

## THE PERCEPTION OF VIOLENCE CONTENT IN TELEVISION NEWSCASTS BY CHILDREN

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### **Abstract**

*The messages produced by television, which performs an opinion-forming mission in the process the individual perceives the world he or she lives in, gives meaning to it, and develops new attitudes and behavior, possess a consequent significance particularly for news contents defined as 'the presentation of reality'. Violence as reflected on the screen with dramatizations, exceptional fictions, repeated images is sold and watched or either consumed easily for the sake of the TV producers. Since it is learned and imitated quite easily as behavior pattern violence as displayed in a news program which is suggested as 'presentation of the real' considered significant. Especially in the case of children as it's been researched and reported well often and documented in the past researches situation becomes more important. Since children is passive audience who can not discern between the fantasia/fiction and the real they can easily perceive what they watch in the news as 'real' and they can develop an extensive world view over what they perceive to be real. This study aims to practice a descriptive analysis of how violence element, frequently and intensively observed in television newscasts over the last few years, is perceived and evaluated by children. To this end, a questionnaire was conducted on 203 children at elementary education level aged between 11 and 15. Within the light of the data gained, the study tries to report on the opinions and evaluations of children about news, in general, and the violence element in news specifically.*

**Key words:** TV News, children, violence.

### **Özet: Televizyon Haber Bültenlerindeki Şiddet İçeriğinin Çocuklar Tarafından Algılanması**

*Bireyin yaşadığı dünyayı algılaması, anlamlandırması, yeni tutum ve davranış kalıpları geliştirmesinde bir tür kanaat önderliği misyonu da olan televizyonun bu bağlamda ürettiği mesajlar özellikle 'gerçeğin sunumu' olarak tanımlanan haber içeriklerinde ayrı bir önem taşımaktadır. Canlandırmalar, görüntü tekrarları, ve sıra dışı kurgulamalarla ekrana yansıyan şiddet, televizyon yapımcıları için izleten ve satan bir biçim. Taklit edilebilir ve öğrenilebilir bir tutum/davranış kalıbı olması nedeniyle şiddetin 'gerçekliğin sunumu' olarak betimlenen haber içeriklerinde yer alması özellikle dikkati çekilmesi gereken bir nokta olarak düşünülmektedir; diğer bir deyişle, daha önce yapılmış olan araştırma sonuçlarında da görüldüğü üzere çocuk izleyiciler fantazyal kurgu ile gerçeklik arasındaki farkı net olarak ayırt edemeyen pasif alıcılar olduğu için haberlerde izlediklerini 'gerçek' olarak algılayabilmekte ve bu algılama üzerinden de yaygın bir dünya görüşü geliştirebilmektedirler. Bu çalışmada, televizyon haberlerinde son yıllarda sıkça ve yoğunlukla gözlemlendiği üzere şiddet öğesinin çocuklar tarafından algılanmasına ve değerlendirilmesine yönelik bir betimleme yapılması amaçlanmıştır. Bu amaca yönelik olarak 11- 15 yaşları arasındaki 203 ilköğretim çocuğuna anket uygulanmıştır. Elde edilen veriler çerçevesinde çocukların genel olarak*

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haberlere, özel olarak ise haberlerdeki şiddet ögesine ilişkin kanaatleri ve değerlendirmeleri ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Televizyon Haberleri, çocuk, şiddet.

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## INTRODUCTION

According to the research conducted by UNESCO, among the countries where television is viewed most, Turkey is the second country with 3 hours and 59 minutes' TV watching time after the USA. Since private television broadcasting started in Turkey in the 90s, it has been observed that in most of the program contents violence element has been presented in a stressed way. Regarding this, it is known that those television contents with intensive violence element have been the main theme of many researches. The relationships between violent behavior patterns and media contents were examined through the researches based on the social-cognitive learning theory, desensitization theory and social comparison theory, and some meaningful data were gathered. Of these data the most significant one is the fact that violence has been identified as a phenomenon which is 'learned, imitated, and repeated.'

It has been observed that once private (mercantile/commercial) television broadcasting emerged in Turkey, newscasts – like other program contents – began to present important differences in terms of both content and presentation formats. Among these differences observed, the intensity of violence element in newscasts is a remarkable one. There are, of course, a lot of causes why violence element is employed within newscasts. These are to make sure that the news is more appealing, to attract

attention, to reach more viewers and therefore to get maximum commercial income, in other words advertisement income. Just like violence element is used in Hollywood movies to increase box-office revenue, the violence within newscasts is for the sake of increasing ratings. According to the data published by Radio Television Supreme Council (RTSC), which is an institution controlling and regulating private broadcastings in Turkey, the percentage of complaints about violence in all the complaints received from viewers about television newscasts is as the following: towards the society in general 44%, tempting into violence 23%, towards the young and children 17%, towards animals 11%, towards women 3%, and other 2% (RTÜK, 2006).

Those statements made in a press conference by RTSC, which also include the points defined as problem in this study, are remarkable (RTÜK, 2006a):

In our researches, we've come up with the fact that violence images on televisions also seriously disturb viewers. The images of people crawling or people stuck in vehicles, the images of torn corpses, beating, torture and suicide cause incurable wounds especially in little children's souls. Television newscasts are naturally to be presented through images. However, every violence image within life itself should not be projected onto the screen in an uncomfortably bare manner.

The findings of a survey conducted by Radio and Television Supreme Council in 2006, which included 1719 students in 7–14 age group in 17 cities all over Turkey under the title ‘The Impact of Television Broadcasts on Children,’ point out that the images students at elementary level education feel uncomfortable about viewing most are ‘the images containing nudity and barely clothed scenes’ with 82.7% and ‘the images of fight and violence’ with 71.1% percentage. Similarly, 69.3% of the children involved stated that they felt uncomfortable about ‘the images in which people feel sad and cried.’ While students at elementary education level (ages 7–14) expressed in general that television viewing did not affect them in a negative way, their statements like ‘I feel sorry about the sad thing I see on television’ and ‘I want to do those violent things I see on television’ are noteworthy (RTÜK, 2006b)

The incidences with which children meet violence occur to a great extent through television, even if a kind of physical or emotional assault is not directed at them. A person in Turkey spends five hours daily, one-third of hours except sleeping, watching television. The level of violence and aggressiveness frequency is the same with that in world televisions. In a study conducted in Turkey in 1995, it was reported that two-thirds of the phenomena in weekly television programs more or less contained some violent action. One-third of them are classified within the boundaries of criminal act.

‘Reality-shows,’ which transform violence into a visual material in Turkey, are most viewed by 12 – 19 age group. Violence is presented on television in an audiovisual way through armed skirmishes, traffic

accidents, colliding vehicles, blood, corps, coffins, images of wounded or suffering people, hitting with a stick or stone, and bombs exploding. In more than one-third of newscasts, violence is presented as a usual or justified concept. Through the studies carried out so far, it was determined that the amount of aggressive behavior increases in children watching the programs with violent content on television. It was further suggested that the people encountering television violence in childhood commit criminal violent acts in adulthood (Yurdakök, 2006).

When the general situation of violence and crime factor on children is considered at societal level, the results of a research conducted in 2005 by Ankara Chamber of Commerce (ACC), which is accepted to be a major civil society organization in Turkey, are particularly striking and thought-provoking. According to the report prepared by ACC through using the data from three individual official institutions, it has been observed that there’s a rapid increase in the number of child-criminals in Turkey. Of the crimes committed against real persons, 10% is children and 14% of these children are girls. 17 of every 100 willfully wounding suspects, 9 of every 100 injury suspects, and 9 of every 100 homicidal suspects are children. Many economic and social factors surely play role in the fact that the number of the criminal or the accused has increased during the last few years. However, when scientific study findings about violence and media are examined, it is thought, in the light of these data, that television has a part in this increase as well. It shouldn’t be neglected that those television characters who easily earn money by employing violence, who violate others’ rights and get no punishment in return, and who gain

power through using violence could be perceived in different ways especially by child viewers.

In the researches George Gerbner and his colleagues conducted using content analysis method, they compared the reality of television with that of everyday life and in the light of the results obtained, they determined the cultivating role of television. By means of Cultivation Analysis, the third component of the Cultural Index Project developed by Gerbner et al, social environment perceptions and social reality conceptualizations of television viewers from different groups related to exposure to television are identified (Signorielli, 1993: 318).

Cultivation analysis focuses on viewers' perception and shaping of the frequently repeated messages of the television world in the real world. In other words, the analysis also tries to put across the fact that the individuals who watch television frequently and for long durations give meaning to the world they live in within the boundaries of the messages pumped from television, which is the source of social reality conceptualization.

According to the results of another research conducted by Department of National Education and RTSC, children at elementary education level in Turkey watch television for 3- 4 hours on average on a daily basis and they spend approximately 900 hours at school but 1500 hours in front of television annually. The study also reports that number one out-of-school activity of children and adolescents at 6 – 17 age group is watching television and that a child completing elementary level education has been exposed to 100 thousand violent image

and 8 thousand images with death or killing. (Haber10. com/haber/26549) At this point, the fact that the children who prefer watching television as a number-one non-academic activity develop attitudes and behavior based on the messages received from television screen; in other words, that they form their perceptions about the world within the dictations television messages present is considered as a natural evidence and expected result of Gerbner's Cultivation Theory.

Bandura believed television was a source of behavior modeling. Today, films and television shows illustrate violence graphically. Violence is often expressed as an acceptable behavior, especially for heroes who have never been punished. Since aggression is a prominent feature of many shows, children who have a high degree of exposure to the media may exhibit a relatively high incidence of hostility themselves in imitation of the aggression they have witnessed (Berkowitz, 1962: 247).

Following the studies by Bandura and his colleagues concerning children and aggressiveness, many other studies were conducted trying to explain the relationship between the viewed aggressiveness and aggressive behavior. By looking at these studies from a general point of view, today, it is possible to suggest that children's viewing the events or images with violent content increases the likeliness of the possibility that they perform these acts themselves in future. In 1980s, researchers inclined towards the study of how the violence in television programs affected people. The findings of these researches suggest that the influence of television programs can take place in two ways: In the first one, the large number of programs with

violent content causes people to develop a kind of insensitivity to violence. In the second, on the other hand, the idea that violence is a commonly accepted way to solve problems and to reach an end; aggressive behavior is released in everyday life (Zülal and Yüce, 2006).

### **AIM**

In today's world, the influence of mass media on the individual's socialization process is undeniable. The individual realizes and understands the world he or she lives in, learns the social signs belonging to this world and forms individual thought, behavior and soul patterns within these signs particularly during childhood and adolescence periods. Television messages, which lead to major changes in social and cultural life, which are most widely used ones among mass media and which have the maximum power to convince, have a unique significance and authority over this context. These mentioned impacts of television messages over children and adolescents are certain to be relatively more powerful and influential compared to those on adults. Child viewers, who form their world-related perceptions via television most, are passive and in position of a defenseless consumer against any message in front the television screen.

According to Şirin, if a child has acquired the habit of watching newscasts, it is impossible for him to quit it and children are secret consumers and the most attentive of newscasts. Children categorize the news they view into two groups: Bad children news and pink children news. Bad children news is formed by child-focused violence, rape, robbery, drugs, child kidnap, murder, news on disaster and war. These kinds of news, on the other hand, which children

refer to as bad news, are 'best-seller' and have too many followers. Being influenced by the news, a child is unable to know about the background and accuracy of the news and the fact that the open information and explanations provided by the reporter may not always necessarily be the truth (Şirin, 2002: 43).

It is possible to assume that the violence content on television is coded differently by viewers according to program types; in other words, a movie on television with violence content and the images in newscasts with violence content are not perceived in the same way. It is considered that children, who can't distinguish between the real and the imaginary, are therefore exposed to unique influences from the contents in newscasts which they view as 'reality'. In parallel with this point, the impacts created by the war or murder images presented in the news will be different from those in a movie. Child, who watches newscasts thinking that they reflect the reality existent in the world s/he lives in, is certainly to reach the perceptions at a different dimension from the violence in a movie scene which is presented as a fictitious fantastic life story.

The number of studies aiming to determine to what extent television newscasts in Turkey are viewed by children and how violence elements in newscasts are perceived is limited. The findings of the research conducted on 509 testing children in 5-7 and 7-12 ages by Rigel in 1995 and 1999 are remarkable for they exhibit children's attitudes and views about newscasts. Through the study, it was found that children perceive and define television newscasts as a program type whose violence content is intensive. It was, furthermore,

observed that most of the test subject children who have negative attitudes towards news perceive news as 'scary truth'. 5 – 7 year-old 188 children symbolically used bomb, pistol, knife, police, colliding vehicles and figures of firing people to draw a picture of the news. The figures used in these drawings point out that children very clearly perceive the intensive violence feature in television news. The most significant news perception of children is again over the images with violence content such as war, death and accident themes. Likewise, it can clearly be concluded from the responses children provide that 321 among 10 -12 year-old children possess negative perceptions concerning news. The implications of these results suggest that when asked about 'news' children focus on negative images and contents to a great extent and perceive the news as scary reality (Rigel, 2002: 47-50).

There are, of course, certain reasons why violence-intensive contents are employed in recent years within newscasts on television, which can yield a maximum level of influence on viewers for it is a means presenting the visual in accordance with its nature. As long as producers are dominated by the approach 'bad news is good news', stories of dramatic components will inevitably find a place for themselves in newscasts. To put it another way, violence, no matter in which news program it is included, will always attract interest and be considered as a fundamental component guaranteeing being viewed. The fact that scenes of intensive violence, fighting, war, blood and assault are frequently used in television newscasts, just like in Hollywood movies, is the most significant indicator for the present application of this conception.

Children's evaluations of the violence element in television newscasts are what constitute the principal aim of this study. Within this framework, this study will try to determine how often children view the newscasts defined as the reality of life, or in other words, the reflection of reality onto the screen; what they perceive about news; how they evaluate violence level presented within news; to what extent violence content has an influence on children; and at the same time, the levels they believe in television news.

#### **METHOD**

In accordance with the aims mentioned, the survey was limited to the borders of Eskişehir province of Turkey. The survey was conducted on May 18, 2006 with students at Çağdaş Private Elementary School and Atayurt Private College, the two oldest private elementary schools in Eskişehir. The questionnaire prepared for the study was conducted on all 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> grades (ages 11 – 15) at these two schools. The data collected through questionnaire application were evaluated based on the results of 203 questionnaires returned. As result of the questionnaire application, in order to meet the problem and aims of the study, the responses provided for different questions were evaluated in terms of correlation relationships and therefore, determinations and descriptions were made about the age, gender, television-viewing frequency and other variables, and consequently, of their perceptions of the violence in newscasts, of that they are affected in a positive or negative way, of the levels they believe in news, and of the opinions and images they possess about news concept.

Children were asked 18 questions in total; some of the questions were multiple-choice and in a way allowing them to choose between more than one option. Other options provided by the other questions were arranged according to triple scale as 'I disagree', 'I neither agree nor disagree' and 'I agree'.

## **FINDINGS**

The gender distribution of 203 children participating in the questionnaire is as follows: 43% girl (88) and 56,2 % boy (114)

Considering the age distribution of children involved in the questionnaire, there seems to be some intensity at age 13 with 43,3 % (88), at 12 with 29,6% (60) and at 14 with 22,2 % (45). The data concerning the children's television-watching frequency show that 46,8% (95) of them watch television for 2 to 4 hours on average daily, and 44,3% of them 1- 2 hours (90).

The reason why the children were asked the question 'What are the programs you prefer watching on television most?' is to determine at which rate they prefer newscasts among other programs. The question has 8 answer alternatives, but because they are multiple-choice and they are allowed to pick more than one, the total number turned out to be 801. In other words, a correlation was carried out according to those marked and not marked by each child and the total number 801 was gained. The results indicate that 11,5% (92) of the children watch newscasts most among all program contents. The fact that movies and television series are viewed at 22,1% (177) level and that programs with music and video-clip content are watched at 14,7% (118) level are also significant among other results gained. On the other hand, the programs

with documentary and magazine (tabloid) content seem to be at lower levels of children's preferences.

According to responses given for the question aiming to determine 'how often they watch television newscasts,' it is seen that 45,8% (93) of them regularly watch the news everyday. They are followed by those watching television news 3 to 5 times a week with 29,6% (60). Therefore, it could be suggested that the children participating in the questionnaire frequently watch television newscasts in general.

According to the responses given by the children for the question 'what comes to your mind when you think news?' which aims to learn about the image they have in their minds concerning news, or in other words the image they've developed about news concept, 36% (118) of them considered news as true, 22,6% (74) informative, 12,8% (42) sad/distressing, 6,7% (22) frightening/terrifying, and 9,5% (31) fun. It could be seen, in the light of these data, that the children this questionnaire was conducted on, in general, perceive television news as a television content presenting the real and informing more within these realities. This result also clearly supports the hypothesis that 'television news is perceived by children as media contents which are accepted as reality'. This hypothesis is fundamental to this study, as well. To put it another way, children define what they watch on television newscasts as events existent in the world they live in and conceive of the messages presented in newscasts as real.

According to the responses given by children to the question 'Which people do you think you see most in newscasts?' aiming to figure out more explicitly the

images they possess about the news concept, politicians are the first group with 19,1% (152) followed by snatch-and-run thieves with 17,5% (139), terrorists with 16% (127) and murderers with 12,6% (100). Models, on the hand, are also people children see on television news most with 13,6% (108). Within the implications the scores suggests, politicians, violence or violence associative figures and indicators from magazine (tabloid) world take part in the images children perceive about television newscasts. Some important clues about the fact that violence element is included in newscasts were obtained through the responses the children provided for the question 'Which news do you think you see in newscasts?' That 37,1% (179) of children stated they witnessed the news on war and terror most is considered to be a meaningful data. That is followed by politics with 22,4% (108) and the news of magazine and entertainment with 18,3% (88) among other responses. It is possible, according to results, to suggest children perceive the fact that the violence factor is intensively included/ repeated in television newscasts.

The responses children gave for the question 'Do you believe in the news you watch?' show that they are hesitant to a great extent. While 48,3% (98) of them stated they were 'not decided,' 16,7% (34) expressed that they disagreed with this statement, in other words that they did not believe in the news they watched, and 35% (71) expressed their agreement, in other words that they did believe in the news they watched. The responses provided by children for the question 'Are you affected by the news containing violence like war, murder, and terror in a negative way?' are presented here. 44,8% (91) of the children stated that they were not affected by the news containing

violence in a negative way, but 36% (73) of them stated that they were negatively affected by the news with violence content. In a mathematical consideration, not being affected seems to be higher; the high level of their being affected, on the other hand, seems to be noteworthy. Of the responses made by children according their agreement levels to the statement 'When I watch news, I think that the world I live in is dangerous place' 15,8% (32) expressed their disagreement and 66,5% (135) agreement. As it can be clearly seen, a result similar to those of the studies conducted by Gerbner and his colleagues into 'perception of a dangerous world' in relation to television's cultivating role. The fact that children stated they witnessed the news with intensive violence elements in television newscasts with 37,1% and that they defined the world they lived in as dangerous according to the responses provided in these results indicate the impact level of the violence pumped through television screen.

Of the responses the children made to the statement 'I think television news contain violence' aiming to determine their opinions about the violence element in television news, 44,3% (90) turned out to express agreement. 27,1% (55) of children did not think that news contained violence and 28,6% (58) stated that they were 'not decided.' As this result clearly shows, a great number of children agree with the opinion that television news contained violence. The last question children were asked aimed to determine the amount of the violence in television news. Some quite meaningful results were gained through the responses made to the statement 'How much violence do you think is included in television news?' While 50,7% (103) of the children expressed that there was much violence element in



news, 41,4% (84) stated a normal amount of violence content. As can clearly be seen through the results, a great number of 12 – 15 year-old children at elementary education level perceive violence elements in news as in ‘much’ amount. As stated in the method chapter, the responses children made to some key questions will be expressed through the correlation relationship among themselves in order for their perceptions about the violence in television newscasts to be stated in a more explicit way. The questions asked will be presented in the way they were numbered in the questionnaire form:

Question 7: How Often Do You Watch Television Newscasts?

Question 12: I Believe in the News I Watch on Television.

The reason why both questions were correlated is to determine the correlation between the frequency children watch news and the level they believe in them. Thus, 32 of 93 children regularly watching news everyday stated that they found news reliable, 45 expressed uncertainty, and 16 stated that they did not believe in news. Similarly, 31 of 60 children who watch news 3 to 5 times a week stated that they believed in news, 5 stated they found them unreliable, and 24 expressed neither agreement nor disagreement. In total, of 203 children, 71 believed in the news they watched, whereas 34 children did not (Crosstab 1)

		Q12			Total	
		Disagree	N.a.N.d.	Agree		
Q7 1-2 times a week	Count	10	21	5	36	
	% within Q7	27.8%	58.3%	13.9%	100.0%	
	%within Q12	29.4%	21.4%	7.0%	17.7%	
		% of Total	4.9%	10.3%	2.5%	17.7%
3-5 times a week	Count	5	24	31	60	
	% within Q7	8.3%	40.0%	51.7%	100.0%	
	%within Q12	14.7%	24.5%	43.7%	29.6%	
		% of Total	2.5%	11.8%	15.3%	29.6%
Everyday	Count	16	45	32	93	
	% within Q7	17.2%	48.4%	34.4%	100.0%	
	%within Q12	47.1%	45.9%	45.1%	45.8%	
		% of Total	7.9%	22.2%	15.8%	45.8%
I Don't Watch	Count	3	8	3	14	
	% within Q7	21.4%	57.1%	21.4%	100.0%	
	%within Q12	8.8%	8.2%	4.2%	6.9%	
		% of Total	1.5%	3.9%	1.5%	6.9%
Total	Count	34	98	71	203	
	% within Q7	16.7%	48.3%	35.0%	100.0%	
	%within Q12	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	16.7%	48.3%	35.0%	100.0%	

Crosstab 1: The Level of Trust in News in Relation to News-watching Frequency (Q7 \* Q12)

		Q14			Total
		Disagree	N.a.N.d.	Agree	

		Q14			Total
		Disagree	N.a.N.d.	Agree	
Q7	Count	20	6	10	36
	1-2 times % within Q7	55.6%	16.7%	27.8%	100.0%
	a week %within Q14	22.0%	15.4%	13.7%	17.7%
	% of Total	9.9%	3.0%	4.9%	17.7%
3-5 times	Count	22	11	27	60
	% within Q7	36.7%	18.3%	45.0%	100.0%
	a week %within Q14	24.2%	28.2%	37.0%	29.6%
	% of Total	10.8%	5.4%	13.3%	29.6%
Everyday	Count	41	20	32	93
	% within Q7	44.1%	21.5%	34.4%	100.0%
	%within Q14	45.1%	51.3%	43.8%	45.8%
	% of Total	20.2%	9.9%	15.8%	45.8%
I Don't Watch	Count	8	2	4	14
	% within Q7	57.1%	14.3%	28.6%	100.0%
	%within Q14	8.8%	5.1%	5.5%	6.9%
	% of Total	3.9%	1.0%	2.0%	6.9%
Total	Count	91	39	73	203
	% within Q7	44.8%	19.2%	36.0%	100.1%
	%within Q14	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	44.8%	19.2%	36.0%	100.0%

Crosstab 2 Being Negatively Affected by News in Relation to News-watching  
Frequency (Q7 \*Q14)

Question 7:How Often Do You Watch Television Newscasts?

Question 14: The News on War, Murder, and Terror Affects Me in a Negative Way.

The reason why both questions were correlated is to determine the correlation between the children's news-watching frequency and the extent to which they are negatively influenced by the violence contents they view in news. In this respect, it is evaluated that 32 children among 92 children who regularly watch news everyday stated that they were affected in a negative way and 41 expressed they were not affected negatively. It is observed that 73 of 203 children in total were negatively affected by news on violence, whereas 91 children did not agree with the idea of being

affected in a negative way. Despite the fact that the numbers present a lower level for being affected negatively, it would be appropriate to suggest that it is not at an ignorable level (Crosstab 2).

Question 7: How Often Do You Watch Television Newscasts?

Question 15: When I Watch News, I Think that the World I Live in is Dangerous.

The reason why both questions were correlated is to determine the connection between the frequency children watch news and whether they perceive the world they live in as dangerous. While 58 children among 93 children regularly watching news everyday perceived the world they lived in as dangerous, 17 children stated they did not. It is evaluated in this correlation that

		Q15			Total
		Disagree	N.a.N.d.	Agree	
Q7	Count	7	6	23	36
	1-2 times % within Q7	19.4%	16.7%	63.9%	100.0%
	a week %within Q15	21.9%	16.7%	17.0%	17.7%
	% of Total	3.4%	3.0%	11.3%	17.7%
3-5 times	Count	4	9	47	60
	% within Q7	6.7%	15.0%	78.3%	100.0%
	a week %within Q15	12.5%	25.0%	34.8%	29.6%
	% of Total	2.0%	4.4%	23.2%	29.6%
Everyday	Count	17	18	58	93
	% within Q7	18.3%	19.4%	62.4%	100.0%
	%within Q15	53.1%	50.0%	43.0%	45.8%
	% of Total	8.4%	8.9%	28.6%	45.8%
I Don't Watch	Count	4	3	7	14
	% within Q7	28.6%	21.4%	50.0%	100.0%
	%within Q15	12.5%	8.3%	5.2%	6.9%
	% of Total	2.0%	1.5%	3.4%	6.9%
Total	Count	32	36	135	203
	% within Q7	15.8%	17.7%	66.5%	100.1%
	%within Q15	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	15.8%	17.7%	66.5%	100.0%

Crosstab 3: Children's Perception of the World As Dangerous in Relation to News-Watching Frequency (Q7 \*Q15)

children from almost every news-watching frequency group perceived the world they lived in as dangerous despite the different percentages. It is concluded that 47 among 60 children watching news 3 to 5 times a week and 23 among 36 children watching news once to 2 times a week found the world they lived in dangerous. 135 children in total among 203 children found the world a dangerous place (Crosstab 3).

Question 7: How Often Do You Watch Television Newscasts?

Question 17: I Think That Television News Contain Violence.

The reason why both questions were correlated is to determine the correlation between the children's news-watching frequency and their perceptions of violence content in television newscasts. 36 children among 93 children regularly watching news

everyday stated that news contained violence but 27 of them stated they did not. It is concluded that 28 among 60 children watching news 3 to 5 times a week and 20 among 36 children watching news once to 2 times a week thought that news contained violence. 90 children in total among 203 children were observed to agree with the opinion that news contained violence. (Crosstab 4).

		Q17			Total
		Disagree	N.a.N.d.	Agree	
Q7	Count	11	5	20	36
	1-2 times % within Q7	30.6%	13.9%	55.6%	100.0%
	a week %within Q17	20.0%	8.6%	22.2%	17.7%
	% of Total	5.4%	2.5%	9.9%	17.7%
3-5 times	Count	14	18	28	60
	% within Q7	23.3%	30.0%	46.7%	100.0%
	%within Q17	25.5%	31.0%	31.1%	29.6%
	% of Total	6.9%	8.9%	13.8%	29.6%
Everyday	Count	27	30	36	93
	% within Q7	29.0%	32.3%	38.7%	100.0%
	%within Q17	49.1%	51.7%	40.0%	45.8%
	% of Total	13.3%	14.8%	17.7%	45.8%
I Don't Watch	Count	3	5	6	14
	% within Q7	21.4%	35.7%	42.9%	100.0%
	%within Q17	5.5%	8.6%	6.7%	6.9%
	% of Total	1.5%	2.5%	3.0%	6.9%
Total	Count	55	58	90	203
	% within Q7	27.1%	28.6%	44.3%	100.1%
	%within Q17	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	27.1%	28.6%	44.3%	100.0%

Crosstab 4 Violence in Relation to News-watching Frequency (Q7 \*Q17)

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Through the data gained from the study, it was firstly determined that a great number of the children participating in the questionnaire spent 3 to 4 hours on daily average watching television. Likewise, this can be considered as a finding matching with the referred conclusion by RTSC as 'Children watch television for 1500 hours and go to school for 900 hours'. Depending on this conclusion, it is possible to suggest that television possesses an important position in children's everyday lives and it is influential in the forming of their personal opinions and visions as much as their families and social surrounding.

It was further determined that the vast majority of children regularly watched television everyday and television news was

perceived as real and informative by most of them; and some them stated that they perceived news as sad and frightening. That there were news contents defined as violence figures and to a great extent about terrorists and snatchers among the people children saw most in newscasts can be a natural indicator for the fact the violence in television news in Turkey is evaluated to be interesting and a factor making people watch. Another result in favor of this conception is that children stated they viewed the news on war and terror in newscasts most, which are accepted as violence indicator. Similarly, children stated that they witnessed violence to a great extent in television news and that most of them perceived the world they lived in as dangerous after exposure to news with intensive violence.

Just like the case with other countries, the private broadcasting in Turkey presents too a commercial approach beyond that of public service broadcasting. Therefore, it should be considered as a natural consequence that television channels, which can be thought to be commercial firms, leave the fundamental missions of mass media means and incline towards different, striking, and abusing reporting applications for the sake of surviving in the economic conditions of the sector. Generally speaking, violence intensity is observed in many types of television programs. However, the extent to which the violence reaches the viewers through newscasts is thought to be higher than other television productions. Viewers, who take a position in front of television to watch news and think that what they watch matches with the real life or is similar to it, perform the perception of the world they live in through the repetitive messages they receive from the screen just like the way put forward by Gerbner in Cultivation Theory. Most of researches, however, point out that the messages like violence and sex, which are frequently repeated in newscasts or other

programs, do not take place in real world that intensively.

Although this study was conducted over children, it is presumed to yield similar results with adults. The fact that children, who are openly and defenselessly exposed to any message and its effects, evaluate the world where they live based on the violence-intensive perceptions they extract from television newscasts defined by them as 'real' provokes the idea that in the long term they may possess a perspective justifying violence and growing more and more insensitive.

In other words, that violence is perceived in this very form and that it is considered to be normal in everyday life at both children level and adults' level might bring about the consequences that the violence encountered turns out to be inured and therefore, in a sense, the individual becomes lonely in a world of masses. The violence in television newscasts causes the people viewing it to be voluntarily involved in the time and space of that violence in a sense and to watch it as a daily show.

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