

## Reflection of “Self” and “Other” in children’s literature: Examples from Turkish children’s books

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When children read literature they process, construct and reconstruct meaning through their experiences, prior knowledge, attitudes, emotions, learning contexts, cultural context, beliefs, values, norms, and ethics (Stephens, 1992, Galda, Cullinan and Sipe, 2010) so do writers when they construct and create their texts/stories. Although reading literature is a “personal activity, it is actually thoroughly embedded in the social and cultural milieu of the author, the reader and the reading itself” (Galda et al., 2010, p: 37). Through books children acquire not only knowledge, values and beliefs but also historical values, ideologies, assumptions, and specifically images of Self and Others. In this presentation Self and Other (Greeks) in Turkish children’s books will be discussed through two main themes; nationalistic ideology through historical fiction that divide and stereotype, and stories that focus on humanist ideas that unite Self and Other. In Turkish books from historical perspectives one can view author’s agenda molded explicitly or implicitly through the setting and protagonists. This defines and redefines Greek Other in various traits such as enemy, traitor, backstabber, as negative and Turk Self as brave, victorious, honest, credible, and humanistic. Humanist stories unite Turks and Greeks and the Greek Other is represented in the positive light with good attributes. Turkish authors with humanistic approach bring commonalities through culture, traditions and contemporary events. Observable themes generally are friendship, cultural exchange, respect, good neighbor relationships and harmony. This presentation will help understanding of how Turkish Self and Greek Other communicate in selected Turkish children’s books.