at the same time relevant to the purpose of the research. In the third step, items were grouped and ordered. In the fourth step, the questionnaire to be applied was designed. Items were ordered from general to specific. Information about the purpose of the study was included at the top of the questionnaire. In addition anonymity, confidentiality, and how the participants should respond to the questions were added, and similar questions were grouped. After the questionnaire was drafted, an instructor from the Amasya University Turkish Teaching Department and an expert from the Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department, both experienced in developing questionnaires and scales were asked to revise it. As a result of the expert review, some items were removed and the questionnaire was finalized. In the fifth step, a pilot experiment was carried out with a group of Turkish teaching undergraduate students who did not participate to current study. No problem was encountered during the pilot study. Lastly, the questionnaire was implemented.

The questionnaire consisted of two open-ended questions. The students were asked to write down 10 quality books that they knew for children in primary school grades in the first open-ended question and similarly they were asked the write down 10 quality books for children in secondary school grades.

2.4 Procedure

Data for this research were collected from the students during second term of the 2015/2016 academic year. Questionnaires were administered by the first researcher during regular class hours. The students were informed about voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and that they could withdraw at any step of the study without sanction. No student refused to participate in the research. Students completed the questionnaire in about 20 minutes.

2.5 Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were performed with SPSS 23 software. Firstly, the books for primary and secondary school pupils, which were indicated as quality by the students, were classified using frequencies and percentages. However, because the students gave so many different responses, 10 books having the highest frequency as being quality were reported. In the second step of the analysis, appropriate books suiting the classification of “quality books for children” were selected according to Çer’s (2016a, 2016b) suggestions, and the foreknowledge levels of each student for quality books were determined considering the students’ responses: 1 point for the correct ones and 0 points for the incorrect ones or the ones which were not marked. Evaluation criteria for appropriate books is Appendix A whereas quality books appropriate for primary and secondary school students based on Çer’s (2016a, 2016b) criteria in Turkish and World classics is Appendix B. The Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test were respectively carried out to determine if these foreknowledge levels were different according to gender and grade level. The reason why these tests were used is that the assumption of normality, which is necessary to perform parametrical tests (e.g., Independent samples t-test, One-way Analysis of Variance) was violated. When Kruskal-Wallis H test results were significant, follow-up the Mann-Whitney U tests was conducted to reveal the difference between grade levels. In order to effectively control Type I error rate, when multi-comparisons were made, the Bonferroni correction was applied after the Kruskal-Wallis H test ($.05/6=.008$). The statistical significance level was set at .05 as the upper limit.

3. Results

The 10 books most frequently marked by the students as appropriate for primary and secondary grade students are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the top 10 books

	<i>n</i>	%
Primary School		
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs	46	6.5
Keloglan Tales	44	6.3
Gin Ali	40	5.7
The Little Black Fish	37	5.3
Pinocchio	35	5.0
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland	30	4.3
Little Red Riding Hood	28	4.0
Jokes of Nasreddin Hodja	23	3.3
Ben Loves Anna	20	2.8
La Fontaine’s Fables	19	2.7
Secondary School		
The Little Prince	38	5.3
Falaka [Bastinado]	37	5.1
Kaşağı [Curry]	36	5.0
Around the World in 80 Days	24	3.3
Dede Korkut’s Stories	21	2.9
Ben Loves Anna	17	2.4

White Teeth	17	2.4
The Little Black Fish	16	2.2
Yalnız Efe [A Lonely Swashbuckler]	15	2.1
Pollyanna	13	1.8

As seen in Table 1, the most commonly stated quality books for primary school students are marked as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* 6.5% ($n=46$), *Keloglan's Tales* 6.3% ($n=44$), *Gin Ali* 5.7% ($n=40$), *The Little Black Fish* 5.3% ($n=37$), *Pinocchio* 5.0% ($n=35$) and for secondary school students as *The Little Prince* 5.3% ($n=38$), *Falaka [Bastinado]* 5.1% ($n=37$), *Kaşığı [Curry]* 5.0% ($n=36$), *Around the World in 80 Days* 3.3% ($n=24$), and *Dede Korkut's Stories* 2.9% ($n=21$).

Table 2. Frequencies and percentages of the number of books that students correctly evaluated

	Books	
	<i>n</i>	%
Primary School		
0	100	68.5
1	18	12.3
2 or more	28	19.2
Total	146	100
Secondary School		
0	93	63.7
1	43	29.5
2 or more	10	6.8
Total	146	100

Table 2 shows the scores of students for quality books for children based on Çer's (2016a, 2016b) suggestions. As seen in Table 2, 68.5% ($n=100$) of the students did not know any quality books appropriate for primary school and this rate was 63.7% ($n=188$) for secondary school. On the other hand, 12.3% ($n=18$) of the students knew only one book, and 19.2% ($n=28$) knew two or more books for primary school. These rates are 29.5% ($n=43$) and 6.8% ($n=10$) for secondary school, respectively.

Table 3 shows the mean rank scores of the students' for the quality books with which they were acquainted in terms of gender and grade level. Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were performed to determine whether the students showed a significant difference according to the number of books with which they were acquainted in terms of gender and grade level respectively.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and test results

Variable	Primary	Secondary
	M.R	M.R
Gender		
Male	65.23	61.49 _b
Female	77.07	78.68 _a
<i>U</i>	1880.00	1715.50
<i>z</i>	1.89	2.66
Grade		

1 st	55.77 _b	66.90 _b
2 nd	58.86 _b	70.69 _b
3 rd	103.12 _a	69.57 _b
4 th	82.93 _c	111.60 _a
χ^2	51.46	19.21
df	3	3

Note. M. R: Mean rank, a>b, c>b, df: degrees of freedom.

As a result of the Mann-Whitney U test, the female students were found to be significantly more acquainted with quality books for secondary school than male students ($U=1715.50$, $p<.01$, $z=2.66$). However, there was no significant difference in terms of gender in books for primary school ($U=1880.00$, $p>.05$, $z=1.89$). As a result of the Kruskal-Wallis H test, a significant difference was found both for books for primary ($\chi^2(3)=51.46$, $p<.001$) and secondary school ($\chi^2(3)=19.21$, $p<.001$) books in terms of grade level. As a result of the Mann-Whitney U tests, it was found that the junior and senior students were significantly more acquainted with books for primary school than the freshmen and sophomore students. There was no significant difference among the other groups. Additionally, Mann-Whitney U tests also revealed that senior students were significantly more acquainted with books for secondary school than the freshmen, sophomore and junior students. There was no significant difference between the other grades (See Table 3).

4. Discussion

This study showed that Turkish teacher candidates are not acquainted with appropriate books of literary quality for the developmental level of children at either the primary school level or secondary school level. The fact that the books that prospective teachers are acquainted with for primary and secondary school levels are *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, *Keloglan's Tales*, *Gin Ali*, *Jokes of Nasreddin Hodja* ve, *La Fontaine's Tales*, *ile Falaka [Bastinado]*, *Kaşığı [Curry]*, *Dede Korkut's Stories*, and *Pollyanna* not only shows that the teacher candidates are not well acquainted with quality books appropriate for the children's developmental level, but also it may indicate the educational problem in institutions training teachers, as well as the fact that children are always expected to read Turkish and world classics. However, it is a fact that these books, when their content is analyzed, construct antiquated ideas about gender and gender discrimination; physical, psychological, and emotional violence; old fashioned ideological elements; traditional values; a world viewed through rose-colored glasses; hyper-sentimental elements; and fear and anxiety (Sezer, 2012). This may cause students in primary school to encounter undesired situations that distance them from books. For this reason, prospective Turkish teachers, before they introduce the book to children, should analyze its quality in terms of content, design, and educational attributes according to the principles of appropriateness for the child.

The Little Prince (5.3%) ($n=38$) which appeared as the most known book by the teacher candidates for the secondary school level was removed from the reading list called 100 Classical Works prepared by the Ministry of Education to help improve reading skills. It was removed because of a single sentence: "A Turkish Dictator forced his own folk to dress like Europeans, those who did not admit to dressing as being told were sentenced to death and this helped the stargazer be known (Radikal, 2005)" but *The Little Prince* is a quality book, heartily read by children, with variables such as curiosity, exploration, adventure, imagination, and the excitement that it arouses in children. Moreover, it also reflects both the principles of appropriateness for children and child reality with interesting, astonishing, distinct, extraordinary, and supernatural elements (Çer, 2016a, 2016b). Not introducing the most known book by Turkish teacher candidates for secondary school to pupils may cause teacher candidates to give poor quality, inappropriate books for children.

When these books are examined in terms of content, design, and educational attributes, they might be found to reflect neither child reality nor the principles of appropriateness for children (Çer, 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). This condition both shows that the teacher candidates have not sufficiently understood the importance of quality books and proposes that these books should be presented to children after being examined according to the principles of appropriateness for children.

While teaching Turkish classes, quality books appropriate to students' developmental levels should be utilized. This plays a crucial role in including children in the reading culture. However, it was seen that 68.5% ($n=100$) of Turkish teacher candidates for the primary school level and 63.7% ($n=188$) for the secondary level are not well acquainted with quality books appropriate for children's developmental levels. This fact, on the one hand,

prevents the design of quality text focused classes, and on the other hand, it may cause children not to be able to improve their linguistic and cognitive skills, not to be able to take responsibility for imagining and thinking, not to be able to have aesthetic taste, not to know about human and life realities, not to be able to socialize, not to be able to express their feelings and thoughts efficiently, not to be able to enhance their vocabulary, and not to be able to have the love of and habit for reading. All these conditions may negatively affect children in linguistic, cognitive, affective, and social senses.

The fact that books of literary quality, appropriate to his developmental level, contribute to the child's linguistic, cognitive, affective, and social development mean that institutions training teachers have a vital responsibility to teach their students about such books and how to select them. Turkish teachers, in particular, must be systematically taught that the principal stimuli are quality books that ensure students find a place in the reading culture. Moreover, they should know that books appropriate to the educational level should be presented to children of different ages and developmental levels because Turkish teacher candidates should be aware that the child's achievement in reading and comprehension skills is formed by his interaction with quality books. Hence, firstly, teacher candidates are supposed to know about quality texts in terms of content, design, and educational attributes, and they should be able to distinguish these texts from those which are inappropriate for the child and his reality. If a teacher candidate has such skills, he/she will be able to help children become friends with books, and master other developmental skills.

The first limitation of this study is that it was performed on a limited number of prospective Turkish teachers; therefore, the results would be corroborated by additional research with a larger sample size. Secondly, this study also investigated limited number of sociodemographic including gender and grade level. However, researchers have shown that a number of demographics including parental education level may positively affect some psychological traits (Şahin, Barut, & Ersanlı, 2013a, 2013b). Thus, future studies also investigate the effects of other sociodemographics. Another limitation is that this study was only conducted on Turkish teacher candidates, instead of Turkish teachers. For future studies, research encompassing Turkish teachers and teacher candidates in different disciplines should be examined. Lastly, mental health concerns affects considerable number of people in Turkey (Topkaya, 2014a, 2014b, 2015a, 2015b; Topkaya & Meydan, 2013), and improving mental health of these individuals is a key concern for most mental health professionals. One possible way to improve mental health for children and adolescents may be reading quality books. Future studies may also investigate this subject.

In conclusion, it was found that the acquaintance level of Turkish teacher candidates with quality books for primary and secondary pupils is quite low. It is recommended, therefore, that this study be applied to the Turkish teaching departments of universities from different regions to discover both the foreknowledge level of Turkish teacher candidates about quality books.

Acknowledgments

E.Ş participated in designing the data collection instruments, performed data collection and analyses, drafted the manuscript. E.Ç and E.Ş performed data collection, participated in designing the instruments, reviewed and revised the manuscript. E.Ç conceptualized and designed the study, designed the data collection instruments, coordinated and supervised data collection, critically reviewed the manuscript. All authors approved the final manuscript as submitted.

References

- Ahrens, K. (2011). Picture books: Where literature appreciation begins. In B. Kümmerling-Meibauer (Ed.), *Emergent literacy: Children's books from 0 to 3* (pp. 77-90). Amsterdam: John Benjamins. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/swll.13.07ahr>
- Anderson, G., & Arsenault, N. (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research*. London: Cengage Learning.
- Anderson, N. A. (2013). *Elementary children's literature, infancy through age 13*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Arnold, D. S., & Whitehurst, G. J. (1994). Accelerating language development through picture book reading: A summary of dialogic reading and its effect. In D. Dickinson (Ed.), *Bridges to literacy: Approaches to supporting child and family literacy* (pp. 103-128). Cambridge: Blackwell.
- Aslan, C. (2007a). Yazımsal nitelikli çocuk kitaplarının çocuğun okuduğunu anlama ve yazılı anlatım becerilerine etkisi. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research*, 27, 15-29.

- Aslan, C. (2007b). Yazınsal nitelikli çocuk kitaplarının çocuğun gelişim sürecindeki yeri. *II. Ulusal Çocuk ve Gençlik Edebiyatı Sempozyumu, Gelişmeler-Sorunlar, Çözüm Önerileri* (04-06 Ekim 2006) (pp. 192-206). Sempozyum Kitabı, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi.
- Aslan, C. (2008). Yaşam gerçekliğinin çocuklara iletilmesi bakımından “100 temel eser” deki öyküler üzerine bir çözümleme. *4. Uluslararası Çocuk ve İletişim Kongresi & 4. Uluslararası Çocuk Filmleri Festivali ve Kongresi*. İstanbul.
- Aslan, C. (2011). Yazınsal çocuk kitaplarında neler olmalı, neler olmamalı? *Okuma Kültürü ve Söz Varlığının Geliştirilmesi Çalıştayı*. Ankara: Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı.
- Aslan, C. (2013). Çocuk edebiyatı yapıtlarının temel işlevleri. *Eğitimci Öğretmen Dergisi*, 17, 6-9.
- Aslan, C. (2014). Türkiye’de çocuk ve gençlik edebiyatında duyarlı konuların (sensitive issues) ele alınışı üzerine eleştirel bir yaklaşım. *Eleştirel Pedagoji*, 32, 51-56.
- Bakırcıoğlu, R. (2012). *Ansiklopedik eğitim ve psikoloji sözlüğü*. Ankara: Anı.
- Barbara, D. D. (1993). Joint picture-book reading correlates of early oral language skill. *Journal of Child Language*, 20(2), 455-461.
- Çer, E. (2014). *Çocuk edebiyatı: 0-6 yaş çocuk kitaplarında çocuk gerçekliği ve çocuğa görelik*. Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Çer, E. (2016a). *Çocuk edebiyatı: 0-6 yaş çocuk kitaplarında çocuk gerçekliği ve çocuğa görelik*. Ankara: Eğiten Kitap.
- Çer, E. (2016b). Preparing for books children from birth to six: The approach of appropriateness for the child. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(6), 78-99.
- Çer, E. (2016c). Preparing for books children from birth through six: A new children’s reality approach. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 4(5), 1024-1036. <http://dx.doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2016.040512>
- Çılgin, A. S. (2007). *Çocuk Edebiyatı*. İstanbul: Morpa Kültür.
- Dilidüzgün, S. (2000). Çocuk kitaplarında yazınsal nitelik. In *I. Ulusal Çocuk Kitapları Sempozyumu, Sorunlar ve Çözüm Yolları* (20-21 Ocak 2000) (pp. 253-267). Sempozyum Kitabı, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi ve TÖMER Dil Öğretim Merkezi.
- Dilidüzgün, S. (2004). *Çağdaş çocuk yazını: Yazın eğitime atılan ilk adım*. İstanbul: Morpa Kültür.
- Dilidüzgün, S. (2011). Çocuk kitaplarının çocuğun sanat eğitimine katkısı. In *II. Ulusal Çocuk ve Gençlik Edebiyatı Sempozyumu, Gelişmeler-Sorunlar, Çözüm Önerileri* (04-06 Ekim 2006) (pp. 111-115). Sempozyum Kitabı, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi.
- Güleryüz, H. (2003). *Yaratıcı çocuk edebiyatı*. Ankara: Pegem-A.
- Gültekin, A. (2009). Çocuk ve gençlere okuma kültürü oluşturmada çocuk ve gençlik edebiyatı eğitiminin önemi. In Aydın Afacan (Ed.), *Çocuk ve Okuma Kültürü Sempozyumu* (24-25 Mayıs 2008). Ankara: Eğitim Sen.
- Hunt, P. (2005). Introduction: The expanding world of children’s literature studies. In P. Hunt (Ed.), *Understanding children’s literature* (pp. 1-14). New York: Routledge. http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/9780230554801_36
- İpşiroğlu, Z. (2011). Çocuk yazını eleştirisi. In *II. Ulusal Çocuk ve Gençlik Edebiyatı Sempozyumu, Gelişmeler-Sorunlar, Çözüm Önerileri* (04-06 Ekim 2006) (pp. 173-176). Sempozyum Kitabı, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi.
- Lukens, R. J., Smith, J. J., & Coffel, C. M. (2013). *A critical handbook of children’s literature*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Nas, R. (2004). *Örneklerle çocuk edebiyatı*. Bursa: Ezgi.
- Oğuzkan, F. (2006). *Çocuk edebiyatı*. Ankara: Anı.
- Payne, A. C., Whitehurst, G. J., & Angell, A. L. (1994). The role of home literacy environment in the development of language ability in preschool children from low-income families. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 9(3), 427-440. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0885-2006\(94\)90018-3](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0885-2006(94)90018-3)
- Pringle, M. J. K. (1986). *The needs of children*. London: Routledge.

- Radikal. (2005). *Küçük Prenses out Necip Fazıl in*. Retrieved May 20, 2016, from <http://www.radikal.com.tr/haber.php?haberno=160404>
- Russell, D. L. (2009). *Literature for children, A short introduction*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Sawyer, W. E. (2012). *Growing up with literature*. United States: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Sever, S. (2007). Çocuk edebiyatı öğretimi nasıl olmalıdır? In *II. Ulusal Çocuk ve Gençlik Edebiyatı Sempozyumu, Gelişmeler-Sorunlar, Çözüm Önerileri* (04-06 Ekim 2006) (pp. 41-56). Sempozyum Kitabı, Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi.
- Sever, S. (2009). Türkiye'deki, bilimsel ve sanatsal nitelikli çocuk edebiyatı etkinliklerine ilişkin genel bir değerlendirme. In Aydın Afacan (Ed.), *Çocuk ve Okuma Kültürü Sempozyumu* (24-25 Mayıs 2008). Ankara: Eğitim Sen.
- Sever, S. (2013). *Çocuk edebiyatı ve okuma kültürü*. İzmir: Tudem.
- Sezer, M. Ö. (2012). *Masallar ve toplumsal cinsiyet*. İstanbul: Evrensel Basım.
- Şahin, E., Barut, Y., & Ersanlı, E. (2013a). Parental education level positively affects self-esteem of Turkish adolescents. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(20), 87-97.
- Şahin, E., Barut, Y., & Ersanlı, E. (2013b). Sociodemographic variables in relation to social appearance anxiety in adolescents. *The International Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(1), 56-63.
- Şirin, M. R. (2007). *Çocuk edebiyatı kültürü "okuma alışkanlığı ve medya sarmalı"*. Ankara: Kök.
- Thompson, R. A. (1999). Early attachment and later development. In J. Cassidy, & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of Attachment: Theory, Research and Clinical Application* (pp. 348-366). New York: Guilford.
- Topkaya, N. (2014a). Psikolojik yardım alma niyetini yordamada demografik, bireysel ve çevresel faktörler. *Türk Psikoloji Dergisi*, 29(74), 1-11.
- Topkaya, N. (2014b). Gender, self-stigma, and public stigma in predicting attitudes toward psychological help-seeking. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 14(2), 10-17.
- Topkaya, N. (2015a). Factors influencing psychological help seeking in adults: A qualitative study. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 15(1), 21-31.
- Topkaya, N. (2015b). Willingness to seek psychological help among Turkish adults. *Revista de Cercetare Si Interventie Sociala*, 48, 149-163.
- Topkaya, N., & Meydan, B. (2013). Üniversite öğrencilerinin problem yaşadıkları alanlar, yardım kaynakları ve psikolojik yardım alma niyetleri. *Trakya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 3(1), 25-37.
- Wasik, B. A., & Bond, M. A. (2001). Beyond the pages of a book: Interactive books reading and language development in preschools classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93(2), 243-250. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.93.2.243>
- Wolf, S. A. (2004). *Interpreting literature with children*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Yalçın, A., & Aytaş, G. (2005). *Çocuk edebiyatı*. Ankara: Akçağ.

Appendix A

1) The following are educational attributes that children's books should have to be marked as appropriate for the child and his reality.

Educational Attributes that Books for Children Should Include		Not appropriate at all	Not appropriate	Neither appropriate nor inappropriate	Appropriate	Totally appropriate
1	A dictating and teaching conception should not be preferred in books for children.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Books should allow the child to take responsibility for hearing, sensing, and thinking.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Authors should allow the child to think within the cause and effect relationship instead of imposing their own truths.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Children's books should not regard the child as an ideal adult to be raised with the aim of shaping him.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Children's books should not embrace an authoritative conception of teaching children about how they should behave when they are a child or an adult.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Children's books should not present situations in a one-sided way to impose their own view and criticism.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Authors of children's literature should not take over the role of educators.	1	2	3	4	5
8	In children's books, children should not be advised and commanded by repressing their feelings and thoughts.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Children's books should not be prepared in a peremptory way.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Children's books should by no means include advice and commands lest children should feel that their opinions are unimportant.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Children's books should neither keep the child's nature under pressure by advice and commands nor build up walls against his colorful world.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Children's books should not put pressure on them by providing advice and commands based on adults' desires.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Children's books should not negatively affect the child's sanity with frightening, creepy characters.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Children's books should not make the child anxious, rather than excited, by creating unnecessary emotional tensions with excessive dramatic elements.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Children's books should not scare the child by irrational entities, make him have unnecessary experiences, wave fingers, and use the feeling of fear as a tool to teach and impose.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The feeling of fear should not be presented in children's books to create emotional tension.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Children's books should not create fear and anxiety within the child by abusing the child's curiosity about what is unknown by creating mystery with entities like genies, bogeymen, zombies, bugaboos, witches, and ghosts.	1	2	3	4	5

18	Irrational entities should not be used as frightening elements to make children embrace a belief or thought.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Concepts like shame and sin, punishments, threats, and frightening elements should not be included in children's books.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Children's books should not carry ideological and moral statements which the cognitive level of children could never receive.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Works of children's literature should neither be shaped by adults' judgmental values nor spiritual and ethical notions nor ideological statements.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Works of children's literature should not be utilized as a tool to impose values and opinions.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Children should not be given religious education through fear, command, and advice in children's books.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Children's books should not be used as agents to make children face conditions prioritized by a patriarchal culture.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Male and female characters should not be introduced in stereotyped and sexist roles in children's books.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Children's books should approach women and men equally while making the child reader discern social roles.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Male and female characters in books should not be removed from each other by repressing and weakening them or making them feel guilty.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Works of children's literature should reject any kinds of tricks or hoaxes displaying life as a bed of roses.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Children's books should make children sense the reality of life.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Children's books should not be disguised in an unreal form presenting life as the opposition between right and wrong, good and bad.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Children's books should not remove the child from reality using too many abstract values.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Works of children's literature should not prefer to retain values and traditions as they always have been but present them in the critical perspective of our age.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Discordant values, judgments, and rules should not be transferred through works of children's literature.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Children's books should not educate the child in a way that he should adapt to stereotyped notions, principles and rules, traditional values, enforcing attitudes, and judgments of the adult world.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Children's books should allow the questioning of unchanging truths instead of imposing them on children.	1	2	3	4	5
36	Children's books should respond to children's emotional needs, but they should not exploit them.	1	2	3	4	5
37	Facts and situations with sentimental depth, such as mercy, sorrow, and horror, should not be allowed to overwhelm children emotionally.	1	2	3	4	5
38	Children should be taught how to cope with sentimental situations like grief, sorrow, and gloom.	1	2	3	4	5
39	Children should learn how to cope with violence.	1	2	3	4	5
40	When the character encounters physical violence, he/she should not use violence to overcome this trouble.	1	2	3	4	5

2) The following are design and content attributes of books for children to be marked as appropriate for the child.

Content and Design Attributes that Books for Children Should Include		Not appropriate at all	Not appropriate	Neither appropriate nor inappropriate	Appropriate	Totally appropriate
Cover						
1	The cover should create an impression to make the child curious and lead him to explore.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Simple, clear, and understandable visuals appropriate for the child's cognitive level should be included in the cover.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The cover should be rendered fascinating with contrasting, bright, and vivid colors and with plain and dynamic lines.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The design style of the cover should give discerning clues to its content.	1	2	3	4	5
5	The ground-figure relationship on the cover should make the visuals noticeable.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The visuals on the cover should be in harmony in a way that they will not create even a slight complication.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The element to be emphasized on the cover should be balanced in terms of composition, size, gap, pattern, color, and line.	1	2	3	4	5
8	The cover should be made of carton, cardboard, or fabric.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The cover should have unexpected, attention grabbing, ridiculous, extraordinary, supernatural, interesting, and astonishing elements which are not expected by the child.	1	2	3	4	5
Paper						
10	Thick carton or high quality paper pulp should be used in books.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Pages of books should be of high quality and durable so as not to be easily torn.	1	2	3	4	5
12	The paper should not be pale, thin, bright, of glossy, or of low quality paper pulp that make it difficult to see.	1	2	3	4	5
13	The paper should render the characters and their relations with each other understandable and noticeable.	1	2	3	4	5
Binding						
14	Books should not be bound using wire and glue which may negatively affect children's health.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Books should be bound with string to ensure the child's long term interaction with the book.	1	2	3	4	5
Font and Size						
16	Letters should be clear, plain, and understandable so that they will be remembered.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Flowery, vague, and confusing letters should not be included in books in order to make them ostentatious.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Writing in illustrated books should reflect the actions and statements expressed by the visuals without ruining them.	1	2	3	4	5

Dimension						
19	Books should be sized for children to hold, carry, and read comfortably.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Books in different dimensions which can stimulate the child's interest and curiosity should be made.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Books should neither be too small to be held nor should they be too large so that they cannot be carried by the child.	1	2	3	4	5
22	The dimension of the book should visually reflect the content and not make it difficult to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
Layout						
23	The entities should be reflected on the page noticeably with contrasting and bright colors and plain and dynamic lines.	1	2	3	4	5
24	The actions on the page should be reflected in an order suitable for the content on the page/pages.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Entities on the page should not be drawn smaller than the child could see.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Every element and its location on the page should have a purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Colors, lines, letters, space, and tones on the page should be in harmony.	1	2	3	4	5
Pictures						
28	Pictures should teach children concepts and help them recognize the entities around them.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Pictures should discipline the child's sense of sight.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Pictures should allow children to take imagining and thinking responsibilities in a way that is open to interpretation.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Pictures should be eye-catching with interesting and extraordinary colors.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Pictures should be visible even in the slightest detail.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Pictures should help children enjoy, imagine, play, and reflect their sincerity, enthusiasm, and joy.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Pictures illustrated aesthetically in one full page or two will be easy for children to see.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Pictures on every page should define the story or the concepts told from the beginning to the end of the book.	1	2	3	4	5
Characters						
36	The characters should be physically attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
37	The characters should be sincere and convincing so that the child can identify with them.	1	2	3	4	5
38	The characters should be open to change and transformation.	1	2	3	4	5
39	The actions and behaviors as well as emotions and thoughts within the storyline should be rendered understandable.	1	2	3	4	5
40	Personified characters (animals, plants, objects, etc.) should be included in books in addition to child characters.	1	2	3	4	5
41	An astonishing, interesting, supernatural, ridiculous, and dynamic character increases the interest of the child who wants to enjoy, laugh, and ask questions.	1	2	3	4	5
42	The characters should respond to the child's need for love and confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
Plot						
43	Concrete, simple, familiar, plain, and understandable concepts, which are appropriate for the child's life, should be used in books of educational quality.	1	2	3	4	5

44	Children should be exposed to a character's good deeds, love, friendship, achievement, union, solidarity, benevolence, assistance, and taking responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
45	Children should not be subjected to passion, sex, illness, death, separation, and disability in books of literary quality.	1	2	3	4	5
46	The plot should be supported by extraordinary, interesting, different, astonishing, and ridiculous elements.	1	2	3	4	5
Language and Narration						
47	Simple, plain, and understandable words and sentences should be preferred in books.	1	2	3	4	5
48	Dynamic narration should be preferred with repetitions, alliterations and assonances, recapitulations, rhymed structures, as well as synonyms and antonyms.	1	2	3	4	5
49	There should be more verb clauses together with noun clauses in order to provide dynamism.	1	2	3	4	5
50	The beauty of articulation, expression, vocabulary, and the elaborateness of Turkish should be present in the language and narration.	1	2	3	4	5
Theme						
51	Themes in books of literary quality should evolve based on the love of human beings, nature, and life.	1	2	3	4	5
52	Didactic books should provide information and teach visually.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

1) Qualified Works of Children's Literature Appropriate for the Primary School Level

- Ak, B. (2007). *Uyurgezer Fil [The Sleepwalking Elephant]*. İstanbul: Can.
- Ak, S. (2010). *Puf Pufpuf Cuf Cufcuf ve Cino [Puf Pufpuf Cuf Cufcuf and Cino]*. İstanbul: Can.
- Akal, A. (2009). *Oğlum Ben Küçükken [My Son: I was very Young]*. İzmir: Uçanbalık.
- Akal, A. (2012). *Masal Masal. [Tale in a Tale]*. İzmir: Uçanbalık.
- Akal, A. (2012). *Oğlum Neredesin [My Son: Where are You?]*. İzmir: Uçanbalık.
- Akal, A., & Yener, M. (2011). *Şaşkın Şiirler [The Confused Poems]*. İstanbul: Bilgi.
- Akal, A., & Yener, M. (2014). *Reçelli Şiirler [The Poetry Jam]*. İstanbul: Reshouse Yayınları.
- Avcı, F. (2014). *Benim Kırmızı Minik Balığım [My Little Red Fish]*. İstanbul: Final Kültür Sanat.
- Behrengi, S. (2012). *Küçük Kara Balık [The Little Black Fish]*. İzmir: Kırmızı Kedi.
- Behrengi, S. (2016). *Bir Şeftali Bin Şeftali [A Peach, A Thousand Peaches]*. İstanbul: Fom Yayıncılık.
- Boyne, J. (2007). *Çizgili Pijamalı Çocuk [The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas]*. İzmir: Tudem.
- Çınaroğlu, A. (2012). *Mavi Boya [The Blue Paint]*. İzmir: Uçanbalık Yayıncılık.
- Dağlarca, F. H. (2007). *Baline ile Mandalina [Whale and Mandarin]*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.
- Dağlarca, F. H. (2008). *Cin ile Cincik [Cin and Cincik]*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.
- Dağlarca, F. H. (2008). *Kuş Ayak [The Bird Feet]*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.
- Dağlarca, F. H. (2008). *Yazıları Seven Ayı [The Writing-Loving Bear]*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Dağlarca, F. H. (2011). *Cincik [Cincik]*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Dahl, R. (1997). *Dev Şeftali [James and the Giant Peach]*. İstanbul: Can.
- Hartling, P. (2008). *Banjamin Anna'yı Seviyor [Ben Loves Anna]*. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- İçöz, N. (2002). *Güneşe Tırmanan Çocuk [The Boy Climbing the Sun]*. İstanbul: Altın.
- Nöstlinger, C. (2004). *Lollipop. [Lollipop]*. İstanbul: Günışığı.

- Öner, Ç. (1997). *Gülibik*. [The Gülibik]. İstanbul: Can.
- Twain, M. (2016). *Tom Sawyer'ın Maceraları* [The Adventures of Tom Sawyer]. İstanbul: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.
- Yener, M. (2006). *Ay Kaç Yaşında* [How Old is the Moon?]. İzmir: Uçanbalık Yayıncılık.
- Yener, M. (2006). *Çikolata Zamanı* [The Chocolate Time]. İstanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi.
- Yener, M., & Akal, A. (2007). *Kırmızı Şemsiye* [The Red Umbrella]. İzmir: Uçanbalık.
- Yener, M., & Akal, A. (2008). *Mavi Ay* [The Blue Moon]. İzmir: Uçanbalık Yayıncılık.
- 2) Qualified Works of Children's Literature Appropriate for the Secondary School Level
- Ak, B. (2013). *Yaşasın Ç Harfi Kardeşliği* [Long Live the Ç Letter Brothers]. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- Behrengi, S. (2012). *Küçük Kara Balık* [The Little Black Fish]. İzmir: Kırmızı Kedi.
- Carter, F. (2008). *Küçük Ağaç'ın Eğitimi* [The Training of Small Tree]. Ankara: Say.
- Cervantes Saavedra, M. (2006). *Don Quijote* [Don Quijote]. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.
- Çınaroğlu, A. (2004). *Şiir Gemisi* [The Poetry Ship]. İzmir: Tudem.
- Coelho, P. (2010). *Simyacı* [The Alchemist]. İstanbul: Can.
- Dahl, R. (2005). *Charlie'nin Çikolata Fabrikası* [Charlie and Chocolate Factory]. İstanbul: Can.
- Dayıoğlu, G. (2008). *Fadiş* [Fadis]. İstanbul: Altın.
- Dayıoğlu, G. (2008). *Işın Çağı Çocukları* [The Ray Age Boys]. İstanbul: Altın.
- Hartling, P. (2008). *Banjamin Anna'yı Seviyor* [Ben Loves Anna]. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- Jonathan, S., & Kastner, E. (2013). *Gülviver'in Gezileri* [Gulliver's Travels]. İstanbul: Can.
- Molnar, F. (2009). *Pal Sokağı Çocukları* [The Paul Street Boys]. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.
- Neydim, N. (2008). *Sen Işık Çalmayı Bilir Misin* [Do You Know the Whistle?]. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- Nöstlinger, C. (2003). *Kim Takar Salatalık Kralı* [The Cucumber King]. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- Nöstlinger, C. (2004). *Lollipop*. [Lollipop]. İstanbul: Günışığı.
- Öner, Ç. (1997). *Gülibik* [The Gülibik]. İstanbul: Can.
- Osada, A. (2010). *Atom Bombası Çocukları* [The Atom Bomb Boys]. İstanbul: Onur.
- Saint-Exupery, A. (2015). *Küçük Prens* [Le Petit Prince]. İstanbul: Can.
- Vasconcelos, J. M. (2000). *Şeker Portakalı* [My Sweet Orange Tree]. İstanbul: Can.

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/>).