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# Values Education in Turkish Textbooks in Primary Education

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## Abstract

Texts are indispensable tools used in a language teaching environment. They help students learn both implicitly and explicitly. This learning activity guides the future of the student. The individualization processes of memories that are combined together with qualified texts would be shorter and more qualified. There are many affective approaches and cognitive approaches in curriculum because raising individuals with adopted basic human values is a universal phenomenon that takes place in all the education programs. In today's teaching processes, along with data mining, opinion mining is also included in educational processes. Equipping the input in students' memories with positive poles (the literature used polar), in terms of value load, will directly lead to the observation of the positive affective behaviours in students. The learning outcomes under the title of education values in native language programs are basically a product of value load mining. This paper focuses on classifying the value loads of the words in the reading texts in the primary education of 7th and 8th grade Turkish textbooks as positive/neutral/negative. The study also attempts to determine the positive/neutral/negative value loads that the textbooks try to convey to the students. This study is a qualitative study and is structured with a document review method. Rapid Miner and MS Excel programs were used to acquire data, which was described in the context of value load that is transferred. With the results obtained, it can be concluded that, at the word level, the textbooks try to convey positive and negative values that are approximately the same ratio without using a certain systematic approach that would consider adjusting the text content for the grade levels.

**Keywords:** Values Education, Value Load (positive-neutral-negative), Language Education

## Introduction:

### Background to the study

Human decision making is extensively influenced by the assessments or judgements of others (Bakshi, Kaur, Kaur & Kaur, 2016). In this process, which involves decision and evaluation, the individuals' memory is affected by other inputs such as social, linguistic, cultural, and communicational inputs. More so, the opinions, values, and judgements are conveyed through the



words cited in the textbooks that resides in the teaching and education circle.

Opinion is the view of a person which reflects their sentiments, beliefs, or judgments regarding a matter of importance in a particular context and is usually considered to be subjective in nature. Studies show that the opinions of stakeholders greatly influence the decision making of individuals as well as communities like governments and organizations. Opinion mining and sentiment analysis are used interchangeably these days and is a field of text data mining that involves extraction of opinions from evaluative texts and classification of the opinion's polarity. This could be positive or negative based on the orientation of the text result and is followed by the computational treatment of opinions expressed towards the key features (Medhat, Hassan & Korashy, 2014).

Value is defined as the combination of rules and principles that are necessarily desired and required in a society (Cooper, 2014; Sagiv, 2002). Apart from influencing people's behaviours and motivating them, values directly affect the decision-making process of individuals while completing a task (Sagiv, 2002; Schafer, 2012; Schwartz, 1994). However, since values are considered among those factors that regulate individuals' tasks, they are affected by the society they dwell in (Davidov, 2010), and the reflections can be observed in the long-term.

In this context, values are the most important criteria that adds meaning to the socio-cultural elements of the society while shaping it as well (Ulusoy & Arslan, 2016:5). They are also the measures that form the ideal behaviour patterns or guide the individuals' lives that do not exist perceptibly but emerge with the results of such actions (Aydm, 2010).

Besides affecting the behaviours, values contain judgemental ability about what is appropriate and balanced and what is not (Shobha & Kala, 2015; Giddens, 2009). Considering these factors, value resides among the most interesting topics in local and global terms, which are highly used in today's world (Superka et al., 1976; Koh, 2012).

Lickona (1992) states that education of values is a fundamental issue for the success of a democratic society. In formal education, values exist in education programmes such as citizenship education and it is found in the hidden curriculum as well (Yüksel, 2005). Hidden curriculum is embedded in the physical and psychological environment of the school such as the rules, the messages of the school administrators, and the teachers working at that school.

There is a close relationship between the characteristics of the individual and the values of the society, as well as the value being taught to the individual. Depending on the internalized values and habits, the individual value can be beneficial to both the individual and the society at large. Furthermore, when it is harmful, it can affect both the individual and the society at the same time. For this reason, Kanad (1951) divides the character into two, namely: moral and unmoral character. Moral character can only be formed by the values that carry positive load. Modest, honest, kind, loyal, patient, respectful, responsible, and sincere people are qualified as people of character by others (Kelley, 2003; cited in Akbaş, 2008). Values are the criteria that individuals use to recognize and understand the events and situations in their environments.

Moreover, humans are considered as the sole living beings that can produce value. In this context, an important feature of values indicate that they do not exist innately but are acquired through experience. Hence, it is important to learn from these experiences. Acquisition of values is therefore an educational problem all by itself (Yeşil & Aydın, 2007). For individuals, it is only possible through values education to obtain local and universal values together. This would also allow them to internalize these values. Individuals should be aware of the positive effects of moral values on their personal and social life, distinguish between positive and negative values, and question the rules (CDÖP, 2017).

With the increasing global concerns in today's world, there is an urgent need to develop values such as mutual communication, cooperation, being in peace with the environment, and living in harmony within that environment (Shobha & Kala, 2015). The negativities experienced in public or private spaces in education and academic communities reveal the importance of value education (Koh, 2012).

According to studies on the concept of value, values education plays an important role along with the developmental characteristics of children such as experiences, the environment in which children communicate and interact, the elements within the environment, and the curriculum prepared in line with these elements (Sapsağlam & Ömeroğlu, 2016). The education process does not only provide knowledge or makes the individuals successful, but it also aims to build the individuals' characteristics because value-based education is required to raise good citizens (Hawkes, 2009; Sekhar & Emmaniel, 2012). In various research that aims to help children gain values, it is seen that values are introduced via integrating them in the educational programmes (Akpınar & Özdaş, 2013; Brownlee et al., 2016; Johansson, 2011; Meydan & Bahçe, 2010).

The main purpose of any school curriculum is to educate students as individuals equipped with creativity. Kirschenbaum (1995) states that both types of thoughts gain importance in today's education system. Young people who do not realize their own values are influenced by peer groups and related propaganda in the decision-making process (Simon, Leland & Kirschenbaum, 1972). What is expected from educational institutions today is to encourage individuals to adapt to living conditions, to socialize, to adopt the values of the society they live in, and to create an awareness that will protect and keep the native cultural heritage (Kolaç & Karadağ, 2012).

Values are the sum of principles that form the basic elements of the curriculum followed in schools as curricula are built upon these principles. Therefore, with a more general overview, education systems also fulfil their function within the frame of gaining values through curricula. Educational program is developed via considering all the elements of the education system such as curricula, learning and teaching environments, educational tools, extracurricular activities, and legislation. In curricula, values are not seen as a separate program or a learning tool, unit, subject, etc. The root values included in the curriculum of Republic of Turkey, Ministry of National Education (MoNE) (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades) are as follows: *justice, friendship, honesty, self-control, patience, respect, love, responsibility, patriotism, and helpfulness*. These values will come to life on their own, through the sub-values they are associated with, and with other root values in the learning-teaching process. These root values mentioned in the program are the values that carry positive value load. Kanad (1951) proposes that it is only possible to educate an individual with moral character who has internalized these values.

In general, within the concept of values education, an individual equipped with positive qualities is expected to internalize the following characteristics:

1. Give importance to working in groups,
2. Being able to have the ability to think rationally, logically, and systematically,
3. Being able to solve personal dilemmas in the social process,
4. Being characterful, smart, kind, literate, virtuous, and educated.

One of the missions of educational programmes is to teach the values explicitly or implicitly as mentioned in the program, to discipline the students in accordance with the determined rules, to contribute to their moral development, and to affect their character positively. Texts used in the

textbooks have been the most common and most essential tool to activate these tasks at formal institutions of education.

### Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to determine the value of loads conveyed in the texts through the words of the reading texts in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish course books of primary education offered by the MoNE and to analyse these values according to their value loads.

### Methodology

The texts in the textbooks were analysed by cleaning the data, removing the punctuation marks via text editing programs, and by tokenization. The result list has been rearranged in order to lemmatise, which requires the elimination of the repeated words in the tokenized list. ABBY Fine Reader 12 optical character recognition (OCR) program was used to convert the texts included in the study into text files. Text Mate 2.0 and Text Wrangler 5.5 text processing programmes were used to prepare and clean the texts for the final analysis.

The words determined in the database of the study were analysed with their conveyed internal meaning and their value loads were classified as positive, negative, and neutral by three field experts with a PhD degree in applied linguistics. The field experts used a variety of methods that includes introspection and aid of dictionary definitions provided by different dictionaries and their comparison of given definitions for the word(s) in question.

### Database of the study

The database of the study consists of the texts in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade primary school Turkish textbooks that are used in the Ministry of National Education Information Network (<http://www.eba.gov.tr/ekitap>). Since the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary education focuses on writing skills, 1<sup>st</sup> grade textbooks are excluded from this study. Similarly, the texts included in the study are in prose, and the poems are not included in this study. As a result, a database of 3637 unique words was populated for this study.

### Titles of the texts in the database

The total number of reading texts in the primary school for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade Turkish textbooks is 88, and the titles of the reading texts are listed in the table below (see **Error! Reference source not found.**, **Error! Reference source not found.**, and **Error! Reference source not found.**).

**Table 1. Titles of Reading Text in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Turkish Textbooks**

Titles of Reading Texts			
VIZVIZ ile Gülnaz (Buzzy and Gülnaz)	Teşekkür Etme Özür Dileme (Thanking, Apologizing)	Aile Fotoğrafları (Family Photos)	Kargalar (Crows)
Anne Kedi ve Yavruları (Mummy Cat and The Kittens)	Planlı Yaşam (Planned Life)	Ormanın Renkleri Kimde? (Who Has the Colours of the Forest?)	Dünya'nın Hareketleri (Earth's Movements)

Düğün Yemeği (Wedding Dinner)	Bayram Armağanı (Holiday Gift)	Bizim Nasrettin Hoca Nasreddin (Our Hodja)	Türkiye'm Benim Cennetim (My Turkey My Paradise)
Millî Kültür (National Culture)	Gazi Dede Cumhuriyeti Anlatıyor (Ghazi Grandpa Telling the Republic)	Doğum Tarihimi Sen Söyle (You Tell Me My Date of Birth)	Atatürk'ün Kişiliği ve Özellikleri (Atatürk's Personality and Characteristics)
Yerli Mali (Domestic Products)	Geçmişten Günümüzde Tarımın Öyküsü (The Story of Agriculture from Past to Present)	Keloğlan ve Sihirli Tas (Keloğlan and the Magic Bowl)	Enerji Tasarrufu Haftası (Energy Saving Week)
Hastane Günlerim (My Hospital Days)	Bezirgânbaşı (Traditional Child Game)	Temizlik Malzemeleri (Cleaning Materials)	Beslenme (Nutrition)
Ya Tutarsa! (What if it happens!)	Üç Elma, Dört Öğrenci (Three Apples, Four Students)	Robot (The Robot)	Dondurmayı Külahta Sunmayı İlk Kim Düşündü? (Who First Thought to Serve Ice Cream in a Cone?)

**Table 2. Titles of Reading Text in 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Turkish Textbooks**

<b>Titles of Reading Texts</b>			
Kırlangıcın Dostluğu (The Friendship of The Swallow)	Şakacı Fil (Playful Elephant)	Çiftçi ve Oğulları (The Farmer and His Sons)	Bütün Çocuklar Dondurma Sever (All Kids Love Ice Cream)
Atatürk'ün Yaşam Öyküsü (Atatürk's Biography)	Atatürk'ün Doğa Sevgisi (Atatürk's Love of Nature)	Gözüm Arkada Kalmayacak (I Won't Worry)	Rüya Bahçesi (The Dream Garden)
Rengini Arayan Top (The Ball Looking for its Colours)	Gökkuşağından Bir Dünya (A World of Rainbow)	Ayçiçeği (The Sunflower)	Bilgi Evleri Kütüphaneler (Information Houses Libraries)
Kitap Sevgisi (Love of Books)	Ninemin Öğrettikleri (What Grandma Taught)	Müzeler (Museums)	Ay Avcısı Eskimolar (Moon Hunter Eskimos)

Günebakanlar (The Heliotrope)	Çocuk ve Bulut (The Kid and The Cloud)	En Güzel Çiçek (The Most Beautiful Flower)	Gezmeyi Seven Ağaç (The Tree That Loves Travelling)
Kuşlar Neden Göç Eder? (Why Do Birds Migrate?)	Kelebekler Vadisi (Butterfly Valley)	Anadolu ve Dünya Bilgesi: Nasrettin Hoca (Wise Man of Anatolia and the World: Nasreddin Hodja)	Kavuk (Quilted Turban)
Karagöz Mektup Yazmayı Öğreniyor (Karagöz Learns to Write A Letter)	Komşunuz Evde Mi? (Is Your Neighbour at Home)	Küçük Çocuk ve Oyun Arkadaşları (The Kid and The Playmates)	Yüzme (Swimming)
Büyük Yarış (The Big Race)	Çocukça (Childish)		

**Table 3. Titles of Reading Text in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Turkish Textbooks**

<b>Titles of Reading Text</b>			
Paylaşmayı Öğrenen Sincap (The Squirrel Learning to Share)	Trafikte Nasıl Güvende Olabiliriz? (How Can We Be Safe in Traffic)	Beden Dilimiz (Our Body Language)	Cumhuriyetin Bekçilerine (To the Guards of The Republic)
Atatürk'ün Çocukluğu (Atatürk's Childhood)	Umudunu Yitirmeyen Tek İnsan (The Only Human Who Never Lost Hope)	Babaanne ve İhlamur Ağacı (Grandma and The Linden Tree)	Temizlik Kurallarına Dikkat Edelim (Let's Pay Attention to Hygiene Rules)
İp Bacaklı Uzaylı Çocuk (Rope-legged Alien Boy)	Meyvenizi Yemeden Önce Yıkadınız Mi? (Did You Wash Your Fruit Before Eating?)	Gökyüzündeki Dost (The Friend in The Sky)	Buz Pateni (Ice Skating)
En Büyük Takım Bizim Takım (The Greatest Team is Our Team)	İzcilik (Scouting)	Oyuncakların Öfkesi (The Anger of the Toys)	Bisiklet (The Bicycle)
Tutumsuz'un Öyküsü (The Story of the Spender)	Şekerci Güzeli (Candy Beauty)	Sihirli Çoraplar (Magic Socks)	İstanbul Dünyam (Istanbul, My World)
Yedi Göller Millî Parkı	Anadolu'nun Tarih Hazinesi	Ayşegül	Ölümsüzleşen Bahçe (The Immortal)

(Yedi Göller National Park)	(Historical Treasures of Anatolia)		Garden)
Dünyayı Güldüren Adam (The Man Who Makes the World Laugh)	Ulusal Bayramlar (National Holidays)	Kışın Fotoğraf Çekerken (Taking Pictures in Winter)	En Yararlı İş Hangisi? (What's the Most Useful Job?)
Taşın Kovduğundaki Şişe (The Bottle in the Hollow of The Stone)	Pablo Picasso ve "4" Rakamı (Pablo Picasso and The Number '4')		

### Findings

With the results gathered in this study, a sample analysis for the value loads of the words can be found in Table 4 and Table 5.

**Table 4. Transfer Analysis of Words Value Loads**

<b>Positive Value Load Transfer</b>	<b>Neutral Value Load Transfer</b>	<b>Negative Value Load Transfer</b>
bayram (holiday)	zil (bell)	işkence (torture)
heyecan (excitement)	zürafa (giraffe)	rezalet (disgrace)
muhteşem (gorgeous)	vatandaş (citizen)	ölüm (death)
sevinç (joy)	tel (wire)	hain (betrayed)
samimi (sincere)	yorgan (quilt)	yoksul (poor)
kibar (kind)	temsil (play)	utanç (shame)
şampiyon (champion)	takvim (calender)	sıkıcı (boring)
...	...	...

Based on the feedback received from the field experts, 172 (4.72%) words had positive value transfer in the database of 3637 words, while 159 (4.37%) words had negative value transfer. The remaining 3306 (91.43%) words offers neutral value transfer.

**Table 5. Example of Words Related to Value Transfers of the Words**

<b>Positive Value Transfer</b>	<b>Neutral Value Transfer</b>	<b>Negative Value Transfer</b>
bayram (holiday)	zil (bell)	işkence (torture)
heyecan (excitement)	zürafa (giraffe)	rezalet (disgrace)
muhteşem (gorgeous)	vatandaş (citizen)	ölüm (death)
sevinç (joy)	tel (wire)	hain (betrayer)
samimi (sincere)	yorgan (quilt)	yoksul (poor)
kibar (kind)	temsil (play)	utanç (shame)
şampiyon (champion)	takvim (calendar)	sıkıcı (boring)
...	...	...
<b>Total:</b> 172 (4.72%)	<b>Total:</b> 3306 (91.43%)	<b>Total:</b> 159 (4.37%)

The data were analysed according to grade levels and the results revealed that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grades, 64 positive, 60 negative, and 1104 words convey neutral values out of 1128 words in total. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, 78 positive, 69 negative, and 1382 words convey neutral values out of 1529 words in total. Finally, in the 4<sup>th</sup> grades, 119 positive, 109 negative, and 2199 words convey neutral values out of 2427 words in total. The table below shows the ratio of these findings against the total (

Table ).

**Table 6. The Value Transfer Rates of the Words**

<b>Turkish Textbooks</b>	<b>Positive Value Transfer</b>		<b>Neutral Value Transfer</b>		<b>Negative Value Transfer</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<i>F</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>F</i>	%
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	64	5,21	1104	89,91	60	4,88	1228	100
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>	78	5,1	1382	90,38	69	4,52	1529	100
<b>4<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	119	4,9	2199	90,61	109	4,49	2427	100

### Conclusion and suggestions

When the texts in the primary school Turkish textbooks were analysed, apart from the debate that focuses on whether the numbers of words in the reading texts show an increase gradually or not, the findings reveal that there is no observable relationship between the grade

levels and the values that the words transfer. In this context, it can be said that there are no established standards related to value education when the words are presented to the students in the textbooks. Therefore, the words in the textbooks can be classified according to the values they can or may convey and the text could be constructed with the related words according to the value that will be taught. However, it is believed that using a corpus-based method while preparing course textbooks is of great importance as it will help in selecting the texts according to the grade of the class.

Consequently, the data supports the idea that the words with positive value transfer are at a low-level distribution (4.72%). More so, words with negative transfer are almost at the same level of distribution (4.37%). At the word level, the textbooks also try to convey positive and negative values to the students using the same ratio. However, it is believed that the words that provide positive transfer appear at the higher rates in the word distributions. This will contribute to values education, especially to the tools of corpus linguistics as well as the outputs that could be used for this purpose.

This study plays an important role as there are few academic research on textbooks using corpus techniques in the Turkish context, and the basic reason behind this lack is that the textbooks are not digitally available at large. This provides an extra layer of effort for the researchers in this field. Therefore, further studies that focus on digitizing print textbooks would help researchers to make diachronic studies to compare the results in time.



This article does not contain any studies with human participants performed by any of the authors.

This article does not contain any studies with animals performed by any of the authors.

***Conflicts of interest.***

The authors of this paper certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial or non-financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; membership, employment; affiliations, knowledge or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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