The Shift of Children’s Magazines into Digital Medium: 
Case of TRT Children’s Magazine

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Abstract

Information superhighway enables access to information world wide and promises electronic democracy. However, when the issue is surveyed through critical discourse analysis, where power has dominance, inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by media text and talk in social and political content, narratives produced and distributed in the worldwide digital data networking needs to be regarded in a more critical perspective. The shift of printed media to electronic medium brings the question of how narratives are restructured. Hence, this study frames TRT’s (Turkish Radio Television) children’s online magazine where the narratives concerning children are digitally restructured and produced as they reveal how various social order phenomena is reflected on individuals via narratives.

Keywords: E-magazine, children, pedagogy, TRT Children’s Magazine, imagined community

Çocuk Dergilerinin Dijital Ortama Geçişi:
TRT Çocuk Dergisi Örneği

Özet

Bilgi otobanı tüm dünyada bilgiye ulaşmayı sağladığı gibi elektronik demokrasiyi de vaat eder. Ne var ki, bu konu eleştirel söylem analizi açısından ele alındığında, egemen gücün baskı olduğu yerde media metinleri aracılığı ile eşitsizlik sergilenebilmekte, yeniden üretilebilmekte, karşı konulabilmekte ve sosyal veya politik içerikli olabilmekte. Bu durumda, üreticiler dijital veri ağı ile dünyanın her yerine dağıtılan anlatılar eleştirel bir bakışla ele alınmalı. Basılı yayınların dijital ortama geçmesi anlatıların nasıl yeniden üretildiği sorusunu da beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu çalışmada TRT’nin (Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu) çocuklara yönelik anlatıların yeniden yapılandırıp ürettiği çevrimiçi çocuk dergisinin çeşitli sosyal düzen olgularının metin üzerinden nasıl yansıttığına bakılacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: E-dergi, çocuk, pedagoji, TRT Çocuk Dergisi, hayali cemaat
Introduction

Children’s magazines are one of the communication media that is shifting into virtual world. Although with animations, digital applications and lively colourful presentations this new medium conveys texts at highly motivated style, the controversial issue of discourse at a much wider and immediate cultural level comes forth as a matter of discussion. The process of pedagogy with its pragmatics is a topic discussed vigorously in the studies made on digital culture and the case of children’s magazines should undoubtedly be a part of this discussion.

According to Krishan Kumar (2004: 194), as all ideologies, ideology of information society can be said to satisfy certain needs and expresses some prominent dimensions of every day realities of contemporary world. Computers became part of life of many as they do their e-marketing, e-banking or even e-education through this functional channel. Regarding the information age as a revolutionary reality, its effects on lifestyles of those living through it are inevitably obvious. From security to entertainment, use of computers and internet has become functional and indispensible. Thus, electronic publication is a part of this fast, visual and virtual medium which changed the way we perceive and experience our world around us (Ibid.).

Currently, digital media is the new canvas for the communication studies as many traditional communication ways already shifted into a virtual medium. The praxis of representation of published or online texts differ in design, conventions, discourse and syntagm of digital world takes the stage giving way to a unique and new narrative, the way in which a text reveals information to the audience in order to create a “story”.

In this study, TRT (Turkish Radio and Television), which is the national broadcasting agency’s printed and electronic children’s magazines will be studied via critical discourse analysis to convey the shifting narrative conventions from the printed medium to electronic/digital one. Thus, how the traditional pedagogical intentions and socio-cultural objectives of authority are tried to be formed or maintained through new media technologies with relevance to young readers is the focus of this study.

Literature Review

Ottoman Empire has published its first children’s magazine called “Mümeyyiz” (meaning to be able to separate good from bad) in 1869. In Turkey, children’s magazines have a 145 years history (Ungan and Yiğit, 2014: 184-198). One prominent feature of children’s periodicals that differentiate from the ones for adults is its employment of entertainment (Balci, 2003: 340-41). Magazines had to change their content as radio and television took pace and
Instead of printing intense written material began employing visuals. In the Information Era, all the printed mass communication devices faced marketing problems, thus, the content changed from a textual format to visual format. However, one thought about the usage of internet technology by children is that they are bound to the information given to them via the internet and they are far from using it which in turn makes them used to the visual illusions and drive away from media literacy (Şirin, 2006a: 45).

The way in which the children’s magazines should be prepared, what kind of features there should be are two factors to be considered for the healthy cognitive and psychological development of children. Furthermore, another important point that has been focused on while studies on children and their reception of digital texts are conducted is the family they grow in. On the role of the family regarding the relationship between children and media, M. Ruhi Şirin comments as such (2006b: 66):

“All kinds of media usage bring variety and obstruction. It is not enough to insist only on the protection of children. Whatever the media, a child’s usage of it is determined by his or her social, cultural and economic circle. All three surroundings are prepared by the adults. Here, family plays the major role.”

The concern for the production and reception of the media messages was carried out to the digital world when e-magazines for children began to be published online with numerous opportunities of applications giving way to edutainment.

Regarding edutainment, as in our society to value learning takes place after it is categorised with reference to the frameworks of academic disciplines which we recognize as ‘knowledge’ (Coffield 2000; Moss 2001). About the rights of children regarding digital world, right to use and right to be protected numerous commented on the argument of today’s climate as to refusing to recognize any activity as learning unless there is a labelled ‘certification’ to it (Sutherland 2001). Edutainment can be described as “children’s out-of-school learning with ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) - we can see an incredibly broad range of activities and experiences” (Sefton-Green, 2014: 7). Vygotskians (sometimes also known as socio-cultural theorists) conceptualize learning as more socially constructed as Vygotsky’s work is, most of which, relate to its use in developing theories of pedagogy where non-teachers (peers and other ‘experts’) might fulfil teaching roles (Vygotsky, 1978). Also, it is productive to study software in general to see how internet texts in might be written to teach or support inexperienced users/learners so as to structure ‘Vygotskian’ learning (Sefton-Green, 2014: 12).
As to Buckingham and Scanlon (2001) the recent proliferation of edutainment magazines there is an increased commercialisation and exploitation of copyrights but also a growing emphasis put on education by authority which escalates parent anxiety.

When the issue of how mass media devises are directed to educational institutions and the amount of public opinion that has been created is looked upon, the process of how one culture institution gets in relation with the other and how it represents that institution are the points also regarded. This is a complicated and sensitive relationship which is the product of their historical development, cooperate structure and supporting points. Both of these institutions are apt to shape the mass and are the outcome of the industrial change. Although schools were created for the liberal and equal education opportunities, with the need of literacy, competence, reasoning in the industrial society, they have gradually become independent of the tribal and traditional ties (Gebner, 2014: 146).

Moreover, mass communication is the new category for institutionalised public education. Mass communication is enabled only with the development of technological devises and social institutions which produces and transmits the messages to the mass. Thus, mass communication systems generate from technology, mass production, global markets, firms or collective establishments. As being the part of the industrial order, mass communication devices are functional in reproducing and distributing the cultural commodities in a fast, continuously, centrally and in a standardised way for the mass. The revolutionary feature of these communication systems is its quality to surpass the limitations of interpersonal and basic handmade productions and to mass produce and distribute the messages, and thus, establish new basis for collective thought and action. Mass communication devises use the quality of forming public opinion to enable themselves and customers to achieve their targets. The historical importance of mass communication devises is due to its ability to determine and direct the public opinion towards certain points. However, the function and importance the businesses attribute to mass communication is the creation of the mass (target audience) and marketing of these masses to advertisers and representatives (Gerbner, 2014: 147).

Kristina E. Hatch (2011) studies the effects of internet on children with its advantages and disadvantages. As advantages, updating the classroom, using of technology being highly motivational in teaching, enabling new simulations and 3D models, preparation of children to a technologically working industries from a young age (making children to be educated in a relevant way to workspaces) and children becoming active in projects which provides them new
point of views were considered to be the advantages of using of new technologies were listed in the study. Here, by using interactive gaming, video game companies’ push of an active lifestyle on young gamers and promotion of family time, which is considered crucial for childhood development is indicated to be vastly successful effort. However, in the same study, the safety of children and keeping track of their activities on internet became a major concern. Shifting and splitting attention to multi tasks causes attention and concentration breaks as this also changes the way of thinking and behaving. Constant flow of new information results in lack of concentration as reported “multitaskers actually have more trouble focusing and shutting out irrelevant information... and they experience more stress.”

**Theoretical Background**

Information Superhighway, or the worldwide digital data networking, seems to promise access to information rich society where the idea of electronic democracy is also virtually promised to be allocated (Baran and Davis, 2003: 60). Electronic democracy where people would directly communicate with their “leaders” is associated deeply with internet usage via which organic solidarity is intended as to strengthen the elements of modern social order together. Regarding new media, communication technologies hold a very strong position on forming important new social bonds (Ibid.). Hence, when studying electronic media texts in relation to discourse a critical approach is needed.

Attributing to semiosis, which is the process of interpreting and using signs, individual has the ability to transcend meaning of sign system which we learn from our past experiences as well as from interpersonal and mass communication (Jensen, 1995: 1, 69). When images from the past accumulate, they make the existing social order valid via performances actualized through rituals (Connerton, 1992: 9-12). Thus, whenever there is an interpretation of the sign system in the course of daily life, situated activity – activities occurring in particular social environments which help to shape or are shaped by human interpretations of the sign – occurs giving way to existence of sets of generated meanings allowing to label and make sense of actions which in terms is called reflexivity (Baran and Davis, 2003: 356).

Thus, just as symbolic interaction theory, social construction of reality theory also explains how culture use signs and symbols to construct and maintain a uniform reality. As people share a culture, they also communicate through conventional and negotiated meanings. “Through interaction in and with the culture over time, people bring together what they have
learned about these signs and symbols to form typification schemes – collection of meanings assigned to some phenomenon or situation” (Ibid.: 432) The design of typification form a canvas for people’s interpretation of the signs meaning and their resulting behaviour in, as Berger and Luckmann indicates, “the major routines of everyday life and experiences” (1966: 43).

Childhood is a life-stage for every social actor. Also, it is a cultural category and a set of discourses that seeks both to define childhood and to articulate the behaviours, activities and values that should be associated with it (Cook, 2002). Media and commodities hold a significant role in this process where children come to understand social power, hierarchy, gender and other cultural significations via weighing what they learn from media against what they learn through social fields in their lives such as homes, neighbourhoods, peer groups and schools. To this Fisherkeller (1997) indicates that the manner which children learns from media is a dynamic and recursive process peer, institutional and family cultures set “guiding motivations” which help them define social future, which later refined and reimagined through media imagery and narrative.

Children are faced with a twofold challenge in their social interaction to negotiate who they are and who they are going to be: through play, family relations, peer socialization, work and media; and through education (Peterson, 2005: 180). Consumption, one of the socially learned codes through play, work and human activities, is a cultural practice and an act through which people organize their experiences as a means of expressing and realizing fundamental cultural principles about how the world is constituted (Douglas and Isherwood, 1978). Act of consumption is of a generated nature where people reproduce the social order through consumption as they develop particular kinds of tastes that have different kinds of consequences in various social fields (Bourdieu, 1979; 1984).

Globalization in relation to consumption and reconstruction of social codes involves people, place and culture isomorphism on which the hypothesis about socialization, enculturation and social order are based (Giddens, 1990; Gupta and Furgeson, 1992). The concept of “social imagination as the domain in which people produce cultural order and cultural orders produce people brings forth explication of relations between globalization, consumption, identities and social futures to which Arjun Appadurai (1996) argues that in our world today the social imagination took on a crucial new character where imagination is no longer confined to limited spaces but extended in a world of interconnectedness and social
imagination is not limited to realms of fantasy and expressive culture that leads to impossibilities but has become an expression of new possibilities, including those of children’s social futures. Thus, Appaduria regards media as primary devise for the circulation of ideas and resources for the social imagination. In addition, different producers provide resources to imagine new possible forms of action and new social futures (Peterson, 2003). Anderson (1991) uses the term imagined community to describe nations as collectives of persons the majority of whom will never meet or interact, but on the contrary who imagine themselves as sharing meanings counteracting other divisions, such as race, religion, class, language, or caste, to form a greater whole.

For imagined communities, rise of media is essential as due to these persons can have opportunities to imagine others as themselves. Magazines, which are different to film, television and popular literature, present very different content, texts and narratives in one package. With this feature, magazines uphold a liability to draw many different persons and communities together into one hybrid community (Okker, 2003: 1). Thus, magazines are both cultural products - because they hold and represent collective meanings, providing recipes, patterns, narratives, and models for the reader – and commodities as they are produced by the print industry and sites for advertising which signify a deep involvement in capitalist production and consumption at many levels (Moeran, 2004: 260).

Today, while adults are digital immigrants, children and young people are digital natives that rigorously use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Formal educational establishments consider children’s use of ICT resources that are primarily viewed as leisure activities, such as children’s playing of computer games, their use of chat rooms, their exploitation of digital media and digital television - all the activities that are now mediated by digital technologies as part of young people’s social and cultural lives - as outside the realm of valued educational experience. According to a study conducted by EU Kids Online (2011) cross national comparisons to highlight children’s online safety are as follows:

“In countries where children have more mobile and/or private access to the internet, average time spent online is generally higher. As children gain access to the internet at younger and younger ages, the time they spend online is rising... Children report the highest levels of digital literacy and safety skills in Finland, Slovenia and the Netherlands. Their digital skills are reportedly the lowest in Romania, Italy and, especially, Turkey. If children are classified according to the types of activities they
do, the percentage of users in each country that can be classified as ‘advanced/creative users’ ranges from 14% in Romania to 50% in Sweden. Self-reported digital literacy and safety skills are generally related to diversity of online activities. In general, countries where children report a higher level of digital skills also display a wider repertoire of online activities, and vice versa. ‘Excessive use’ describes problematic behaviour associated with use of the internet or related digital technologies. Across Europe, 15% of children aged 9-16 agree that ‘I have caught myself surfing when I am not really interested’. In most countries, more time spent online (in minutes) is straightforwardly associated with higher proportions of children who report excessive use. In general, countries with high levels of internet use also have the highest percentage of children who have encountered risks on the internet. The highest percentage of risks experienced by children is found in North East Europe (Estonia and Lithuania), closely followed by Sweden and Norway. Countries with the lowest risk encountered online are West and South European countries, the lowest percentage being in Turkey, Portugal, Greece and Italy. Talking to someone about a harmful online experience is more common among children from France, the Netherlands, Italy, the UK and Portugal.”

Media Pedagogy steps in when the electronic world reveal information through, not limited to, films, e-books, e-education, e-papers, e-journals and e-magazines and where media literacy is a monitory utility considering accessibility to, analyzing and evaluation of information (Babad, 2012). The new literacy studies, not only focus on a whole range of ICT-related experiences often described as a kind of literacy, sometimes called the ‘computer literacy’, but research in literacy studies itself focuses on how meaning is distributed across semiotic domains such as visual, aural and text (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001). Literacy studies in this new ‘multimodal’ age, do not just define how texts are made but how readers (online ICT users) learn how to make sense of and use new texts in making meaning (Gee 2003). The new literacy studies also focus on the pedagogic structure of texts, which is how the reader is involved in and then guided through the reading process. The development and reclamation of new literacies are not in dominancy of traditional institutions of schooling and pedagogy anymore (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977; Luke 1989), but are educated within the wider culture (Green & Bigum 1993; Buckingham & Sefton-Green 1994).
Furthermore, when the close relationship between the content of electronic media production with the variety of industries and their aim to reach heterogeneous masses, and convey messages that are reliable, profitable and complementary (Gerbner, 2014: 284). The things we call variety, appear in the form of new effects, styles, genres, games, plots. However, point of view, the things valued or the program structures are the same. The popular is naturally intends to reflect and cultivate the hegemonic culture and ideology. This is the programming web of cultivation of reality’s stable and shared meanings which all societies have to face in the long run. The audience or the receiver are born in this symbolic world and inevitably encounter these webs of connotations many times (Gerbner, 2014: 285).

As to one step further to media pedagogy, legal arrangements on children’s right to access information and on their protection should be looked upon as well. In 1996, European Commission has published two important documents concerning internet usage called *Communication from the European Commission on Illegal and Harmful Content on the Internet* and the *European Commission Green Paper on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audio-visual and Information Services*. According to these documents there are two types of content; one is the illegal material that is prohibited to everyone regardless of age and the other is the harmful material which may have an effect on children’s physical and mental development but consumable by adults. Illegal material consists of violation of human dignity, such as child pornography, extreme violence, promotion of racism, hatred and discrimination. Harmful material, on the other hand, consists of a broader range of content that is for adults. Thus, these specifications mark negotiations and mobilisations between European Commission and member states, industry and non-governmental actors which superintend to an internet policy (Oswell, 1999: 42-46).

Although the fast changes in the media industries brought forth the centralisation and vertical integration of electronic holdings, the content produced in the media markets did not change. Although the messages were the same the time to be exposed to the information became limitless, meaning that with the new media technologies a text would be viewed many times regardless of time and space. The traditional effects studies based on the evaluation of special informational, educational, political, marketing, selective perception and assessing differences between the those who are exposed to the media to those who are not. Researchers who adopt these traditional approach focus on the cultivation process not as total downing in media but imposing selective viewing; not as the stable and permanent distribution of viewpoints but cultural differentiation; and as the remaining of change. Similarly, people are still cultivated
with print culture ideology, liberty, variety and the being the ideal of active voter. This ideal assumes the production of information, entertainment (spare time activities), election to take place in a competitive scale and through the viewpoint of contradictory interests holders (Gerbner, 2014: 286).

Similarly in Turkey, In 2007, as an addition to Press Law of 2004, Prime Ministry of Turkey has published two notices, The Law on the Organisation of Internet Publications and Counteracting on the Crimes Committed via These Publications (www.mevzuat.gov.tr), and an additional article, Regulations of Procedures and Basis for Organisation of the Internet Publishing (www.medyahukuku.org), which were quite similar to that of European Commission concerning children. However, while there is an emphasis on edutainment at home and schools currently, the prospective change in the internet content need to be regarded with at most attention as the above regulations would only be actualised after the child will be acquainted with the insight that is actually reproduction of the existing material.

**Electronic Publishing in Turkey**

Not only electronic publishing began to replace the traditional one and become preferable by users, but also those who have access to communication technologies had the opportunity to become publishers in their own right (Erol, 2009: 15). Furthermore, all sorts of documentation can be transformed into internet as they can be reproduced and distributed easily. However, at the beginning, due to a need for technological background a parallel publishing that is traditional and online publishing were both done at the same time (Ibid.).

During the transformation of publication from its traditional application to electronic format brought about controversy as well. At the beginning electronic publication has been noted to have a number of drawbacks: 1) Slow acceptance of the online texts as readers would prefer to have a book in their hands while reading; 2) Economical worries of the publishers as investment is needed for such an innovation; 3) Lack of technological facilities is another problem where the publisher needs to renovate the used technology appropriate for electronic publication; 4) The inquietude over the possible expanding of the gap between developed and developing countries regarding accessibility to information which would cause inequalities in numerous ways; 5) Archiving and safety issues; 6) Motivational disadvantage for the writers as readability would seem to be hard and reading process needs to be done through an electronic medium that may be costly (Tonta, 2000: 89-132). However, the advantages seem to over throw
the negative connotation of electronic publishing: 1) Information is distributed easily, quickly and widely; 2) Once the technical utilities are structured communication becomes a low budget process; 3) The possibility of interactive applications; 4) Easy and rapid access to information; 4) Securing the private identity of the user, 5) The flexible structure of the medium for editing and controlling of the content; 6) The high capacity of storage; 7) The alluring advantage of digital publishing of text, audio-visual features being together (Erol, 2009: 22-24).

The ethical and copyright issues were two important concerns of the transition process. Due to long term existence of traditional publishing rules and regulations are nationally and globally set in legal terms. Whereas, the copyrights of the materials used in the electronic medium is hard to trace as the illegal copy-paste procedures and distortion of the material is quite easy. Furthermore, infraction to private life or personal rights is a problem which still prevails. Despite the excitement it created, these issues together with namely disadvantages caused a doubtful start for electronic publication (Nizam, 2006).

Nevertheless, in course of time e-publishing became a profitable business as costs were comparably economical to that of printing and distributing. Throughout the world publishing industry is changing in parallel to the rapid development of communication technologies in terms of style and content. Besides e-books, e-newspapers and e-magazines became favourable to use as quick refreshment of the news, easy access to information and personalised sites according to preference of design (Pektaş-Turgut, 2009). As a mass communication media devise internet publication is a prominent platform to study the shifting narrative conventions, and thus, determining the negotiated meanings the readers would generate from the content.

The high costs of traditional publication and consequently their increasing prices for the reader could be considered as the major reason for shift towards digital publication (Yağmurlu, 2009: 75-79). Just like e-newspapers, e-journals, e-books and e-magazines started as electronic copies of their hard copy publications. The efficiency of categorising, no need for cover paging and shelving were benefits of digital publishing which brought the costs down. Easy access to these e-publications via internet enabled its wide spread usage.

The description of digital magazine by Dora Santos Silva (2012) is as follows: “the print magazine, a digital magazine is distinguished by six key features: it has a beginning, middle and end; it is edited and curated (has an editorial alignment, is divided into sections previously established); it has an aesthetic treatment much more appealing than a newspaper; it’s date-
stamped (it has series of issues published in a specific date, usually weekly, monthly or quarterly); its contents are permanent, suffering only minimal corrections; it is periodic (created to have subsequent issues).

There are three kinds of e-magazine publications: those traditionally published and then copied to electronic medium; that of electronic magazines which later printed in limited numbers as hard copies; and those that are only e-magazines. The access to these electronic magazines take place in three ways as well: without any payment as the magazine is all free; by subscription; and by partly payment where the reader or user only pays for what is downloaded (Erol; 159-60). From 1990 to today, the increase in their numbers (Tonta, 2002), show that e-magazines hold a solemn place among e-publications. Internet media began with the as print media started to transform their content and load them to the internet.

In Turkey, 12th April 1993 is the date for the beginning of internet as ODTÜ (Middle East Technical University) actualised the first access through internet. On July 1995, Bosphorus University was the channel for internet via which its students adapted the Aktüel Magazine content and put it on the net. 2nd December 1995 was the date that Zaman Newspaper put its content partially into internet. Moreover, it created a digital archive where open access to its older issues became available. On 1996, two digital news media, Aktüel Magazine and Zaman Newspaper, were on the internet and a site called “Xn” was electronically publishing selected news and articles from various publications. On 27th November 1996, Milliyet became the first e-newspaper that fully became open access. Consequently, by 1st of January 1997, Hürriyet and Sabah Newspapers followed. Radikal Newspaper became online on 28th March 1998 and on 7th May 1998 Cumhuriyet Gazetesi joined the other. The independent site on internet was NetHaber which delivered news directly from Anadolu Ajansı and Reuters (Ünlü, 2014).

From the years 1996 to 2002, the digital copies of the printed journals were e-published with a number of 2909 (ULAKBIM, 2002) only 10% of which were published online as the rest were parallel publications (Erol: 67). However, since 2002 various types of e-magazines are electronically published. Although most of these e-magazines are designed as web pages, electronic setting provides new approaches, applications, designs and understanding. Generally, e-magazines are published in PDF, Flash and HTML format where interactivity and visual effectiveness and content play a huge role (Turgut, 2009).
In HTML format, the design enables articles to be loaded and forums to be input. Usually, the name of the magazine is given horizontally at the top, the directions are given at the bottom or above the banner, or at the left side of the page. The page is to be followed down words. GIF and Flash visuals could be placed to enhance the effectiveness and the buttons placed on pictures or texts would provide inter-textuality. PDF is the most often used style for the e-magazines. It provides a larger space for written material and downloading, storing and copying is easy. Also, the text and the visuals are printer friendly as there is no need for complicated adjustments. Electronic magazines created in PDF format can be kept as printed material. Owing to its highly artistic applications, Flash is a preferable format for e-magazines. Its vectorial operating system and supporting of the Bitmap visuals helps the designer in creating the artistic look of the site. Flash formatted e-magazines are the most reader and site interacted ones. Furthermore, audio effects when used with the visuals lead to creation of a thematic style (Turgut, 2009).

As their forms and functions reveal meaningful information, children’s e-magazines become an interesting study canvas to generate how they would operate. The children’s magazines, which functions to inform, enhance children’s imagination, form a link with the real life experiences and providing them edutainment, are presumed to have certain qualities such as: a) theme that is suitable for the experience and perception of children. b) Concrete and intact details. c) Narration formed of short sentences and paragraphs. d) An active story that ends with reasoning and real-like heroes. e) Character analysis simplified for children’s comprehension. f) Sense of humour that is not rude. g) Emphasis on exciting events and creating interest to details. h) Visuals relevant to the theme (Oğuzkan, 2006: 111).

Similarly, while their format differs from one another as some are designed as HTML format the other may be Flash or PDF depending on the kind of material its content upholds,

“Electronic magazines are the major edutainment materials which include, if not all but many, illustrated stories, rhymes and songs, colouring-in, mazes, counting activities, sorting and marching exercises, make-and-do assignments, finding and identifying objects, information giving features such as articles or short films, games, writing articles, alphabet activities, competitions, audio-visual readers and advertisements” (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 284).

Thus, when regarding e-magazines effectiveness wise throughout the globe as well as in Turkey, their usage of format, colour, audio-visuals, inter-textuality, inter-activeness, page
styling, typography all counts for the purpose and identity of the publication (Turgut, 2009). In the next part, the parts - stories, questions to think about, informative texts, games, creativity - of TRT’s printed and electronic children’s magazines, which are randomly chosen from the year 2014, which its first year, will be examined through critical discourse analysis.

**Methodology**

In ambiguous situations there might be a need to create new signs or creatively apply existing signs to interpret the ongoing occurrences or events. The signification takes place in form of presentation through discourse (Lothe, 2000: 45-47). “A discourse is a collection of statements (frequently, though not exclusively, a body of texts) unified by the designation of a common object of analysis, by particular ways of articulating that object, and by certain connections, especially regularity, order, and systematicity. What unite these texts are the forms of knowledge they produce about their object of study… And the power relations that are thereby involved” (Peter Childs and Patrick Williams, 1997: 98-99). Discourse analysis is where the content of the media texts are analysed and the study of words, phrases and meanings of the media texts. Here, not only the sole meanings of the language used are examined but also the relationships, historical context and relevant paradigms concerning the process of production of these texts are looked upon (Güngör, 2011: 206). Hence, through discourse when the created signs are articulated, they become the structure that determines the future action meaning cultural symbols are learned through interaction and later mediate that interaction. In other words, after people generate meanings of a signified, the meaning which they generated becomes drive of their behaviour (Baran, 2006: 431).

Furthermore, discourse is a representation system that would described as the reproduction of purpose, power relationships and then constructing their ideological effects. In the centre of discourse analysis there is criticism and this focuses on how social groups or individuals use discourse to obtain, maintain and distribute power and ideology (Elliott, 1996).

Studies on the critical discourse analysis emerged from 'critical linguistics' in the 1970s. At the time sociolinguistics were not attentive towards social hierarchy and power (Wodak, 2001: 5). Critical discourse analysis was then developed by the Lancaster school of linguists of which Norman Fairclough was the most prominent figure. Fairclough developed a three-dimensional study pattern on discourse aiming to map three separate forms of analysis: analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text
production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of socio-cultural practice (Fairclough and Holes, 1995) combining micro, meso and macro-level interpretation. At the micro-level, the text's syntax, metaphoric structure and certain rhetorical devices are regarded from the members-groups, action-process, context-social structure and personal and social cognition levels, whereas at the meso-level text's production and consumption that focuses on how power relations are enacted are considered (Van Dijk, 2003: 354). Significantly, at the macro-level, text is studied to come to an intertextual understanding where the broad, societal currents that are effective (Barry, Carroll and Hansen, 2006).

In addition to linguistic theory, social theory is also central to critical discourse analysis, to which Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu were contributors, where discourse is examined regarding ideologies and power relations. (Fairclough and Holes, 1995).

Ideology has been considered from the social representations of groups, and, in psychological versions of critical discourse analysis developed by Ruth Wodak, who has contributed to the field of study. Interdisciplinary nature of the study employs areas of study from the humanities and social sciences, such as critical linguistics (Fowler, et al, 1979), and Teun A. Van Dijk. A socio-cognitive interface between social structures, discourse structures (Van Dijk, 1998) and the historical dimension fall into basis of critical discourse studies (Wodak and Meyer, 2001).

When technological advancements and communication is regarded in terms of digital publications, McLuhan’s technological determinism and needs to be remembered as he argued that all social, political, economic and cultural change is inevitably based on the development and diffusion of technology as new forms of media transform our experience of ourselves and our society (1964). Following advancements in telecommunication, convergence in time accelerated with the fast innovations of digitalization and development of internet enabling divergence of different sectors (Iosifidis, 2002: 28).

Critical discourse analysis puts emphasis on the relationship between ideology, hierarchy and authority. Discourse considers all parameters of the message: Who is creating the message? According to what the text is created (the authority)? To whom the message is targeting? What is the purpose of the text? (Punch, 2005: 215-218). Therefore, critical discourse analysis a method of discourse analysis which handles the topics such as power, hegemony, class distinctions, gender, race, ideology, discrimination, benefits, gain, reconstruction,
transformation, traditions, social order (Van Dijk, 2003: 354).

The main features of Critical Discourse Analysis are as follows (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997: 271-80):

- Critical discourse analysis addresses social problems
- Power relations are discursive
- Discourse constitutes society and culture
- Discourse does ideological work
- Discourse is historical
- The link between text and society is mediated
- Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
- Discourse is a form of social action.

In this study TRT’s (Turkish Radio and Television National Broadcasting Agency) Children’s magazine, which is in the market for three years, and their digital versions will be studied. TRT is chosen for being the national broadcasting medium, where although before some autonomy was attributed, which is under control of the governmental sanctions (Sarmaşık, 2000). The reason for this is to determine the themes regarded and reflected via the national mass communication device TRT children’s magazines. The magazines are chosen randomly and are 2014 publications. On the messages published in the printed magazine and the purposes aimed, vice editor of the magazine Sümeye Üzer states, “Our purpose is to make education process systematic and entertaining source and to give well studied, examined and planned information to children and to make them follow the agenda of the country and direct them to a certain target rather than just fill their free time” (Yiğitbaş, 2014: 47). This statement indicates that the magazine, printed and digital, is created with a purpose. Therefore, TRT children’s magazines shifting narrative conventions from the printed medium to electronic/digital channel in relation to the above listed features of critical discourse analysis is the best fitted method of analysis.

**TRT Çocuk (Children’s) Magazine: Printed and Digital**

In Turkey there are two kinds of children’s magazines; character magazines and general knowledge magazines as vice editor of TRT Children’s Magazine Sümeyra Üzer indicated. TRT Children’s Magazine is the only magazine that has the both qualities. Üzer, continues to argue that children have fun while having the opportunity of improving themselves in science, art, history and general knowledge. Üzer also states that the content of the magazine is far from employing American style ideology and popular heroes and heroins, but aims to form positive
behaviour and strengthening their ties with their history via cartoons, picture stories, entertaining and informative texts (Yiğitbaş, 2014: 53-54). TRT Children’s Magazine is a monthly, 65 paged, coloured, 24x30 cm sized printed periodical. The age span is 7-12 but in addition it is sold with a supplementary magazine aiming pre-school children. The cover and the cover theme in the magazine are usually designed regarding important days and weeks represented by TRT Children’s TV Channel’s characters (Yiğitbaş, 2014: 45).

We will consider the magazines first year electronic publications as the launch of the magazine would rely its bases on the statements of Vice Editor Üzer. The Electronic TRT Children’s Magazine is colourful, however, does not go further than being a PDF styled website. The on-line magazine has four main headlines under which there are sub topics of which only a few are interactive. None of the pages of the site are animated and there are no online games or GIFs either.

The stories in the printed magazine display the characters in the animations and programs of the TRT TV Channel. Mualla, Keloğlan (a character from an old Turkish story seriel), The Flying Mouse, Uzu the Sheep are all cartoon characters from the TV channel. In the magazine, these animations are given in a similar format as cartoon strips and not as written stories. Thus, with the colourful visuals and few lines to read, the story is made up of pictures rather than a written story supported with few visuals. Mualla is a girl with super powers who helps those in need although she would sometimes be pictured as ironing, cooking and doing house work. Keloğlan is a traditional story character. In traditional stories he is a naive but a very lucky boy, however, in the magazine he is a cartoon strip character giving lessons on social values. The Flying Mouse is short story about the adventures of a mouse (apparently a boy) in its neighbourhood. Uzu the Sheep is made up of short stories to be read to smaller children by their elder sisters of brothers and the topics are simple lesson giving sort. Both the Flying Mouse and Uzu the Sheep are stories accompanied by big, colourful pictures. Over all the story parts of the magazine is much of a visual type than written material and are all associated with their TV productions.

In the Internet magazine, the reading part consists of only two pages; My Library and You Complete. In the My Library page, there are published book summaries (which are very short) with their cover pictures. In the You Complete page there are two paragraphs of a story where the reader is asked to write the rest and send as a message to the site. Here a note indicates that one of reader stories will be published in the relevant month’s printed magazine.
Pirdino and the Journey to Inventions, Those I Talk of, Sinan’s Dreams, belong to set of informative content. Here, historical personalities, usually those that belong to Ottoman period, are presented. Sinan’s Dreams and Pirdino are cartoon stories while Those I Talk of is a one page prose with small pictures. Kuruş Ailesi (The Penny Family) teaches the facts about money (the penny calculation) and it is again a cartoon strip. Gökay the Space Encounter, Curious Turtle, Mincır’s Museum Interest are the three cartoon strips that go in to category of science. In these texts, how to do things, experiments and some scientific events are given to children in colourful content. For the geographic information, Hazerfan (an Ottoman inventor) is chosen as the hero of the story. Hazerfan is a child and not yet a grown up person who fly with gigantic winds. Still the connotation is historical and not from the contemporary Turkey. The Route of Mole is another two paged geography story where a pilot mole visits places that are of historical importance. The history is prominent here as the places with Ottoman connotations are focused on. For sports, again Keloğlan is used to give information about sports. Here information is presented without any story but just as text book knowledge. Cover Stories of the magazine, which are two pages long, are the important events, days and weeks and the insight stories of the covers are presented via the heroes of the TRT Children’s Channel again.

The informative pages of the online magazine are shorter and less than the printed one. In Let’s Go and See file, there are usually three places and the information for each is brief and geographical where couple of photographs are used for visual support. I didn’t Know but I learned is again gives information about things such as the inventions of Muslim world or which sport is done where or Christopher Columbs (written phonometically as Kristof Kolomb). In these files very short informative texts are present with one or two pictures that are quite small. Clearly the colourful visuals, that are prominent in the printed magazine, are not used in the digital magazine effectively. In the My Hero section of the online magazine, historical characters, such as Nasrettin Hoca (a comic and philosophical character who lived in the Ottoman period) or Piri Reis (the well-known Ottoman Captain who drew maps), are given as PDF format with one small sketched picture. The last informative section of the internet magazine is the news. Here school projects being conducted and places to visit, such as the museums or fairs, are given with maps and even entering fees.

Considering games, in the printed magazine, Test Yourself with Mancınık, Wire Ali’s Words (word puzzle), Witty, Natural Puzzle and Mimocan (which is another sheep character) fall into the games category. Whereas in the online magazine there are no games at all despite the fact that internet is very suitable for animations, GIFs and online games. Referring to
Buckingham and Scanlon (2001: 284), electronic magazines are the perfect spaces for edutainment materials such as colouring-in, mazes, sorting and marching exercises, make-and-do assignments, finding and identifying objects, in short variety of games, activities and competitions. Following the same reference the indication of increase in the commercials in edutainment magazines, both digital and printed, brings forth a concern regarding the education purposes of the magazine. Thus, the absence of such activities from the digital TRT Children’s Magazine brings about the question whether it is a conscious action of the authority to limit the children’s time spent in the cyber world and if so why are there the projections of the advertisements and the commercialisation of the products featured in the TRT Children’s TV Channel.

For creative section of the printed magazine, a girl character, Çıtçıt Hanım (Miss Clipper or Fastener in Turkish) is chosen to do handcraft. Here various handmade products are made using simple tools like glue, scissors and paper. The interesting thing here is while it was a bull (a male character) doing handcraft in the previous magazines, later on a chicken (a female character) was the host of the page signifying a gender representation distinguishing the roles and jobs which male or female characters would employ just like Mualla the super power character who occasionally does house chores. Another page for art in the printed magazine, which is actually the last page, is called Young Artist and here the pictures sent by the readers are printed with their names, ages and cities. On the contrary, The handcraft page of the internet magazine is called Have Fun and here only the pictures of Çıtçıt Hanım (the handcraft page of the printed magazine) are uploaded.

As pointed out, one of the apparent objectives of the TRT Children’s Magazine seems to be the gender issue. In both printed and online magazine male characters are the ones who are mobile and are concerned with going to places, curious about inventions and are interested in science. On the other hand, female characters, even when super powers are entitled to them, are housebound doing house work or handcrafts and recessive. When we look at the balance of appearance of the male and female characters in both magazines, in the printed magazine male characters appear in most of the themed pages while female characters are not many. Actually, Mualla seems to be the only female character that has her own cartoon strip, however, even though she helps others in solving their problems she does housework which marks her role in the society in her ordinary life. Regarding male/female balance in the online magazine, the pages are mostly PDF text files with few pictures and mostly photographs where the balance seems to be equal.
Reminding vice Editor Sümeyra Üzer’s indication that the magazine aimed to bring forth national characters and symbols against popular culture (Yiğitbaş, 2014: 54). From this statement, one would expect modern time national heroes to appear in the magazine, on the contrary, national heroes seem to be Ottoman ones and of historical connotations. Regarding popular culture as the practices and pragmatics exercised in a society in general or conventional means which is devised to present a culture structured by hegemony to maintain the status quo (Schudson, 1987: 51-68), Üzer’s discourse on the representation of the sensitiveness to avoid popular culture seems to be invalid as it contests the actual meaning of popular.

Üzer also states, “In the information age where visual culture is dominant giving way to seeing other than reading and comprehending, there is a need for publications to enable them to become keen readers, to remind them traditional values and norms, and keep them away from consumerism and effects of ideological content” (Yiğitbaş, 2014: 54). Taking up from here, the recessive existence of the female characters, the absence of modern-time heroes or characters and dominant existence of Ottoman characters could be argued to be quite an ideological representation of a conservative sort. Furthermore, as majority of the stories in the printed magazine are cartoons and in the online magazine the texts are very short making the magazine’s purpose to make children attentive readers irrelevant. Moreover, Üzer’s statement of keeping children away from consumerism appears to be void as there are advertisements in magazines which are the images of the TRT television programs to which a commercial ascription can be attained. Thus, both the printed and the digital magazines nestle material of advertainment reckoning without the edutainment attributions. Also the magazines are directing the readers to TRT Children’s TV Channel where there are advertisements. Hence magazines having just educative purposes, as the vice editor mentions appears to be an invalid argument, while they rather motivate and anchor the generation of the meanings to hegemonic pedagogical signification of social roles, gender roles, beliefs, values, behaviours, myths, attitudes, mores, norms and traditions.

**Conclusion**

On the children’s usage of the information technologies and internet usage Alan Earl (ITNOW: 19-20), Harm Reduction Officer, comments “it’s like we are in an aeroplane, but the children are flying it. We need to go into the cockpit and ask them what they are doing. It is my belief that it is the child we need to educate the most – help them understand the risks – but parents are very important too.” Hence it may be right to say that the generation gap in the fast and ever developing information age is growing as children are digital natives and the previous
generation being digital immigrants, a state giving rise to the question of how should the latter create and respond to digital culture flow.

Certainly there are noteworthy useful materials for educational purposes regarding e-magazines. However, when edutainment features get involved with the education process, children’s interactive tendencies would cause a threat to their cognitive and personal safety as they are also vulnerable to the explicit and implicit cultural discourse, if any, imposed through e-texts whether made up of only texts or with supplementary audio-visual effects where TRT Children’s magazine’s both printed and digital versions subsume.

Despite legal regulations and measures designed for internet usage, precautions to edit the e-texts before children are exposed to output seem to be at short as these laws are effective after exposition. The curricularized (the e-magazines that fall into edutainment category), commercially influential (which belong to popular consumer based e-magazines) and dogmatic (that promotes certain ideological elements) textuality of the e-magazines for children are open access without any filtering. The parental and tutorial assistance and monitoring to the reception of these visuals seem to be a vital part of e-published otherwise the reception of the content would become a problematic and inextricable media pedagogy especially where media literacy education is not properly applicable.

Following the media pedagogy tendencies in regards of creating conventional social meanings, as Connerton indicated (1992: 9-12) when images from the past are aggregated systematically, existing social order would become valid whenever there is an interpretation of the sign system in the course performing activities occurring in particular social environments. This in return would help to shape or are shaped by human interpretations via sets of generated meanings which would fall into phatic communication where aspects of language serve to reinforce social relationships resulting conformity where there would be a tendency of individuals to adopt the conventions or norms of a particular group and fit in their expectations (Beck, Bennett, Wall, 2002: 97, 212). As the formation of a virtual community is apparently the subject, when the TRT Children’s Magazines are studied in relation to ideology and pedagogy relationship, the concept of Group Think, a psychological degenerative condition which would afflict group members, undermining their ability for individual response (Ibid.: 214) need to be further studied regarding semiotic perception. In the age of fast information flow where the prepotency of the visual culture hinge on gazing and even on simply looking, children of an intended imagined community, just as in the case of both TRT Children’s
Magazines’ stance, generating conventional meanings from the presented media contents would end up with preferred reading, the reading which a text’s producer would like to be made (Ibid.: 69) which in turn would affect reflexivity of the receivers, who in this case are the children.
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