

LANGUAGE AND VIOLENCE IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Research article

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**Abstract**

The question of the appropriateness of violence inclusion in children's literature is a recent concern in scholarly studies, whereas for a long time the didactic role of violence as a punishment for wrong-doing was the main proponent of children books. Believing that talking mildly and patiently about violence in children's books can become an instructive experience, this article explores the manner in which representation of violence has to be rendered in children's books. Acknowledging the power of language, speaking instead of people and turning them into subjects who merely respond to this system of signification through their actions, the proper portrayal of violence is explored. The display of violence in children's literature is claimed to be beneficial for two reasons. First, violence representation can become the means of standing up to violence during real-life exposure to aggressive behavior, making prevention probable by providing a cathartic fictional experience. Second, identification with the protagonist and immersing in their adventure informs the child of the destructive effect of the act of violence on the sufferer. Thus, by providing the opportunity for children to experience violence safely, literature allows the reader to observe from multiple perspectives the horrible aftermaths of violence, preventing aggression and raising awareness.

**Keywords:** language, power, violence, children's literature.

**ЯЗЫК И НАСИЛИЕ В ДЕТСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЕ**

Научная статья

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**Аннотация**

Вопрос об уместности жестокости в детской литературе в научных исследованиях возник недавно, тогда как насилие как мера наказания за проступок в детских книгах долгое время главенствовала. Исходя из того, что спокойное и терпеливое обсуждение насилия в детских книгах может быть поучительным, в статье исследуется должная репрезентация насилия в детской литературе. Признавая силу языка, говорящего за людей и обращающего их в субъектов, лишь реагирующих на эту систему обозначений действием, изучается корректное изображение насилия. Выносятся утверждение о том, что изображение жестокости в детской литературе может быть полезно по двум причинам. Во-первых, репрезентация насилия может стать средством противостояния ему в реальной жизни при столкновении с агрессивным поведением, таким образом проводя его профилактику через катарсисный вымышленный опыт. Во-вторых, ассоциирование себя с главным героем и погружение в его приключения информирует ребенка о разрушительном воздействии акта насилия на его объект. Таким образом, предоставляя детям возможность столкнуться с жестокостью безопасно, литература позволяет читателю с разных точек зрения наблюдать ужасные последствия насилия, предотвращая агрессию и повышая осведомленность о ней.

**Ключевые слова:** язык, сила, насилие, детская литература.

**Introduction**

One eminent question often posed when contemplating the role of language is whether people control language, or language controls them, their culture and their entire ways of life. Another is if language operates as a sheer device for reproducing and voicing ideas, or if language is actually the constructor of those ideas. These inquiries become in a broader sense the question of whether or not the limits of our language, to borrow Ludwig Wittgenstein's famous dictum, define the limits of the world itself [1].

Language functions as the base for communication, prone to rhetorical twists and manipulation. Implanted within language use are hidden ideologies and tacit assumptions about the world, since power is written into the very core of all human discourses. Language sustains and is never emptied of this power, immortalizing it through the process of being utilized in communication and writing. Feeding on the desire to possess, language becomes the very legislation of power itself. Thus, the precise moment when language is used and words are voiced, power steps into the picture, even within the friendliest conversations. Once someone talks to another, the master/slave relationship is formed, making power relations inherent in language.

When the question of power comes in, it is impossible to detach it from the concept of violence and its roots that are deeply embedded within this discourse. Violence by definition is the application of physical, or non-physical forces for the sake of putting people into positions they are reluctant towards. Violence can be perpetrated by one against oneself, or another, and is not restricted to physical action alone. Taking many distinct forms, violence can also be verbal, or psychological. Often,

a simple but annoying call can be interpreted as violence against another. The World Health Organization deems the imposition of economic or educational sanctions on a particular individual or group as an instance of violence.

Although violence is often perceived as human in nature, the reasons and explanations as to why it emerges and how it is to be defined is varied from the lens of distinct philosophers and sociologists. The concern of human rights activists and the media today, however, is no longer the issue of violence itself, but the attempt to curb it. Efforts to end torture, fight against all forms of violence against women, violence against children, workers, etc., all strata that are somehow oppressed and perpetrated by those in power. Perhaps the only common denominator between psychologists, sociologists, and human rights activists and the media is the unequivocal repudiation of violence; that is, they all jointly denounce violence, even those who see it as inherent in humanity.

Among the aforementioned fields stands literature. The distinguishing strength of literature lies in the fact that it, by nature, reveals how language is appropriated by power and, by extension, violence. In literature, this is achieved by the exposure of language. Fully aware that there is no escape from power and the myriad subtle ways it engages language, authors playfully utilize language to unveil literature's oratory nature and depict the violence that exists in the world. One of the first modern Persian novels associated with violence, for instance, is Sadeq Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* [4], one of its well-known scenes being the encounter with the mutilation of an ethereal woman, a fragment with a special significance. The protagonist in this story refuses to say utter the name of this "slender, ethereal, misty form. . . with eyes in the depths of which . . . life has slowly and painfully burned and melted away" [4, P. 11-12] for the world is too cruel to said to be too cruel to contain her. Other examples of violence can also be seen practiced towards women in Sadeq Hedayat's short stories. Literary uses of language can go further as to not only depict violence and power's intervention into language, but also to exert texts not to easily succumb to such appropriation, as James Joyce attempted in *Finnegans Wake*, or as Samuel Beckett did in his later plays. Their use of a seemingly anarchic language was an attempt to escape power relations—a mode of writing which became popular in high modernist literature. These writers' employment of a seemingly anarchic language was an attempt to escape power relations—a mode of writing which became popular in high modernist literature. Hence, literature exposes violence and power not only through depiction, but also by means of utilization of language. Written language and literature can become immune to the intervention of these forces, such as the case with the style of writing well received in high modernist literature by the audience.

The relationship of power, violence and literature already complex and multidimensional becomes even more complicated when the role of audience comes in the equation. Great works of literature without a doubt are able to operate on distinguished levels, regardless of encompassing language as the written medium in that they voice power and violence that enter all fields of human discourses including literature itself. Acknowledging such strength in literature, the concern now becomes the more vulnerable audience and whether or not they are capable of undergoing exposure to violence in literature. This article explores the question of whether or not children's literature, host to a very sensitive audience, should address the question of power through the portrayal of violence. With the power that language holds, the fictional experience can shape the entire perception of violence and aggression, making the utilization of language and literature and the manner of representation quite prominent matters. Creating parallel universes, language in literature is capable of producing multiple perspectives on serious topics, both positive and negative. Aware of this complication of language and its capability of manipulation and producing mindsets, the question becomes whether the risk of depiction of violence is worth the probable aggressive imitation by the young audience. As expected, this inquiry is subject to distinct responses by different scholars, agreeing or disagreeing with the depiction of violence in children's literature.

### **Literature Review**

As aforementioned, television is similar to literature in its capacity to present violence or reveal power as a medium with a vast and diverse audience. Closely linked to the interrelationship of power and violence and similar in function to literature in this sense, the television is a medium that can be simultaneously observed. Because of this quality, the sources that scrutinize the portrayal of violence in television and its effect on children and adolescents are incorporated into this study as well as sources that inspect works of literature. Linda Heath in her article "Effects of Media Violence on Children: A Review of Literature" [6] elaborates on the reasons why many findings regarding the depiction of violence and its effect upon children are carried out through the study of violence displayed on the media. According to her, this is because "children can be exposed to television. . . at ages much younger than they can expose themselves to novels, comics, or newspapers. . ." [6, P. 378]. Since the question of the effects of the portrayal of violence to children can be tended to in the light of media violence as well, the review of literature in this section consults sources discussing both the portrayal of violence in literature and that of the television. Heath in her article claims that observing the literature existing on media violence, there appears to exist an interrelationship between violence depicted in the media and the aggression later played out by the audience in real life. However, she acknowledges that in this exploration there remain many ambiguous questions "and [that] no interventions are clearly indicated" [6, P. 376]. The effect of violence, though the concern of many scholars, answered differently by each, persists as a complex question that cannot be definitively responded to. Heath points to the surprising consistency that exists in the findings regarding aggression depicted in the media that is played out in real life afterwards by the audience. Heath construes that although studies done on media violence all agree on the existent relationship between exposure to violence portrayal and negative behaviors, they differ "in the extent to which they believe this relationship represents a serious threat" [6, P. 376]. More or less, the reflection of regression in the media or in any other platform impacts the violence that is carried out on real life, though distinct on surface. Further, the approach taken by the platform itself towards such aggression is one denominator of the behavior that is to come from the audience's side in real-life situations. For instance, Heath explicates the rewarding of the act of violence or its justification as reasons for the more positive influence on the audience [6, P. 376]. The portrayal of the violent act and the way it is rendered differs a great deal as to how it affects the vulnerable audience. Another factor that determines the effect of the violence on the audience, is according to Heath, the message [6, P. 378]. The narrative of a media production, or in this case, a work of literature, is shaped around the message that is to be produced. The way an image is portrayed depends entirely on the purpose it has to carry in a way that determines the being or non-being of the identification with the aggressive characters—a factor that Heath announces as another depicter of the image-behavior

relationship. The move from early studies to the latest ones includes the stepping away from the deeming of an absolute direct relationship between portrayal and enactment by the children audience to a more complex one. The complicated nature of this relationship raises “unanswered questions about intervening factors [that] make decision making about possible solutions and interventions difficult” [6, P. 379]. Thus, this article scrutinizes the findings of the portrayal of violence in the television as moving from the establishment of a definite positive relationship between media aggression and its effect on children to a better comprehension of this complex relationship. The more recent the research is according to Heath, the more aware it is of the complexity of the relationship between the two. This article claims that unanswerable as the question of the influence of the depiction of violence is on children, the way the violence is rendered and the relatability of the characters can determine a great deal how children internalize this violence.

Joy D. Osofsky in her article “The Impact of Violence on Children” observes further the effect of the witnessing of violence by children and the factors that determine the relationship between observation of the violent act and the behavior of the audience. Osofsky construes that “[w]hether a child’s exposure to violence leads to withdrawal or to increased aggression and violence is likely to depend on a variety of factors, including the age. . . and the characteristics of the child” [11, P. 36]. Osofsky, aware of the possibility of variety of influence upon the audience based on the multiple factors involved, is of the same belief that the rendering of violence representation says a great deal about the effect on children. Of the belief that there exists distinction between fictionalized depictions of violence and the reality of the act, Osofsky claim that “real-life events shown in sensationalized manners may overwhelm or numb the senses” [11, P. 38]. Therefore, despite the uncertainty and complexity that Heath associates with the portrayal of the violence and its influence on children, Osofsky attaches a certainty as to the negative nature of this relationship varying on extent based on the new factors she introduces.

Patti M. Valkenburg analyzes in *Plugged In* the portrayal-action relationship in the same light observing the consequential learning that occurs through witnessing of punishment or rewarding, the factor that was introduced by Heath as well. Acknowledging that the perceiving differs based on the characteristics of each child, Patti M. Valkenburg and Jessica Taylor Piotrowski conclude that the role models are imitated by children. However, the role model can be distinguished for each child based be it a person in the family, “in their broader social environment, [or] in the media” [15, P. 105]. With the choice of the role models differing for each individual child, the perceived nature of violence depends on the level of identification the child achieves with the character. Highlighting both the contextual features of violence portrayal and the parallel non-being of homogeneousness of the audience, this book identifies and introduces three global factors that affect the relationship between media violence and real-life aggression. These include “developmental factors. . . dispositional factors. . . , and social factors. . .” [15, P. 113]. Having labeled these factors as forces affecting the operation of the impact on violent youth behavior, this book hopes for a progression in the field towards a comprehension of the multiplicity of distinct violent exposures in the media leaving the question open to interpretation.

Nimon Maureen in “Violence in Children’s Literature Today” explores the question of how the possible interpretations of the effect of violence exposure in literature can be made use of today. scrutinizes the years of didactic tradition of writing for the children audience with punishment embedded strongly in each work. Maureen construes that “. . . whether authors were Puritan eighteenth century rationalists or nineteenth century Evangelicals, [w]riting for children has for centuries encompassed. . . physical violence, [as] frequently part of punishment” [8, P. 29]. Thus, in the past punishment and violence played operated as the learning means for children to understand the consequentiality of their actions and the prominence of responsibility. Only today has the place of violence in children’s books been doubted as Maureen explains, due to the prevalence of offering “solutions other than retaliatory violence” [8, P. 31]. We are no longer confronted with a direct answer of physical punishment to inappropriate behavior, rather, the solution sought is more complicated due to the sensitivity of the topic of how non-conformity is to be treated. The coming into being of this concern, thus, more or less, lies in the “social context which we find ourselves” [8, P. 32] that is stepping further and further away from the religious belief in punishment and reward for actions and choices. The solution that Maureen introduces is to make significant for children the violence that is produced in the work of literature. According to Maureen, the world inhabited by children must be experienced in literature in a way that is relevant to their times and not the past generations social conditions and ways of thinking.

Hence, the role of violence in the literature has been deemed as operational in a multiplicity of ways. The responses to the question of violence and its impact on children are perceived by the sources consulted distinctly. Though all acknowledge the existence of a complex relationship between violence portrayal and aggression of children, the impact of violence on children is distinctly viewed. Mainly deeming it as more negative than positive, the question of the exposure of violence is left open to more analysis. Not aiming to eliminate it all together, the literature mentioned attempts to explore the factors that influence the extent to which children are vulnerable to the impact of violent exposure in their behavior. A more recent, non-eliminatory yet relatable and efficient involvement of violence is sought by all these sources wherein the operation of violence representation is not to be imitated, but to be functioning cathartically. This article aims to scrutinize the ways violence in literature can impact youth generation and children positively in a way that assures the avoidance of aggression in real-life situations with an eye to the role of language.

## Discussion

Having witnessed the review of literature, it is clear that the portrayal of violence in children’s literature is perceived in two main ways: either as absolutely destructive in the case of old research and findings, or recently as complicated and instructional means through proper directing. Violence representation, if not promoted, is viewed as instructive in the sense that it teaches the readers how survive in difficult situations and not to succumb to irrationality, injustice and oppression. Already exposed to a world full of news of war, strife and aggression, children are not immune to the real-life experience of oppression, bloodshed and violence. Thus, they inevitably witness violent behavior in the news without proper comprehension; or they may become verbally abused every day at school by adults and peer groups without a proper understanding of their rights. In this light, literature with the proper language and means can be used as an aid to real-life exposure to violence and serious matters.

For instance, Ben Mikaelson's *Touching Spirit Bear* [9], narrates the story of a teenage boy named Cole Matthews who beat up his classmate Peter and was later banished to a remote Alaskan island to find himself again: "Agreeing to spend a

whole year alone in Southeast Alaska had been his only way of avoiding a jail cell in Minneapolis" [9, P. 9]. As we move further in the story, we understand that Cole was constantly beaten by his father and was neglected by his careless mother. After being sent to exile, Cole tries to escape the island but fails. Unable to control his anger, he attacks a spirit bear, a rare animal in the area, and is severely wounded by the bear. Throughout the story, Cole realizes that if he trusts others, if he learns to forgive, and if he helps Peter stop attempting suicide, anger will no longer come to him and he will be saved and become part of the circle of life. And in this circle, each point could be both the beginning and the end. *Touching Spirit Bear* is a social realist story with the overall theme of learning to be kind to people in order to feel good about oneself. This is a two-layer story. The main character is initially introduced as an aggressive teenager, but when we come to really know him, we realize that he has been a victim of parental violence in a so-called civilized culture. The main issue is the struggle of a traumatized boy to survive. He struggles to control anger and heal the wounds of the soul. He chooses between life and death, living and giving meaning to life, even in very difficult circumstances. The book shows that the use of force and imprisonment is not always the best way to reduce crime in society. In addition, with accurate descriptions of nature and the world around it, it makes the reader look at the world differently and see himself as part of an environment whose components are interconnected: "everything is one" [9, P. 164].

Kimberly Brubaker Bradley's *The War that Saved My Life* [1] is another worthwhile novel. The book is about Ada, a ten-year-old girl who cannot walk properly due to her physical disability (clubfoot); her ruthless mother has locked her in the house and Ada is looking out the window for days. She has never successfully left the house in her entire life. Once, as Eda descends the stairs of the house, her mother arrives and beats her so badly that her shoulder bleeds: "'You're nobody but a disgrace!' she screamed. 'A monster, with that ugly foot! You think I want the world seeing my shame?' She threatened to board over my window if I went downstairs again. That was always her threat to me" [1, P. 12]. Ada's world is limited to her small room and the space she can see through her bedroom window, and she has no idea about many things. Her only joy is her little brother, but when her brother grows up to go to school, Ada realizes that she has to do something for herself and thus secretly learns how to walk. World War II begins and children are sent to rural areas to escape bombing. Ada hopes her mother will send her to a safe area with her brother Jamie. But the mother ruthlessly says that no "respectable" family will accept her. But Ada does not want to miss this special opportunity to get rid of her unkind mother. One day, Ada took her brother and together they ran out of the house to escape the bombing and, of course, the violence of their mother. Finally, they are adopted by a kind Miss Smith. Miss Smith, who also has problems with her father because of her different thoughts, gives Ada the opportunity to recognize her abilities, gain self-confidence, and love herself.

*The Children at the Carpet-Weaving Factory* [10] by Houshang Moradi Kermani (1944- ) is a well-written, internationally-recognized Persian novel for children and young adults. The author has received the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1992 and the University of San Francisco's 2000 Book of the Year award. The salient features of Moradi Kermani's works are positive thinking, hidden humour, fluent prose and a realistic and at the same time hopeful view of life. The bitterness of his stories is nothing more than the real events of ordinary life. In this novel, Moradi Kermani narrates the suffering of children who spend their childhood in a carpet-weaving factory in unfavourable and difficult conditions. To write this story, which actually consists of two sub-stories, he relied on his childhood memories in Sirch, a little village in Kerman, and the surrounding villages. That is why his writing is trustworthy and very believable. The novel is about a roughly 6-year-old boy named Nemekoo who lives in a poor family in a remote village. Nemekoo has been forced to work in carpet-weaving factory because of the poverty of his father Yadollah. His father used to make a living by digging up thorns and thistles in the desert and selling them, but he has lost all his property. The situation of children in the carpet-weaving factory, with voices "weak and sad. . . [and] in pain that could be heard. . . along with coughs from behind the walls. . ." [10, P. 39], is not unlike the exploitation of kids in Charles Dickens's novels such as *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*.

In *Lullaby for a Dead Girl* [12], Hamidreza Shahabadi (1967- ) weaves a fictional story around an existing social problem: ignoring and suppressing girls in patriarchal societies—a world in which people sell their daughters in order to "pay taxes and save the rest of their children from hunger" [12, P. 31]. The novel gives voice to the suffering of girls throughout history. *Lullaby for a Dead Girl* is a historical novel which tries to shake the society out of its conventional complacency. Historical novels help bring to the fore characteristics and qualities shared by all members of a society (e.g. tradition, values). These elements are internalized by the members of the society. A nation is a lived experience, and the historical novel is indeed a narration of such a rich experience. Shahabadi's historical novel goes back and forth from the present to the past and simultaneously tells stories about several girls who have been mistreated by family and society. The story takes place in a half-finished residential complex near Tehran. The atmosphere of the town was eerie with its half-built and empty buildings, with the memory of the deadly fall of its builder from the fifth floor of the thirteenth block, and with the cold silence that was always there. Maybe that's why when the protagonist, Zohreh, one of the tenth-grade girls at Arghavan High School, explained the fall that she saw to others, everyone said she was delusional and no one believed her. Zohreh said this to her closest friend Mina for the first time, and after that, they all found out about the incident. And finally, the news spread throughout the town. Zohreh said she saw a girl with gray hair, her hands burned from the elbows and, most importantly, she died a hundred years ago! Zohreh sees a generation of silenced women driven forcefully to the margins of society.

Language must be treated with caution in the sensitive case of children's literature since power and violence are knitted in the warp and woof of language itself. Speech and thought are devices that allow us to live in peace and harmony with each other and the world when used properly. People, having been gifted the tool of language and thought, utilize "language over tooth and claw" [14, P. 182] and escape physical violence in most cases unlike animals that lack the gift of speech and language. However, in the post-lapsarian world, after entering the realm of the symbolic, power and violence also became symbolic, embedded in language. In "On the Origin of Violence and Language" [14], Nathan Storrer explains the discursiveness of power and argues:

creature had long turned against creature, using whatever means necessary to survive, until this one beast invented language as a non-violent way to exert power. . . . Language supersedes violence [but it] was always 'just there' [14, P. 182-183].

Stormer's article, being informed by Nietzsche's "On the Origin of Language," substitutes violence for language, arguing that the former rests on a discursive context to survive. Violence is implicated in rhetoric and evolves in its matrix. Therefore, "language is violent *habitus*," and cannot escape the "animality it shares with violence" [14, P. 187]. These statements recall Foucault's famous dictum in *Archeology of Knowledge* [2] which invites us to "conceive *discourse as a violence* that we do to things, or, at all events, as a practice we impose upon them" [2, P. 229]. The desire to dominate, the Derridean arche-violence, underlies any such violent act. Not only does the structure of language create violence, but also perpetuate it.

In the same vein, Jean-Jacques Lecercle (1946- ) asserts that language acts and wrecks, and forces people to do things, and this process is ever repeated and men are trapped in its iteration;

We note that language is the source of pain ... through the violence they exert, the linguistic violence of literalness which threatens to turn into the literal violence of language. The violence of feelings, of indignation, of guilt, once interpreted in the literal terms of language, becomes the painful violence of physical action [5, P. 232].

Negative words (insults, invectives, insinuations, etc.) carry violent effects. Words have powers: "The words of the imagined curse have real effect on bodies" [5, P. 236]. To constantly call someone bad names can actually harm them because "words have literal violence" [5, P. 236]. Thus, the violence which lies at the heart of language should be harnessed, lest it causes disturbance. Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* is a testament to this argument; when Tess is forced to discard the dialect on her tongue and learn 'correct' English spoken by men such as Alec (and by extension to emulate their ways of behaviour and being in the world), her downfall begins. When she is made aware of the history of her family *name*, her misfortune sets off, eventually becoming a "lesser creature than a woman" [3, P. 421]. So when Shakespeare famously asks "what's in a name?" he understands that physical violence is accompanied by linguistic violence, and this is the reason Hamlet, in the eponymous play, turns to Horatio and says: "Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name with you" [13, I, II, P. 163] in order to free himself of the back-breaking burden of his great name which is destined to follow "a tale unfold whose lightest word / would harrow up thy soul" [13, I, V, P. 15-16] so that he can set right "the cursed spite" [13, I, V, P. 188]. Laertes fights to death "to keep [his] name ungorred" and Hamlet dies asking his friend Horatio to keep his good name in esteem: "Report me and my cause aright / to the unsatisfied / ... what a wounded name! / ... In this harsh world draw thy breath in pain / to tell my story" [13, V, VII, P. 330-334]. The violence seen in language is in its naming of acts, differentiating and classifying them. Language begets difference and it arouses violence.

Language shapes a net-like structure which imposes its rules and regulations on each and every person who enters its realm. Language thus exploits and molds reality and deprives subjects of their subjectivity and autonomy. In short, "language is either metamorphosed into a dramatic antagonist which destroys the literary characters or forces them into conformity with its pre-given structures and precepts; or it is portrayed as an inescapable prison which determines the characters' fate and defines the limits of their world" [7, P. 1-2]. Language is therefore aggressive, and it affects and puts limits on our intelligence.

When the subject is stripped of its role as a conscious agent of meaning-making, the self loses itself in the operations of a larger system. Consequently, the subject is decentred and its place is filled by language (the system of signification). Since it is language which creates or constructs reality for us—no longer does language hold a mirror up to nature—we are divested both of agency and individuality. Literature in this sense, through employment of language becomes a mirror for children and adolescents who are or may be exposed to various forms of violence. Literature can show its audience what is going on in the world, it can create empathy in its audience, an audience that may not have experienced war but by reading a novel fully understands how war can destroy life, an audience for whom the dream of peace is highlighted. Literature is a safe space for experiencing anything unpleasant that happens in the outside world.

### Conclusion

A recent question in literary studies is if the existence of violence in adolescent novels is appropriate and defensible. The danger of the portrayal of violence in the minds of many is that the representation itself may become a form of promoting violence. However, it is not the presence or absence of violence that makes the book appropriate or inappropriate, but how it is dealt with. Addressing violence should not make it seem trivial or encourage destructive actions. It remains to be seen what the outcome of the violence will. It is questionable whether the abuser suffers or expresses remorse—if violence is to be shown as normal and trivial. There are mainly two approaches here: to show violence only for the sake of showing it with no moral lesson at the end, or to show violence not for sake of approving or propagating it but for the purpose of showing how literature could be a safe haven for experiencing anything unpleasant that happens in the outside world. The audience can read their own experience in the book and see how the protagonist was able to get through this situation, the experiences that help him to put himself in the place of others, and if one day he encounters a bully student at school, he may be able to interact with him. The display of violence in children's books does not mean its promotion, the display of violence acts precisely against violence, the display of violence in the search for a world full of peace and free from violence. Also, by showing violence, the author can to some extent prevent its possible occurrence. On the other hand, the adolescent audience can identify with the main character and share in their experience, to the extent that the pain and suffering caused by violence becomes awareness and gives the audience a new perspective. In fact, books about war and war migrants and the daily violence in society give children the opportunity to see the world around them with an open mind.

### Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

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### Conflict of Interest

None declared.

### Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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