

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION CLASSROOMS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

DECEMBER 2024

Approval of the thesis:

**CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION CLASSROOMS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION RIGHTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CLASSROOMS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY

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Ph.D., The Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education, Early
Childhood Education

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December 2024, 211 pages

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the enactment of children's participation rights in independent Turkish public early childhood education (ECE) schools, with a particular focus on the classroom discourses and the experiences of in-classroom practices during circle time. Framed within Lundy's participation model, this study was conducted as a multiple case study to elaborate on the issue by exploiting the specifics of each case to form a conceptual level and holistic understanding. The participants of this study were the members of two ECE classrooms with preschool teachers (N=2) working in two different classrooms of the same school with 60-72 months of children (N=45). Data collection tools included pre- and post-interviews and observations with audio records and field notes. General findings from deductive reflexive thematic analysis illustrated how children manifested their voices, and teachers facilitated children's expression throughout circle time. Moreover, study findings presented how teachers incorporate children's views into decision-making processes and how they handle contrasting views. Even though

participant teachers stated that they regard children as capable enough to declare and defend their rights with the support of their surroundings, experiences of in-classroom practices are not always parallel to their declarations to favor children's participation rights. At the end of the post-interviews, teachers shared their awareness of the possibilities of promoting children's participation rights even through daily activities.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Participation Rights, Circle Time, Multiple Case Study

ÖZ

ERKEN ÇOCUKLUK EĞİTİMİ SINIFLARINDA ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKLARI: ÇOKLU VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

KARAN, Şeyda

Doktora, Temel Eğitim, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Feyza TANTEKİN ERDEN

Aralık 2024 , 211 sayfa

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, erken çocukluk eğitimi döneminde Türkiye'deki bağımsız anaokullarında çocukların katılım haklarının hayata geçirilmesini, çember zamanı sırasında sınıf içi söylemlere ve uygulamalara odaklanarak incelemektir. Lundy'nin Katılım Modeli çerçevesinde bu çalışma, her bir vakanın özgün özelliklerinden yararlanarak kavramsal düzeyde ve bütüncül bir anlayış oluşturmak için çoklu vaka çalışması olarak yürütülmüştür. Bu çalışmanın katılımcıları, aynı okulun iki farklı sınıfında görev yapmakta olan iki okul öncesi öğretmeni (N=2) ve sınıflarındaki 60-72 aylık çocuklardır (N=45). Veri toplama araçları arasında yarı yapılandırılmış ön ve son görüşmeler ile ses kayıtları ve saha notlarıyla yapılan gözlemler yer almıştır. Tümdengelimli refleksif tematik analizden elde edilen genel bulgular, çocukların çember zamanı boyunca kendi fikirlerini nasıl ifade ettiklerini ve öğretmenlerin çocukların kendilerini ifade edişlerini nasıl kolaylaştırdıklarını göstermiştir. Çalışma bulguları, öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini karar alma süreçlerine nasıl dahil ettiklerini ve karşıt görüşleri nasıl ele aldıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcı öğretmenler, çocukları çevrelerinin de desteğiyle haklarını beyan edebilecek ve savunabilecek yeterlilikte gördüklerini ifade etseler de sınıf içi uygulamaları her

zaman çocukların katılım haklarını destekleyen beyanlarına paralel değildir. Görüşmelerin sonunda öğretmenler, çocukların katılım haklarının günlük faaliyetler aracılığıyla bile teşvik edilebileceğine dair farkındalıklarını paylaşmışlardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erken Çocukluk Eğitimi, Katılım Hakları, Çember Zamanı, Çoklu Vaka Çalışması

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this dissertation was made possible through the invaluable support, guidance, and encouragement of many individuals to whom I am deeply grateful.

First and foremost, I express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden, whose unwavering trust, encouragement, and constructive feedback illuminated my path throughout this journey. I consider having had the privilege to work with her during my academic journey as one of the most meaningful gifts of this process.

I am also profoundly thankful to the members of the examining committee, Assoc. Prof. Serap Sevimli Çelik, Assoc. Prof. Ahmet Sami Konca, Assoc. Prof. Selda Aras, and Assoc. Prof. Volkan Şahin, for their valuable comments, suggestions, and contributions, which significantly enriched this study.

A special note of gratitude goes to my doctoral companions at METU: Betül Yılmaz Çam, Yeliz Menteşe, Zeliha Demirci Ünal, and Elif Güvelioğlu. Moreover, I want to express my sincere gratitude to my dear friend Dr. Kübra Fırat for her valuable guidance and support from the beginning of my academic journey. Their support was a source of immense strength throughout this process.

I extend my sincere thanks to the preschool teachers and children who participated in this study. Their collaboration and openness not only facilitated my research but also provided me with profound learning experiences that I will always cherish.

To my colleagues, Tuğba Turgut, Zeynep Çam, Fadile Zeynep Çavuş, Sara Akkuş and Özge İdrisoğlu, and the administration at Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, I owe deep thanks for their understanding and encouragement during this demanding period.

I am equally grateful to my dear friends Sümeyye Özer Kökçen, whose steadfast belief in me was truly indescribable; Şeyda Çetintaş, for her invaluable companionship and endless support on our shared academic journey; and Tuğba Ayan Candan & Şeyma Karadereli, for their unwavering trust, encouragement, and presence at every step of my life. This journey would not have been the same without you.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the unyielding love, encouragement, and sacrifices of my family. My late father, Ali Uçar, who laid the foundation for my academic aspirations, will always hold a special place in my heart. His dedication, both financially and emotionally, was the cornerstone of my early academic life. Words fail to capture the immense contribution of my mother, Nurşen Uçar, whose prayers, unwavering faith, and limitless support guided me through every challenge. My sisters, Hilal Uçar Kavlak and Tuğba Uçar Çelikbay, along with my nephews, were a constant source of motivation and joy during this journey. I also extend my heartfelt thanks to my extended family and my husband's family for their encouragement and kind wishes.

Finally, I am forever grateful to my beloved husband, Alperen Karan, and our son, Erdem Karan. Alperen, your unconditional support, patience, and unwavering love have been my anchor in this challenging process. Without your presence, this work might not have been completed. To my son Erdem, the most hopeful and joyful companion of this journey, I am deeply thankful. Your presence has taught me patience and the beauty of savoring the moment.

I hope that this academic journey, enriched by my past experiences and culminating in this work, will serve as a foundation for a brighter future for my son and all children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	xv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem	4
1.3. Purpose of the Study	7
1.4. Research Questions	9
1.5. Significance of the Study	10
1.6. Researcher’s Worldview	13
1.7. Definitions of Key Terms.....	15
1.8. Summary	17
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	18
2.1. The History of Children’s Rights	18
2.2. The History of Children’s Rights in Türkiye	19
2.3. Theorizing Children’s Rights	22
2.4. Classification of Children’s Rights	25
2.4.1. Children’s Rights to Provision	26

2.4.2.	Children’s Rights to Protection.....	26
2.4.3.	Children’s Rights to Participation.....	27
2.4.4.	Models of Children’s Participation Rights.....	29
2.4.5.	Theories Pertaining Children’s Participation Rights.....	33
2.5.	Children’s Participation Rights in the Context of ECE	37
2.5.1.	Enactment of Children’s Participation Rights in ECE.....	40
2.5.2.	The Role of Preschool Teachers in Children’s Participation Rights..	43
2.5.3.	Classroom Discourses and Children’s Participation Rights in ECE..	47
2.5.4.	Turkish ECE Context and Children’s Participation Rights.....	50
2.5.5.	Studies of Children’s Participation Rights in Türkiye	52
2.6.	Summary	56
METHODOLOGY		58
3.1.	Design	58
3.1.1.	Sampling Overview.....	60
3.2.	Getting to Know Research Cite.....	67
3.2.1.	Getting to Know Observation Period.....	68
3.3.	Field Work Strategy	69
3.4.	Data Collection Tools and Procedures.....	71
3.4.1.	Interviews	71
3.4.2.	Observations.....	72
3.5.	Data Analysis	74
3.6.	Validation: Trustworthiness and Credibility	76
3.7.	Ethical Considerations of the Study.....	77
3.8.	Limitations of the Study.....	78
3.9.	Summary	79
FINDINGS		81
4.1.	Space: Providing Safe and Inclusive Environment to Express Views.....	83

4.1.1.	Arrangement of Meeting Context	84
4.1.2.	Implementation of Circle Time Activities	88
4.1.3.	Facilitation of Space.....	94
4.1.4.	Summary of Findings of First Sub-Research Question.....	102
4.2.	Voice: Affordances of Children’s Expression	103
4.2.1	Children’s Windows of Expression.....	104
4.2.2	Facilitation of Voice.....	108
4.2.3	Summary of The Findings of Second Sub-Research Question	115
4.3.	Audience: Communicating Children’s Views with Due Weight.....	116
4.3.1.	Teachers’ Strategies for Active Listening.....	117
4.3.2.	Teachers’ Challenges in front of Active Listening	119
4.3.3.	Summary of the Findings of Third Sub-Question.....	126
4.4.	Influence: Acting Upon Children’s Views Seriously When Appropriate	127
4.4.1.	Incorporation of Children’s Views.....	127
4.4.2.	Handling Contrasting Views	130
4.4.3.	Expert Opinion	131
4.4.4.	Summary of the Findings Regarding Fourth Sub-Question.....	133
4.5.	General Summary of the Findings	134
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS.....		135
5.1.	Discussion	135
5.1.1.	Discussion of the Findings Regarding Safe and Inclusive Space	136
5.1.2.	Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children’s Expression.....	140
5.1.3.	Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children’s Audience	142
5.1.4.	Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children’s Influence	144
5.2.	Conclusion.....	147
5.3.	Implications.....	148
5.4.	Recommendations for Future Research	150

REFERENCES.....	152
A. TEACHER INVITATION LETTERS	169
B. PRE-INTERVIEW (CASE SELECTION).....	170
C. CONSENT FORMS (TEACHERS AND PARENTS)	172
D. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS TIMELINE	174
E. POST-INTERVIEW: TEACHER’S REFLECTION ON THEIR PRACTICES	175
F. FIELD NOTES STRUCTURE	176
G. ANALYSIS GUIDELINE FOR OBSERVATION DATA	177
H. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE.	178
I. APPROVAL APPROVAL MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.....	179
J. CURRICULUM VITAE.....	180
K. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET.....	184
L. THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU	211

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Common Classification of Children’s Rights Articles	25
Table 2 Demographics of Preschool Teachers Attending Case Selection Process ...	63
Table 3 Information About Classroom Composition of Selected Cases	65
Table 4 Information About Daily Flow	66
Table 5 Field Work Observation Focus Guideline Framed by Lundy's Model.....	73
Table 6 Summary Table on the Investigation of Research Questions.....	82
Table 7 Information About Circle Time Context	84
Table 8 Information About the Phases of Circle Time.....	85
Table 9 Type of Activities and Materials	86
Table 10 Information about Conversation Types	93
Table 11 Summary of the Facilitators of the Space.....	94
Table 12 Teachers’ Strategies to Facilitate Expression.....	108
Table 13 Teachers' Strategies of Ending Talk	119
Table 14 Summary of the Challenges Regarding Audience.....	119

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Adults' Positioning in Children's Rights, adapted from Hanson (2020).....	23
Figure 2 Adapted from Lundy's Participation Model (Lundy, 2007)	32
Figure 3 Pattern of Monologic Talk.....	49
Figure 4 Pattern of Dialogic Talk.....	49
Figure 5 Overall Timeline of the Research Process.....	59
Figure 6 Presentation of Research Questions Embedded in Lundy's Model	60
Figure 7 Diagram for the Case Sampling.....	61
Figure 8 Clustering Participants based on the Typology of Children's Rights.....	64
Figure 9 Second Floor Ground Plan and Inner Hall.....	68
Figure 10 Classroom of PT05	68
Figure 11 Classroom of PT06	68
Figure 12 Data Collection Process	71
Figure 13 Summary of the Findings of the First Sub-Research Question	83
Figure 14 Distribution of Total Time into the Circle Time Phases.....	85
Figure 15 Matrix of Teacher-Child Roles Across Activity Types.....	89
Figure 16 Matrix of Nature of Conversation Across Activity Types.....	94
Figure 17 Matrix of Conversational Ground Rules Across Circle Time Phases	95
Figure 18 Matrix of Mediators Across Circle Time Phases.....	99
Figure 19 Matrix of Extension Strategies Across Activities.....	102
Figure 20 Summary of the Findings of the Second Sub-Research Question	103
Figure 21 Matrix of Windows of Expression Across Phases.....	104
Figure 22 Matrix of Issues of Expression Across Phases	107
Figure 23 Distribution of Teachers' Follow-Up Strategies	113
Figure 24 Summary of the Findings of the Third Sub-Research Question.....	116
Figure 25 Summary of the Findings of the Fourth Sub-Research Question	127
Figure 26 Matrix of Strategies to Handle Contrasting Views Across Phases.....	129
Figure 27 Matrix of Teachers' Responses Across Issues of Expression	130

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ECE Early Childhood Education

MoNE Ministry of National Education

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

TICL Teacher-initiated-child-led

TITL Teacher-initiated-teacher-led

CITL Child-initiated-teacher-led

CICL Child-initiated-child-led

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*From the beginning,
children demonstrate that they have a voice,
know how to listen and want to be listened to by others.*

-Carlina Rinaldi-

The introduction chapter provides information about the background of the study and explains its significance, purpose, and definitions of important terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Participation is an inherent act of human beings, which is apparent in relational processes. It does not only refer to the physical involvement; it is indeed a broader concept comprising the sense of belonging and getting respect through having opportunities to have a voice in multiple ways and getting responses in the issues concerning children (Landsdown, 2005; Larkins, 2020; Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001; Mascadri et al., 2021; Cassidy et al., 2022; Waters-Davies et al., 2023). Creating opportunities for children to express their views and recognizing their evolving capacities help support their agency and autonomy, enabling them to more effectively advocate for their provision and protection rights (Hanson, 2020; Larkins, 2020; Landsdown, 2005).

Legally, children, without any lower age limit, have the right to have a say in matters that affect them and to be heard and respected in decision-making processes (Landsdown, 2005; UNCRC, 2005; UNCRC, 2009). These rights, referring to the

participation rights among the three Ps (Provision, Protection, Participation), are recognized in various international human rights instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which states that children have the right to express their views freely and to have their opinions taken into account in any matter that affects them (UNCRC, 1989; UNCRC, 2009). State parties, including Türkiye as one of the countries adopting the declaration of UNCRC since 1990, need to act based on the requirements of the declaration to recognize and ensure the best interests of children.

Along with the protection and provision rights, the promotion of participation rights challenges the accustomed image of childhood by emphasizing the obligation of listening and responding to children in matters affecting their lives and considering children capable agents to do so (Hart & Brando, 2018; James & James, 2004; Mayall, 2000; Quennerstedt, 2010; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014; Hanson, 2020; Cassidy et al., 2022). Mainly, Article 12, which underlines a child's competence to have a voice and get respect for views, is stated as the general principle to enact all other rights (UNCRC, 2009). Associated articles from 12 to 17 strongly connect participation with recognizing children's capacities for forming their views with the freedom of expression and thought, freedom of association and peaceful assembly, and accessing information in respectful formats (Larkins, 2020). Activation of participation rights requires adults and policymakers to develop skills and create spaces to listen to children attentively, to understand children's intentions with the help of expertise in the field, and to respond to them by giving due weight in a developmentally appropriate manner (Lundy, 2007; Kangas et al., 2016; Theobald, 2019; Cassidy et al., 2022).

Schools are impactful microsystems in the lives of children, managing the teacher-child interactions, and teachers are the primary audience of children (Clark, 2005; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Gal, 2017). Studies particularly examining children's participation rights in early years (Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Theobald, 2019; Kangas et al., 2016; Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001; Sandberg & Erikson, 2010; Mascadri et al., 2021; Cassidy et al., 2022) conceptualize adults' role in the promotion of children's participation rights as listening and supporting children by creating

environments that are conducive to their voices heard in daily life. For this aim, these studies necessitate primary caregivers and policymakers providing opportunities for children to be involved in decision-making processes, supporting children's communication and problem-solving skills, valuing and respecting children's ideas, and collaborating with various actors around children to promote participation. However, the latest discussions on children's participation rights call for experts in the lives of children, including parents/guardians and teachers, to benefit from their professional expertise to prioritize high-quality early childhood experiences with the acknowledgment of the enjoyment of all human rights (Lundy et al., 2024).

Preschool teachers are influential and responsible actors in implementing and promoting children's rights, considering the ethics of care (Bath, 2013; MacNaughton, 2007; Lundy, 2024; Cassidy et al., 2022). The recent comprehensive study by Correia et al. (2020) illustrated that preschool teachers' perceived participation practices mediate their observed participation practices and children's perceived participation. Thus, the embracement and promotion of participation make teachers responsible for knowing about and valuing children's evolving capacities, competence, and rights (Landsdown, 2005; Save the Children, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Clark, 2005; Robinson et al., 2020; Correia et al., 2020; Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Hanson, 2020).

Even though scholars in the field of children's rights underline the importance of children's participation rights and the teachers' role as facilitators of rights, studies particularly investigating how teachers' beliefs in conjunction with their practices could influence children's participation in early years through daily interactions are limited (Correria et al., 2019; Theobald et al., 2019; Cassidy et al., 2022). Moving forward, the large-scale study of Cassidy et al. (2022) from *Look Who is Talking Project* indicates the productive connection between theory and practice with ethical considerations about enacting children's rights from earlier ages in educational settings. Their study (Cassidy et al., 2022) calls for investigating how teachers' ideological aspirations in favor of children's participation rights are translated into practical works while questioning the conceptualization of children's voices in different contexts of ECE.

Current debates on children's participation rights studies through the early years question the interventions and the one-shot projects promoting participation, which are restricted to only particular times and settings (e.g., student councils) instead of transmitting practices to day-to-day interactions (Theobald et al., 2011; Hanson, 2020; Larkins, 2020; Theobald, 2019; Graham et al., 2018; Weckström et al., 2020). The distinctive features of Early Childhood Education (ECE) contexts guide researchers to focus on daily classroom routines co-constructed by the interactions of teachers and children. Teachers are the primary audience of children's voices. Thus, it is an issue of consideration how they open spaces to listen to children effectively to hear the voices in multiple ways and respond to them as giving due weight to the possibility of influence with these views in daily activities (Lundy, 2007; Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2015; Murray, 2019; Mascadri et al., 2021).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In general understanding, children's participation rights refer to the right of children to have a say, be part (as a group or independently) in matters that affect their everyday activities, and be heard and respected by adults (Alderson, 2008; Landsdown, 2005). The main driving forces of participation rights are the legal documents declared by UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) and the co-construction of child and childhood with evolving theoretical understanding considering children as active, capable agents and citizens (Prout & James, 1997; Mayall, 2002). It is the professional responsibility and legally binding obligation for teachers to follow the guidelines of children's rights for equity and high quality because the most apparent relational actors in the management of participation are teachers (Wang et al., 2018; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; OECD, 2021; Correia et al., 2019; Robinson, 2022; Jerome & Starkey, 2021; Lundy, 2007; Lundy, 2024; Pianta et al., 2016). The studies mentioned above imply that teachers and other responsible educational system actors need to know at least that participation rights exist and go beyond knowing by understanding. Therefore, this current investigation made the preschool teachers' beliefs and practices regarding children and their rights an issue of exploration.

Among the limited studies examining teachers' role as the primary audience within classroom discourses about practicing participation rights, Tholin and Jansen's (2012) study focused on the role of ECE settings as the meeting place. It regarded the conversation as a means of practicing participation. Mainly, they investigated how preschool teachers' language use promotes democratic conversations within planned content and activities. However, their study was limited to formal learning activities, and there is a need to explore ongoing daily communication to examine children's participation better. The study by Theobald and Kultti (2012) contributed to this gap by examining teachers' talk with groups of children through daily activities. However, although their study examines day-to-day participatory practices reflected in classroom discourses, examined excerpts from classroom talk were limited to only two episodes reflecting the discussion on the previously determined content in the fixed times. Thus, these studies call for investigating teachers' role in the operation of classroom discourses through everyday activities to detail how teachers and children experience child participation in the interactional classroom spaces.

Participation can take many forms and be implemented differently based on the context, program aims, or resources. Learning about differing models might guide implementers in selecting and using the most beneficial models based on the needs of children and adults and the context (Dolaty et al., 2022). The widely known and referenced models of participation are the Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992), Degrees of Participation (Treseder, 1997), Spectrum Model of Participation (Shier, 2001), Matrix Model of Participation (Davies, 2009), and Non-categorization Models of Participation (Lundy, 2007). Among them, Lundy's multilayered model proposes four areas: (1) space, (2) voice, (3) audience, and (4) influence to be investigated for observing and promoting children's participation in a given context.

The recent study by Correia (2022) presents how Lundy's participation model fits by its distinct but interrelated elements to study children's participation right from a multilayered perspective in the ECE context. Moreover, the study by Moore (2019) presented how this model supports preschool teachers in creating an open and inclusive listening climate. Lundy's influential model has been adopted by worldwide organizations, including the European Commission (EC), World Health Organization

(WHO), and UNICEF, and consulted as the operational framework in the studies of ECE (see, e.g., Correia, 2022; Moore, 2022; Ranta, 2023). Adopting the elements of Lundy's participation model as a theoretical framework, the present study aimed to expand our knowledge of how children's participation is evident in everyday classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices during circle time.

As part of daily activities in nearly all ECE settings, circle time is the period that functions to involve all members of the ECE classroom by avoiding hierarchy in relations so that all members can interact with each other regularly by creating a safe and inclusive listening and sharing environment usually within circle shaped seating order as the symbol of unity (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007). Pertaining literature (Bustamante et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2015; Chen & Kim, 2014; Mumcuoğlu, 2022) presents that the studies about circle time were limited to examining its structures (e.g., seating order and types of activities) by outlining the need to examine the quality and richness which is mainly depending on teacher-child interactions.

On the other hand, examining the quality of teacher-child interactions and classroom discourses can potentially interpret how that period offers spaces for children's participation in the facilitator role of teachers (Bustamante et al., 2018; Pianta et al., 2016). Hereby, the teacher's strategies might provide space for children's active participation by elaborating on the remarks of children's ideas as springboards for extending further conversations. Thus, examining how preschool teachers operate circle time for practicing children's participation rights was expected to present valuable insights to observe the richness of experiences of in-classroom practices and classroom discourses in that sense when compared to other periods of daily flow.

Following the literature mentioned above, the present study intended to expand our knowledge of how children's participation is evident in everyday classroom activities and ongoing teacher-child interactions through classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom activities during circle time.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The overarching purpose of this study was to examine how children's participation rights are practiced in early childhood settings through ongoing classroom discourses and the experiences of in-classroom practices, specifically in independent public ECE classrooms of Türkiye. This study examined the daily practices during circle time within the classrooms of preschool teachers who are identified as favoring children's participation rights in their discourses.

The studies of the "New Sociology of Childhood" (Prout & James, 1997; Mayal, 2000; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014), which present paradigms reconstructing children's lives, offer standpoints in describing the view of child and childhood and addressing the study of children's rights as an issue that needs to be researched. Correspondingly, in this study, childhood was considered a socially constructed phenomenon, and children were regarded as competent meaning-makers to make their voices heard and act upon participation rights along with their protection and provision rights. From sociocultural lenses (Vygotsky, 1978; Smith, 2002), this study aimed to investigate children's participation rights as evident in the reciprocal interactional process among children, teachers, and space in which teachers could scaffold children to express their views in different ways and children use various strategies for expressing views.

From a fully theory-informed inductive perspective (Varpio et al., 2020), the study applied Lundy's (2007) model of participation (space, voice, audience, influence) as a theoretical framework to examine the interactions between the teachers and children through the direction of everyday classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom activities. In the context of ECE, space means safe and inclusive places and times (e.g., circle time) where teachers create opportunities for all children to express their views freely. Voice refers to facilitating children's way of expressing views by informing them on the issues regarding them with the support of teachers' listening skills and follow-up talk moves to welcome children into the dialogues. Audience means teachers' listening and responding, ensuring that children's views are heard and understood, and encouraging them to communicate further through dialogic discourse.

Influence refers to teachers' responses to children's voices as giving due weight to the views with necessary explanations even though all the views could not influence the decisions. However, beyond these theoretical lenses, the study was open to exploration as it progressed and gained new insights.

Enactment of children's participation rights could appear in formal (e.g., student councils) or informal ways (everyday activities) at schools. However, the study of Waters-Davies et al. (2023) points out from a relational perspective that children's participation rights in early years could be enacted better as part of process quality dimensions throughout everyday practices. In everyday activities, children could declare their views by being asked for an opinion or share their ideas without being asked. Moreover, the study by Mascadri et al. (2021) examining children's perspectives on being listened to by teachers indicated that children regard themselves as capable agents to make their voices heard, and they feel admired when listened to by their teachers. However, their study (Mascadri et al., 2021) also points out that teachers mostly listen to them in monologic exchanges instead of expanding the talk to elaborate on their ideas. Therefore, this current study aimed to analyze discourses and experiences through ongoing interactions between teachers and children during circle time as one of the outstanding everyday activities.

Circle time is a regular event within the daily flow of various preschool education programs, including the 2013 and 2024 Preschool Education Programs of Türkiye. This period provides affordances to children and teachers to reflect themselves within the classroom community through speaking, interacting, sharing, and listening with the facilitator role of teachers within usually circle-shaped sitting order (Collins, 2007; Mumcuoğlu, 2022; Bustamante et al., 2018). Thus, attending and exploring circle time enables gathering richer context to investigate teacher-child interactions regarding children's participation rights. Since the classroom discourses are mutually constructed between teachers and children in terms of exercising participation, there was an interactional standpoint acknowledging that classroom discourses are produced jointly by children and teachers. Within the study's limits, the examination mainly focused on how/when/where teachers listen and respond to children's voices through everyday classroom practices of circle time. However, naturally, this examination included

how/where/when children initiate the talk or respond to the teacher for specifically posing their ideas or preferences.

In this work, a multiple case study design was employed to address the research problems from comparative lenses and respond to the need for further studies investigating, particularly, the in-classroom experiences of children's participation. A multiple case study is a type of design that provides an in-depth examination of a particular phenomenon, including two or more cases that are investigated with replication logic (Yin, 2018). This approach allows for a deeper exploration of complex phenomena, offering insights into both the general and specific aspects across cases to have a holistic understanding (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2009).

The current investigation specifically focused on the classrooms of two preschool teachers who favor children's participation rights with differing degrees as being from the side of emancipation or welfare, focusing on their practices about children's rights to explore the nuances of teacher-child interactions regarding children's participation rights. The present study aims to expand our knowledge of how children's participation is evident in everyday classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices. From a theory-driven inductive perspective, the study's research questions were investigated embedded in the four pivotal elements of Lundy's participation model: (1) space, (2) voice, (3) audience, and (4) influence.

1.4. Research Questions

Based on the aforementioned purposes, there are the case selection question and general research question with pertaining sub-questions.

Case Selection Research Question:

How do preschool teachers recognize children's rights?

Multiple Case Study Research Questions:

1. How do preschool teachers navigate the classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices in relation to children's participation rights during circle time?

1.1. How do the teachers implement strategies to establish safe and inclusive environments where children can express their views in the classroom?

1.2. In what ways do children communicate their views to the teacher, and how do the teachers support and facilitate children's expression?

1.3. What methods do the teachers employ to show their willing to listen children's views actively? and what obstacles or challenges do they encounter while engaging with and responding to children's voices?

1.4. How do the teachers incorporate the views of children into decision-making processes, and how does the teacher respond when children express ideas that diverge from their own?

1.5. Significance of the Study

In the context of ECE, preschool teachers play a crucial role in the promotion of participation life from the daily practices of school life to the broader social change in society with the promotion of citizenship (MacNaughton et al., 2007; Sandberg & Erikson, 2010; Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001; Mascadri et al., 2021; Sabol & Pianta, 2012). Türkiye is one of the signatory countries of UNCRC; thus, teachers working in public schools in Türkiye are legally responsible for knowing and supporting the right to participation. According to the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) Teacher Competency Indicators (MoNE, 2017) and the currently applied National Turkish Preschool Education Programs (MoNE, 2013; MoNE, 2024), teachers need to behave in a way that supports children's rights. This study aimed to contribute to the existing knowledge regarding how preschool teachers working in Turkish public preschools attributed to the image of children and children's rights in conjunction with examining in-classroom practices. In the age of global crisis, the findings of the current

investigation might draw the attention of policymakers to take steps to raise awareness regarding children's rights in the public sphere.

As mentioned in the aforementioned literature, there is a need to contribute to the studies of children's rights intensely by connecting various methods of inquiry to learn about the issue from a broader perspective (Correria et al., 2019). Although changing paradigms regarding children's conceptualization and participation draw the attention of early years scholars, studies examining the practical reflections of participation in the early years period to a lesser extent (Theobald, 2019; Correia et al., 2019). Even though national publications and dissertation theses conducted in Türkiye regard children's rights and particularly participation rights as significant issues to be investigated, they are primarily descriptive in nature and limited to interviews or surveys about teachers' ideas and beliefs on the issue (e.g., Şallı İdare, 2018; Çelik, 2017; Çetin, 2021; Coşkun, 2015). Among the studies conducted in Türkiye, the study of Koran (2017) goes beyond describing the issue and studies the process and impact of an intervention program to inform and support teachers' knowledge and capabilities for children's participation rights. However, this study does not regard observing teachers during everyday school activities as the cornerstone of the study. Hence, the present study intended to contribute to the existing children's rights studies by exploring and describing the practical implications of children's participation rights in the public ECE classroom context of Türkiye and defining new indicators for the overall conceptualization of children's participation rights during the early years.

Furthermore, classroom dialogue or mundane conversation emerging within classroom discourses has unique structures to be investigated to understand the practices of teachers as the primary audience of children's voices (Kaya & Ahi, 2022; Graham et al., 2018; Vrikki et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018). Even though UNCRC and leading scholars in the field (Lundy, 2007; Moore, 2019; Landsdown, 2015; Clark, 2005; Rinaldi, 2001) point to the role of classroom discourses for children's participation right in everyday activities, studies examining why/how adults operate classroom discourses in early years about children's participation and empowerment are rare (White et al., 2015; Theobald & Kultti, 2012; Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Shaw, 2019; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010). According to Rinaldi (2001), the pedagogy of

listening requires acknowledging different facets of voice besides verbal statements, inviting kindly to add on and giving time to share, having and reflecting listener's curiosity to hear more, moderating children's expression to be understood using dialogical talk strategies for clarity (e.g., revoicing, rephrasing) and extension of talk within community (e.g., clarifying, sharing, expanding), and reflecting on the acknowledgment of voice with due weight (e.g., comment, praise).

The studies outlining the importance of classroom discourses throughout the experiences of in-classroom practices (Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Gilson, 2022; Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007) refer that participation rights are disseminated through ongoing classroom discourses, laid between the monologic and dialogic discourses, in daily interactional processes. Even though classroom discourses and interaction are the baseline for the quality of teacher-child interaction and learning, even in the ECE, as a formal education setting, teachers' monologic talk dominates classroom discourses by limiting children's voice to have a say and being encouraged to sustain dialogue (Mascadri et al., 2021; Alexander, 2018). The present study strengthened the existing literature by examining how preschool teachers operate classroom discourses concerning children's participation and empowerment in early years, particularly circle time. Thus, the findings of the current investigation could function to design workshops and courses to assist pre-service and in-service teachers regarding the operation of classroom discourses to create a participatory environment.

Despite the growing interest in the field of children's rights studies, the studies leading the field (Sinclair, 2006; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010; Correia et al., 2019; Theobald & Kultti, 2012; Theobald, 2019) invite researchers to investigate the issues impacting the lives of specifically younger children through day-to-day interactions. The recent systematic review by Correia (2019) presents that studies focusing on children's participation right in the early childhood period are primarily qualitative and limited to adults' ideas about participation, with lesser emphasis on the practices to promote participation in daily life. Besides learning about the beliefs of adults, examining the classroom practices of teachers who favor children's participation rights is an essential indicator of whether their beliefs are reflected in daily practice.

The present study intended to explore different facets of the phenomenon by employing qualitative data collection methods to construct a more holistic standpoint to understand the issue of children's participation by examining real-life experiences within the ECE context. Relying on the pertaining literature (Koczela, 2021; Zaghlawan & Ostrosky, 2011; Graham et al., 2022; Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007; Mumcuoğlu, 2022) related to circle time as part of daily activities in Turkish National Education Programs, the current investigation purposefully focused on the circle time as a case of investigation to observe how children make their voices heard throughout less structured activities. In that sense, this study's findings could contribute to designing and implementing circle time to open a safe and inclusive space for children's participation. From the subjectivist inductive approach (Varpio et al., 2020), the conceptual framework proposed within the limits of relevant theories and literature brought along the new insights, ideas, and knowledge gathered throughout the transformation and cocreation of data and the evolving understanding of the phenomenon. Therefore, study findings, discussion points, and pertaining literature provided valuable sources to design and implement pre-service and in-service education for preschool teachers through courses, workshops, and broader projects. Notably, an examination of Lundy's participation model could expound the practical implications of children's participation rights in early childhood settings to form tools for teachers' in-service education practices.

1.6. Researcher's Worldview

My enthusiasm to study children's participation rights as human rights inevitably emerged while concluding my master thesis project (Karan, 2019), which was mainly influenced by understanding child well-being. Child well-being is the multifaceted concept of studying the lives of children and families encompassing both objective indicators and subjective perspectives to help understand the overall quality of life and satisfaction in each aspect of life (e.g., health, education, home, and environment conditions, risk and security, participation) (Pollard & Lee, 2003). The roots of child well-being understanding direct researchers to make conceptual and methodological choices to investigate children's lives. The child indicator movement, which has its origins in "social indicator movements," has emerged and evolved with the

contribution of the normative concept of children's rights, challenging the rooted understanding of child and childhood with the new sociology of childhood studies, and the ecological theories of child development (Ben-Arieh, 2008). Hereby, child well-being understanding, which is strictly contingent upon the existence and implementation of children's rights, invites researchers to place children on their agenda to monitor the indicators of the implementation of children's rights.

The recent systematic review study of Correia (2019) investigating children's participation rights in ECE settings presents that the issue of children's participation is mainly studied with qualitative designs with a greater focus on describing the adults' ideas concerning the issue. However, data recruited from these studies are limited to reflect on what is happening in children's lives due to relying upon mostly adult perspectives. Pertaining literature regarding children's participation rights studies (Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Theobald & Kultti, 2012; Correia, 2019; Lundy, 2023) underlines the need to observe the interactions of children and adults in day-to-day relations. Thus, relying on observation techniques triangulated by other data sources has the potential to enlighten the practices of children's participation rights in early childhood contexts. Investigating the pivotal elements of Lundy's (2007) participation model (space, voice, audience, and influence) comprehensively, as the theoretical framework guiding this study, and justifications behind my enthusiasm to explore children's participation based on real-world experiences direct this study to be designed/conducted with a constructivist worldview.

Worldviews have been categorized based on the elements of philosophical foundations (Ponterotto, 2005) about the nature of reality (Ontology), the relationship between the researcher and that being researched in the creation of knowledge/reality (Epistemology), the role of values (Axiology), the research process (Methods), and the language of research (Rhetoric). Constructivist worldview aims to describe, understand, and interpret the real-life phenomenon within a bounded context, acknowledging the multiple realities (Meriam, 2009).

This study's overall aim and the research questions with the intended methodology harmonize with a constructivist worldview. In this study, a constructivist worldview

guiding for multiple case study design allowed exploring how preschool teachers, determined to favor children's participation rights, recognize and respect children's participation rights through their experiences of in-classroom practices with children during circle time. Accordingly, the issue of children's participation in ECE classrooms was investigated based on both observing and documenting the experiences allowing participation within the observed classroom via in-classroom observations and semi-structured interviews and analyzing the nature of teacher-child dialogues, which either opens or closes the spaces of children's participation in the classroom environment through the facilitation of children's voices.

1.7. Definitions of Key Terms

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is defined by NAEYC (2020) as the provision of knowledge, skills, and values in a developmentally appropriate manner to all children from birth to 8 years of age. In the public ECE classrooms of Türkiye, it encompasses the provision of education for children between the ages of 3 and 6. Within the scope of the current study, the researcher collected data from ECE classrooms of children between the ages of 5 and 6.

Preschool Teacher is the teacher who is working in independent public ECE classrooms of Türkiye with 5 to 6 years of children.

Independent Public ECE Classrooms refer to state institutions affiliated with the Turkish Ministry of National Education that are entirely autonomous in building (not located as a classroom in any primary or secondary school building) and accommodate age groups between 36-66 months. Within the study's limits, only the ECE classrooms within these schools serving age groups between 60-72 months were included.

Children's Participation Rights are the rights guaranteed by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in conjunction with the Convention on the Rights of the Child-CRC (United Nations General Assembly, 1989). The two critical dimensions of the right are (i) having the right to express views and (ii) the right to have the view given due weight (UNCRC, 2009; Lundy, 2007). Within this study, the beliefs and practices of

preschool teachers regarding these rights were investigated framed within Lundy's Model of Participation (Space, Voice, Audience, Influence) and through classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices between children and teachers during circle time activity period of ECE classrooms.

Circle Time is the period that functions to involve all members of the ECE classrooms by avoiding hierarchy in relations so that all members can interact with each other regularly by creating a safe and inclusive listening and sharing environment, usually within circle-shaped seating order as the symbol of unity (Bustamante et al., 2018). Circle time in observed cases consisted of the settling down process, circle time routines (e.g., attendance, weather, spontaneous sharing), and circle time activity period (e.g., storytelling, sharing).

Classroom Discourse refers to the communication and interaction between teachers and students in educational settings through spoken language and nonverbal gestures and expressions (Perry, 2007), occurring as outlined in the traditional framework Initiation, Response, Follow-up/Evaluation (IRF/E). Monologic discourse (IRE) is teacher-centered and limits children's opportunities for participation, while dialogic discourse (IRF) is more inclusive and allows for the inclusion of children's expression with the extension of talk (Mehan, 1979; Alexander, 2018). The operation of classroom discourses between teachers and children was examined during the circle time activity period.

Experiences of In-Classroom Practices refer to events that are actually lived through the interactions between preschool teachers and children during the circle time period. These interactions are part of the process quality within the classroom environment, encompassing engagement, communication, classroom management, instructional processes, closeness and emotional coaching, and conflict issues (Sabol & Pianta, 2012).

1.8. Summary

Chapter 1 presents a general introduction regarding the children's participation rights in the ECE context. UNCRC is the most legal document for declaring children's rights. State parties, including Türkiye, are responsible for disseminating children's rights in cooperation with different layers of society. Based on the standard classification, children's rights are grouped under Protection, Provision, and Participation rights. Legitimately, participation rights refer to the fact that, without a lower age limit, children have the right to express their views freely and to have their views taken into account in any matter that affects them. Article 12 of the convention is one of the most referenced general principles of participation rights. The two critical dimensions of participation imply that children have the right to express their views, which need to be given due weight by responsible actors. Studies about children's rights emphasize the significance of the ECE period, which outlines the requirements for implementing participation rights in children's daily lives, stressing the need for a competent view of the child, respectful listening, effective communication, and age-appropriate interactions. Implementing children's participation rights in ECE requires teachers to create inclusive and supportive environments that value children's voices. Thus, it requires going beyond formal structures like student councils and incorporating participatory practices into daily interactions. Teachers play a crucial role as the primary audience for children's voices, and their understanding and implementation of participation practices shape children's experiences. Models of participation rights function as analytical tools to observe and evaluate current practices. From a fully theory-driven-inductive perspective, this study was framed within Lundy's participation model. As a context of investigation, the current study focused on examining circle time to observe teacher-child interactions through classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices in Turkish public ECE classrooms to expand the knowledge of children's participation rights in the ECE context through daily practices.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the literature regarding children's participation rights in the context of ECE. In order to provide an understandable basis for the investigation of the proposed study, there are several titles and subtitles that are relevant to the study's aims. Firstly, the understanding of children's rights from the definition and history to the enactment within the political statements and daily practices are presented concerning the models, approaches, and theories regarding the period of early childhood development with a particular focus on children's participation rights. Subsequently, the enactment of children's participation rights within the context of ECE, which is discussed in national and international literature, is intended to be presented underlying the sub-headings regarding the role of the daily schedule, preschool teachers, and the nature of classroom discourses with a particular focus on exploring it within the circle time.

2.1. The History of Children's Rights

The history of children's rights can be traced back to the notion of child and childhood as entities with unique needs and profiles, even before the formal declaration of children's rights. Childhood is a socially constructed phenomenon that changes over time (Prout & James, 1997). Recognizing this fact can help comprehend how children's rights have evolved in social and legal contexts throughout history, as noted by Aries (1960). Thus, understanding the historical conceptualization of childhood is essential for scholars exploring the origins of current policies and attitudes toward children. Such an understanding can also help investigate the factors influencing children's rights.

The status of child and childhood has undergone significant changes throughout history (Cook, 2020). For example, during the period spanning the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution, child health was a priority, and adapted medicines were developed to cater to children's specific needs. Despite the exploitation of children in industries during the Industrial Revolution, governments sought to limit working conditions and set age limits for working children by the 1840s. Compulsory and free schooling emerged as a powerful tool to protect children's rights. However, the outbreak of World War I in 1914 led to a decline in children's living conditions. The Geneva Declaration in 1924 marked a significant turning point for children's health and well-being. Despite setbacks such as the Great Depression and World War II, children became the subjects of the law in their own right. The UN adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959, building on the principles of the Geneva Declaration to recognize children's rights to education, play, a supportive environment, and healthcare. The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989, which extended children's rights to include participation rights. These alterations shifted from seeing children as passive beings to individuals with unique interests, priorities, and rights. All signatory countries are required to submit regular reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, including Türkiye since 1990. Based on the Committee's recommendations, countries need to adopt measures to improve the conditions of children.

While the history of childhood shows the gradual improvement in the status of children and childhood, UNCRC aims to promote the idea of children both as "becoming" and "being." While the Western narrative provides a framework for the origins, changes, and current state of children's rights, it is crucial to recognize that different countries interpret and implement UNCRC differently (Cook, 2020). Thus, children's rights remain a dynamic field that requires further research into the social construction of child and childhood in systems that directly or indirectly affect children's lives.

2.2. The History of Children's Rights in Türkiye

In the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, the child is defined as an individual who is under the age of 18. The Convention on the Rights of the Child declared by the

UNCRC in 1989 was signed by Türkiye in 1990 in the Convention at the World Summit for Children held at the United Nations Central Office. However, the formal implementation of the Convention goes back to 1995 after being confirmed legally in 1994 by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. Before the Convention, Türkiye declared the Turkish Children's Rights Statement prepared in the light of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1963. The main points of this statement highlight children's right to education, protection, and care without discriminating against any children with disabilities (Erbay, 2019).

State parties, including Türkiye, are responsible for presenting monitoring reports to UNCRC. Respectively, the Republic of Türkiye shared its monitoring reports with the committee in 2001(Beginning Report), 2011 (Second and Third Reports), and 2021 (Fourth and Fifth Reports). Since the initial reports, the Republic of Türkiye has shared reservations about the declaration's statements about minority groups. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye and the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923, ethnic groups are not recognized as minority groups in Türkiye. Moreover, the Turkish Republic recognizes any individual or group migrating to our country needing protection under the status of "Temporary Protection" instead of being refugees. Therefore, these points mainly restrain the full implementation of children's rights. Until now, the committee shared the concluding observations on the second and third reports (UNCRC, 2012). As far as the United Nations' latest monitoring reports are examined, the report presents the progress achieved by Türkiye on the issues, including softening penalties under the age of 18, advancements in the provision of rights to persons with disabilities, the issues concerning the involvement of children in armed conflict, national child rights strategies, gender equality, and discrimination. However, the reports underline the need to recognize minority groups and refugees, as outlined in the UNCRC, as the primary concern. Also, the report pays attention to regional differences and inequalities, particularly in the eastern part of the country. Thus, the reports call for national coordination with a clear structure and strategy for successfully implementing the rights with the right-based approach and effecting monitoring strategies. Notably, the report recommends taking concrete steps for disseminating, awareness-raising, and training for each layer of society, from governmental officials to the public and children.

Besides, even though the Turkish Republic defines a child as one under the age of 18, legalizing marriage under this age is criticized by the report. Under the articles of General Principles, the committee shares the recommendations to improve the situation regarding the issues of discrimination, interests of the child, rights to life, survival, and development, as well as respect for the views of the child. In addition, the report presents the concerns and improvement suggestions for the parts of civil rights and freedom, family environment and alternative care, basic health and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities, and exceptional protection measures such as asylum-seeking and refugee children (UNCRC, 2012).

This study's scope gives specific attention to the recommendations in the report regarding the children's rights to gain respect for their views in conjunction with the freedom to express and access appropriate information (UNCRC, 2012). The committee report requires Türkiye to present more concrete steps to illustrate how children's views are communicated between children and adults. Additionally, the report recommends negotiating with families, institutions, and legal and administrative officials to raise awareness and implement education programs on the implementation of children's participation rights. More than that, the report necessitates revising the child and childhood image to regard them as more autonomous individuals and subjects of rights. Such a recommendation also parallels the understanding and the research needs of children's rights defined in this study.

Even though most of the countries signed the convention of UNCRC, countries' child policies are detrimental to the understanding and implementation of children's rights. The study of Erbay (2019) shares that, the obstacles in front of Türkiye's child policy generally originated from legal inadequacies to frame, protect, and maintain children's rights as outlined by UNCRC, and the sociocultural factors influenced by the incompetent image of children, traditional family tensions, gender discrimination, and socio-economic issues.

2.3. Theorizing Children's Rights

Scholars from various fields are investigating why children should have rights and what those rights should be. Multidisciplinary studies have synthesized and integrated unique contributions, providing a pluralistic perspective on children and their rights to understand contemporary social issues concerning children (Reynaert et al., 2009; Cook, 2020). For instance, sociologists study children's social identities, consumption habits, the relationship between media and children, and how children participate in social structures and agency. They are interested in how children interpret their rights, combining social structures and agency by highlighting the childhood image of a competent child. By agency, it meant that children had more control over their own lives, and they had the potential to affect societal change. Sociology of childhood studies (Prout & James, 1997) focuses on how children are constrained and how they can make their rights more apparent in their daily lives. Acknowledging a child's competent image requires redefining the child's position within the family as a member of the raising responsibilities of parents. Thus, current children's rights studies deal with the dichotomy of children's rights and parents' rights and responsibilities (Reynaert et al., 2009).

Children's studies as a dynamic field influenced by social structures inevitably reflect the varying beliefs regarding children's rights in education and social life (Reynaert et al., 2009; James & Prout, 1997; Alderson, 2008; Hart & Brando, 2018; Mayall, 2000; Quennerstedt, 2010; Cook, 2020). The main determinants of people's ideas about children's rights are rooted in childhood image and agency (Being or Becoming), children's competence (Competent or Incompetent), and the kinds of rights (Common Classification: Protection, Provision, Participation). How people position their beliefs concerning these issues could refer their sides regarding the children's rights, as outlined by the typology of Hanson (2020) (Figure 1). The categories indicated by the dashed frame illustrates the ones as advocating for children's rights in a balanced way, albeit to varying degrees.

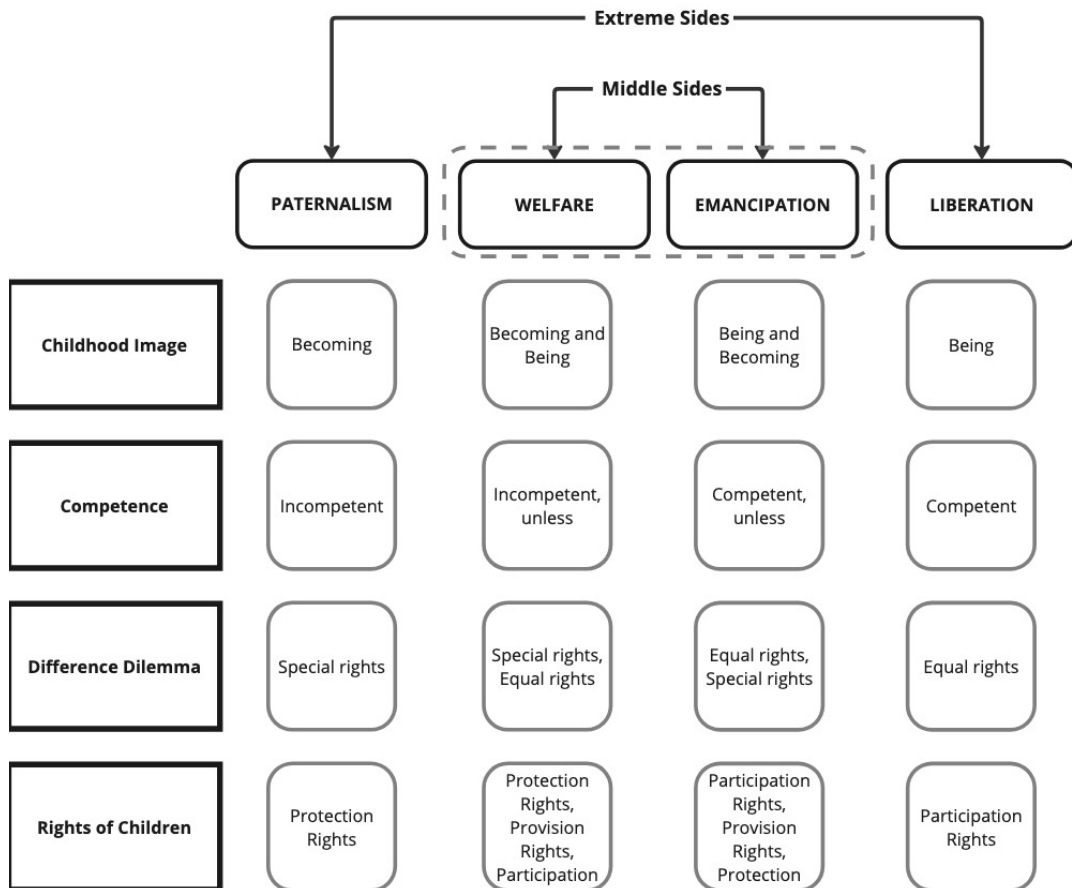


Figure 1 *Adults' Positioning in Children's Rights, adapted from Hanson (2020)*

Hanson (2020) underlines the need to understand how children’s conceptualization and representation could function as an analytical device to understand and observe the emergence and maintenance of children’s rights regarding subjective standpoints and contextual factors. The paternalistic viewpoint sees children as incompetent beings who need the right to protection. The liberationist viewpoint sees children as competent beings who deserve the right to participate. The welfare viewpoint reflects a balanced perspective on children's rights, prioritizing protection, provision, and participation in that order. The emancipatory viewpoint prioritizes participation and sees children as competent and deserving of all rights but in reverse order. People in any category, indicated by the dashed frame of Figure 1, advocate for children's right to participation, albeit to varying degrees. To explain in more detail:

Paternalism refers to the image of childhood as “becoming,” which means children will grow to become adult citizens. As children are not fully mature, they seem incompetent. The dominant right children deserve is protection. This viewpoint reflects looking at a child from an extreme point of view.

Liberation refers to the image of the child as “being” in the here and now. Children are seen as competent as anybody else. The dominant right children deserve is participation. This viewpoint reflects looking at a child from an extreme point of view.

Welfare refers to the image of the child as both “becoming” and “being.” However, this view necessitates prioritizing children’s future and development as “becoming” adults while respecting children’s lives as “being” in the here and now. This perspective regards children as incompetent, but in some instances, children might show their competencies with proof. Children’s rights need protection, provision, and participation, with importance given in that order. So, this view needs to ensure that children are firstly protected, they reach specific provisions (e.g., education, welfare structures), and they can also participate in how their protection is organized. The welfare viewpoint reflects a balanced perspective on children’s rights.

Emancipation refers to the image of the child as first “being” in here and now and then “becoming” for the future. Children are considered competent unless the reverse is proved. Thus, children deserve all rights but in reversed order, including participation first followed by provision and protection rights. Thus, this view prioritizes the right to participation. The emancipation viewpoint also reflects a balanced perspective on children’s rights.

These schools of thought proposed by the typology of Hanson (Hanson, 2012; Hanson, 2020; Hanson & Peleg, 2020) are not the absolute way of viewing children’s rights. However, they help to see how people approach children’s rights and contribute to understanding why people’s perspectives diverge. Detecting where people or policymakers situate themselves in these four schools of thought might contribute to understanding how people approach children's rights and why perspectives diverge. Children's studies reflect varying ideas regarding children's rights in education and

social life, mainly influenced by social structures (Quennerstedt, 2011; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014).

The meaning given to children and childhood regarding their rights in national and international arenas shapes ECE policies, curriculum, educator's professional needs, and parents' perspectives (NAEYC, 2019). Elaborating on the underlying concepts behind the evaluations of children's rights could function to explore adults' positioning toward children's rights. Subsequently, this study explores the preschool teachers' perception of childhood and their implications for children's rights within ECE.

2.4. Classification of Children's Rights

The UNCRC comprises 54 articles and optional protocols (UN, 1989). Even though the classification of articles declared on the convention might change based on different clustering, the standard classification includes three domains (3 P's): Provision, Protection, and Participation (Table 1). Articles composing the Provision include the rights to goods and services. Articles composing the Protection include the rights to be protected from certain dangers, including maltreatment, neglect, and exploitation. Finally, participation articles comprise the right to act and be involved in decision-making processes regarding children's lives. Nevertheless, the placement of some articles changes even under this standard classification. Moreover, some scholars and organizations present different ways of classifying the UNCRC. However, since the rights are interdependent, respecting and applying each is necessary to avoid undermining other rights.

Table 1 *Common Classification of Children's Rights Articles*

Scholars	Provision	Protection	Participation
Alderson (2008)	24, 27-29	1-3, 5-11, 18, 19, 22, 23, 30, 32, 40	12-17
Osler (2016)	2, 7, 13, 14, 28-31	2, 5, 15-19, 28.2, 29, 40	5, 12-15, 17-19, 29.1c
Murray, Swadener & Smith (2019)	4-10, 14, 18, 20, 22-31, 42	4, 11, 19-22, 32-41	4, 12-17

In this dissertation, a common classification presenting the 3 Ps guided the investigation of children's rights. Valuing participation rights is considered the most revolutionary act under the provision of UNCR because articles supporting participation rights challenge the accustomed and tokenistic view of children and childhood (Alderson, 2008; Landsdown, 2005). Becoming a child advocator and implementer of children's rights is impossible without promoting participation rights beyond protection and provision.

2.4.1. Children's Rights to Provision

Provision rights are essential for children's optimal development and growth, which renders the adults around children and policymakers responsible for investing in children's best interests. Murray, Swader, and Smith (2019) present an extended conceptualization of provision rights including the articles highlighting the protection of rights (Article 4), parental guidance (Article 5), survival and development (Article 6), nationality (Article 7), identity (Article 8), separation (Article 9), reunion (Article 10), freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Article 14), parental responsibilities and state assistance (Article 18), children deprived of family environment (Article 20), refugee (Article 22), disability (Article 23), health care (Article 24), residential care (Article 25), social security (Article 26), minimum standard of living (Article 27), Education (Articles 28-29), minority/indigenous (30), play and leisure (Article 31), and knowledge of rights (Article 41). In the UNCRC, the components of provision rights are explained with the provision needs of children, the responsibilities of gatekeepers, and policymakers.

2.4.2. Children's Rights to Protection

Protection rights safeguard children against exploitation, neglect, abuse, and maltreatment. However, the image of children varies across countries within the legal systems, and legislation contradicts the full implementation of protection rights, such as the provision of rights. Based on the classification of Swadener (2019), articles comprising the protection rights refer to protection of rights (Article 4), kidnapping (Article 11), all forms of violence (Article 19), children deprived of family

environment (Article 20), adoption (Article 21), refugee (Article 22), child labor (Article 32), drug abuse (Article 33), sexual exploitation (Article 34), abduction, sale and trafficking (Article 35), other forms of exploitation (Article 36), detention and punishment (Article 37), war and armed conflicts (Article 38), rehabilitation of child victims (Article 39), juvenile justice (Article 40), and respect for superior national standards (Article 41).

2.4.3. Children's Rights to Participation

Beyond the protection and provision rights, participation rights go beyond fulfilling children's needs, seeing them as competent in their own lives. Moreover, implementing participation rights enables one to proceed with all other rights, such as listening to the children's needs from their voice instead of making judgments about children's lives (Hanson, 2020; Lundy, 2007). Conceptualizing participation in the context of Human Rights and the UNCRC is vital to understanding children's participation rights. Correspondingly, participation rights refer to the fact that, without a lower age limit, children have the right to express their views freely and take them into account in any matter that affects them (UNCRC, 2005; UNCRC, 2009). In this manner, participation refers to the rights of children to form their views on the matters affecting their lives and express their views with their capabilities (Landsdown, 2005). This capability of expressing views extends even to babies' lives as they can communicate with body language, gestures, and noise. Thus, the convention on the right to have a voice and be heard is valid for children of all ages. State parties, including Türkiye as one of the countries adopting the declaration of UNCRC since 1990, need to act based on the requirements of the declaration to recognize and ensure the best interests of children.

Article 12 of the convention is one of the most referenced general principles defining participation rights and necessitates its implementation as a precondition to proceed with all other rights (Hanson, 2020). Additionally, scholars extend this right through associated articles, which outline the freedom of expression in diverse ways (Article 13), the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion (Article 14), freedom of association (Article 15), the right to privacy (Article 16), and the access the

information in various ways (Article 17) (Alderson, 2008; Swadener, 2019; Hanson, 2020).

Unfortunately, state parties still prioritize protection rights while giving less importance to disseminating provision and participation rights. In parallel, UNCRC recently added articles declaring children's rights to participation. Even though some scholars or policymakers refer to different articles to explain participation rights, articles 12 to 17 and article 31 refer to participation rights. Notably, Article 12 is accepted as the General Principle concerning children's right to be heard by having an active voice. Article 12, which was adopted in 2009 by the CRC Committee, states that:

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

In general, Article 12 represents the concrete alterations made in the convention to declare a child as a person with dignity and competence to express his/her views to influence the decisions taken. Moreover, participation is not solely an act of a child; instead, it covers children as a collective group to express their opinions on the issues influencing their social lives without age limits. Children's right to participation is strongly linked to children's recognition in society. However, as an influential scholar on the contemporary understanding and dissemination of children's participation rights, Lundy et al. (2024) criticized that children's participation rights, even in scholars' work, are not fully recognized and understood. Accordingly, the cornerstone dimensions composing Article 12 are (i) having the right to express views, and (ii) the right to have the view given due weight.

Children's participation rights need to be understood as an interdependent process between children and adults, which requires negotiation and mutual respect without

outperforming responsible actors' role as experts in children's enjoyment of all human rights (Lundy et al., 2024). The actualization of participation makes adults responsible for finding ways to hear and listen to what children are saying (Landsdown, 2005). Thus, adults need to be responsible for giving space, time, and opportunities to children while empowering their evolving capabilities to feel confident and safe while expressing their views.

Active listening necessitates taking children's ideas into account seriously and respectfully and benefitting from these ideas to act on the issues regarding children's lives. There are several ways of exercising children's participation, including consultation, collaboration, and child-led participation (Landsdown, 2005). Through consultation, children are regarded as the ones with views worth hearing and informing how decisions are made. Through collaboration, children and adults work in partnership for children's rights, even though adults might take particular initiatives while working with children. Finally, child-led participation means creating a space for children to identify the issues considered necessary for themselves. Child-led participation usually occurs through child unions or clubs as communities. Thus, the central role of the adults is to be facilitators and supporters of this decision-making process. The dignity and respect children receive for their participation rights have enormous benefits for realizing and promoting children's rights and easing the processing of more respectful societies and communities on a broader scale.

2.4.4. Models of Children's Participation Rights

Participation can take many forms and be implemented in different ways based on the context, program aims, or resources. Learning about differing models might guide implementers to select and use the most beneficial models based on the needs of children, adults and the context. Even though the models are not limited to the ones presented below, the focus is on differentiating models based on the categories of involvement and the roles of providers within them.

Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992): Hart's (1992) ladder of participation is the most referenced model to conceptualize the different degrees of participation and non-

participation. In the ladder, Hart placed eight rungs, which associates the lowest three rungs with non-participation (Manipulation-Decoration-Tokenism), and the remaining rungs as the degrees of participation from the lowest to the highest degree. Even though the fullest participation is associated with the eighth rung (child-initiated, shared decisions with adults), placing the program or intervention aiming for participation in the remaining rungs might be appropriate depending on the tasks, context, or resources. The distinctive feature between the rungs emerges based on the degree of stakeholders' voice and agency to shape the procedure and the outcomes of services and programs. Based on the ladder model, participation occurs in a progressive sequence.

Degrees of Participation (Treseder, 1997): This model does not represent different levels, but the degrees of participation. Even though there are separate degrees of participation, like the ladder model (Hart, 1992), this model highlights the importance of empowering children to participate better by providing necessary support and resources instead of just valuing child-initiated participation. The five degrees of participation in the model refers to (1) consulting and informing children about adult-initiated projects, (2) assigning children on the adult initiated projects by informing them, (3) adult-initiated but shared decision-making with children in every step of the project, (4) child-initiated but shared decision-making with adults for expertise, and (5) child-initiated as well as directed projects.

Spectrum Model of Participation (Shier, 2001): The participation placement on the spectrum indicates the degree of participation. The model mainly focuses on the adults' role in planning and evaluating the program or intervention for children's participation. There are five levels of participation (Listening, Supporting expression of views, considering views, being involved in Decision-Making, and Sharing power and responsibility in decision-making) based on the three stages of adult commitment (Openings, Opportunities, and Adult Commitment).

Matrix Model of Participation (Davies, 2009): This model extends Hart's (1992) Ladder Model on a matrix by placing categories of the ladder on the vertical matrix (Manipulation, Decoration, Tokenism, Assigned and Informed, Consultation and

Informed, Adult-Initiated and Shared Decisions with Children, Youth-Initiated and Directed, Youth-Initiated and Shared Decisions with Adults) and different participation approaches on the horizontal matrix, reflecting the range of engagement opportunities.

Non-categorization Models of Participation (Lundy, 2007): Non-categorization models do not attempt to classify or assess the degrees of participation. Instead, these models offer new perspectives to explore the enactment of participation rights by bringing attention to the underlying factors around the exercising of participation, such as power relations between children and adults, the voice and agency of young people, and the context of young people for the initiatives and efforts of participation. Although various non-categorization models exist that aim not to categorize levels of involvement but highlight the roles, power issues, and motives of stakeholders, Lundy's participation model is handled as one of the most popular non-categorization models (McCafferty, 2017; Correia, 2022). As a co-director of the Children's Rights Center, Professor Lundy regards children's participation rights by listening to them and responding to them as the priority for enacting all other rights. Lundy's participation model constitutes the baseline of Ireland's National Child and Youth Participation Framework and has been adopted by the European Union Commission, the World Health Organization, and UNICEF. Moreover, the recent study by Correia (2022) presents how Lundy's participation model fits by its distinct but interrelated elements to study children's participation right from a multilayered perspective in the ECE.

Lundy's model presents four interrelated elements (space, voice, audience, and influence) to implement children's participation rights (Figure 2). Lundy's criticism of the understanding and the implementation of Article 12 paved the way for the emergence of the participation model. Lundy (2007) criticized children's participation rights, even in scholars' work, as not fully recognized and understood. The cornerstone dimensions composing Article 12 are (i) having the right to express views and (ii) the right to have the view given due weight. Lundy's conceptualization of her model around these two critical dimensions of participation:

- Space relates to the opportunities to express views.
- Voice relates to the facilitation of children’s expression.
- The audience relates to listening to the voices of children.
- Influence relates to considering children’s views when appropriate.

As noted by Lundy (2007), these dimensions emerge when Article 12 is understood in the light of other relevant articles of UNCRC, including Article 2 (non-discrimination), Article 3 (Best interest), Article 5 (Right to Guidance from Adults), Article 13 (Right to Information), and Article 19 (Right to be Safe).

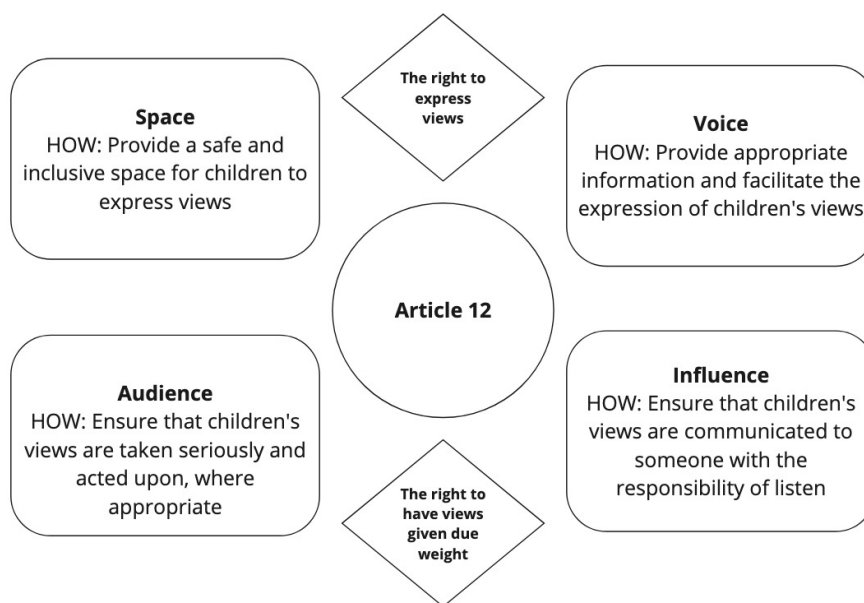


Figure 2 Adapted from Lundy's Participation Model (Lundy, 2007)

The current study adopts Lundy's model of participation (2007) as a theoretical framework for conceptualizing children's participation rights in the context of ECE. Lundy's influential model has been adopted by worldwide organizations, including the European Commission (EC), World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF, and consulted as the operational framework in the studies of ECE (see, e.g., Correia, 2022; Moore, 2022; Ranta, 2023).

The studies and projects acknowledging Lundy’s model show its potential for investigating the affordances of participation right within ECE settings from four

angles (Space, Voice, Audience, and Influence). Subsequently, space could refer to safe and inclusive places and times (e.g., circle time) where teachers create opportunities for all children to express their views freely. Dimension of voice could facilitate children's way of expressing views by informing them of the issues regarding them with the support of teachers' listening skills and follow-up talk moves to welcome children into the dialogues. The dimensions of audience could imply teachers' listening and responding, ensuring that children's views are heard and understood and encouraging them to communicate further through dialogic discourse. Dimension of influence could refer to teachers' responses to children's voices as giving due weight to the views with necessary explanations even though all the views could not influence the decisions.

2.4.5. Theories Pertaining Children's Participation Rights

Theories are general statements that are open to public knowledge to explain facts in life. In human development, theories provide a framework, principles, assumptions, or rules to observe, interpret, and explain changes. Moreover, approaches offer specific methods or strategies to achieve intended goals and the vision of theories behind approaches. Theories and approaches guide researchers to construct and revise their research questions, hypotheses, and methodological choices throughout research processes to explain the phenomenon under investigation by looking from different windows (Grien & Piel, 2010; Varpio et al., 2022).

The studies of new sociology in childhood contribute to theorizing children's rights and present the momentum gained in placing children's rights in societies. It also enlightens the methodology and interpretation of children's rights by relating theories of children's agency and competencies in adult-child interactions regarding children as potentially meaning-makers in the issues concerning their lives. Considering children's rights as a socially constructed phenomenon, this study relies on the sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Smith, 2002) and ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Gal, 2007) as theories enlighten the exploration of children's participation rights within educational settings. Framed within Lundy's participation model, these theories enlighten how preschool teachers, as primary caregivers around

children in early childhood, regard child and childhood with the considerations of different layers of society and scaffold children's active and secure participation in day-to-day interactions.

2.4.5.1. Socio-Cultural Theory of Vygotsky

With the formulation of socio-cultural theory, Lev Vygotsky (1978) founded the basis for the social construction of children and childhood by describing children as social beings who grow up interacting with other social beings and through experiences around them. Correspondingly, his theory underlined the importance of culture, the role of language, and the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) throughout individuals' development journey (Crain, 2010). Vygotsky stated that knowledge is socially constructed through interaction with other members of a culture. He connected the emergence of language with culture, and he regards language as the basis of cognitive development. He defined the ZPD as the gap between children's current capabilities and the possibilities to develop these capabilities with adult support. In that sense, he emphasized the critical role of adults around children with the term scaffolding, which points to the process of adult support to guide children in mastering their potential on engaged tasks.

From a sociocultural perspective (Claxton, 2008), teacher-child dialogue helps children build relationships and improve their verbal and social competence through thinking and reflecting critically about the content and the structure of the talk. With teachers' scaffolding, children participate in talk and build on ideas collectively as the social mode of thinking (Alexander, 2018; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Vygotsky, 1979). While underlying the importance of teachers' attempts to pay attention to what children say in the classroom, creating opportunities for open-ended dialogue creates much more space for children's engagement. In such dialogues, the content of the dialogue needs to be meaningful for participants as children could relate to their world for the co-construction of new understanding (Lefstein et al., 2020). Creating a positive classroom climate through ongoing dialogues between children with the facilitator role of teachers or other implementers from the field might open spaces for adapting

prosperous participation opportunities into the school context by empowering teachers and children into the dialogues within the positive classroom environment.

One of the ongoing criticisms of the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky was concerned about the child as the one shaped by his/her surroundings. In response to this limited understanding of the role of a child within his/her life, this theory states that children are also influential on their environment by co-creating knowledge and experiences besides being shaped and defined solely by socio-cultural and historical contexts (Crain, 2010). Indeed, socio-cultural theory invites the enlargement of the vision to understand children while considering contextual variations. In that sense, the socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky constitutes the ground for the studies of the new sociology of childhood and revolutions in children's rights.

In this study, the investigation of Lundy's participation model elements finds meaning by acknowledging Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory. Taking children's culture and context into account guided this study to regard views of participant teachers regarding children, childhood, and children's rights, considering national legal regulations and critical considerations of the educational system, and describing the research context and participants in detail. Examination of the classroom environment allowed us to regard children's potential in their participation rights and how teachers scaffold them to promote children's voices and to become an audience for the voices of children within ZPD. Correspondingly, Vygotsky's theory guided this study to examine the critical role of preschool teachers in supporting children's participation rights via verbal and physical assistance. However, parallel to the ongoing discussions regarding the degree of scaffolding by adults, this study paid attention to the risks of disproportionate adult support hindering children's curiosity and potential to make their voices heard.

2.4.5.2. Ecological Systems Theory of Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner (1979) formulated ecological systems theory (EST) to present how the development and alterations in individuals' lives take place within nested social systems (e.g., home, school, neighborhood, culture). Parallel to the social construction

of children's rights, EST allows exploring placement and practicing children's participation rights in conjunction with the nested subsystems directly or indirectly interacting with individuals. Among the systems, microsystems are the contexts in which children interact directly, such as the family and community factors (e.g., experiences within family and school, parental mental health and adjustment, family cohesion, and teacher attitudes) (Cummings et al., 2017). As an overarching ecological subsystem, the macrosystem includes culture and its economic, social, and political patterns, giving meaning to the systematic and individual interactions within broader systems (Cummings et al., 2017). Interactional effects of various microsystems constitute the mesosystem, whereas the exosystem reflects the indirect impacts of events around the microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Of the systems surrounding children, the school context steps forward with its role in connecting the different layers of society. Thus, children's participation in classroom teacher-child interactions was not independent of societal issues, support mechanisms, material resources, relations, and personal issues (Gal, 2017). On a macro level, preschool teachers and the whole school staff need to know at least children's rights exist and are recognized by international and national documents. Therefore, participant teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and conceptualization of children's rights were regarded within the scope of this study. Moreover, preschool teachers attributed the direct links of other microsystems (e.g., home and environment conditions) to promoting children's participation rights. Additionally, preschool teachers shared the direct or indirect effects of other systems influencing their preconceptions, resources, support mechanisms, and handicaps to scaffold children's participation rights throughout day-to-day interactions within the ECE context.

In this study, acknowledging EST as a theoretical basis contributed to the design of the methodology by examining day-to-day interactions within the classroom as one of the outstanding micro-systems in children's lives. Additionally, receiving preschool teachers' opinions on the issue enlightened the exploration of direct and indirect influences of systems around processing children's participation rights within the school context.

2.5. Children's Participation Rights in the Context of ECE

The Committee on the Rights of the Child recognizes young children, from birth to the transition to primary school ages, as right holders of all rights declared in the Convention on the Rights of the Children (CRC), and regards the ECE period as the critical period for the enactment of all rights (UNCRC, 2005). Although the definition of ECE varies across countries, the Committee embraces the conceptualizing of the ECE period from birth to age eight. Even though the Convention declares that all rights need to be enacted universally with the principles of indivisibility and interdependence of the rights, the state parties mostly fail in their implementations due to the incompetent image of a child and not giving all necessary attention to the ECE period as a distinctive phase in the lives of children. The Committee highlights the importance of the ECE period with the features of the most rapid development of lifespan and the interconnectedness of all developmental areas (Physical, Social, Emotional, and Cognitive) for holistic development under the influence of nature and nurture. Throughout the ECE period, respecting children's interests, experiences, and challenges, considering optimal development requirements and their conditions, is the starting point for realizing and enacting children's rights (UNCRC, 2005).

The General Principles of the Convention are Articles 2 (Right to Non-Discrimination), 3 (Best Interests of the Child), 6 (Right to Life, Survival, and Development), and 12 (Respect for the views and the feelings by giving due weight) by the Committee on the children's rights (UNCRC, 2005). Respecting the principles of indivisibility and the interdependence of all rights declared in the UNCRC, this current study specifically brings participation rights (mainly Article 12) in ECE forward within the limits of this study. Article 12 states that children have the capacity and the right to express their views freely on issues regarding their lives, and adults need to scaffold children to express their views and give due weight to influence the views if appropriate (UNCRC, 2005; Lundy, 2007). Considering the child as the right holder, promoting participation rights reinforces children's active participation in enacting their promotion and protection rights.

The General Comment (No.7) of the Commission on Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood (UNCRC, 2005) presents the requirements for the state parties, including the parents, primary caregivers, educators, policymakers, and all other gatekeepers, to respect and implement children's participation rights. The Commission highlights the necessity of implementing these rights in children's daily lives at home and in their community, including school, neighborhood, and other surroundings. Moreover, the Commission lists the prerequisites adults need to succeed in for the successful implementation of participation rights as having a competent image of a child, the ability to listen and respect children's views, having patience and the creativity to communicate with children in multiple ways, informing children on the issues regarding them, and communicating with children in developmentally and contextually appropriate ways. These outlined requirements parallel the dimensions of Lundy's model of participation and Hanson's typology of children's rights, which frames the current study's standpoints.

In ECE, enabling ongoing playful participatory practices helps children develop essential skills such as communication, collaboration, and problem-solving (Vartiainen et al., 2024). These skills, in turn, contribute to the development of children's competence in decision-making (Wang et al., 2018; Kangas et al., 2016; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010). For instance, in everyday practices, the play offers many possibilities for children to express themselves freely so that the practitioners can give due weight to their wishes and concerns. Free play, mainly, provides lots of affordances for children's initiation and direction, such as choosing and deciding on the kind of play, the roles within a play, and the materials used during the play.

When children are actively involved in the decision-making process, and their views are considered through attentive listening and negotiation with adults, they are more likely to feel a sense of ownership over the decisions made. This sense of autonomy promotes their overall well-being and development (Graham et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2018; Mascadri et al., 2021; Murray, 2019; Lundy et al., 2024). Hereby, facilitating children's voices and listening to them attentively in matters that affect them allows them to exercise agency and autonomy as competent meaning-makers in their lives. It empowers them to articulate their needs and advocate for the provision and protection

of their rights. In this way, children can take on the responsibilities of life and live as equal partners with others, functioning as active citizens (Kangas et al., 2016; Landsdown, 2005; Correia & Aguiar, 2019; Landsdown, 2014).

As children grow up, their interactions with people, materials, and the environment become much more intense and arduous. Correspondingly, practicing the right to participate might be challenging due to the risks of being underestimated by caregivers, educators, policymakers, or researchers (Lundy, 2007; MacNaughton et al., 2007; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010). Specifically in the ECE period, children might face complicated factors behind children's rights due to mainly adults' lack of awareness regarding rights, underestimation of children's capacity with the incompetent view of children, and concerns in power relations with children (Lundy, 2007; Kangas et al., 2016; Theobald, 2019; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010). To illustrate, from a paternalist perspective, regarding children as only becoming of the future, incompetent to declare their preferences, and having only rights of provision and protection for growing up devalues the importance and necessity of participation rights in the lives of children (Hanson, 2020). The study of Kangas et al. (2016) criticizes teachers' roles as translators, intermediates, and advocates of children's rights. It invites teachers to use their experience and expertise in child development by collaborating and negotiating with children to advance participation.

In ECE centers, the international quality standards pay attention to the need to guide children through interactive moments to develop skills for active participation by creating a caring and equitable community for learners (e.g., waiting for one's turn, sharing, and listening to what others saying) with developmentally appropriate practices (NAEYC, 2020). Hence, preschool teachers could open spaces for active participation through ongoing pedagogical practices by regarding children's interests and negotiating with children in daily routines (Kangas et al., 2016; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010; Theobald et al., 2011).

Stoecklin and Bowlin (2014) state that there is a need to develop techniques and procedures to raise the voice and influence of younger children by fostering educational conditions and teachers' practices to encourage children's evolving

capacities with freedoms, competencies, and achievements. The study of Sheridan & Samuelsson (2001) examining the children's perspectives on participation presents that high-quality preschools providing opportunities for communication and negotiation have a more open atmosphere to invite children to participate and negotiate. Correspondingly, the implementation of participation rights in the lives of younger children becomes strongly dependent on the process quality, which is co-constructed in an interactional process with the significant influence of people around children beyond children's evolving capacities (Theobald et al., 2011; Theobald, 2019; Hart & Brando, 2018; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010; NAEYC, 2020).

Conceptually, overcoming the barriers in front of the promotion of participation rights, specifically in the early years, requires challenging the accustomed view of children by recognizing children as experts in their own lives, skillful communicators, active agents, and meaning-makers (Clark, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Landsdown, 2005; James & James, 2004; Hanson, 2020). Practically, participation rights require adults and policymakers to develop skills and create spaces to listen to children attentively, to understand children's intentions with the help of expertise in the field, and to respond to them by giving due weight in a developmentally appropriate manner through everyday practices even though it is not possible to put the views of children into practice (Lundy, 2007; Kangas et al., 2016; Theobald, 2019; Lundy et al., 2024). Hereby, adults need to revise their image of children from incompetent beings to competent meaning-makers to transmit the requirements of participation into the pedagogical practices (Clark, 2005; Theobald & Danby, 2011; Correia et al., 2019; Kangas et al., 2016).

2.5.1. Enactment of Children's Participation Rights in ECE

Children's participation rights are a multifaceted concept encompassing various definitions, making its implementation complicated. Relying on the current literature theorizing children's rights and connecting its dimensions to the pedagogical understanding with the practical implications, enactment of children's participation rights requires creating safe and inclusive environments for children's expression and

giving due weight to children's views with the moderation of expert opinion (Lundy et al., 2024).

Enactment of children's participation rights in ECE settings is not independent of the different layers of society (Gal, 2017). On the macro level, recognizing international documents of children's rights, acting upon the requirements for the enhancements of national policies (e.g., educational policies, curriculum), and revising the image of children on behalf of children's rights are the cornerstones to promoting children's participation rights. On a micro level, recognizing, valuing, and promoting children's rights in the home with family members, within the classroom, in interaction with teachers, peers, and school administrators and staff, among peers within the neighborhood could enhance the enactment of children's participation rights. Direct and indirect interactions between different layers of society could support the revision of childhood image and the enactment of children's participation rights in the levels of mesosystem and exosystem. Additionally, considering the children at the core of all systems as individuals, children could protect and enhance their rights with their unique features as potential meaning-makers with the appropriate guidance.

Considering all these elements of society influencing each other differently, investigating the enactment of children's participation rights in ECE classrooms is necessary for understanding the practical implications, obstacles, and dilemmas regarding the one-to-one interactions between children and teachers.

2.5.1.1. Daily Flow in ECE Settings and Children's Participation Rights

Across the universe, there are various ECE systems. Nevertheless, following the universal standards in education systems, the national education systems of many countries share similar points regarding daily schedules, curriculum, and materials (Jackman et al., 2014). Considering the features of activity types and pedagogical practices, a spectrum of children's autonomy and the degree of teachers' pedagogical moves varies across activities during the daily flow (Veraksa et al., 2023).

The study of Veraksa et al. (2023) discusses incorporating children's views in early childhood while balancing teacher and child-directed approaches. The study's findings consider that teacher-child autonomy across daily activities could be related to children's participation rights enactment. The ideal promotion of children's participation requires teachers to create spaces to hear the voices of children by using their pedagogical expertise (Lundy et al., 2023), as in the case of creating a zone of proximal development. Thus, the study's claims (Verakse et al., 2023) could be interpreted that the degree of children's participation varies across activities ranging from child-initiated and child-led to adult-initiated and adult-led. For instance, free play provides a variety of affordances for children's participation by deciding on what to play, how to play, and with whom. Also, free play time allows children to engage in dialogues with each other to negotiate conflicting ideas or preferences without the inferences of authorities. On the other hand, direct instructions, which are adult-initiated and adult-led, offer limited opportunities for children's participation, particularly in the content and enactment of activities. Nevertheless, preschool teachers are responsible for actively listening to children's ideas by giving them a voice and giving due weight to their views by balancing teacher-child-directed approaches (Verakse et al., 2023) during the regular school day.

Among the activities of daily flow, circle time comes forward with its features of creating a space for teacher-child interactions to promote children's participation rights by creating a safe and inclusive listening environment (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007).

2.5.1.2. Circle Time and Children's Participation Rights

Circle time is a regular event within the daily flow of various ECE programs, including the 2013, and 2024 Preschool Education Programs of Türkiye and Maarif Model. This period provides affordances to children and teachers to reflect themselves within the classroom community through speaking, interacting, sharing, and listening with the facilitator role of teachers within usually circle-shaped sitting order (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007; Mumcuoğlu, 2022). Thus, attending and exploring circle time

enables gathering and provides a richer context to investigate teacher-child interactions regarding children's participation rights.

The context of circle time changes depending on the weekly frequency of circle time, duration, seating arrangement, and the kind of circle time activities. The study by Koczela (2021) presents the norms regarding the structure and implementation of circle time within early childhood settings. Accordingly, the duration of circle time is approximately 15-20 minutes, including mainly the routinized activities (e.g., calendar, weather). Moreover, outlining the findings of Zaghlawan & Ostrosky (2011), Koczela (2021) points out acknowledging developmentally appropriate practices for processing circle time so that children can enjoy this time without expressing disruptive behaviors with disengagement.

Children's participation rights primarily manifest in the activities in which children's autonomy is promoted (Graham et al., 2022). Moreover, considering the features of circle time (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007), including one-to-one teacher-child interactions in response to balancing children's efforts and opportunities in decision-making and teachers' incorporation of children's ideas and decisions, it could offer the space for giving voice to the views of children and negotiating on them with the facilitator role of teachers.

2.5.2. The Role of Preschool Teachers in Children's Participation Rights

Of the subsystems surrounding children, school plays a key role by connecting the proximal and distal nested systems influencing the children's conditions and experiences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Gal, 2017). Lundy (2007) lists the barriers to practicing participation rights in the school context in three categories: (1) the incompetent image of the child, (2) the fear of losing control in the governance of the school atmosphere, (3) the waste of time and effort. By considering the direct influence of unequal power relations within school in front of children's participation, it is essential to learn about precisely teachers' image of child, which in turn shapes their pedagogical beliefs and practices for valuing and implementing children's rights (Hanson, 2020; Turnšek, 2016; Correia & Aguiar, 2020; Lundy, 2007; Hart, 1992;

Weckström et al., 2021; MacNaughton et al., 2007; Erdiller-Yatmaz et al., 2018; Cassidy et al., 2022).

From a socio-cultural perspective, the meaning given to child and childhood and considering children's rights in national and international arenas have the potential to shape educational policies, curricula, educators' professional needs, and parents' perspectives. From a paternalistic viewpoint, governmental policies and adults, particularly teachers, prioritize children's protection rights with a competent image of a child who is in need of excessive protection (Hanson, 2020). However, the current studies highlight the need to acknowledge children's participation rights by valuing children's evolving capacities to be involved in decision-making processes (Hanson, 2020; MacNaughton et al., 2007).

In ECE, teachers are the most apparent relational actors in the lives of children (Sabol & Pianta, 2012), and it is the legally binding obligation for them to act based on the requirements of children's rights. Thus, together with the protection as well as provision of rights, the implementation and promotion of participation rights following the guidelines of children's rights are fundamental (Wang et al., 2018; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; OECD, 2021; Correia et al., 2019; Robinson, 2022; Jerome & Starkey, 2021). In schools, the activation of participation right is directly evident in the process quality of ECE (OECD, 2021; Water-Davies, 2023) through supportive teacher-child interactions when teachers understand children's intentions with their expertise and facilitate their voice and agency for increased self-esteem, communication skills, conflict resolution, decision-making, and practicing citizenship (Wang et al., 2018; Kangas et al., 2016; Sabol & Pianta, 2012; Sandberg & Erikson, 2010).

Schools play a significant role in the lives of children, functioning as impactful microsystems where teacher-child interactions occur. Teachers serve as the primary audience for children within this context. Specifically, in ECE contexts, implementing children's participation rights in their daily lives goes beyond simply hearing their voices. It involves actively listening to children, providing support, and creating environments that facilitate their voices being heard. Active listening includes playfulness, offering opportunities for children to engage in decision-making

processes, fostering their communication and problem-solving skills, appreciating and respecting their ideas, and collaborating with various individuals involved in the children's lives to promote their participation (Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Theobald, 2019; Kangas et al., 2016; Sheridan & Samuelsson, 2001; Sandberg & Erikson, 2010; Mascadri et al., 2021; Vartiainen et al., 2024).

In school, children's right to participation can be exercised through formal ways, such as student councils, and informal ways, such as everyday activities like circle time or book reading time. However, ongoing debates surrounding children's participation rights in the early years challenge the effectiveness of one-shot projects and interventions that only promote participation within specific times and settings, such as student councils (Theobald et al., 2011; Hanson, 2020; Larkins, 2020; Theobald, 2019; Graham et al., 2018; and Weckström et al., 2020). Instead, there is a growing emphasis on integrating participatory practices into day-to-day interactions against the limitations of interventions that restrict participation to specific times and settings.

Exercising children's participation in influencing daily routines requires teachers to take responsibility for arranging certain conditions, including creating spaces, opportunities for voice, and an audience throughout the daily activities. Within the context of ECE, it is essential to focus on the co-construction of daily classroom routines through the interactions between teachers and children. Teachers, the primary audience for children's voices, must create open spaces that effectively listen to children and acknowledge their voices in multiple ways. Teachers need to respond to these voices by giving them due weight and considering the possibility of incorporating children's views into daily activities (Lundy, 2007; Quennerstedt, 2011; Quennerstedt, 2016; Theobald, 2019; Correia & Aguiar, 2022; Correia et al., 2019; Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2015; Murray, 2019; and Mascadri et al., 2019).

According to Stoecklin and Bowlin (2014), it is essential to establish methods and protocols that promote the active participation and influence of younger children. Participatory practices can be achieved by creating educational environments and implementing teaching practices that support the development of children's evolving capabilities, granting them freedoms, competencies, and accomplishments. Similarly,

Sheridan and Samuelsson (2001) conducted a study exploring children's perspectives on participation. Their findings suggest that high-quality preschools that offer opportunities for communication and negotiation create a more inclusive and welcoming atmosphere, encouraging children to participate and engage in negotiations. A recent extensive research conducted by Correia et al. (2020) demonstrated that preschool teachers' understanding and implementation of participation practices play an important role in mediating children's perceived participation. This finding highlights the importance of teachers embracing and promoting participation by recognizing and valuing children's developing abilities, competencies, and rights.

Tholin and Jansen (2012) conducted a study that focused on ECE settings as meeting places and viewed conversations as a means of practicing participation. Their research examined how preschool teachers' language use promotes democratic conversations within planned content and activities. However, their study was restricted to formal learning activities, and there is a need for further exploration of ongoing daily communication to gain a deeper understanding of children's participation. Similarly, Theobald and Kultti (2012) conducted a study that examined teachers' interactions with groups of children during daily activities. Their research contributed to filling the gap by investigating day-to-day participatory practices reflected in classroom discourse. However, their study only included limited excerpts from classroom discussions, focusing on two specific episodes that involved discussions on predetermined content during fixed times. The study of Zak-Doron and Perry-Hazan (2024) highlights that teachers must have participatory disciplinary procedures while guiding and supporting children's participation to balance conflicting situations on a continuum of advocating vs. delimiting student participation rights. Consequently, there is still a need to investigate the role of teachers as the primary audience in facilitating classroom discourses through everyday activities. Thus, the current investigation is crucial for understanding how teachers and children experience child participation within the interactive spaces of the classroom.

2.5.3. Classroom Discourses and Children’s Participation Rights in ECE

Classroom discourse refers to the communication and interaction between teachers and students in educational settings through spoken language and nonverbal expressions (Perry, 2007). Classroom discourse is a crucial way for children to gain access to the curriculum, construct their understandings, and connect to new ideas. Through classroom discourse, children can give voice to their ideas and perspectives with the opportunities to speak and reflect and to have their opinions and experiences valued and recognized via being heeded by teachers (Lefstein et al., 2020). When children participate in classroom discourse, they can express their ideas and opinions, ask questions, and engage in discussions, which can help foster a more inclusive and democratic learning environment. Classroom discourses become participatory dialogues instead of monologues by facilitating classroom discourse and supporting children's participation through teachers' conversational styles, listening skills, and the ability to provide safe and inclusive spaces (Shier, 2001; Alexander, 2018; Lundy, 2007).

American Psychological Association (APA) (n.d.) defines dialogue as the “exchange of ideas between two or more people”. Moreover, the Greek roots of the word imply logos as “what is talked about” and dia as “through,” which conceptualize the dialog as the flow of meaning among, through and between people (Bohm, 1997). Understanding the dialogue from the hermeneutic perspective as the meaning-making in between-space through negotiation constitutes the “conversation” as the corollary of the dialogue through our interactions with children in the context of participation (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010). From this perspective, Graham and Fitzgerald (2010) regard conversation as dialogic because it produces shared meaning beyond reproducing the conversation partner’s interpretation or meaning. Thus, besides just listening children’s voices, dialogue opens space for reciprocal meaning-making through conversation, which creates much more space for full recognition and inclusion of children with participation in each segment of their lives (Theobald et al., 2011). The dialogical approach to participation has strong connections with dialogic teaching, which promotes using talk most effectively to create an effective teaching and learning environment through ongoing talk between educators and children

instead of educator-dominated talk (Alexander, 2018).

From a socio-cultural perspective (Claxton, 2008), teacher-child dialogue assists children in building relationships and improving their verbal and social competencies by encouraging critical thinking and reflection on the content and structure of the conversation. With teachers' scaffolding, children participate in the dialogue and collectively build upon ideas, fostering social modes of thinking (Alexander, 2018; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). Recognizing the importance of teachers paying attention to what children say in the classroom, creating opportunities for open-ended dialogue allows for more significant engagement of children. In such dialogues, the content of the conversation must be meaningful to the participants as children can relate it to their world for the co-construction of new understanding (Lefstein et al., 2020). Establishing a positive classroom climate through ongoing dialogues among children, with teachers or other facilitators from the field playing a supportive role, can create spaces for integrating meaningful participation opportunities into the school context, empowering teachers and children within a positive classroom environment.

The structures of classroom dialogue and everyday conversations within classroom discourses warrant an investigation into how teachers serve as the primary audience for children's voices (Kaya & Ahi, 2022; Graham et al., 2018; Vrikki et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018). Despite the UNCRC and influential scholars (Lundy, 2007; Moore, 2019; Landsdown, 2015; Clark, 2005; Rinaldi, 2001) highlighting the role of classroom discourses in children's participation rights during everyday activities, there is a scarcity of studies examining why and how adults engage in classroom discourses in early childhood settings about children's participation and empowerment (White et al., 2015; Theobald & Kultti, 2012; Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Shaw, 2019; Sandberg & Eriksson, 2010).

Indeed, the dissemination of participation rights becomes evident through ongoing classroom discourses, which exist between monologic and dialogic discourses in daily interactive processes (Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Gilson, 2022; Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007). The study of Mascadri et al. (2021) on children's perspectives about being listened to by teachers presents that teachers primarily respond to their

initiation of talk with monologic exchanges instead of expanding the topic of conversation. Monologic discourses are mainly dominated by teachers initiating questions with an expectation of a response from the child, after which teachers provide feedback or direct children toward the correct answer (Mehan, 1979; Alexander, 2018) (Figure 3).

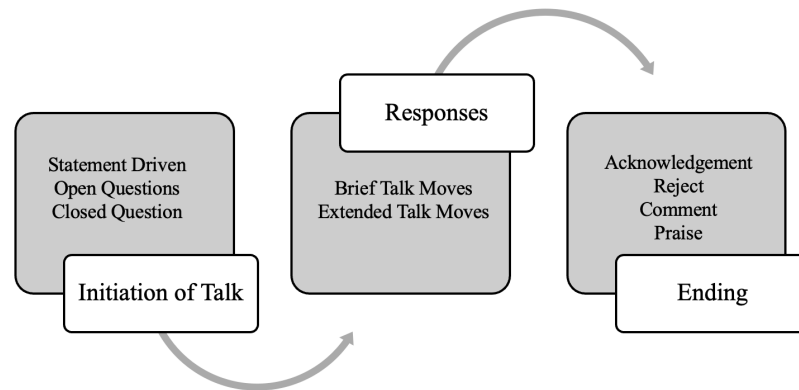


Figure 3 *Pattern of Monologic Talk*

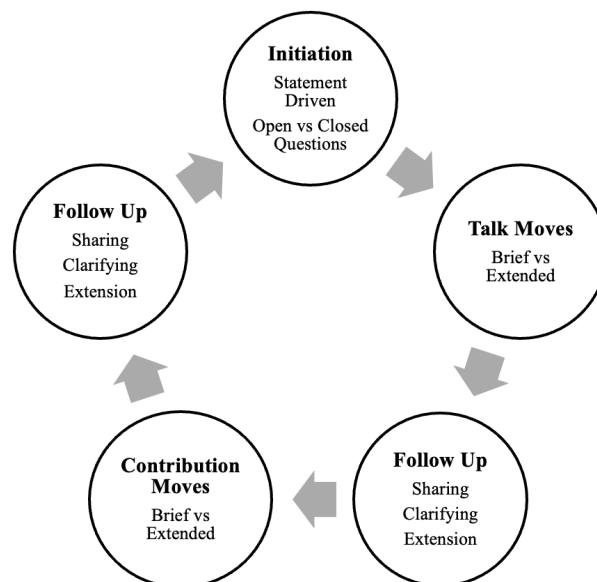


Figure 4 *Pattern of Dialogic Talk*

On the other hand, in dialogic discourses, teachers actively invite children to participate by creating openings and opportunities for sustained conversation (Alexander, 2018). However, even in ECE, where classroom talk and interaction form the foundation of teacher-child interactions and learning, teachers' monologic talk tends to dominate classroom discourses, limiting children's opportunities to express their opinions and engage in sustained dialogue (Mascadri et al., 2019; Alexander, 2018) (Figure 4).

When considering the underpinnings of classroom discourses maintained between children and teachers, the promotion of participation in ECE settings directs us to investigate the verbal and non-verbal communication mainly operated by the teachers as the audience and the facilitator of children's voice via their listening skills and talk moves (e.g., time allocated for silence, question types, feedback/evaluation, follow up) (Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2005; Graham et al., 2018; Gilson et al., 2022; Lundy, 2007; Alexander, 2018; Tholin & Jansen, 2012). According to Shier (2001), pathways to participation, which are laid between hearing the child and sharing power in decision-making, teachers' listening skills, and talk moves, might deepen children's commitment to enact participation right through classroom discourses. Teachers who have a dialogic discourse (e.g., asking open questions, probing with follow-up questions, allocating silence time) that is supportive and facilitative of children's participation are likely to create a listening climate in the classroom that is conducive to children's participation and well-being (Gilson et al., 2022; Lundy, 2007; Shier, 2001; Alexander, 2018). Thus, investigating how teachers operate the classroom discourses could demonstrate the actualization of children's participation through being asked, respondent, and respected for an opinion (Theobald & Kultti, 2012; Mascadri et al., 2021).

2.5.4. Turkish ECE Context and Children's Participation Rights

Schools are convenient places to observe, monitor, and enhance children's participation rights (Özyurt, 2023). Teachers working in public schools in Türkiye, a country that has adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, are responsible for

being knowledgeable about and supporting the right to participation. Data from this study was collected and analyzed before the launch of the 2024 Preschool Education Program and Maarif Model. Therefore, the 2013 Preschool education program sheds light on exploring findings for this particular study.

In the governance of public ECE centers, the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MoNE) Teacher Competency Indicators (MoNE, 2017) and the Turkish Preschool Education Program (MoNE, 2013) emphasize the importance of teachers behaving in a manner that upholds children's rights. According to the general principles of preschool education (MoNE, 2013), learning environments should be prepared in accordance with the democratic education approach (Article 3); children should not be treated in a way that harms their personality and should not be subjected to pressure and restrictions (Article 10); children should be supported to develop independent behaviors, and when they need help, adult support, guidance and reassuring closeness of the adult should be provided (Article 11).

Additionally, the 2013 Turkish ECE Curriculum and Teacher Competency Indicators highlight the importance and responsibilities of preschool teachers for advocating and implementing children's rights. Accordingly, teachers need to provide a safe and inclusive environment for children's optimal development and enthusiasm for learning through a consistent and supportive teacher-child relationship. Teachers need to consider the competency and individuality of children while considering their developmental and socio-cultural variations. Some of the teacher Competency Indicators (MoNE, 2017) specify teachers' skills, which are explicitly related to children's rights as such:

B2.5. (Professional Skills-Creating Learning Environments): She/he organizes democratic learning environments where students communicate effectively.

B3.3. (Professional Skills-Managing the Teaching and Learning Processes): She/he ensures active participation of students in learning processes.

C1.1. (Attitudes and Values-National, Moral and Universal Values): She/he respects child and human rights.

C1.3. (Attitudes and Values-National, Moral and Universal Values): She/he helps students to grow as individuals that respectful of national and moral values and open to universal values.

C2.1. (Attitudes and Values-Approach to Students): She/he values every student as a human being and individual.

C2.4. (Attitudes and Values- Approach to Students): She/he serves as a role model for students with his/her attitudes and behavior.

C3.2. (Attitudes and Values-Communication and Collaboration): She/he pays attention using effective communication methods and techniques.

C3.3. (Attitudes and Values-Communication and Collaboration): She/he builds relations with others through empathy and tolerance.

C4.6. (Attitudes and Values-Personal and Professional Development): She/he ensures her/his professional commitment and dignity by adhering to professional ethics and principles.

Besides, some aspects of the 2013 National Turkish ECE Curriculum have features to promote children's participation rights. The principles of the program underline the need to consider individual differences and necessitate promoting a democratic learning environment. The program is child-centered and flexible, which opens the door to the views and preferences of children, with active participation during planning the day and making accommodations when necessary. The play-based curriculum invites children to express themselves better in various ways. Learning with discovery encourages the child to notice the world around him/her, criticize, explore, and learn with questioning. Moreover, the flow of the half-day program provides many opportunities to listen to children's voices and incorporate their ideas when appropriate.

2.5.5. Studies of Children's Participation Rights in Türkiye

The study of children's participation rights in Turkish literature has increased since 2015, particularly in ECE. Although publications and dissertation theses in Türkiye recognize children's rights, particularly the right to participation, as significant topics

for investigation in early childhood context, these studies primarily consist of descriptive approaches and rely on interviews or surveys to gather teachers' ideas and beliefs on the subject (e.g., Şallı İdare, 2018; Çelik, 2017; Çetin, 2021; Coşkun, 2015; Polat, 2018; Şişlioğlu, 2022; Sezer, 2022). Moreover, the findings of the studies examining children's participation rights in primary or secondary schools provide valuable insights (Urfalıoğlu, 2019). In addition to these studies, some particular studies are exploring the issues from different angles, such as participation rights in children's picture books (Gündoğdu-Ayar, 2018), transnational migrant children's participation rights (Kurt, 2022), Turkish Civil Law (Tuğ-Levent, 2022), and social inclusion (Özyurt, 2023).

The study by Urfalıoğlu (2019) presents how children's participation rights are implemented by comparing primary school classrooms having low and high democratic attitudes in multiple cases. Findings illustrate that comparing these two cases, the classrooms having higher democratic attitudes have much more affordances for children's participation rights and have a more democratic classroom environment. Additionally, the findings suggest that teachers' beliefs are detrimental to a democratic classroom environment and to implementing the children's participation rights. Employing both interview and observation methods within his study sets an example to study how children's participation rights are performed within the classroom environment.

The study of Gündoğdu-Ayar (2018) examines where the children, as the main characters in children's picture books, stand concerning Hart's ladder of participation. Findings illustrate that child characters are mostly represented as the ones consulted and informed or assigned but not informed. Children's qualifications to sense the dangers around them are the most violated regarding their participation rights. Notably, their study's findings present that child characters reach the top of the ladder in the narratives about child-initiated play environments. Since children's literature has gained popularity, and many children have access to various picture books, the representation of children via characters needs to reflect the autonomy and agency of children as the subject of their rights.

Besides solely examining teachers' beliefs or attitudes about participation rights, the study by Şişlioğlu (2022) examines the relationship between teachers' teaching attitudes (democratic or autocratic) and the inclusion of children's right to participation in school context. Findings present that teachers with democratic teaching attitudes have higher scores for including children's right to participation than teachers with autocratic attitudes. However, this study still does not respond to the gap necessitating observing teacher-child in-classroom activities to better understand what's going on, particularly between teacher-child regarding participation rights.

In addition to eliciting the views and beliefs of teachers, the study conducted by Kurt (2022) steps forward by examining viewpoints of transactional children's participation rights within state preschools with mixed methods design. Moreover, consulting in-classroom observations to create more analytical interview questions increases the reliability of the findings. Overall findings illustrate that children are not satisfied with the enactment of participation rights concerning their subjective statements. Additionally, teachers' reflections indicate that transnational children's language barrier limits them from expressing their views to better experience participation rights. Moreover, the study by Özyurt (2023) claims the need to observe and enhance the status of disadvantaged children regarding participation rights. However, even Kurt's study (2022) is limited to focusing on children's daily experiences within the classroom environment.

Besides the studies directly examining children's participation rights, there are a variety of studies discussing the underlying concepts such as the child-adult dichotomy, power relations, and the competence of children concerning the children's expression of views and preferences in the issues directly influencing their lives. For instance, each type of play has tremendous contributions to the lives of children, and children enjoy life through play. However, caregivers might not allow engaging in some types of play, such as risky play, for various reasons. The study by Akdemir et al. (2023) explores the parental variables and parenting styles that permit risky play. Disregarding what children want to play for various reasons, some parents or educators might not listen and respond to children's preferences. Thus, depending on the

activation of children's participation rights to their parenting style might place some children in the disadvantaged groups to have their participation rights.

On the other hand, the study by Öneren Şendil and Erden (2014) presents how children's peer preference relates to their social competence and behavioral well-being through early childhood. The children having higher peer preference by expressing their views showed more social competence, whereas the children with higher levels of reactivity showed higher anger-aggression behavioral orientation. The study's findings could be interpreted to show the ongoing and reciprocal relationship between children's autonomy, competence, and usage of their participation rights. Their study (Öneren-Şendil & Erden, 2014) also points to the necessity of having and developing social competence in children's self-expression. If the way children express themselves violates someone else's rights (anger, violence), defining this as exercising the right to participation would not be appropriate. Especially considering that schools are institutions that have the potential to support and exemplify democratic attitudes, educators should strive to develop social-emotional competence in children's self-expression.

The existing literature suggests a need for more in-depth investigations employing diverse research methods to comprehensively understand the issue (Correria et al., 2019). While some studies examining the Turkish early childhood environment, such as Koran (2017), move beyond descriptive approaches and examine the process and impact of intervention programs aimed at informing and supporting teachers' knowledge and skills regarding children's participation rights, even these studies do not prioritize the observation of teacher-child interactions during everyday school activities. Therefore, this present study aims to contribute to the research on children's participation in public ECE classrooms in Türkiye by observing how children's participation rights are practiced in the daily practices of early childhood settings beyond identifying it at a conceptual level.

2.6. Summary

Chapter 2 presents the general frames about children's participation rights in the ECE context. Firstly, the researcher offered the historical basis of children's participation rights. The history of children's rights is connected to the evolving understanding of childhood as a socially constructed phenomenon. The interdisciplinary field of children's rights encompasses diverse perspectives that contribute to understanding the significance and nature of children's rights in contemporary society. Typologies, such as Hanson's classification, provide a framework for understanding and analyzing differing viewpoints about childhood image, competence, and rights, aiding in exploring how individuals and policymakers approach and interpret children's rights. Subsequently, the researcher examined the critical considerations of UNCRC as a legal document behind children's rights and declared the responsibilities of state parties, including Türkiye. The researcher also cited the theories, approaches, and models about children's participation rights. Particularly, Lundy's model of participation is examined compared to other models to illustrate how this model could be used as an analytical frame to examine children's participation rights in the ECE settings. Then, the researcher displayed the interconnectedness of children's participation rights in early years and ECE settings based on legal documents, national and international studies. Notably, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recognizes young children as holders of all rights declared in the UNCRC, with the ECE period being crucial for enacting those rights. Additionally, the researcher pointed out the value of examining classroom discourses to enact children's participation rights. Classroom discourse is crucial in providing children with opportunities to construct their understanding, express their ideas and opinions, and engage in dialogue with their teachers and peers. It is essential to investigate classroom discourses and understand how teachers can effectively serve as the primary audience for children's voices, bridging the gap between monologic and dialogic discourses. By shifting towards more dialogic discourses, teachers can enhance children's participation and empowerment, creating meaningful opportunities for engagement and learning in early childhood settings. Lastly, the researcher referred to how existing studies outline the need for implementing participation rights in children's daily lives, stressing the need for a

competent view of the child, respectful listening, effective communication, and age-appropriate interactions.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the design characteristics including the rationale behind the research design, sampling procedure, instruments, the procedures of data collection and analysis together with the limitations of the study. Moreover, the considerations for the validation and ethics are presented.

3.1. Design

The general purpose of the present study was to examine how children's participation rights are practiced in ECE classrooms with preschool teachers, who are identified as favoring children's participation rights, through ongoing classroom discourses and the experiences of in-classroom practices, specifically in independent public ECE classrooms of İstanbul/Türkiye. Figure 5 illustrates the overall timeline of the research process. Framed within Lundy's participation model, this study was conducted as a multiple case study to elaborate on the issue of children's participation rights around the interconnections of the model's four dimensions (space, voice, audience, and influence).

A multiple case study is a type of design that provides an in-depth examination of a particular phenomenon, including two or more cases that are investigated with replication logic (Yin, 2018). This approach allows for a deeper exploration of complex phenomena, offering insights into both the general and specific aspects across cases to have a holistic understanding (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2009).

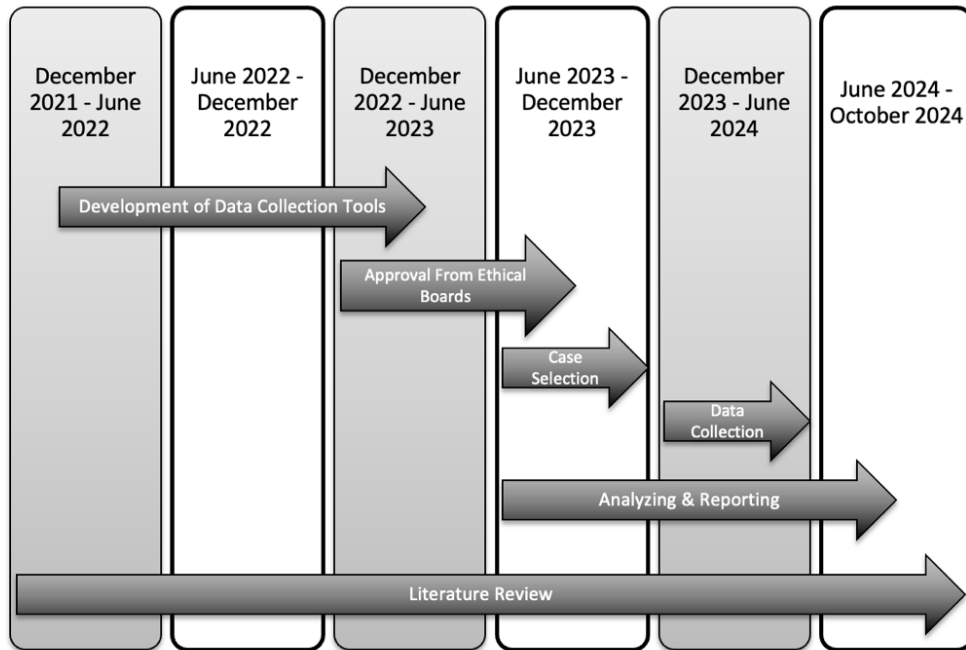


Figure 5 *Overall Timeline of the Research Process*

The current investigation specifically focused on two preschool teachers' classrooms by exploring the nuances of teacher-child interactions regarding children's participation rights. Even though these teachers were identified as being aware of children's participation rights during the case selection process, their prioritization of participation rights along with protection and provision rights differed as being from the side of emancipation or welfare perspectives. The present study aimed to expand our knowledge of how children's participation is evident in everyday classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices. From a fully theory-driven inductive perspective (Varpio et al., 2020), this study was conducted within the framework of the four dimensions of Lundy's participation model (Lundy, 2007): (1) space, (2) voice, (3) audience, and (4) influence. Figure 6 presents this study's research questions embedded in this model.

The basic conceptualization of case studies refers to the detailed understanding of the case(s) bounded with specific criteria such as an individual, organization, or activity to explore the phenomenon under investigation within its real-world context without implementing any control on ongoing events (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2009). From qualitative and interpretive perspectives, multiple case studies provide affordances in

educational studies to explore the nuances of interactions between teachers and children throughout the teaching and learning processes with cross-case and contextual analysis (Meriam, 2009). Thus, by acknowledging the constructivist approach, this study intended to explore the interactions between teachers and children in two distinct ECE classrooms, involving detailed observations and interviews to gather comprehensive insights into the experiences of participation rights and teacher strategies.

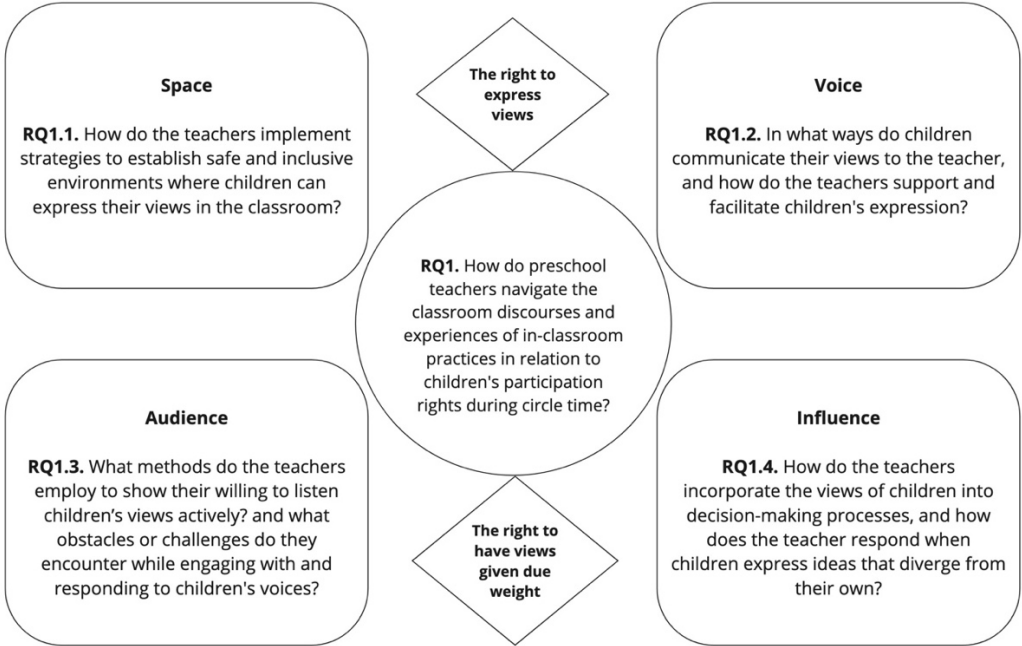


Figure 6 Presentation of Research Questions Embedded in Lundy's Model

3.1.1. Sampling Overview

This study employed a purposeful sampling strategy because the key feature of case selection is having small and purposeful sampling with certain boundaries (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2009). Purposeful sampling sets the boundaries for selecting context and participants, as the case sampling procedure explains.

3.1.1.1. Case Sampling and Bounding the Cases

One of the core considerations of case study design is deciding when and how to identify case(s) (Yin, 2018); thus, there are specific criteria foremost for selecting cases (Figure 7). The overarching purpose of this study was to examine the enactment of children's participation rights in independent Turkish ECE classrooms, with a particular focus on teacher-child interactions during circle time. Specifically, this study focused on the classrooms of preschool teachers who are identified as favoring children's participation rights in their discourses. Thus, the case was bounded by certain criteria including teacher choice, school choice, and activity/time.

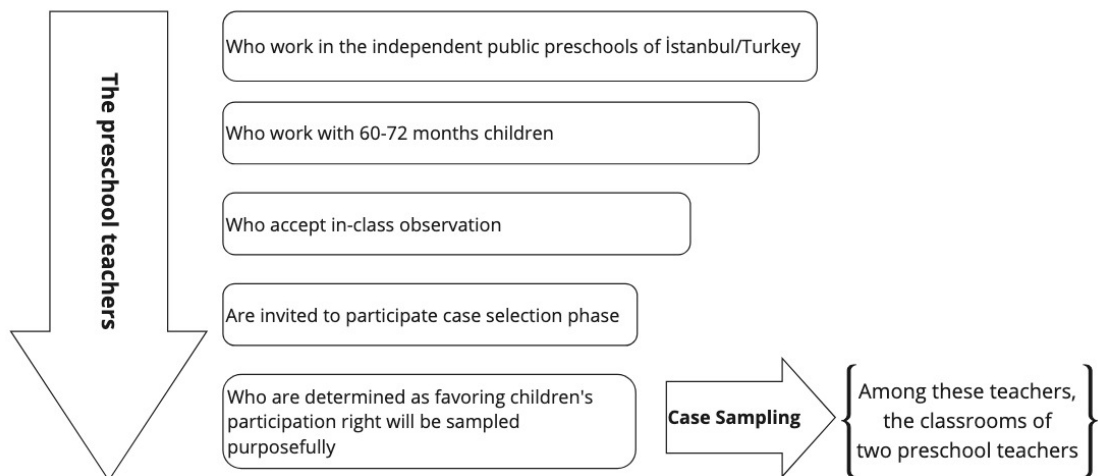


Figure 7 *Diagram for the Case Sampling*

3.1.1.1. Bounding the Case with School Selection

This study targeted independent public ECE classrooms in İstanbul/Türkiye to identify preschool teachers and classrooms for case selection. These schools give opportunities to implement the ECE program and curriculum with the advancements in the physical environment, materials, and daily schedule compared to the ECE settings located inside the elementary school buildings.

The researcher of this investigation has served as a teaching practicum coordinator of education faculty within her workplace. Therefore, her experience within public preschools directed her to select school types purposefully. Based on her experiences in independent public ECE schools, she observed that the school administrators are usually from the field of ECE; thus, they are familiar with the academic investigations in the field. Based on informal interviews with the administrators of these schools, the researcher realized that they might lean toward studies involving children and teachers, focusing on classroom observations and the general school environment. Since the proposed study was expected to take weeks, the researcher consulted with teachers and administrators of independent public ECE settings to build rapport throughout the research process. Additionally, since the majority of the unit of analysis consisted of discourses between children and teachers, the researcher purposefully directed her attention to the ECE classrooms composed of 60-72 months of children for the possibility of a richer context for investigating children's expression. Thus, the researcher conducted case selection interviews with preschool teachers working in independent public ECE classrooms for 60-72 months.

3.1.1.2. Bounding the Case with Teacher Selection

Before purposefully selecting participants with case selection criteria, the researcher employed convenient sampling with the help of existing networks to invite preschool teachers to the semi-structured interviews via letters (Appendix A) explaining the study's general purpose and procedure. However, after inviting the preschool teachers conveniently, purposeful sampling guided the rest of the participants' selection based on the criteria presented in Figure 7.

The researcher conducted synchronic online interviews with six preschool teachers with an appointment via the Zoom platform (Table 2). The interviews took approximately 40 minutes and were recorded as audio. Then, the researcher transcribed the audio files verbatim.

Table 2 *Demographics of Preschool Teachers Attending Case Selection Process*

Name Code	Education Degree	Gender	Birth Year	Year of Experience	Age Group (Months)	Number of Children	CRP
PT01	Master	Female	1993	7	36-48	25	Welfare
PT02	Bachelor	Female	1998	2	60-72	25	Emancipation
PT03	Bachelor	Female	1992	7	60-72	20	Welfare
PT04	Bachelor	Female	1997	4	60-72	25	Emancipation
PT05	Master	Female	1984	16	60-72	23	Emancipation
PT06	Associate	Female	1986	10	60-72	23	Welfare

The case selection process identified how preschool teachers conceptualize children's rights regarding their views on childhood image, competencies of children, and manifestation of children's rights based on the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix B). According to Hanson's (2020) categorization, children's rights positioning (CRP) refers to the position that the participants position themselves in relation to the children's rights identified in the pre-interview phase. The welfare and emancipation perspectives indicate that people recognize all the rights of children (protection, provision, participation). While the welfare perspective prioritizes the right to protection over all other rights, the emancipation perspective prioritizes participation rights over all other rights.

The researcher analyzed the verbatim transcription of the participants in the theory-driven focused analysis (Rädiker & Kuckartz, 2020) with MAXQDA software. This analysis helped to determine the teachers falling in the categories of welfare and emancipation, which reflect the balanced positioning by adopting participation rights with protection and provision rights. Clustering the candidate preschool teachers illustrated that all teachers fall into either emancipation or welfare categories in varying degrees (Figure 8). The welfare viewpoint reflects a balanced perspective on children's rights, prioritizing protection, provision, and participation in that order. The emancipatory viewpoint prioritizes participation and sees children as competent and deserving of all rights but in reverse order.

Since each candidate was eligible for the purposeful sampling criteria, their convenience guided the case selection by considering the pros and cons of studying

with each teacher. Even though it was not possible to eliminate the extrinsic factors influencing the nature of the study, the researcher discussed the barriers that seemed difficult to overcome during the data collection process with the committee to outline the eligibility status of candidates.

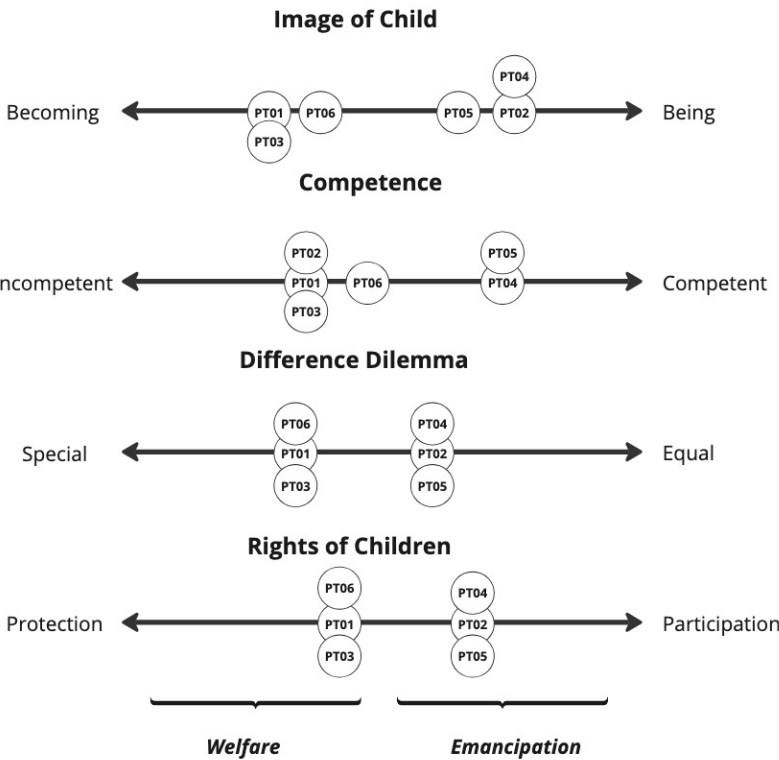


Figure 8 Clustering Participants based on the Typology of Children's Rights

The candidates considered more eligible to participate in the study were working in the same school (PT05; PT06). Even though it is questionable to study within the classrooms of the same school as two different cases, specific considerations about the nature of the cases allowed this selection. In the semi-structured interview of the case selection, participant teachers reported that limited physical features of the classrooms and school building (e.g., width, materials, crowdedness, indoor and outdoor playing areas, security issues within the building), and the limited cooperation between teachers and administrators as critical handicaps in front of manifesting children's participation rights. Thus, by removing the possible influence of the current environmental excuses, it has been preferred to work with two different classes from

the same school to focus on the differences and similarities in teachers' beliefs and experiences of in-classroom practices. In this case, the factor that distinguishes one case from the other is the beliefs and attitudes of these teachers regarding the children's participation rights, excluding the barriers regarding school conditions. Even though both teachers were determined to favor children's rights (Protection, provision, participation), PT05 falls under the category of emancipation, whereas PT06 is on welfare. In other words, PT05 prioritizes participation rights over all other rights, while PT06 prioritizes the rights of protection. The classroom composition of selected cases is presented below (Table 3).

Table 3 *Information About Classroom Composition of Selected Cases*

Classroom	Gender	Age Group	School Experience	Any Special Needs
PT05 Children (n=22)	Boys (n=13)	60-66 Months	Two Years	Language and
	Girls (n=9)	(n=8)	(n=17)	Speaking Therapy
		67-72 Months	Three Years	(n=3)
		(n=11)	(n=5)	No Special Needs
		+72 Months (n=3)	(n=19)	
PT06 Children (n=23)	Boys (n=12)	60-66 Months	One Year (n =3)	No Special Needs
	Girls (n=11)	(n=1)	Two Years (n =	(n=23)
		67-72 Months	20)	
		(n=18)		
		+72 Months (n=4)		

Moreover, since these teachers' working schedules differed (PT05-Afternoon Session; PT06-Morning Session), they had limited contact with each other within the school context. Thus, the researcher anticipated that they could not directly compare their observation sessions.

3.1.1.3. Bounding the Case with the Activity/Time

The nature of qualitative case studies necessitates limiting the investigation to a particular period. The study's location is two ECE classrooms in an independent public ECE setting with a half-day program (Table 4).

Table 4 *Information About Daily Flow*

Daily Flow	PT05	PT06
Entering School and Greetings	13.00-13.30	09.00-10.00
Free Play	13.30-14.15	10.00-10.30
Breakfast/Lunch	14.15-14.45	10.30-11.00
Circle Time	14.45-15.30/13.15-14.00	11.00-11.45
Activity Time/Branche Courses	15.30-16.30	11.45-12.30
Leaving Time	16.30-17.00	12.30-13.00

The researcher collected the data to elaborate on the proposed research questions during circle time. Circle time is a regular event within the daily flow of various preschool education programs, including the 2013 and 2024 Preschool Education Programs of Türkiye. This period provides affordances to children and teachers to reflect themselves within the classroom community through speaking, interacting, sharing, and listening with the facilitator role of teachers within usually circle-shaped sitting order (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007; Mumcuoğlu, 2022). Thus, attending and exploring circle time provides a richer context to investigate teacher-child interactions regarding children's participation rights. The context of circle time changes depending on the weekly frequency, duration, seating arrangement, and the kind of circle time activities. After confirming that candidate preschool teachers (PT05; PT06) integrate into their daily flow at least twice a week, the multiple case study investigation was bounded with the period of circle time.

Children's participation rights primarily manifest in activities that promote children's autonomy (Graham et al., 2022). In that sense, free play could be anticipated as providing glorious opportunities for the expression of children's autonomy with mostly child-initiated, child-led activities. On the other hand, primarily teacher-led structured activity times (e.g., literacy, mathematics) could be expected to restrict children's autonomy due to the dominance of adult-initiated, adult-led governance (Veraksa et al., 2023).

Even though free play time could be the best for observing children's participation, observing that period might restrain the child-led activities by constraining the nature of free play time due to the teacher's possible attempts to direct children. Moreover,

considering the features of circle time (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007) for the nature of activities and teacher-child roles, it could offer the space to observe the balance of teacher-child roles for creating space of expression with the facilitator role of teachers.

As a multiple case study, this study takes the one-to-one teacher-child interactions within two ECE classrooms during circle time as the unit of analysis to uncover how preschool teachers facilitate and negotiate children's participation rights. It offers insights into the challenges and opportunities that shape these interactions through comparative lenses.

3.2. Getting to Know Research Site

The observed ECE classrooms are in an independent public ECE setting in İstanbul/Türkiye. The school building has four floors, including the attic floor. Out of the school building, there is a garden paved with stones and an outdoor area with plastic park toys. The basement floor has an activity equipment room and a club room for dance, rhythm, and theatre activities. At the school entrance, there is an area where parents can leave their children to transition to the school without entering the interior of the school building. There are two classrooms and a dining hall on the first floor. On the second floor (Figure 9), there are rooms for the administrative staff and three classrooms, including the classrooms where observations were made. There is also a large inner hall and a balcony covered with plastic grass carpet on this floor. Also, the attic floor has a reading area and a library. The observed classrooms are located on the second floor (Figures 10-11). The items in both classrooms are mainly similar. In addition to the children's lockers, there is a teacher's locker, a computer with a television connected to it, and a printer. There are chairs per child and five rectangular tables. Teachers stated that they determined the table layout and the class corners (e.g., house building, blocks).

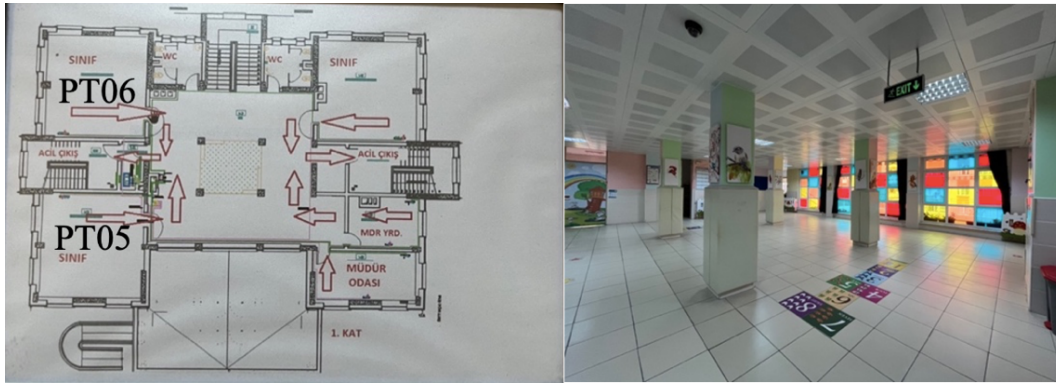


Figure 9 *Second Floor Ground Plan and Inner Hall*



Figure 10 *Classroom of PT05*



Figure 11 *Classroom of PT06*

3.2.1. Getting to Know Observation Period

Circle time is the period that functions to involve all members of the ECE classroom by avoiding hierarchy in relations so that all members can interact with each other regularly by creating a safe and inclusive listening and sharing environment, usually within a shaped seating order as the symbol of unity (Collins, 2007). Considering the

arrangement and functioning of circle time, it is one of the less structured periods during the daily flow of preschool programs. The essential features of circle times within the observed ECE classrooms were presented in the findings section in terms of context, stages, types of activities, and the facilitators that were used.

3.3. Field Work Strategy

Before piloting, the researcher visited the research site by getting an appointment from the school administrator. In this meeting, the researcher gave the approval files and consent forms (Appendix C) to the administrator for delivery to the classroom teachers and parents for each classroom. Moreover, the researcher shared a brief summary of the study and a copy of the ethical approvals from the METU Ethical Board and MoNE with the administrator. Then, the school administrator introduced the researcher to the school staff and classrooms by allowing the researcher to take photographs within the school building. Throughout this visit, the researcher was allowed to observe classrooms by sitting in the back corner of the teacher and children during the free play period. After the children went to breakfast (Classroom of PT05) and lunch (PT06), the researcher informed the teachers that she would come to their classrooms for approximately eight half-days and get an appointment beforehand.

After gaining access to the site and getting consent from gatekeepers, the teacher introduced the researcher to the children by saying she was a teacher and sometimes would stay in their classrooms. The researcher conducted the pilot observations before beginning the in-class data collection process. Then, the researcher shared the initial data from these observations with the advisor. After pilot observations, the researcher iteratively enhanced the structured field notes file to transmit observation notes better. Throughout the observations, the researcher aimed to neutralize the existence as a researcher as much as possible, even though it seemed much more difficult with the group of young children. During observations, the researcher took an active role in the classroom, following a midway between not participating in any activities and living the same experiences with participants (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). Moreover, since the researcher is also an instrument in qualitative methods, she enhanced her abilities to observe, interview, and take field notes by keeping anecdotal notes, reflective notes,

and a logbook concerning ethics and validity.

On the field notes and analytical memos, the researcher took the records of issues regarding her existence during research processes and reflected on them. The passages below are among some of the memos the researcher recorded as anecdotal notes to reflect on her roles during the research process:

At the beginning of the observation sessions, I introduced myself as a researcher, wondering what they are doing during circle time, and asked for children's assent for my presence. Most of the time, no children contacted me during observations, and I sat in the playhouse corner. I continued to stay that way to avoid interfering with the natural classroom climate. They mostly ignored my existence. At the beginning of the observations, PT06 said that they were familiar with the existence of other adults in the classroom, mainly due to the training of preservice teachers. Only some children came near me and said hello, and I just said thank you. (Pilot and First In-classroom Observations)

PT06 seemed suspicious while I was taking notes. At the end of the observation, she asked whether I was observing solely her or the children. I said that I was trying to explore their reciprocal relationship. Before the following observation, I made the issue more apparent by reminding my research objectives written in consent forms. In general, children mostly seemed to ignore my existence. (PT06-Second In-Classroom Observation)

PT05 shared how she became relaxed about my existence as time passed. She kindly communicated with me before and after observation sessions. At the end of the observation sessions, PT06 told me that she has difficulty in this classroom due to the difficulty of regulating them, and she asked me to give any ideas. I said, "I think you know better". Besides, I had conducted with the school administrators and other staff. They usually invited me to meal time, but I kindly rejected these offers to protect limits within the research site. At the end of the observation sessions, I thank the children for accepting my existence

in their classrooms. Also, I expressed my gratitude to mainly preschool teachers and whole school staff for welcoming me for approximately three months in their schools. (General Anecdotal Memo)

3.4. Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The researcher collected data for different study phases, as illustrated in Figure 12, to investigate the study's aims and research questions. As a qualitative case study, data collection tools included interviews and observations. After completing the case selection phase with consultation and getting approval from the thesis committee, the researcher completed data collection promptly and adequately (APPENDIX D). From the beginning of the data collection procedure, the researcher strived to follow ethical guidelines and considerations.

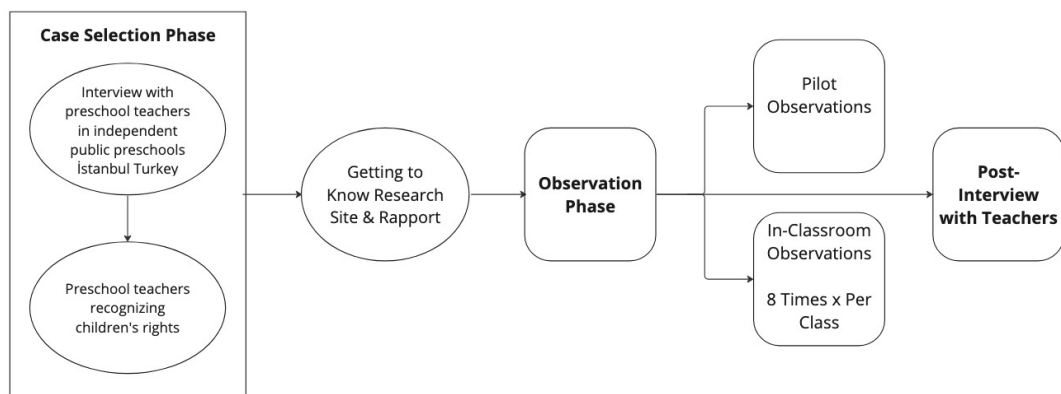


Figure 12 *Data Collection Process*

3.4.1. Interviews

This researcher conducted interviews to collect data for the case selection process with pre-interviews and to elicit the reflections of participant teachers with post-interviews.

3.4.1.1. Pre-Interview (Case Selection Interview)

Case studies are required to investigate bounded systems. Within the bounding criteria of this multiple case study, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews for the

teacher selection phase (Appendix B). The researcher conducted the case selection interviews as synchronic online interviews with six preschool teachers with an appointment via the Zoom platform. The interviews took approximately 40 minutes and were recorded as audio recordings. Then, the researcher transcribed the audio files as verbatim. Directly asking about the teachers' beliefs regarding participation rights were considered as carrying the risk of getting plausible/desired answers. The pre-interview protocol functioned to discover the implicit beliefs determining teachers' positioning about children's rights by questioning the underlying concepts of participation, including the image of the child, competency of the child, and rights of children (Appendix B).

3.4.1.2. Post-Interview

Post-interviews were structured as semi-structured interviews prepared based on the interview protocol (Appendix E) and recorded as an audio file. In post-interviews, the researcher aimed to explore what went well and the challenges or barriers the teacher faces while listening and responding to children's voices. Thus, the researcher conducted post-interviews at the end of the observation period by getting an appointment from the teachers and using some transcripts from video-recorded observation to ease the teachers' reflection on observed cases. Synchronic online post-interviews conducted via Zoom platform took approximately 30 minutes to conduct.

3.4.2. Observations

The researcher conducted in-classroom observations each time the researcher entered the site. There was one pilot and eight main observations for each observed classroom. The researcher shared the data recruited from pilot observations with the advisor to make adjustments before starting the main observations. Observations show the alignment and discrepancies between the teachers' beliefs that favor children's participation rights in the case selection process and their practices with children about practicing their participation rights throughout the in-classroom activities. Sitting in the corner and conducting observation without interacting with participants in a particularly ECE context is not realistic. Thus, the researcher took the active role

(Saldana & Omasta, 2018), standing midway between not participating (peripheral role) and complete role as living the same experiences as the participants.

The researcher conducted in-classroom observations as purpose-driven. The researcher explicitly observed the teachers' practices regarding their interactions with children based on the observation analysis guideline framed within Lundy's participation model (Table 5). During the observation sessions, the researcher noted the empty pages as jottings by indicating periods (approximately 5-10 minutes periods) and the description of materials and events as sketches. Moreover, the researcher photographed the excerpts from activities and materials with permission from the participants.

Table 5 *Field Work Observation Focus Guideline Framed by Lundy's Model*

Domain	Subdomain	Focus of Observation
Space	Safe	What strategies teachers use in order to eliminate possible interruptions in front of being heard and expressing/Where/when the teacher and children meet to express their views and listen
	Inclusive	What kind of activities teacher provide to enable active interaction
Voice	Informing	Where/when teacher give information about the topic for children's expression, inform children they do not have to take part
	Discourse Type	What kind of dialogical talk strategies teacher use for expression of talk (e.g., revoicing, rephrasing, expanding)
	Alternatives	How teacher gives alternatives for expression (e.g., drawing, dancing); In what ways children express their views to teacher
Audience	Willing	How the teacher communicates that children can talk to him/her to express views
	Discourse Type	What kind of dialogical talk strategies teacher use for expansion of talk (e.g., why/how questions)
	Due Weight	How the teacher reminds that he/she will give due weight to the views/where/when/in what topic/whom the teacher does not listen and/or respond to the view of child.
Influence	Acting Upon Views	Where/how the teacher incorporates children's views into decision-making processes
	Feedback	How teacher provides feedback explaining the reasons for decisions taken or not taken.

3.4.2.1. Field Notes

The researcher documented the observations as field notes. After each observation, the researcher transmitted the initial notes into the field notes. Field Notes are the structured files that compose jottings and running records written during in-classroom observations of the researcher with the titles of time, site/location, date, duration, participants, and detailed descriptive information of the activity (where, when, with whom, how), excerpts from documents and materials, posing questions for further steps, and analytical reflections for initial analysis. To avoid disturbing participants by exposing the feeling of being observed, the researcher wrote the notes in handwriting occasionally and transmitted them in a structured form (Appendix F) as soon as possible.

3.4.2.2. Audio-Records

During in-classroom observations, the researcher recorded the classroom audio into two devices. Since discourses between the teacher and child are the unit of analysis, transcription and analysis of voice records enabled the analysis of observation data with the support of excerpts from the observation scenes for the validity and reliability of the study findings.

3.5. Data Analysis

In qualitative studies, data analysis begins when the research enters the research site (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). Thus, the researcher's reflections and inferences from the first scene of data collection via field notes and voice records started the analysis. Additionally, each collected data via semi-structured interviews and observations typed verbatim immediately for initial reflections and writing analytical memos with the support of field notes. As suggested by Saldana and Omasta (2018), during and after taking field notes and typing data verbatim for analyzing the observations, the researcher wrote analytical memos to reflect and infer the participants' actions, reactions, and interactions; the participants' routines, roles, rituals, and relationships; researcher's self-inferences about the participants and context; any emergent patterns,

categories, themes as well as the links between them; an emergent and framed theory; research questions; ethical issues; future directions of the study; and drafting the final report. The researcher analyzed the data with the MAXQDA Qualitative and Mixed Methods Analysis Software Program (VERBI Software, 2023).

In general, the thematic analysis guides the analysis of the qualitative strand (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Framed within Lundy's model of participation, there is deductive reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Even though it tends to present a less detailed description of overall data, it provides a more detailed analysis of the particular aspects of the data. Based on the framed theory of Lundy's participation model, the codebook guided the deductive coding of the verbatim transcription of semi-structured interviews, informal interviews, and observation.

In general, the researcher employed a semantic approach in identifying explicit or surface meanings of the data. Thus, the analytical process begins by describing and interpreting the fundamental theories and previous literature. For instance, the researcher analyzes the instances from observations based on the indicators of "Space" in Lundy's Framework to identify where/when the teacher asks children's views dialogically, listens to children to express ideas by giving wait time, and how the teacher invites children who do not express views. Then, with the help of field notes and analytical memos, thematic analysis helped to identify patterns of strategies to create safe and inclusive spaces to enable children's expression of views.

As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, the thematic analysis begins with familiarizing with data through listening records, transcribing verbatim, and re-reading the data by noting initial ideas. The guideline eased the initial analysis (Appendix G) to analyze particular observation data. These initial codes constructed potential themes and sub-themes. Throughout the ongoing and iterative analysis processes, the researcher reviewed, defined, and named the themes for producing the final report. The researcher aimed to have internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive themes.

3.6. Validation: Trustworthiness and Credibility

The present study for the qualitative strand follows the principles for trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1989; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Credibility refers to internal validity, which helps to explore the truth value of inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). For credibility, the researcher visited the research site long before the data collection processes to ensure sustained involvement in a research setting and build rapport with participants. Also, the researcher monitored self-perception by keeping a journal regarding her beliefs, biases, judgment, and inferences throughout the data collection. Additionally, sharing the preliminary analysis results with committee members enabled member checking to increase the study's credibility.

Transferability refers to external validity, which strives for the generalizability of the findings to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). For transferability, the researcher described the research site and participants in detail with *thick descriptions* so that the ones reading the study could transfer the findings to their context.

Dependability refers to reliability, which aims to ensure the consistency and replicability of the study procedure (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). For dependability, the researcher reports and shares any points changing during the research process regarding measuring the targeted constructs. Moreover, the inter-coder agreement was conducted by two separate researchers from the fields of social sciences using MAQXDA software. The second coder has a doctoral degree in the field of Psychology. Based on the inter-coder formula, the reliability of the current study was calculated as 82%. Thus, this rate met the criteria set by Miles and Huberman (1994) for having at least 80% similarity.

Confirmability refers to objectivity, which ensures neutrality without being influenced by personal biases (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). For confirmability, the researcher will share the details of collected data, including examples of passages from participants' statements.

3.7. Ethical Considerations of the Study

Ethical guidelines and principles hold all researchers responsible for following the code of ethics required by governmental regulations and institutional review boards. Thus, the researcher obtained ethical approvals (APPENDIX H) from the METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee and the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) Ethical Board first and foremost. However, particularly in qualitative studies, there are additional layers of ethical concerns that need to be taken into consideration by researchers throughout the research process.

Mertens (2012) outlines the ethical principles for qualitative researchers based on the three pivotal elements of the Belmont Report: (1) Beneficence, (2) Respect, and (3) Justice. Dimension of beneficence requests researchers to consider possible benefits and harms of the overall research process for study participants. In this study, the researcher explained the significance of this study in contributing to exploring children's participation rights throughout daily ECE classroom practices to provide insights for tackling existing handicaps and promoting children's enactment of participation rights. However, the prolonged engagement of researchers within classrooms carried the risk of scattering the natural classroom atmosphere. In anticipation of this risk, the researcher took an active role in the school, following a midway between not participating in any activities and living the same experiences as participants (Saldana & Omasta, 2018).

The dimension of respect necessitates researchers to build respectful relations with participants within their unique contexts, obtain informed consent from participants, and not make any promises that could not be fulfilled within the limits of the investigation process. This study obtained informed consent from the school administration and participant teachers. Informed consents for children were approved by their parents. Additionally, at the beginning of pilot observations, teachers introduced the researcher to children as a visitor who was wondering about their daily practices, and the researcher directly asked the children to visit their classrooms once or twice a week to take their assent. Moreover, the researcher made self-reflection via anecdotal records to ensure that she acknowledges the expertise of teachers instead of

regarding herself as an expert who has come to direct classroom environment. The final dimension of ethical considerations is justice, which requires researchers to give similar chances to all participant candidates without excluding marginalized groups. In this study, all classroom community members were included in the research process. Besides, the researcher attempted to conduct a valid research design by consulting with the institutional ethical boards and thesis committee members. Moreover, the researcher recorded each data after getting informed consent from participants. The researcher took steps to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and the data recruited from them by saving data only on a personally locked computer, transcribing the records by herself without consulting any transcription software, and replacing the participants' names and school information with nicknames.

3.8. Limitations of the Study

The overarching purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the enactment of children's participation rights within early childhood classrooms throughout daily practices. For this aim, data collection methods were interviews and in-classroom observations. However, for several reasons (e.g., limited time, being a solo researcher), the researcher limited her investigation period from the whole school day to a particular period. In that sense, the investigation was on how children's participation rights manifested in teacher-child interactions and classroom discourses within circle time. The whole school day in a regular ECE setting is composed of a mixture of less or more structured activities. In order to extend the exploration of children's participation rights during the regular school days, there is a need to examine other kinds of activities.

Pertaining literature regarding children's participation rights underlines the need to gather knowledge and insight regarding issues beyond recruiting adults' views around children. This study conducted in-classroom observations to explore how children's participation rights were enacted within classrooms through teacher-child interactions. In consultation with the thesis committee, the researcher recruited preschool teachers as the main participants through interviews and examination of in-classroom practices. Therefore, within the study's limits, this study focused on how/when/where teachers

listen and respond to children's voices through everyday classroom practices of circle time. However, although this examination could not include children directly in participatory research processes, it included how/where/when children initiate the talk or respond to the teacher for specifically posing their ideas or preferences.

Additionally, even though the researcher attempted to record videos during in-classroom observations and took the approval from METU Human Subjects Ethics Committee, the MoNE Ethical Board informed the researcher of not allowing video records within public ECE settings of İstanbul, Türkiye. By consulting the thesis committee members, the researcher revised and enhanced in-classroom observation forms and took audio records. Moreover, for the validation of the study, the researcher followed the principles for trustworthiness, including intercoder agreement of the coded segments, sustained involvement for observations, writing thick descriptions of observation sessions, and reflecting on the role of being a researcher within the research site.

Lastly, through the end of the data collection process of this current study, MoNE launched two new curriculums for revisions in the implementation of public preschool programs. The 2024 National Preschool Education Program was the first publicized program, and the other was the Maarif Model. Moreover, since these programs have been newly beginning to be implemented in public ECE settings, the researchers regarded the 2013 National Preschool Program for the current study. Nevertheless, the researcher introduced the basic features of the 2024 National Preschool Education Program regarding the rationale and aims of the current investigation in the part of the literature review.

3.9. Summary

This multiple case study was conducted in two classrooms of one independent public early childhood institution of İstanbul/Türkiye. The case selection procedure was conducted in three phases: selecting school type, teachers, and activity period. The participants of this study were two preschool teachers working in two different classrooms of the same school with 60-72 months of children and the children in their

classrooms. The researcher consulted various data collection tools to examine selected cases in-depth, including pre-and post-interviews and observations with audio records and field notes. The researcher conducted pre-interviews during the case selection process to determine how teachers approach children's rights regarding their beliefs in children's agency and competence. Accordingly, the researcher differentiated participant teachers' beliefs on children's rights those of emancipation and welfare. Additionally, the researcher attended in-classroom observations eight times in each classroom, in addition to pilot observations. The researcher consulted post-interviews after the in-classroom data collection process to elicit teachers' reflections on their ongoing practices. Framed within Lundy's model of participation, the researcher analyzed the data with deductive reflexive thematic analysis. Accordingly, the researcher conducted the analytical process by consulting the critical elements of Lundy's participation model. Then, with the help of field notes and analytical memos, thematic analysis helped to identify patterns. Finally, the researcher shared the study's validation, ethical considerations, and limitations.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The overarching purpose of this study was to examine the enactment of children's participation rights in independent Turkish public ECE settings, with a particular focus on teacher-child interactions during circle time. From a fully theory-driven inductive perspective, the current study aimed to present how enactment of children's participation rights is evident in everyday classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices framed within the four pivotal elements of Lundy's participation model: (1) space, (2) voice, (3) audience, and (4) influence. Firstly, the current study explored how preschool teachers create safe and inclusive environments for children's expression. Secondly, this study aimed to reveal how children communicate their views to teachers and how teachers facilitate children's expression. Thirdly, this study aimed to uncover teachers' methods to reflect their willingness to listen to children's voices while eliciting teachers' views regarding obstacles or challenges they encounter in that sense. Lastly, this study presented how teachers incorporate children's views into decision-making.

In light of these purposes, this chapter presented the findings from the deductive reflexive thematic analysis concerning audio-recorded observations, structured field notes, pre/post interviews, and analytical journals and memos of the researcher. Findings from the data analysis by examining two ECE classrooms were aimed to be presented holistically to contribute to a nuanced and richer understanding of the studied phenomenon. The overall findings were presented in an orderly to answer the overarching research purpose concerning the underlying aims outlined above. The researcher underlined the outstanding aspects of the quotations provided by the participants by making some of the sentences bold to ease the readability of long quotes.

In the beginning, the first sub-question was answered to present an overall picture of the study context, including descriptive information about the context of the circle time. Findings from the descriptive information, the investigation of classroom discourses concerning the instances of teacher-child talk, and the teacher's ways of constructing space guided the analysis of further questions by enhancing the codebook with iterative revisions to determine analytical choices. At the end of iterations, the researcher generated a finalized codebook and applied those codes to the data analysis of further sub-questions.

The information in Table 6 was followed as frames to explain the investigation and present the data findings.

Table 6 *Summary Table on the Investigation of Research Questions*

RQ1. How do preschool teachers navigate the classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices in relation to children's participation rights during circle time?		
Sub-Questions	Weighted Data Sources	Theoretical Concept
RQ1.1. How do teachers establish the listening environment where children can express their views and being heard?	O* FN** PRI*** PSI****	Space
RQ1.2. In what ways do children communicate their views to the teachers, and how do the teachers support and facilitate children's expression?	O FN	Voice
RQ1.3. What methods do the teachers employ to show their willing to listen children's views actively? and what obstacles or challenges do they encounter while engaging with and responding to children's voices?	O FN PRI PSI	Audience
RQ1.4. How do the preschool teacher incorporate the views of children into decision-making processes, and how do they respond when children express ideas that diverge from their own?	O FN PRI PSI	Influence

O*: Observations, FN**: Field-notes, PRI***: Pre-interview (Case Selection Interview with Teachers), PSI****: Post-interview with teachers

4.1. Space: Providing Safe and Inclusive Environment to Express Views

The first dimension of this investigation was about examining how teachers provide safe and inclusive environments within ECE classrooms during circle time for children's participation rights. Figure 13 below summarizes the key aspects of the findings.

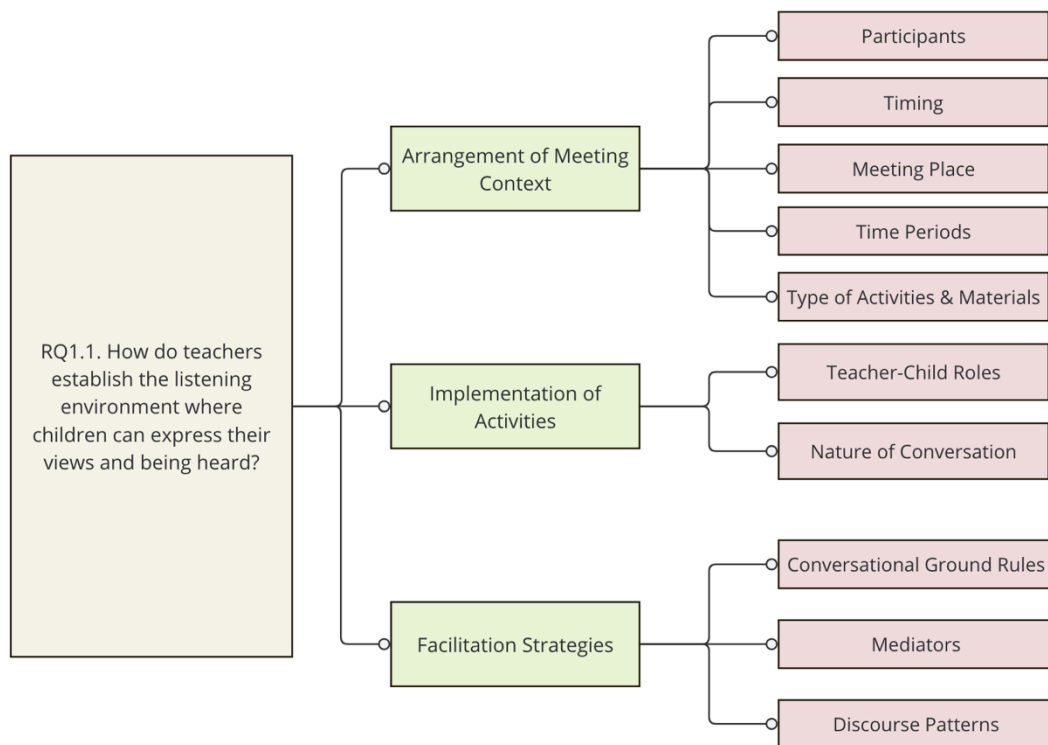


Figure 13 *Summary of the Findings of the First Sub-Research Question*

As explained in the methodology section under the heading of case sampling, the circle time was purposely selected as the context of this investigation based on the criteria applied to bound the cases. Accordingly, the circle time within both classrooms was examined as the target of the investigation to explore how teachers facilitate the enactment of children's participation rights. Table 7 includes detailed information about the circle time within observed classrooms. The circle time observation period consists of nine observation sessions for each classroom.

Table 7 Information About Circle Time Context

Classroom	Timing	Average Duration	Average Children (N)	Seating Plan	Others
PT05	Before Meal (n=6)	34 Min	19	Within Circle (n=8)	Practicum Students
	After Meal (n=3)			Around Table (n=1)	(n=6)
PT06	After Breakfast (n=9)	30 Min	20	Within Circle (n=2)	Practicum Students
				Around Table (n=7)	(n=3)

The details regarding the circle time context arrangement and the activities' selection and implementation were given below with subheadings. Moreover, the findings regarding teachers' strategies to enhance space for children's expression were presented. The predominantly descriptive findings presented in this section provided a ground for making deeper sense of the findings regarding classroom observations.

4.1.1. Arrangement of Meeting Context

Detailed recordings through structured field notes from research cite constructed findings to describe the arrangement of meeting context during circle time for two ECE classrooms. Field Notes were structured files composed of jottings and running records written during in-classroom observations of the researcher, with the titles of time, site/location, date, duration, participants, and detailed descriptive information of the activity (where, when, with whom, how), including excerpts from documents, materials, and analytical reflections.

Throughout the observation period, both classrooms maintained a generally consistent structure even though occasional changes were made to the classroom routines for the arrangement of circle time context. The distinctive features between the two classrooms for the arrangement of meeting context were observed in the timing (Before/After Meal/Breakfast) and seating plan of ECE classrooms (Within Circle/Around Table). In both classrooms, the circle time was composed of the phases indicated in the Table 8.

Table 8 *Information About the Phases of Circle Time*

Phases	Definition
Settling Down	The time period spent until the teacher and children sit in their place and begin to circle time routines and/or activities
Circle Time Routines	The time period spent for conducting circle time routines (e.g., Calendar & Weather, Attendance, Spontaneous Sharing)
Circle Time Activity	The time period spent for conducting circle time activities (e.g., Storytelling, Sharing)
Follow-Up Activity	The time period spent for conducting follow up activities (e.g., Art/Craft about the topic of talk, Games, Experiments) concerning the issue of discussion

Findings gathered from the distribution of coded segments for different phases of total circle time are illustrated below. Figure 14 presents the percentage of time teachers allocate the total circle time into different parts of it. Accordingly, the time wasted on the settling down process was the same as that allocated to circle time activities and routines. Of the 18 observation sessions total within both classrooms, follow-up activities were occasionally attended in classrooms of PT05 (n=2) and PT06 (n=7), and the time given for it was to a lesser extent.

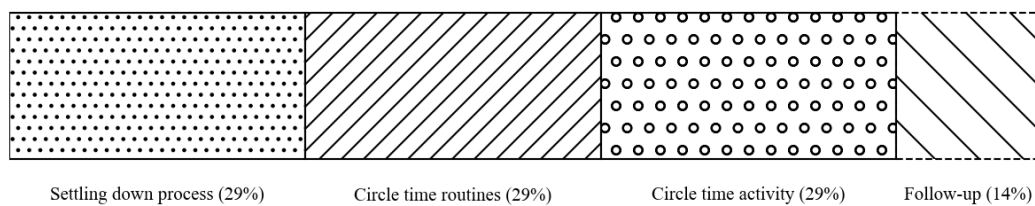


Figure 14 *Distribution of Total Time into the Circle Time Phases*

Investigation of those different phases directed the researcher to make choices for further analysis. With consultation with committee members, the researcher decided on the circle time activity period as the study unit to explore children’s participation rights concerning classroom discourses. Besides, the researcher elaborated on the

settling down process and circle time routines to present the overall functioning of the circle time. However, the researcher did not examine the nature of the conversation and the kind of discourses for follow-up activities because of the characteristics of follow-up activities. Even though teachers did not explicitly distinguish follow-up activities from circle time, teachers invited children to turn back to the tables to begin another activity (e.g., Arts/Crafts about the topic of talk, Games, Experiments) mainly concerning the issues of discussion.

During the circle time activity period, various activities and materials were utilized throughout the implementation of activities (Table 9). In some cases, children and teachers engaged in both storytelling and sharing activities during an observed circle time activity period. Therefore, 21 activities were recorded in total recorded during 18 observation sessions.

Table 9 *Type of Activities and Materials*

Classroom	Sharing	Storytelling	Group Play	Materials
				Children’s Book (n=6)
PT05	6	5	1	Puppet (n=1) Samples Materials (n=2)
PT06	6	5		Children’s Book (n=5) Samples Material (n = 1)

Engaging in sharing activity (n=12) was an outstanding activity in both classrooms, followed by engaging in storytelling (n=10). To initiate the storytelling or sharing, teachers primarily utilized children’s books. Besides, other kinds of materials were used as stimuli to start a community of conversation including puppets or sample materials regarding the topic of the book or conversation (e.g., recycling materials, a jar of pickles, rules board).

In post-interviews, PT05 claimed her strategies to re-arrange the classroom environment to create an idealized circle time context for the creation of participatory space as follows:

*When I came to this class at the beginning of the year, there were two carpets and tables. Then, I went to the principal and said I wanted to remove those carpets. She said you could remove them... I would take them out, throw those tables forward, and open the area because I wanted to create an actual circle. After that, the children learned what to do when I told them to make a circle. In fact, it became more functional both for classroom order and my comfort. Otherwise, since I entered the classroom at noon, I had no control over managing the classroom. **Thus, I needed to do circle time for this classroom, even for 15 or 20 minutes daily. Hence, making a circle eased my organization a lot.** The movement from the circle to the table or vice versa increased children's movement and mood positively, which affected children's participation. (PT05-Post Interview)*

Additionally, PT06 shared her thoughts on an idealized circle time arrangement as she wished to create a participatory space:

***In fact, circle time is a precious thing. That is the moment when we can listen to each other calmly.** Sometimes, when you talk about any subject, the child may say something irrelevant to open new discussions. Outside of free time, it is a time that opens the door to several things. It is where children express themselves more comfortably and start to say something themselves. However, we cannot always enter the school simultaneously to start the day. Also, the intensity of daily activities forces us to be faster. **If you asked me how much I implemented circle time, I had done less than I wanted or thought I wanted to do in this school.** For example, I would like to implement circle time where we could chat more comfortably together because everyone wants to talk about the things in their heads during circle time. For example, children share their stories, such as "I went to this place; my mother is like this." I mean, they talk about their mother, father, grandmother, and grandfather who died.. You know, they share about the things that are so irrelevant because the child conveys whatever is in his/her mind...I wish to share the daily plan with the children, like "We will do these things today." I could only do these things a little. I want to relax there; I wouldn't want to think about the time. **Thus, I would like to have much more time to give my whole attention to them and allow them to talk without experiencing stress about how many minutes we have left.** Instead, I want to sing a song, relax, and play a finger game with children. (PT06-Post Interview)*

4.1.2. Implementation of Circle Time Activities

As presented above, circle time comprised the phases, including the settling down process, circle time routines, circle time activity period, and follow-up activity. Of the phases constructing circle time, the implementation of activities was analyzed for only the “circle time activity” phases. An analysis of teacher-child roles and the nature of conversation was utilized to present the findings about the implementation of activities.

4.1.2.1. Teacher-Child Roles

Findings about teacher-child roles during circle time activity presented who initiated the activities, and how the roles of teacher and child evolved through the end of activity time. In observed classrooms, teachers mostly informed children about activities that were planned by teachers (n=18) about the topic of discussion in sharing time, presentation of children’s books or the rules of large group games during the settling down process (n=4), circle time routines (n=7), and at the beginning of circle time activities (n=7). Occasionally, teachers and children negotiated (n=2) to select among the alternatives teachers introduced to proceed with the preestablished activity types (e.g., storytelling, large group games) as indicated in the example below:

T (Teacher): Now I have brought you three books from home. Can we choose one of them together? Now I will tell you the names of the books.

C (Child(ren)): Painted anchovy

T: Painted anchovy goldfish is my first book. Second?

C: [Speaks all together] Aaa, we know we know that.

T: I suppose you know that?

C: [Unintelligible speech]

T: Three, can I tell you the name for those who don't know?

C: Three cats, a fairy tale

T: Three Cats, One Wish

C: I know, me too.

T: Our third book is about a baby crocodile chipmunk.

C: I want it, I have it.

T: Now wait, wait, can you sit down?

[Scene Description: Children share about which book they want to be read but noise restricts understanding]

T: OK. OK, children, let me ask you something. Who wants the book with the cat?

[Scene Description: Majority of children raised hands]

T: Very much. I'm not asking about the others. Then, I'm not even asking about them.

So many fingers raised. Except for a few children, you wanted this one. Since the majority chose the book about the cat, we will read it. (PT05, Observation)

Nevertheless, PT05 reflected on her awareness of the need to involve children in the planning processes beyond directing children to the plans in her mind:

*If we talk about the implementation of activities in the classroom, we follow a plan. Of course, we also have strategies in our minds that encourage children to attend the plan we implement. **But even if I ask the children what to do, I usually decide according to what I have in my head.** But I cannot say that I do not hear what they demand. In some instances, they could direct me positively. (PT05, Post Interview)*

Besides presenting the information about how teachers informed children about existing plans and invited children to negotiate for evolving plans, teacher-child roles during the implementation of activities were illustrated across circle time activity types (Figure 15).

		Activity Types		
		Sharing	Storytelling	Games
Teacher-Child Roles	TICL	9	5	0
	TITL	2	5	1
	CITL	3	0	0

Figure 15 Matrix of Teacher-Child Roles Across Activity Types

In teacher-initiated-child-led (TICL) implementation (n=14), children were invited to share their ideas and directed the implementation to some extent. Such implementation was mostly observed during sharing activities (n=9), through which teachers opened the talk in various ways (e.g., statement-driven initiation, open or closed questions) to invite children for sharing, expanding, and clarifying. Besides, teachers always initiated storytelling activities based on their pre-established agenda and conducted either teacher-led (n=5) or child-led (n=5). In teacher-initiated-teacher-led (TITL) implementation (n=8), teachers mostly introduced and initiated their pre-established agenda, and they governed the implementation during the activities by telling children what/how to do even though they offered some flexibility.

In the cases of teacher-initiated-teacher-led, storytelling times became *passive listening sessions* in which children listen to the teacher reading a picture book; but, their attempts to interact through comments and questions were not acknowledged. At the end of the book reading session, teachers directed primarily knowledge-based descriptive questions about the content of the book without extending the topic with the engagement of children's voices.

T: **What** was the name of our story, Leyla?

C: MooLaLa

T: **Where** was the cow going?

C: Shopping.

T: Shopping, and **what** was the farmer's name?

C1: Pete-Pete; C2: MooLaLa is going shopping.

T: Okay. **Who** was Pete originally going to go shopping with in the first place?

C1: Pete; C2: Dog

T: She was going shopping with the dog. But oh, **what** did MooLaLa do? It insisted that it wanted to go shopping too.

T: **What** did it ask for first when shopping?

C: [Spoke in unison] High heels

T: **What** color shoes did it wear?

C: Red

T: **And then?**

C: [Unintelligible speech]

T: First it put the shoes on. **And then?**

C: It flew into space.

T: **What** actually happened before the outfit? In a minute, Leyla wait. Yes, **what** did it want to do before the outfit like a turkey?

C: [Spoke in unison] Dress up.

T: It wanted to dress up, then **what** did it wear that didn't fit at all, that was too tight?

C1: Shoes; C2: Dress; C3: No, then it put on shoes; C4: No, then a dress

T: **What** did it do after the dress?

C: Fur. **(PT06, Observation)**

In child-led story time sessions, teachers made *story time engagement* through reading a picture book to the children, during which they listened attentively, made comments, and asked questions:

T: 'Her aunt called out to Ebru "Ebru, can you hand me the wire clip on the table?" When Ebru approached the table without letting go of the magnet in her hand', ... Guess.

C: She pulled it.

T: 'The wire clasp suddenly stuck to the magnet.' Of course, what did Ebru do?

C: She was surprised.

T: 'She was very surprised. So the magnet was working. That's how the magnet works, Ebru's aunt said.'

C: We also had a magnet in our robot.

T: 'Ebru imagined that the magnet could attract all the objects and toys in her room.'

Waits 'So, aunty, does this magnet attract everything?' waits

C: Yes

T: **Think about it, children, if you had never met a magnet, wouldn't you think that it would attract everything?**

C1: No; C2: Yes; C3: Yes, yes

T: Imagine it would be such a complicated thing. Everything sticking to it.

C: Two things sticking to it.

T: 'Her aunt answered immediately. Not everything, of course, but objects that have iron in them will be attracted to it. Iron?' asked Ebru. Then they went to the kitchen together and her aunt asked her to walk around the kitchen with a magnet. Let's see

which objects this magnet will attract? Ebru said to herself and started to walk around the kitchen with curiosity. What happened to the fork, spoon and saucepan?’

C: They were attracted (T: stuck, attracted) because they are metal.

T: Because they are not metals (C: iron-metal with iron in it). It's not just metal (C: with iron in it), it's a metal with iron in it because everything is metal and there are other metals besides iron. **(PT05, Observation)**

Sharing activities were initiated mainly by teachers with the opening of the talk (e.g., Statement driven initiation, open or closed questions) but continued as child-led with children’s involvement to extend the talk. Occasionally, children spontaneously initiated sharing activities (n=3) by narrating their stories (e.g., birthdays, illnesses), and other children were involved in these talks with brief or extended contributions after getting permission from teachers to speak by raising hands. Actually, those child-initiated instances were mostly governed by teachers for extension or ending. Even during child-initiated-teacher-led (CITL) sharing times, teachers ended the sharing activity by informing children to begin their pre-established agenda.

C: **Teacher, I need to say...**

T: **Is it too urgent?** But you get bored when you sit for too long, save some of the conversation for the activity time at the table. Let everyone lean back in their chairs. **(PT06, Observation)**

T: Yes, did we sit back?

C: **Teacher? Teacher, can I say something?**

T: Let's take roll call first. Yes, we leaned back.

C: [Noise]

C: **I have something to say.**

T: I'll take a roll call. Yes, Hakan, you bumped into something.

C: [Noise]

T: **I don't want to talk right now, guys.** The longer the subject goes on, the longer you sit [Noise], the more you sit, the more bored you get. Can I take my roll call first? Keep what you want to say inside you. [Noise] Three, two, one. **(PT06, Observation)**

4.1.2.2. Nature of Conversation

Another dimension to present findings about the implementation of activities with respect to research aims was examining the nature of conversation. The investigation of the nature of conversation illustrated how teachers and children communicated to each other during circle time activity period. The identified conversation types are listed below with sub-category definitions (Table 10).

Table 10 *Information about Conversation Types*

Category	Definition
One-To-One on Separate Topic	The instances when teacher and a child communicate to each other on separate topic/different from community of conversation
One-To-One Within Community	The instances when teacher and a child communicate to each other without involving other children on shared discussion/topic in classroom (without extended talk moves)
Conversation Dominated by Teacher's Directives/Lecturing	The instances when teacher governs the conversation with children by means of giving commanding, directing about what to do/how to do, or lecturing about particular topics/issues
Community of Conversation	The instances when teacher and children communicate to each other as a community on a shared topic by inviting other children for extended talk moves

Figure 16 indicates the analysis of the intersection of the nature of conversation with circle time activity types. During the circle time activity period, the most frequent conversation type was the community of conversation for the activities of sharing and storytelling. In both activities, there were instances of other types of conversations. However, the community of conversation during these activities was interrupted, particularly by one-to-one discussions on separate topic (n=7) and one-to-one discussions within community (n=4).

The findings gathered from the intersection of teacher/child roles and the nature of the conversation with different types of circle time activities illustrated that teachers dominantly governed the initiation of activities. During the activities, children

attended a community of conversation started by teachers or were exposed to the conversation dominated by the teacher’s directives/lectures. Occasionally, the teacher and children were involved one-to-one talk either within the conversation community or on separate topics without extending speech to the contributions of other children or within one-to-one talk on a separate topic.

		Activity Types		
		Sharing	Storytelling	Games
Nature of Conversation	Conversation of Community	12	10	1
	One-to-One on Separate Topic	4	6	0
	Teacher Dominated Conversation	1	3	1
	One-to-One within Community	1	2	0

Figure 16 Matrix of Nature of Conversation Across Activity Types

4.1.3. Facilitation of Space

Teachers’ strategies for providing a safe, inclusive, and participatory environment for facilitating children’s expression were presented here with respect to findings from in-classroom observations, field notes, analytical memos, and post-interviews with teachers. The underlying concepts for the facilitation of space were elaborated as outlined by the facilitators regarding the conversational ground rules, mediators of activities, and dialogic talk strategies, as indicated in Table 11.

Table 11 Summary of the Facilitators of the Space

Categories	Sub-Categories	Data Sources
Conversational	Getting Permission to Speak (n=11)	O
Ground Rules	Raising Hand Before Speaking (n=32)	O
	Sitting Properly on Chairs (n=75)	O
	Building on Community of Conversation (n=16)	O
	Turn Taking (n=24)	O
	Respectful Listening (n=75)	O
	Clear Articulation (n=9)	O

Table 11. (continued)

Mediators	Calming Exercises (n=14)	O
	Rhymes (n=11)	O
	Whistle (n=5)	O
	Background Music (n=1)	O
	Short Break (n=2)	O
	Free Play and Outdoor Play (n=2, Post-interview, PT06)	O, PI
Invitation- Extension	Initiation of Talk	O
	Extension of Talk	O

4.1.3.1. Facilitators Regarding Conversational Ground Rules

For the facilitation of space, teachers' widely applied strategy was consulting on conversational ground rules. Conversational ground rules were the instances when teachers explicitly pointed out conversational ground rules applying to the group and negotiated new rules. Figure 17 presents the distribution of rules across different phases of circle time.

		Circle Time Phases			
		Settling down process	Circle time routines	Circle time activity	Follow-up activity
Conversational Ground Rules	Respectful listening	4	17	54	11
	Sitting properly on chairs	6	17	52	10
	Raising hands before speaking	0	8	24	0
	Turn taking	0	9	15	3
	Building on community of conversation	0	0	16	0
	Getting permission to speak	2	6	3	0
	Clear articulation	0	0	9	0

Figure 17 Matrix of Conversational Ground Rules Across Circle Time Phases

During the settling-down process and circle time routines, conversational ground rules were transmitted to children so that they would listen to teachers' directives and become calm enough to engage in circle time routines and activities. Findings from the observation sessions presented that the most prominent rules spoken by teachers

during these periods were sitting properly on chairs (n=23), respectful listening (n=21), and getting permission to speak (n=8).

During circle time activity periods, conversational ground rules were communicated with children as either listening to one another's speech or obeying teachers' directives. The most prominent rules repeated by teachers were engaging in respectful listening (n=54) and sitting properly on chairs (n=52), followed by raising hands before speaking (n=24).

Regardless of the different phases of circle time, teachers mostly informed children about rules by reminding pre-established ones by pointing explicitly to the rules (e.g., waiting their turn to speak, getting permission to speak). Instead of negotiating rules, rules were commonly transmitted to children as mostly teachers' directives. In some instances, teachers gave orders to children to follow the rules:

T: It's not over, it's not over Ecem, can you come here? Ecem? Why is it like this? Deniz and Ahmet here, Ahmet here! Can you please come here? You are in your seats when I say three, two, one.

C: Two and a half

T: Stay in the chairs. I say I'll ask you an attention question and then we'll get ready for meal. (PT06, Observation)

T: Let everyone sit back and close their mouths.

C: [Makes irrational voices with mouth]

C: I can't hear it.

T: But it's really hard for me to understand, who is making that noise? Stop it now, stop it now. (PT06, Observation)

However, in some instances, teachers kindly invited children to follow the rules while outlining the necessity behind the rules:

T: Duru, Hamzacım? Can you listen to your friends on the spot? Yes.

C: [Noise]

T: Can you make some effort to listen here? [Noise]. **Your friend is telling you. (PT05, Observation)**

[Scene Description: The child who wants to express his opinion waits without speaking because of the noise]

T: You have to be patient for your friend to talk. **When you talk, when you don't shut up, he doesn't talk more, he delays. (PT05, Observation)**

[Scene Description: Cenk took off his shoes while the teacher and other children were engaged in story time]

T: Cenk, did you hear the information? We are listening here. **Cenk, what you've done has distracted us.** Can everyone leave their shoes? That's not true

Trainer: Mehmet, put your feet down.

T: **While something about the story was being learnt here, you involved your friends in something else.** Waits. Did you hear that just now or should I tell it again? **(PT05, Observation)**

T: Zeynep what are you talking about [Laughing]? We were talking about something else. **When you speak as you think, the subject gets confused.** Suddenly you said a biscuit brand. But that, we were talking about something else. Are you aware of that? Do you follow this place? Well Yusuf, you were saying something. I remember you were saying something about "nature". **(PT05, Observation)**

C: We shouldn't talk when the teacher is talking.

T: Only when the teacher is talking? Think a little more, you are getting closer.

C: And when our friends are talking.

T: Why?

A: Because the sounds can mix.

T: OK, we have already said about mixing, they mix together and cannot be heard. There is another reason.

C: We can't hear what our friend is saying.

T: **Exactly, when someone is talking we can't hear what he/she says. We have to listen to his/her speech.**

C: And we can't hear anyone else. **(PT05, Observation)**

T: When our teacher gives permission to speak, Furkan? We will all listen to the same person. **It may be a little bit difficult, you may get impatient, but you need to learn this. Listening to the other person is an important thing.** (PT06, Observation)

T: First of all, when someone is talking, the other person should listen to you. **If we talk at the same time, we cannot understand each other.** (PT06, Observation)

In some cases, teachers guided children to remind the conversational ground rules to each other so that other children could understand what they meant to say:

T: I don't understand what your friend's design is, he can't explain it.

C: [Noise]

T: **Can you tell your friends to be quiet?**

C: Can you guys be quiet?

T: **Can you say I want you to listen to me?**

C: I want you to listen to me. (PT05, Observation)

In some instances, teachers initiated a talk about conversational ground rules to remind them of the issue of discussion within the community of conversation:

T: Yes, I have something in my mind.

C: [Noise]

T: The mid-term holidays you know, you couldn't come to school for two weeks, 15 days, right?... **Now I want us to go over our class rules because we have friends who have forgotten.** Can everyone look here? Let's have a look at the wall. Yes, can everyone see here? (PT06, Observation)

On the issue of conversational ground rules, PT06 shared their ideas in the pre-interviews as follows:

Let me put it this way. I don't expect the child to behave like an adult. I do not want them to sit down and not move at all. These things are not the things that I call about

knowing limits. Let me give an example. You see, we have to queue to wash our hands. Instead of speaking to them like, "Come on, guys, we have to queue," I always do the preliminary things like saying, "We have five minutes left in the game." We sing our line-up song. I use the hourglass so that they can see how much time is left because the concept of time is not well-developed in children's minds. However, in some instances, even though I prepare and warn children to be in line many times, three or five children throw themselves on the ground, and they get on top of their friends. Maybe they hurt themselves or their friends. Otherwise, when a few children took a round and came back and so on, I never got hung up on these things; they already had that energy. **However, I need help understanding when these children are not in the queue at the expense of all warnings. That is the thing I call limitlessness. (PT06, Pre-interview)**

4.1.3.2. Facilitators Regarding Mediators

Another facilitation strategy consulted by teachers was using mediators to calm children during the implementation of activities. The mediators were mostly the things (materials, songs etc.) and sometimes the existence of another staff (e.g., trainer). Teachers got support from them to mediate the circle time by smoothing the settlement process and implementation of activities. The distribution of mediators utilized across different phases of the circle time is indicated in Figure 18.

	Circle Time Phases		
	Settling down process	Circle time routines	Circle time activity
Calming exercises	7	2	6
Rhymes	5	4	3
Whistle	5	2	4
Short break	0	0	1

Figure 18 Matrix of Mediators Across Circle Time Phases

Calming exercises, including physical exercises, breathing, and dancing, were the most consulted mediators during settling down process and circle time activity. Teachers particularly benefitted from nursery rhymes for transitions in these routines.

Additionally, in some cases the whistle carried by PT05 became the mediator to calm children, whereas PT06 just used the whistle to warn children to silence. To illustrate, PT05 used her whistle as a mediator by giving a certain rhyme with a whistle and expecting children to clap their hands according to the rhyme. The teacher often used this method to collect children's attention during the settling down process and circle time activity period.

[Scene Description: Teacher uses whistle by giving rhythm, children hearing the rhythm of whistle replicate the rhythm by clapping hands. Teacher continues to give rhythm with whistle until everyone claps hands harmonically.]

T: I couldn't hear.

C: [Clap hands]

T: No.

C: [Clap hands]

T: It doesn't happen, but there are those who do it wrong.

C: Two

T: Yes, two. One more time.

C: [Clap hands]

T: That part is wrong, but look, you're mixing this up, I've just realized that it's not the same as in the meal time. You'll do it when I finish. But, you did it while I'm whistling. I'll finish it before. So you have to wait until it's finished, okay? One more time.

C: [Clap hands]

T: Isn't it? It's beautiful, isn't it? It's very good.

C: Yeah, bam bam bam bam bam, bam bam bam.

T: What is our purpose here?

C: To be quiet. **(PT05, Observation)**

Besides the mediators observed during in-classroom observations, throughout post-interviews, PT06 shared possible mediators she wanted to integrate their classroom practices to ease the involvement of children into the participatory space by “getting them out of the box”:

I realized that children are more attentive when there are attractive things around them. The other day, Feyza's father came to present about how animations were made. Even though we sat at breakfast for 30 minutes before this event, children could listen

*to Feyza's father while sitting around the table for almost another 35 or 40 minutes, and they were incredibly interested. So, the narration techniques could be changed while telling something to children by consulting not just a book, but, I don't know, using a puppet or something visual and digital. Also, transition activities might be included beforehand for relaxation. I mean, building the balance between active and passive activities is also very important. If children attended the activities while sitting on their chairs, children could be taken out in the fresh air for 10 minutes beforehand. They need fresh air and oxygen. **They need to get out of that box. That is, school is a box, home is a box.** They need this incredibly. I would love to be able to do this if I didn't have time constraints. I would definitely like to make them run and move. **For example, if I didn't have time problems and my head wasn't full, I would like to give more space to those relaxation activities.** I think it would be great if they could relax before attending activities. (PT06, Post-Interview)*

4.1.3.3. Facilitators Regarding Classroom Discourse Patterns and Extension Strategies

Additionally, the discourse patterns during the circle time activity period were investigated to illustrate how classroom discourses directed by teachers contribute to the creation of a safe and inclusive space for children's expression. Discourse patterns were composed either of monologic (Initiation-Response-Feedback) or dialogic (Initiation-Response-Follow Up-.....Feedback) discourses.

The instances of a community of conversation across different phases of the circle time period were dialogic in nature. However, teachers' dialogic talk strategies during the implementation of activities differed in the initiation and extension of talk with children. In the analysis, each statement of teachers and children within the community of conversation was coded for the type of initiation (open/closed questions, statement-driven initiation), children's response types (brief or extended), and teachers' follow-up (sharing, clarifying, extending) and feedback (acknowledgment/reject, praise, comment) strategies. Additionally, to illustrate the kind of dialogic talk strategies teachers provided to create an environment for children's extended-expression, the distribution of these strategies during community of conversation across the implementation of circle time activities is indicated below (Figure 19).

		Circle Time Activities		
		Storytelling	Sharing	Games
Extension Strategies	Clarifying	104	177	7
	Expanding	40	82	0
	Sharing	20	27	0
	Statement driven initiation	17	10	1
	Close-ended question	14	7	1
	Open-ended question	6	0	0

Figure 19 *Matrix of Extension Strategies Across Activities*

Across different types of activities, teachers' widely used strategy to open dialog was the statement-driven initiation (n=28), covering the instances when teachers begin a conversation with a declarative statement, such as "The weather is so nice today," to engage students in dialogue. Occasionally, open-ended questions (n=6) allowing various responses were utilized to initiate the dialogue during storytelling sessions. For the extension of the initiated talk by either teachers or children, teachers' mostly used strategy across activity types was clarifying (n=288), which includes the questions of teachers inviting children to explain through revoicing, repeating or rephrasing the existing questions or asking descriptive questions (e.g., What, When, Where questions). Extension using expanding was mostly observed during sharing time (n=82) by teachers' attempts to ask for adding on, expanding on why, what, and what else, and inviting children to say more about the views. On the other hand, the sharing strategy (n=47) to invite children was seldom utilized by teachers to invite children to share their ideas.

4.1.4. Summary of Findings of First Sub-Research Question

Findings regarding how teachers arrange circle time context to create a safe and inclusive environment for children's participation were presented in this section. The overall circle time encompasses the periods for settling down, routines, activities, and follow-up. Findings illustrated that the circle time activity period allowed children and teachers to meet to express their views and listen to each other, particularly the instances of community of conversation. During this time, the most prominent activity types were storytelling and sharing. The implementation of activities was dominantly

teacher-initiated-child-led, in which teachers introduced and initiated their planned activities but asked children extended questions regarding their ideas. To facilitate the implementation of activities and create a more participatory environment, teachers benefitted from the facilitators regarding the conversational ground rules, mediators, and dialogic talk strategies. The predominantly descriptive findings presented in this section provided a ground for making deeper sense of the findings regarding classroom observations.

4.2. Voice: Affordances of Children’s Expression

The second target of the investigation was to present the findings about how children communicated their views to the teacher and how teachers responded to the voices of children. For the analysis, transcription of audio records from in-classroom observations, field notes, and analytical memos were primarily consulted. Additionally, pre-and post-interviews were utilized to present teachers’ ideas on listening and promoting the voices of children. Figure 20 presents the summary of the findings.

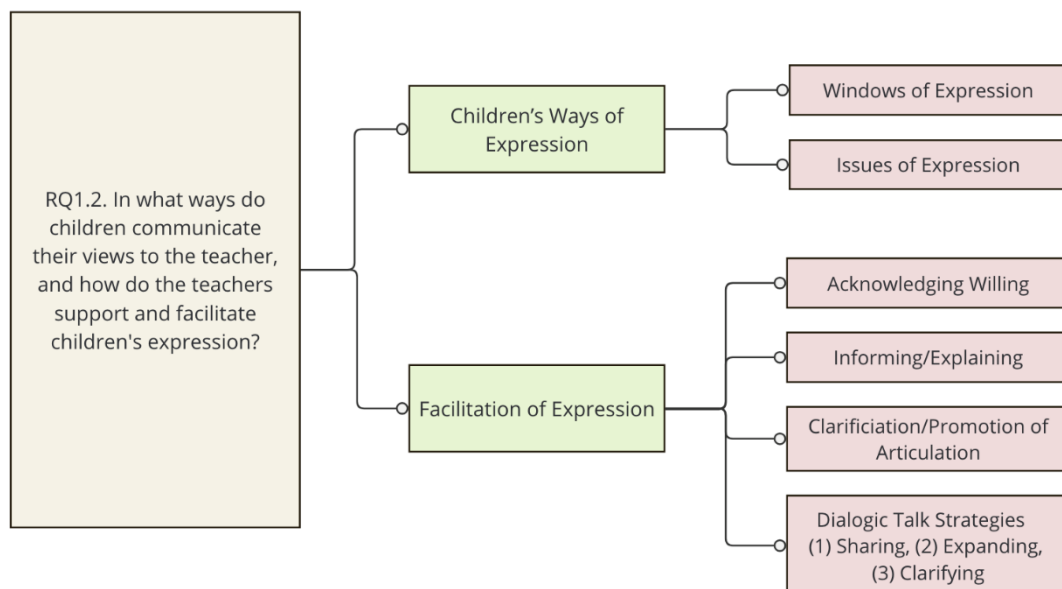


Figure 20 Summary of the Findings of the Second Sub-Research Question

Across different phases of circle time, the moments of community of conversation between teachers and children, and particularly the instances of children’s extended

talk moves, were analyzed to answer this sub-question. A community of conversation encompasses instances when teachers and children communicate with each other as a community on a shared topic by inviting other children for extended talk moves.

In the findings, the underlying concepts of children’s expression were presented as children’s windows of expression outlining the different ways and issues, and the teachers' strategies for facilitating those expressions. Besides briefly describing different ways of children’s expression, only the instances of verbal expression were included for further analysis.

4.2.1 Children’s Windows of Expression

Children’s windows of expression represent the variations in children's ways of communicating and transmitting their views to the teacher. Throughout the community of conversation with teachers and peers, verbal expression included the child-initiated talk and the child’s brief or extended responses, while non-verbal expressions were detected as instances of emotional expression or exhibiting unacceptable behaviors. The Figure below illustrates the intersection of children’s windows of expression within different phases of the circle time. Of the phases of circle time, the activity period was identified as the most apparent period in which children expressed themselves (Figure 21).

		Circle Time Phases		
		Settling down process	Circle time routines	Circle time activity
Windows of Expression	Child's brief talk moves	5	87	421
	Child's extended talk moves	21	89	320
	Child-initiated teacher-child talk	10	29	54
	Exhibiting unacceptable behavior	2	10	14
	Emotional expression	0	2	4

Figure 21 Matrix of Windows of Expression Across Phases

4.2.1.1. Non-verbal Ways of Expression

Findings from in-classroom observations and interviews with teachers presented that children's non-verbal ways of expression were commonly seen as emotional expressions and exhibitions of unacceptable behaviors. Emotional expression of children was seldomly observed through observation sessions (n=6), and this expression was identified through the instances when teachers stated their awareness of the child's emotional state/satisfaction (e.g., crying, laughing, screaming) and asked to share the reasons as illustrated in the example from the in-classroom observations:

[Scene Description: One girl began to cry during storytelling activity]

T: What happened?

C: I miss my mom.

T: I don't understand, again?

C: My mom didn't pick me up.

T: You were upset because she didn't pick you up early. But Hüma left very early now, because her mother had an urgent job.

C: I have an urgent job too...

T: I wondered if you cried because of the story, just to get emotional. But we can get emotional, can't we? **(PT05, Observation)**

On the other hand, there were instances when children expressed themselves via unacceptable behaviors. These behaviors were usually observed in the cases of interrupting classroom rules and climate (e.g., noisiness, interrupting peers or teacher physically, damaging materials). When realized, teachers engaged in communication with these children to end these behaviors and ask the reasons behind them (e.g., boredom from activity, need to drink water).

In case selection interviews, PT05 commented on such kind of expression and evaluated their engagement with these children as being trapped.

But it is also done like this to attract attention. "I always want to cause more problems so that I will be noticed anyway", so this is the part I call imposition. I mean, the child

is getting that attention from me. It doesn't matter if I get angry because he will get that attention from me. After all, I pay attention to it, see it, and notice it even if I get angry. I fall for it and into its trap; I mean, I have to fall into it. (PT05, Pre-interview)

Nevertheless, they shared their awareness behind such kind of expression by acknowledging the need for children to be heard and understood.

*For example, when I was furious, I realized that I was very angry with something. I would tell children, "I'm furious right now, right?". When I realized I was angry at something simple, I would say, "I was very angry right now, right?" Children were used to such expressions. At such moments, I open the windows; I take a little breath, I say, "Children, count me for 10 seconds; I'm going to breathe." Then I realized that when I asked some of my children, "I think you're a little angry today, you came to school angry," they accepted it. **Because it is normal in our classrooms as I do the same things to express my mood. The child tells me what's happened. Or I say, "You are having a hard time sitting right now; you are moving too much. Do you want to run?" I sent him to the corridor. So maturity is related to recognizing and expressing self and needs. (PT05, Pre-interview)***

Additionally, PT06 outlined the necessity of verbal expression instead of exhibiting unacceptable behaviors:

*For example, if the child does not have a language problem, I expect him/her to express himself/herself. For example, if he/she has a problem with a friend, he/she either stands aside and waits or solves that problem differently by fighting, making noise, pushing, and getting up. **For example, what we call human skills is that when they cannot solve a problem by talking, they can ask for help from an adult. (PT06, Post-interview)***

4.2.1.2. Verbal Expression

Within the instances of a community of conversation, children's verbal expression was identified as threefold, including the child-initiated speech, children's brief talk moves, and extended talk moves. Among these, children's most frequent talk moves

were brief talk moves. Brief talk moves were limited to the instances when children responded to the teacher with brief statements (e.g., yes, no, naming...) without giving any further explanation or contribution for the extension of the talk.

The instances of child-initiated verbal talk were elaborated to showcase the issues children initiate when talking with teachers during circle time, including the settling down, circle time routines, and activity periods. Verbal talk of children was identified throughout in-classroom observation as either in response to the ongoing communication within the classroom via brief or extended talk moves or child-initiated talk. Accordingly, the identified issues of child-initiated expression across different phases of circle time were presented below (Figure 22):

	Circle Time Phases		
	Settling down process	Circle time routines	Circle time activity
Complaining about	5	11	29
Expressing opinion/ideas	2	7	27
Asking for requests	6	11	19
Asking for getting explanation	8	4	12
Getting permission	0	5	16
Sharing narratives	0	3	9
Stating agreement/disagreement	1	1	2
Evaluating/argument	3	1	0
Challenging	0	2	1

Figure 22 Matrix of Issues of Expression Across Phases

Across the phases of circle time, Figure 24 illustrates that children mostly initiated talk during the circle time activity period (n=119). As Figure 19 presented before, the nature of conversation within the circle time activity period was mostly observed as the community of conversation. Correspondingly, the child-initiated speech during the instances of community of conversation interrupted the extension of community of conversation because children and teachers had begun to talk about child-initiated issues as one-to-one communication on separate topics. During circle time, the most

common issues children initiate talk with teachers were complaining about someone or something to teachers (n=45) and expression of opinion/ideas on any idea (n=36).

Additionally, children usually initiated talk to ask for requests (n=36) by sharing their desires to make changes in the choice and implementation of daily activities (e.g., outdoor play, dancing, attending free play). Moreover, children asked questions to teachers to get explanations (n=24) about an unknown phenomenon via what/how questions. Following this initiation, children frequently attempted to get permission from teachers for their needs (e.g., going to the toilet and drinking water). Occasionally, the child-initiated speech included attempts to share narratives from daily life, agreement statements, evaluating/arguing, and challenging.

4.2.2 Facilitation of Voice

Besides creating a safe and inclusive environment, teachers used various strategies to facilitate children's expression to make their voices heard. Findings regarding the teachers' facilitation of voice were recruited from the instances when children initiate, are involved in, or are about to initiate a community of conversation. Table 12 below presents how teachers facilitated children's expression within the community conversation during circle time activity periods.

Table 12 *Teachers' Strategies to Facilitate Expression*

Categories	Sub-Categories
Informing &	Informing Children About Content and Giving
Respecting	Explanations about Concepts (n=167) Acknowledging Children's Willing (n=33)
Mediating	Clarification of Statement (n=274)
Comprehension	Promoting Clear Articulation (n=67) Sharing (n=48) Expanding (n=143) Clarifying (n=327)

4.2.2.1. Facilitators Regarding the Informing and Respecting

Findings regarding the facilitation of voice presented how teachers promoted children's voice to express views through giving information about the issues concerning children and expressed that they minded children's willingness for the freedom to take part or not.

Throughout the analysis of the instances of the community of conversation within circle time, teachers' widely used strategy was to inform children about the topic of conversation and give explanations about the related concepts to facilitate children's engagement in the community of conversation. Some of the excerpts identified from in-classroom observations are shared below:

T: Sena? What does this picture say? What do you see?-Waits-So something is happening? What does it say?-waits. You raised your finger? Did you forget?

C: Yes.

T: Okay, let's move on then. What does the magnet attract? Let's explain verbally. What are we doing with this child? You think it doesn't attract. Well, there's something he's holding right there.

C: Magnifying glass.

T: What does the magnifying glass tell us?

C: Not understood voice-speaking all together

T: He's examining it, isn't he?

C: It shows that he is pulling the animal.

T: He magnetized the animal, which animal he magnetized is now better understood. He magnetized birds.

C: No, a seagull.

T: The seagull is a bird. Who said that? Ali Kemal, the seagull is a bird, isn't it?

C: Not a bird, bird-not understood

T: But I didn't recognize them as seagulls anyway, but I don't know what they are.

C1: A flying, C2: Bird type of seagull, C3: Cormorant

T: You think so?

C: Cormorant

T: Maybe, I don't know very well. I only know that the cormorant is black. (PT05, Observation)

Another important dimension in facilitating children's voices was respecting their willingness to express themselves and attend events. During observation sessions, acknowledgment of children's willingness was examined within the instances when teachers gave information to children that they do not have to take part when possible:

T: Meryem? **Meryem, can you tell your friends what happened when you got chicken pox?**

C-Other: When you have chicken pox, you get spots here.

T: But I'm talking to Meryem. Meryem, what happened to your body? [Teacher waits a few seconds] **Do you want to tell us?** Maybe something like this will happen to others too, don't you want to say? **(PT06, Observation)**

Additionally, teachers reflected on their in-classroom practices regarding how they respected children's willing to take part in events/activities when possible:

*For example, in a class of 23 children, each child has different desires and expectations. For instance, think about the color party. We could say that every child would enjoy it, right? You know, there is music, there are balloons, and whatever. However, a student (Ufuk) in my class doesn't like loud tones of voice. I mean, Melisa complained about the same thing once. They do not want to go to a party there. Unfortunately, acting collectively in a way that will satisfy everyone is impossible. Ufuk seemed really uncomfortable because he covered his ears. He became so unhappy that I couldn't put him in a position where I said, "No, you must stand here." I allowed him; I led him to come into the classroom. **But this time, I encountered problems that others wanted to enter the classroom when he entered.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

*Let me start with Ufuk. **At first, I wasn't so aware, or he wasn't showing it so much; he wasn't declaring it. However, I realized that he seemed very unhappy at color parties, and he expressed it after a certain time with sentences like "I'm very uncomfortable, there's too much noise here, it's a very noisy environment."** At the last party, I asked him to stay for a while and then go inside, and he accepted it. I think I responded to his feelings and needs because he seemed really unhappy and did not enjoy that situation. He was forced to have fun. **At least I tried to show with my sentences and body language that I understood him. I am trying to remember if I could do this every time.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

4.2.2.2. Facilitators Regarding Mediating Comprehension

Having a voice within a community of conversation requires being understood beyond being able to speak. Teachers used various strategies for mediating the comprehension of children within a community of conversation via clarification of children's statements and the promotion of clear articulation so that the voices of children could be heard and understood within the community.

Teachers' widely used strategy was clarifying children's verbal statements (n=259). Clarification of statement covered the instances when teachers clarified what children said by repeating, revoicing and rephrasing their verbal statements during the community of conversation.

Another strategy used by teachers was the promotion of clear articulation (n=66). The findings presented the instances when teachers supported children by providing guidance on how to articulate their thoughts clearly by giving clues about what children attempted to say, guiding children to communicate their thoughts with an understandable voice, and encouraging them to remind conversational ground rules to peers.

C: Market [Noise]

T: You want to go to the market?

C: Speaks like baby with not understood speech.

T: **I don't understand him, I want you to speak like you are old.**

C: I want to buy the groceries.

C-Other: He says the grocery store.

T: **Guys, I want him to talk like his age. (PT05, Observation)**

C: [Speaks while laughing] He's dancing or something, he has a hat.

T: What is it? What did you say? I didn't understand anything. **Wait a minute, I didn't understand at all because you were laughing, I think you're going to say something very funny, what? Say it again.**

C: He throws his hat or something, he makes monkey gestures or something. **(PT05, Observation)**

C: [Unintelligible speech due to speaking in low voice]

T: I didn't understand anything because it was interrupted again by others, and you stopped talking. **But you don't talk a bit either, do you realize that? Can you say it live like this? (PT05, Observation)**

T: Yes, look. Deniz has brought a very different [C: Car] material. Can you sit down?

C: [Noise]

T: Can you sit down?

C: [Noise]

T: **Do you feel that they are listening to you right now?**

C: [Noise]

T: **Shall we say it? Shall we say, "Can you guys listen to me?"**

C: Can you guys listen to me?

T: Look, Deniz doesn't always participate, he did it very carefully, so he wanted to participate very much, you know. Let's listen to what he used as material. **(PT05, Observation)**

T: Derya, Halil, can you listen to your friends on the spot?

C: [Noise]

T: Yes [Noise]. Can you try to listen here? [Noise] Your friend is telling you.

C: [Noise]

T: **Kemal, could you ask your friends to listen to you?**

C: [Unintelligible speech]

T: You have never been heard, not even by me.

C: I want you to hear my voice (low voice)

T: **Can you please listen to me?**

C: Can you please listen to me? **(PT05, Observation)**

4.2.2.3. Facilitators Regarding Extension of Talk

To extend the communication with the involvement of children's voices, teachers used the follow-up talk move strategies, including the sharing, expanding, and clarifying, in varying degrees (Figure 23).

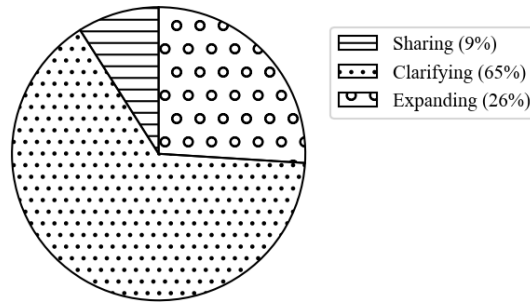


Figure 23 *Distribution of Teachers' Follow-Up Strategies*

Sharing involves the instances of teachers when they explicitly asked to children to share ideas on the topic of discussion with mostly open-ended questions (e.g., What do you think about that? Is there anybody who wants to share their views on the issue?).

T: I wonder why, does anyone have any idea? **(PT06, Observation)**

T: Yes, what could he be talking about here? **(PT06, Observation)**

T: Yes, we can also say compassionate. Does anyone know what compassion means? **(PT05, Observation)**

Clarifying involves teachers' repeating, rephrasing, or revising the questions asked via mostly descriptive questions directed to children. Children mostly responded to clarification questions with brief talk moves instead of extending the ongoing talk.

T: **They are covered in black coal dust and trying to close their eyes. What are they trying to be?**

C1: Shooting star, C2: Ball.

T: **There is no moon in the night sky. What is my purpose when I am covered in black coal dust?**

C1: Shooting star, C2: Closing the eyes

T: **No, no, not like that, in a black sky like this?**

C: To be a shooting star.

T: What is my goal?

C: To be a shooting star.

T: Before that, maybe we don't know it. Before that?

C: The sky, the sky.

T: **I'm trying to be like the sky, right? I mean, what am I trying to be?**

C: The sky, you close your eyes and fall on the roof.

T: **Can you see me standing in a black sky, covered in black coal?**

C: No.

T: **What are they trying to be then?**

C1: I know, but I won't say, C2: Coal

T: They are trying to be invisible, guys. They are trying to be invisible. They are covered in black dust; they are trying to be invisible. **(PT05, Observation)**

On the other hand, teachers mostly asked clarification questions to children in response to the child-initiated speech:

C: Teacher, there are two teachers here. It would be easier if there were three teachers.

T: **What would be easier to do?**

C1: Everything; C2: Well, there are already three teachers.

T: **Do teachers make our work easier?**

C: There are already three teachers here, one, two, three

T: Yes. How lucky you are, there are so many teachers. **(PT06, Observation)**

C: I go to my mother's workplace and help her and earn.

T: **Do they really give money in return for what you do and help? or do they already give it to you?**

C: They really do. **(PT05, Observation)**

Teachers' other strategy was asking expanding questions. Expanding involves the instances of teachers explicitly asking for saying more, adding on, expanding on, and explaining the reasons behind (e.g., why, what else). Expanding questions were usually followed by teachers' clarification questions to invite children for extended contributions:

T: **And do you sometimes feel like MooLaLa?**

A: Yes-No

T: For example, when your mother or father said this is not suitable for you (C: don't wear these shoes), was there anything you insisted on doing? What happened later? Did you wish you had listened to your mother? **(PT06, Observation)**

T: Well, I would like to ask a question like this: **What happens when we don't recycle these wastes, glass, paper, bottles, and plastics, but we throw them all in the garbage, so we recycle them?** **(PT06, Observation)**

T: So, you don't make money. But where does your money come from? I am spending a lot of money now, I wonder.

T: Can you raise your finger and tell me? **Where does the money come from? I know you don't work anywhere.** **(PT05, Observation)**

C: We shouldn't talk when the teacher is talking.

T: **Only when the teacher is talking? It would help if you thought a little bit more.**

C: And when our friends are talking.

T: **Why?**

A: Because the sounds get mixed. **(PT05, Observation)**

4.2.3 Summary of The Findings of Second Sub-Research Question

This section presented the findings regarding how children manifest their voices and how teachers facilitate children's expression throughout circle time. Findings illustrated that children had windows of expression, including verbal and non-verbal ways (e.g., emotional expression, exhibition of unacceptable behaviors) to make themselves seen and heard. For verbal expression, children expressed themselves via child-initiated speech for various purposes and contributed to the community of conversation with either brief or extended talk moves. Findings illustrated that teachers were aware of the need to be seen and heard in response to children's non-verbal communication initiatives. Teachers' strategies to facilitate children's expression were identified concerning teachers' reflections in interviews and in-classroom observations. Accordingly, teachers' strategies were presented as informing and respecting, mediating children's comprehension, and extending talk with dialogic talk strategies. Within the community of conversation moment, the distribution of facilitation strategies and analysis of the flow of communication between teachers and

children illustrated that teachers dominantly facilitated the expression of individual children via informing, mediating comprehension, or clarification. Thus, findings pointed out that teachers limitedly invite other children to add/contribute to ongoing communication with the strategies of sharing and expanding.

4.3. Audience: Communicating Children’s Views with Due Weight

Another target of this investigation was to present findings regarding how teachers took the role of being an audience for communicating children’s views with due weight. For this aim, analysis of pre-and post-interviews with teachers, along with the examination of in-classroom observations, field notes, and analytical memos, were consulted for the analyses.

In the findings, the underlying concepts of being an audience were presented as teachers’ observed and reported strategies for active listening and any possible challenges/obstacles they reported in front of being an audience to the voice of children. Figure 24 summarizes the findings regarding communicating children’s views with due weight.

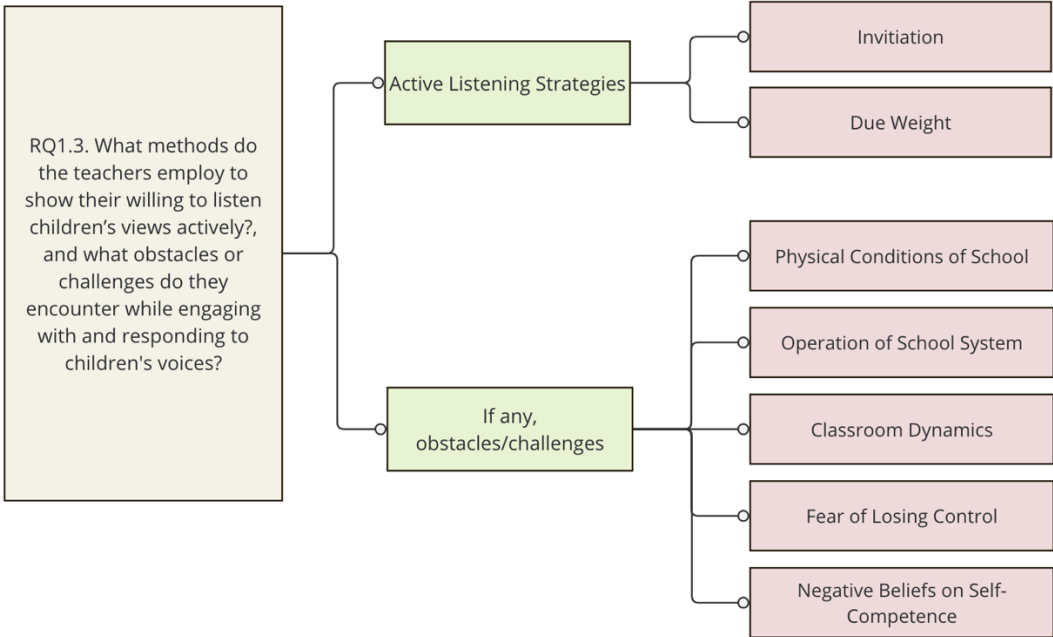


Figure 24 Summary of the Findings of the Third Sub-Research Question

4.3.1. Teachers' Strategies for Active Listening

Active listening encompasses teachers' strategies to show their willingness to listen to children's views by kindly inviting them to share and giving due weight to their opinions. Findings regarding the active listening dimension of being an audience were recruited from the analyses of in-classroom observations and interviews.

The instances of community of conversation throughout circle time activities were analyzed to illustrate the findings of how teachers invited children to share more and acknowledged children's voices as the audience by giving due weight to the views. Findings presented that the dimensions of active listening included the strategies for extending children's ongoing talk (e.g., clarifying or expanding) and the instances of expressing willingness as an audience through encouragement and showing wonder to hear more (e.g., Do you want to share/add something?, I wonder your idea on..., what do you think about...?, Do you want to add something on...?).

In the post-interview, PT05 reflected on the necessity of regarding children's willingness in teacher-child communication through informing and respecting:

Instead of directing children while saying, "We are not doing this, we are not doing that", the kind of language needs to be like, "Shall we do it? Do you want to do this? Who wants to do it?". It might seem like something simple but essential thing to do. On April 23rd, I introduced the song to the children to listen; I told them about the celebration and said, "Shall we do something like this?" (PT05, Post-interview)

*When asking the child questions, I think the language of the conversation needs to include statements like "This is what I do; what do you think about it?". For example, you don't enjoy to engage talk with some people. They always talk about themselves and what they do. However, for communication, someone says something and invites you to share something about yourself because you need to share. **Otherwise, it is solely about me; it's not about the other person at all.** Let's say you shared about something, then when you realize that it's a personal sharing, you could say, "Have you ever experienced this situation? Or what would you do?". That's what makes the*

communication and the relationship. Thus, children need to start doing that at a very young age. (PT05, Pre-interview)

Through pre-interviews, teachers reflected on how they knew about children's views and invited them to share more. Accordingly, teachers' strategies were identified as standing back and observing children, providing windows of opportunities for expression, and extension of talk:

T: When we observe them when we stand back a little bit, it could be understood by the questions they ask, the interest they show in the environment, and their tendencies. I'm not just thinking about the classroom right now. When we look outside the school, someone might ask about the sound in the park, someone might ask about the weather in the sky, and so on. Thus, observing children even playing in a park to explore what children pay attention to could give clues. While not every child asks about things around them, some children's questions reveal themselves and their interests. There is no need for extraordinary things to know about children. We could observe children's competencies even from the routine things we do. (PT05, Pre-interview)

Well, this is something that comes out more in free time activities. We can sometimes see it in planned activities at school. But since we have the chance to spend more one-on-one time with children in free time, we can see it there. Sometimes, in planned activities, for example, the child does different things than his/her friends; he/she does something more beautiful, that is, he/she is interested in something, and he/she always gravitates towards the same thing, for example. Free time is a more decisive point for me because I have more chances to chat with them, get to know them, and see what they are doing. What did he do in his free time? How did he spend time with his friends? His communication gives us something about the child at that point, and from there, the child reveals himself in the planned practices. (PT06_Pre-interview)

Findings regarding how teachers acknowledged children's voices by giving due weight were presented based on in-classroom observations presenting how teachers inform children that they recognize and validate their contributions, desires, and

thoughts. The pattern elicited from in-classroom observations during the instances of community of conversation were listed in Table 13.

Table 13 *Teachers' Strategies of Ending Talk*

Categories	Definitions
Acknowledgement/Reject	The instances teacher simply accept or reject what children say (e.g., I see, Hi hi, revoicing simply what child said as if confirming it) (n=92)
Comment	The instances teacher remarks, summarizes, reformulates, builds on children's contribution/idea (n=70)
Praise	The instances teacher praises children's contribution (e.g., well-done, great, thank you) (n=36)

4.3.2. Teachers' Challenges in front of Active Listening

Findings presented the challenges of being an audience of children's voices through teacher reports primarily and observing in-classroom practices. Findings illustrated that those challenges originated from either external factors (e.g., the operation of the school, physical conditions) or internal factors (e.g., fear of losing control, negative attributions to self-skills, having rooted beliefs). Investigation of interviews with teachers and in-classroom observations presented the challenges in front of actively listening and acknowledging the voices of children in Table 14.

Table 14 *Summary of the Challenges Regarding Audience*

Categories	Sub-Categories	Data Sources
Operation of School	Intensity of daily and monthly program (n=9)	PSI
	Sudden changes in schedule (n=1)	PSI
	Continues relocation within school (n=1)	PSI
Physical Conditions	Limited outdoor areas (n=2)	PSI
	Risks of high-rise building (n=1)	PSI
	Limitations of class size and arrangement (n=2)	PSI

Table 14. (continued)

Classroom Experiences	Breaking conversational ground rules (n=4), (n=14)	PSI, O
	Limited staff (n=1)	PSI
	Parental factors (n=5), (n=4)	PSI, PRI
	Crowdedness (n=5), (n=2)	PSI, PRI
	Time constraints (n=5)	PSI
	Imbalance btw individual vs group needs (n=2)	PSI, O
	Child characteristics (n=3), (n=2)	PSI, PRI
Attributions to Self	Fear of losing control (n=1), (n=1)	PSI, PRI
	Feeling inefficient (n=1)	PSI
	Having rooted beliefs (n=4)	PSI

4.3.2.1. Challenges Regarding the Operation of School

The observation school was centrally managed by the Ministry of National Education according to the 2023 Preschool Education Program. The school's functioning, which is subject to a half-day program (e.g., daily, monthly plans, branch lessons, in and out-of-school activities), was shaped by the decisions of the school administration. In post-interviews, teachers reported that the challenges originated from the operation of their school limited their chances for active listening.

The underlying challenges regarding the operation of the school are indicated in Table 15. Accordingly, the most reported challenge originated from the intensity of the daily and monthly programs. PT06 shared how the intensity of the program directed by the school administration limited her chances to allocate much more time and opportunity to create spaces for children's expression:

When I look at it as a whole, many factors are restricting us, such as schools' functioning, the pace of the school, and the children... Of course, we say that children have the right to play. We see it as one of the most important rights, but this is a bit ignored when I look at current practices. I see that I had to ignore it. On the one hand, this is something that makes me sad. However, even though children have the right to play, we always divide it; for example, we always cut it down when the child starts a new game. On the other hand, unlike primary schools, children come to the classroom one by one. When they come together and begin to play a bit, time

*passes, and I have to end the children's free play time. They played so well this morning, but I told them, "Children, we need to gather because there was a family participation activity." **Children are so right, so I can't get angry with them too much when they react. I understand their frustration very well. On the one hand, I regret that their right to participate is a bit ignored here.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

4.3.2.2. Challenges Regarding the Physical Conditions of School and Classrooms

The observed classrooms were set within independent public ECE classrooms in a self-contained building. However, this school was the only independent public ECE setting within its neighborhood. Regardless of the age groups, the average number of children within classrooms was 22. Thus, the spaces allocated for children's use in the classroom and common areas were limited, as shared within the statements of PT05:

*I know that public preschools share the same conditions everywhere. Most of them are the same, but the class sizes of this school are very small. I think it's smaller because I've seen bigger schools and classes. **Twenty-two students in such a small school is so much to handle. These conditions are tough to handle; there is nothing else.** (PT05, Post-interview)*

Moreover, small classroom sizes and the architectural layout of the classrooms limited teachers' ability to value children's preferences as an audience. PT05 shared that she could not create a participatory space to address children's preferences due to the constraints of current physical conditions even though the 2013 National Curriculum enlightened her way for physical arrangement strategies (e.g., learning centers):

***While implementing the activities, I don't want everyone to do everything simultaneously.** One group can play free time like this while another group can do something else. But, we can't make it work. If there is a center for that day or an art activity according to the subject, some people may want to do it right then and there. There was something called a center in the 2013 National Preschool Education Program. When I started my master's degree, I learned about these centers. When I returned to my previous schools, I actively transformed it into a classroom center. I loved the centers in our daily activities because children could get a chance to pass from one center to another to read books, play games, or practice rhythm. However,*

*in my previous school, I could not create centers in my classroom due to administrative issues. In this school, the classroom structure did not allow me to place centers around the classroom. **The physical environment is critical.** (PT05, Post-interview)*

Additionally, PT06 pointed out that the challenges originated from the limited accessibility of available physical opportunities within the school due to the constraints in the physical environment:

***On the one hand, I understand children, and I know how much they really need open air.** I took them to the park yesterday; they were pleased. For a long time, the floors in our park had been raised, and they were swollen like this. They were pleased when we took the children to the park for the first time since the beginning of term. Naturally, when it happened yesterday, they were expecting it today. (PT06, Post-interview)*

4.3.2.3. Challenges Regarding the Classroom Experiences

Even though the issues regarding classroom experiences were not independent of the overall school climate and upper layers influencing the whole education system, teachers mainly reflected on the factors influencing their in-classroom interactions with children regarding listening to and giving due weight to the expression of children. Table 14 presents the challenges reported by teachers. Accordingly, the most apparent challenges were the time constraints, crowdedness, and parental factors, followed by teachers' attributions to child characteristics.

PT06 shares how time constraints in daily flow restrict her from creating an environment to listen to the voices of children:

I would like to have a relaxed time there. I wouldn't want to think about the time constraints. For example, I would like to have a time when I can give my full attention to children and allow them to talk without stressing about where I will be late and how many minutes I have left. (PT06, Post-interview)

If I had time, I would like to write down one by one what the children drew there because there are children's drawings but not any notes about them. You know, I would like to be able to write a note there, even if it is a small note about what they intended to tell while drawing a picture. But, because of the crowdedness and the anxiety about the deadline, I do not know how much I could do exactly as much as I imagined. I think it is not even 50 percent. (PT06, Post-interview)

Moreover, PT05 reflected on how crowdedness limited her to engage in deeper communication with children:

I like to engage in deeper relations with children. I love to go deeper with them. But, now, I could not conduct children in that way. That's why it makes me very sad. Honestly, I feel like I am not a teacher under these conditions. (PT05, Pre-interview)

On the other hand, teachers shared how parental factors influence their in-classroom practices with children to regard children's needs and desires:

Usually, I complain that it is a challenging class. These complaints start with the parents. When I relieve my tension, my class doesn't seem that difficult, but those external conditions constantly push me... Not a day goes by that I don't get such annoying messages from parents. Their style is annoying; how could I be better? I'm human. Our class becomes more fun when I leave those things and become more involved with my children. So we enjoy being together. (PT05, Post-interview)

PT06 shared her complaints regarding how child characteristics (e.g., communication style, selfishness, impatience) inhibited them to engage in participatory dialogue:

I also want to turn another corner and say something. Sometimes, children make their decisions in a way that imposes them. Is the authoritarian in me coming out here, too? They impose their desires like "We will play a game." I can say that I have come across these kinds of things more recently, such as the child expressing his/her decision in an imposing and destructive way. (PT05, Pre-interview)

*Yes, it happens because they are children, but some children think totally about themselves. So, they never think of anything else. **Some children do not care at all or***

*care very little about their peers' needs. This time, it seems unfair for other children who could postpone their pleasure under any circumstances, even if they want it somehow. These children say, "I am delaying this right now. I want it, but I can't delay it." It is unfair to those children to have the same things as those who cannot hold it. Sometimes, I don't know. But all children can do it. After all, they are all the same age, and there may be a month difference. Yes, they come from different families. **But if some can do it, at least others can strive for it.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

Moreover, PT06 shared an example leading to her confusion about addressing the individual needs of children influencing group experiences:

*For instance, Sinan did something with Lego. There are little tiny blocks, you know, Lego City. They always want to put them up on the cabinet, they want to put that piece they made up. **I let them do that at first, and then I realized that this time, they were taking ownership of what they put away.** You know, "I made it; I can play." **But it causes trouble in the next play times. When the other child attempts to do something, and there is no piece.** Another child says to him, "That's mine; I made it." I said to him, "Look, blocks are to be played with and broken; that's what they are made for. When you place it on a cabinet, other children are deprived of that right; he cannot use the material you use." **I am explaining this. But, I wonder how much they understand.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

Additionally, examination of in-classroom observations presented instances when children disrupt the participatory space and prevent teachers from listening to them by interrupting the expression of other children by breaking conversational ground rules that constrain teachers from becoming audience members.

C: [Noise]

T: I'm going to say something. We're talking about Çanakkale right now [Noise]. I'm going to say something. One minute, I'm not listening. When you're here, I'm not listening.

C: Teacher?

T: **Ahmet, I'm not going to listen to anything you say right now because you're doing other things.**

C: Teacher?

T:One minute, one minute. Tell me who raised your finger. **(PT05, Observation)**

4.3.2.4. Challenges Attributed to Self

In the post-interviews, teachers reflected on how they conceptualize participation rights by evaluating their classroom practices. They discussed their understanding of children's participation rights, idealized classroom practices, particularly during circle time, and how they could transform the existing handicaps. Findings pointed out that their rooted beliefs, fear of losing control in classroom management, and feeling of inefficiency were the outstanding factors constraining them from becoming the audience.

Teachers attributed the influence of their rooted beliefs for failing to become an audience to the voice of children:

*Actually, I wasn't going to say that there are too many children, etc. **I mean, I was going to turn to myself and say that the biggest obstacle is within oneself.** Even if you come from a traditional place or channel, try to overcome yourself with many things. **(PT05, Post-interview)***

*There may be that free, non-hierarchical person inside me that I want to be, but I also clash with traditionalism. It's both the parenting I saw myself and the school. So it gets into you somewhere and comes out. Sometimes, I also want it to be traditional. I want to speak, and children should listen. **My whole life as a teacher may be about how much I can reduce this.** **(PT05, Post-interview)***

Additionally, PT05 mentioned that she could not listen to children and not incorporate their views when she felt like losing control with the emotions of mostly being anxious:

Because we are also like this, we get training, become teachers, and know everything, right? It doesn't work alone. But I know that I have added a lot to it; I know my struggle on my behalf. If I am not going to be unfair to something, I shouldn't be unfair to myself in this regard because I have struggled a lot, you know, both by taking training

for not being a traditional teacher. But it happens, especially more when I get anxious. Especially when I get anxious, I want everything to stop. When we get anxious, the control goes away; that's when it rises the most. I wish I had control. (PT05, Post-interview)

Teachers shared their thoughts on transforming the handicaps originating from external factors (e.g., time constraints) while pointing to their inefficiencies in overcoming existing challenges:

But all these things need to be more planned and timely. I think we need to do the planning part better. (PT06, Post-interview)

Sometimes, we act to manage that crowd and to make everything quicker. Sometimes a child stops me and says, "Teacher, I want to do it myself". That's great. I mean, it's great. I wish we had heard more like this. (PT05, Post-interview)

4.3.3. Summary of the Findings of Third Sub-Question

This section presented the findings regarding how teachers become the audience for the voices of children via active listening strategies and what barriers they have in that sense. Findings demonstrated that teachers' active listening strategies encompass kind invitation by informing and respecting the willingness of children and expressing the value given their voice by responding to the voice of children (e.g., acknowledgment, comment, praise). Findings recruited from observations indicated that teachers inform children about the issues regarding them and kindly invite children to share to become an audience for their voices. Additionally, findings elicited from interviews unearthed the challenges teachers experienced. Besides external factors (e.g., operation of the school, physical conditions), teachers reflected on their classroom experiences and attributions to self as barriers in front of an audience. Although teachers emphasized the importance of listening to children's expressions, they also stressed the difficulty of pleasing everyone as an audience in a crowded classroom community.

4.4. Influence: Acting Upon Children’s Views Seriously When Appropriate

Beyond facilitating children's voices and being an audience, other investigation issues included how preschool teachers incorporate children's views into decision-making processes and how they respond to children's expression even if these views diverge from their own.

The researcher consulted in-classroom observations, field notes, analytical memos, and pre/post-interviews with teachers to recruit the findings. The findings presented the underlying concepts of the influence dimension in twofold terms: the extent to which children's views are incorporated and the teachers' ways of handling contrasting opinions. Figure 25 summarizes the findings regarding the influence dimension.

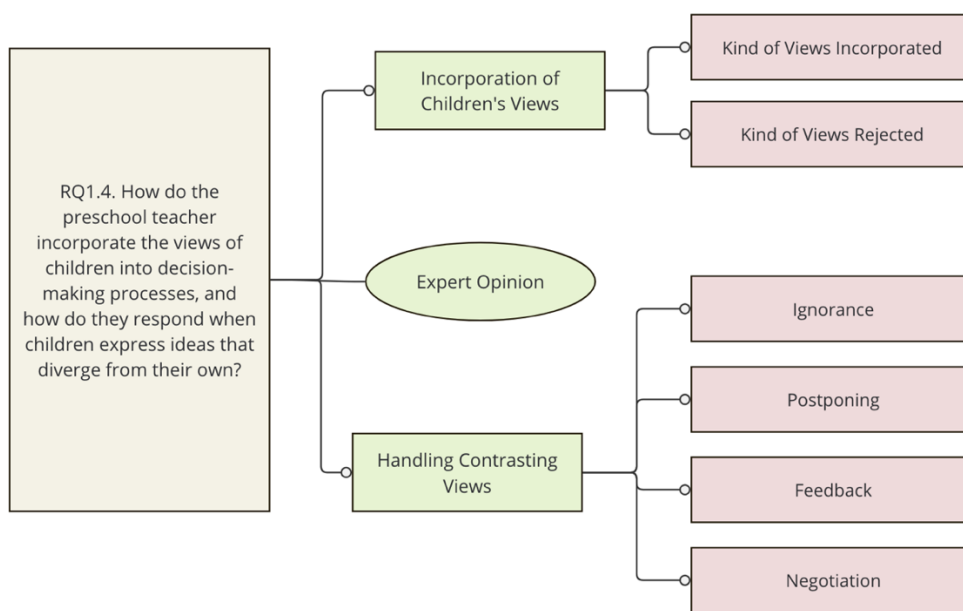


Figure 25 Summary of the Findings of the Fourth Sub-Research Question

4.4.1. Incorporation of Children’s Views

Findings regarding the incorporation of children's views presented how preschool teachers incorporate or do not incorporate children's opinions into decision-making. In this regard, the instances when children initiate the talk to share their ideas/opinions/views throughout the overall circle time were analyzed to explore under

what conditions preschool teachers accept or reject children's views. Examination of in-classroom observations concerning the instances when children talk with teachers to propose their desires/requests/views throughout circle time, from settling down to circle time activities, presented the findings about the context in which teachers incorporate or do not incorporate children's ideas.

Based on the pre-and post-interviews, the findings presented teachers' thoughts on children's decision-making capacity and their strategies for incorporating children's views into decision-making processes throughout the day. PT05 gave examples of the instances in which she incorporated the views of children in-classroom practices while sharing her doubts about the issues regarding the operation of the school:

*It starts with, "Oh, you had trouble getting dressed. Do you need help?" **You can help children directly, but there's a question: "Do you want help?" Children could say whatever they wanted.** It has rarely happened, but children could say, "Teacher," the child stops me and says, "Teacher, I want to do it myself." Very good. It's great. I wish we had heard more like this. **Some want to do it themselves; they don't wish to help because they will do it themselves.** (PT05, Pre-interview)*

*But if you talk about having a say in the school's functioning, I don't know how much the 6-year-olds have a say. I thought I was questioning it right now: How can they have a say? **When they tell me, I listen to them in the classroom and try to do something according to their needs, but I don't know how much this reflects on the school.** (PT05, Post-interview)*

Additionally, PT06 pointed out that children could declare their thoughts in any situation regarding their own lives. On the other hand, PT05 contributed this statement as outlining the need for guidance when necessary:

*I never have anything like that. **You know, the child is their own because sometimes there are things that I learn from them.** Yes, there are times when I say to children, "I never really thought of that; you think very well; it makes a lot of sense." **That's why I don't think about any situations they could not have the right to participate or have a say.** (PT06, Post-interview)*

A mature child can already make all their decisions, except for things like inviting someone to their house. Because sometimes when they invite each other to their home, you should consult your mother before inviting someone to your house. Out of such things, they can already decide something about themselves. (PT05, Pre-interview)

Moreover, findings presented teachers' attempts to balance teacher-child roles with planning and negotiation were shared as follows:

*No matter how much I have a sense of duty, I take these decisions according to them because they are 22, and I am one person. **No matter how many decisions I make, what difference does it make?** I shout a little, call out, and get angry. You know, even though I sometimes have such periods, after all, I realized that I am an adult, and they are children. Here, my ability to control myself should be higher than theirs. I'm talking about even if I get angry; it's my duty to say, "I think I'm a bit angry right now," and calm down. They already know that. Then, I calm them down and listen to them because otherwise, it is not good to listen to them at a point when I am angry. I start by saying, "OK, I understand; I think you feel like this and that; we'll talk about it again today." **Of course, this time, we are trying to reach a consensus about decisions, especially what they say. That way is sometimes tricky.** (PT05, Post-interview)*

Across the phases of circle time, findings pointed out that the instances when teachers incorporated children's views directly (n=22) were to a lesser extent than the attempts to respond/handle contrasting views (n=170). Figure 26 presents what kind of strategies teachers used to respond to and handle contrasting views across the phases of circle time.

		Circle Time Phases		
		Settling down process	Circle time routines	Circle time activity
Strategies of Handling	Ignorance	3	6	37
	Postponing	6	11	27
	Negotiation	7	6	21
	Rejection with feedback	5	8	20
	Simply rejection	1	3	9

Figure 26 Matrix of Strategies to Handle Contrasting Views Across Phases

4.4.2. Handling Contrasting Views

In-classroom observations and interviews illustrated that teachers did not always incorporate children's views. Figure 27 presents the findings elicited from the instances of observations regarding teachers' kind of responses across the issues children stated during circle time activities.

		Teacher's Response to Contrasting Views				
		Simply rejection	Rejection with feedback	Ignorance	Postponing	Negotiation
Issues of Expression	Complaining about	5	7	3	4	14
	Expressing opinion/ideas	0	6	21	3	0
	Asking for requests	2	8	1	15	4
	Getting permission	0	1	4	14	2
	Asking for getting explanation	0	4	5	3	3
	Stating agreement/disagreement	2	1	1	0	1
	Sharing narratives	0	0	0	2	1
	Challenging	1	1	1	0	0
	Evaluating/argument	1	0	0	0	2

Figure 27 Matrix of Teachers' Responses Across Issues of Expression

Teachers' widely used strategies in response to children's questions and sharing outside the community discussion were postponing (n=42) and ignorance (n=36) during the implementation of activities. Occasionally, teachers directly rejected children's expressions without explanations (n=11) or by giving some explanations about rejection (n=28). In some cases, teachers were involved in children negotiating their views and requests (n=28), as indicated by the examples from in-classroom observations:

T: We are making a deal, we are making a deal. You immediately turn things into a joke, but sometimes I don't joke, and sometimes I don't. Sometimes, I speak seriously. I have seen that you don't want to read or listen to books. Is it true? **(PT05, Observation)**

C: Teacher, I'm going out too.

T: You said you wanted to listen to a story, didn't you?

C: Teacher, teacher?

T: Please.

C: I want to leave too.

T: [Took deep breath] I'm going to take a crocodile breath because how do I feel right now? I need to calm down because another group wants to do something else all the time.

C: Not understand speech.

T: I'm finishing the story if you don't want to. I'm asking this. I'm finishing the story.

C: Teacher?

T: Okay? But that doesn't mean you're going to play games. T: No.

C: Teacher, can I go to ...?

T: So when you go there, what are you going to do? I'm asking you, too.

C: Nothing, we won't do anything.

T: Am I supposed to believe that? No, I think when you go there, Mehmet, look Mehmet, look Mehmet, Mehmet, I didn't tell you to go. Will you come instead?

C: Teacher, Serkan makes noise.

T: Let me tell you something ... you are even coming here. I don't read my story, but we calmed down. Because I'm here...

C: [Noise]

T: I talked to you about something before lunch. You know you can't come to school to watch something on YouTube or play with toys, right? (PT05, Observation)

4.4.3. Expert Opinion

Findings about how teachers decide to incorporate children's views illustrated that teachers emphasize the importance of expert opinion as a balance point. Adopting expert opinion in decision-making processes could be seen in instances in which teachers acknowledge children's voices but try to handle contrasting views by explaining and negotiating as experts in children's lives.

Findings from in-classroom observations illustrated some excerpts in which teachers attempted to handle contrasting desires with the reflection of acknowledging children and using their expert opinion:

T: But can I say something (loudly)? Everyone leans back.

C: We leaned back.

T: You want a second playtime; you want to talk more, and you don't want to sit at the same time.

C: I want to go out on the balcony.

T: **It's not possible to have all of these things at the same time, is it? If we talk constantly, the time to do things gets longer. (PT06, Observation)**

T: Yes, are we ready now?

C: Yes.

T: **Look, let's not waste too much time; you remember what I told you before dinner, when we lose time when we waste time. When we waste time, we can't do that free time activity you wanted so much in the morning, the second one. Okay? So, let's start right now. (PT06, Observation)**

T: Yusuf, if I choose you, you decide, but we have chosen him, please. Is it Mehmet's idea if he does what you say? Exactly, let him pick himself. **(PT05, Observation)**

Findings recruited from pre-and post-interviews presented teachers' thoughts on expert opinion and how teachers adopted it in daily practices. To illustrate, PT05 reflected on the necessity of expert opinion in daily practices to have a balance between the desires of children and educational aims and goals:

They say, "Teacher, we don't want to do this, let's not do this, let's do that". Initially, I used to approve of them more, but then I realized it was never like that. That is when they always wanted to do other things, not activity-based. I was more conscious of duty in that regard. Maybe the other one is also a sense of duty, but this is the sense of duty that comes out of me. I may have promised less because they must be done, but I was initially more open to their ideas. (PT05, Post-interview)

Additionally, PT06 shared how she used expert opinion to build balance between individual and group needs while evolving and negotiating ongoing decisions:

Unfortunately, it is not possible to participate collectively in a way that satisfies everyone. But for our school in general, or let me talk about my class, I pay attention

to this. I respond to their opinions, feelings, and emotions as much as possible, as much as my means give me the power and time. Sometimes, I return to my words when the children need what they desire. For example, I said no to them at first. In other instances, I followed children's desires at the expense of my own plans if these desires will satisfy all children within classroom. (PT06, Post-interview)

As a concluding remark, PT05 on children's capabilities and participation rights. She particularly outlined that children are capable enough to declare and defend their rights when their surroundings create safe and secure spaces for them to give a voice to their expression and listen as an audience to incorporate their views.

Children can already tell how much they have rights. For example, they say, "Don't interrupt me while I'm talking." They say that very well, like "I'm talking right now," and add, "Please don't interrupt me." Or they can say it even more harshly, but they can express their rights anyway. If children are given rights, if they think that they have those rights, if they already respect the rights of others, that is, if the parents already respect their own rights and the rights of the child, the child also becomes like this and is in a position to defend their rights (PT05, Post-interview)

4.4.4. Summary of the Findings Regarding Fourth Sub-Question

This section presented the findings regarding how teachers acknowledge and incorporate children's views into the decision-making processes when appropriate. Findings recruited from in-classroom observations presented where, when, and in what issues teachers incorporated or not children's views. Children mostly declared their views during the circle time activity period on the issues of sharing opinions, asking for requests, getting permission, and explanations. Besides the views incorporated by teachers, teachers mostly attempted to handle contrasting opinions in different ways (e.g., postponing, ignoring, giving feedback on rejection, or simply rejecting). Additionally, findings elicited from pre-and post-interviews illustrated that teachers acknowledge and value children's decision-making capacity regarding the issues in their own lives. However, they pay attention to the role of expert opinion to guide children and build balance within the classroom community via negotiation with children.

4.5. General Summary of the Findings

Overall, findings of the current multiple case study illustrated how the enactment of children's participation rights within independent Turkish ECE classrooms during circle time was evident within four interrelated elements of Lundy's participation model: (1) space, (2) voice, (3) audience, and (4) influence.

For the dimension of space, findings presented how teachers arrange circle time context to create a safe and inclusive environment for children's participation with a detailed description of the research context. An investigation of the voice dimension demonstrated how children manifested their voices, and teachers facilitated children's expression throughout circle time. Exploring the audience dimension illustrated how teachers become the audience for children's voices via active listening strategies and what barriers they have. Finally, an investigation of the influence dimension demonstrated the conditions and how teachers incorporate children's views into decision-making processes and how they handle contrasting views. In that sense, in-classroom observations and teachers' reports through pre-and post-interviews pointed out the necessity of expert opinion and negotiation with children to guide children and build balance within the classroom community via negotiation with children. The teachers' views about the conceptualization and enactment of children's participation rights within ECE classrooms were also collected. Accordingly, teachers regard children as capable enough to declare and defend their rights when their surroundings create safe and secure spaces to give a voice to their expression and listen as an audience to incorporate their views. Moreover, at the end of the post-interview interviews, teachers shared their awareness of the possibilities of promoting children's participation rights even through daily activities.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

The overarching purpose of this study was to investigate the enactment of children's participation rights in independent public ECE classrooms of Türkiye during circle time. Circle time is a regular period within the daily flow of MoNE 2013 and 2024 preschool education programs and in the Maarif Model. Framed within Lundy's model of participation, this study intended to explore how findings were evident within the four pivotal and interrelated elements of Lundy's model: space, voice, audience, and influence. Regarding these elements, sub-research questions investigated the different but interrelated aspects of children's participation rights. Accordingly, findings presented how day-to-day teacher-child interactions and classroom discourses could function as spheres for enacting children's participation rights.

In line with these objectives, this chapter consists of a discussion, implications, and recommendations. The first part discusses the findings in relation to the pertaining literature for each sub-research question. The implications present how findings contribute to the field of investigation. The recommendation part sheds light on further research. Finally, the conclusion sums up what this current study intended to say.

5.1. Discussion

This part discussed the key findings based on the literature pertaining to each sub-question. Sub-research questions intended to explore how teachers created safe and inclusive spaces to hear the voices of children and promote their expression, how teachers became an audience for children's expression with strategies of inviting them to share more, and how teachers could acknowledge and incorporate children's views into decision-making processes within day-to-day practices.

5.1.1. Discussion of the Findings Regarding Safe and Inclusive Space

This part discusses the findings about creating safe and inclusive spaces for children's participation rights in ECE classrooms regarding the selection of circle time as a case of investigation, structural arrangements, and teacher-child interactions during that period. Circle time is a regular event within the daily flow of various preschool education programs, including the 2013 and 2024 Preschool Education Programs of Türkiye and Maarif Model. MoNE outlines that period in the daily flow for creating a sharing environment, planning the day, and implementing routines (MoNE, 2013; MoNE, 2024). However, MoNE does not provide implementation guidelines in its programs, excluding mentioning its value and structural aspects (e.g., seating arrangement, timing, routines). This current investigation discussed the circle time context in selected cases in response to the need to elaborate on the issue in Turkish ECE settings considering the enactment of children's participation rights. Besides presenting predominantly descriptive findings about the structural aspects of circle time, this investigation discussed the process quality by examining the experiences of in-classroom practices.

In this study, preschool teachers outlined the importance of circle time as balancing the experiences of practices through teacher-child interactions for engagement, closeness, and classroom management as in line with those of previous studies (Bustamante et al., 2018; Collins, 2007; Verakse et al., 2023). From that sense, circle time could be interpreted as a pathway to balance child-centered and teacher-directed approaches throughout the school day to create space for children's expression and incorporation of views. However, findings recruited from observing the experiences of in-classroom practices were not always convenient with teachers' statements for both structural aspects and process quality. The findings for construction and quality aspects of circle time were discussed based on the previous studies noting the importance of circle time for compliance with norms of structural aspects (Koczela, 2021), balancing teacher-child roles from planning to evaluation (Sak et al., 2018; Verakse et al., 2023), following developmentally appropriate practices in managing teacher-child interactions (Zaghlawan & Ostrosky, 2011; Zak-Doron & Perry-Hazan, 2024).

The initially presented descriptive findings of the current study examined the structural aspects of circle time in observed classrooms (e.g., sitting arrangement, timing, duration, participants, materials, and activity types). In the case of this investigation, descriptive findings were found to be not always parallel to the norms and utility of circle time events in ECE contexts (Koczela, 2021). In contrast to the expected average duration, the total time allocated for the phases of circle time (e.g., settling down process, circle time routines, activity period, and follow-up) was more than 30 minutes. Moreover, members of the circle escaped the chance to meet at the beginning of the school day as participant teachers mostly initiated circle time events after breakfast or meals by complaining about the intensive school schedule and not coming to the school simultaneously. Therefore, children and teachers mostly came together as if they had begun another activity period after free play and meal time. The harmony within the circle could be interpreted as broken due to the reasons for meeting lately, such as escaping the chances of sharing initial thoughts, excitements, and worries and not planning the day together.

Another outstanding dissonance with the norms of structural arrangement was related to the seating arrangement and time management. In one of the observed classrooms, children rarely met in a circle-shaped sitting order. Instead, they sat on chairs around long rectangular-shaped tables, and the children mostly complained about not seeing or hearing teachers or peers. Also, findings regarding teachers' difficulties with time management could be interpreted as possible causes of children's expression in unacceptable ways. For instance, when teachers and children were engaged in conflicts about seating arrangements, the time allocated for sharing in the circle time activity phase was restricted. During in-classroom observations, children sometimes requested teachers to end the activities with either verbal complaints or with the expression of inappropriate behaviors. Parallel to the study of Zaghlawan and Ostrosky (2011), developmentally inappropriate practices of preschool teachers in observed classrooms could be interpreted as leading some children to feel displeased. Even though circle time has the potential to become a space for children's expression, as supported by teachers' reflection on post-interviews, the inconsistency in teachers' statements and practices could be attributed to teachers' needs to gain skills for child participatory management of circle time to overcome the barriers of external and internal factors.

On the other hand, this study elaborated on the process quality of circle time by discussing teacher-child roles, the nature of the conversation, and teachers' strategies of facilitation. Findings recruited from observations could be interpreted as teachers having difficulty balancing teacher-child roles, as indicated in dominantly teacher-initiated-teacher-led activities and instances of conversation dominated by teachers' instructions. Even though participant teachers included circle time in the daily flow, dominantly teacher-directed implementation of circle time activities could result in restricted opportunities to create a safe and inclusive sharing environment for children and teachers. These findings align with the study of Verakse et al. (2013), underlying the need to balance teacher-child roles to support children's autonomy while addressing their learning and development needs within a safe and inclusive circle time context.

Compared to what is expected for ideal circle time practices (Koczela, 2021), in-classroom observations could be referred to as teacher dominance during circle time, restricting children's full participation and satisfaction from being within the circle. In post-interviews, teachers reflected on their inability to implement more participatory practices and shared what they needed for developmentally appropriate practices. Parallel to the findings of the study of Sak et al. (2018), teachers mainly reflected on external factors that prevented them from implementing idealized circle time events with child-centeredness. External barriers were mainly attributed to the time constraints due to the intensity of the daily schedule and difficulties of allocating available time within crowdedness. Even though these factors seemed to be determinants of teachers' current conditions, these external obstacles could be overcome with strategies consulting developmentally appropriate practices (Verakse et al., 2013; Sak et al., 2018; Zak-Doron & Perry-Hazan, 2024).

Preschool teachers are expected to facilitate children's expression by creating safe and inclusive spaces. Categories of teachers' facilitation strategies included conversational ground rules, mediators, and the operation of classroom discourses. As among the most outstanding strategies, participant teachers consulted the conversational ground rules during circle time. Some of those rules were directly related to teachers' attempts at classroom management (e.g., getting permission to speak and sitting correctly on

chairs). In contrast, others sounded to facilitate children's expression directly or create an audience for this expression (e.g., respectful listening, building on the community of conversation). Throughout the phases of circle time, even though conversational ground rules functioned to give voice and be an audience for children's expression, the dominance of teacher directives mostly raised the tension within classrooms while restricting the creation of safe and inclusive spaces. To illustrate, participant teachers dominantly attempted to eliminate classroom interruptions, particularly by explicitly stating rules to children instead of negotiating and constructing rules. Relying on the strategies indicated in the study of Zak-Doron and Perry-Hazan (2024), teachers' current strategies could be approached to transform them into participatory disciplinary practices.

In response to the studies (Bustamante et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2015; Chen & Kim, 2014; Koczela, 2021; Mumcuoğlu, 2022) examining the studies about circle time pointing out that existing studies were restricted to examining its structures (e.g., seating arrangement, routines, types of activities), this study contributed to the discussion of the teacher-child interactions for process quality during the implementation of circle time activities. Through post-interviews, participant teachers reflected on their observed practices. They shared how they could create an idealized circle time context to get to know children better and create space for their expression and involvement. Besides complaining about external factors, they also criticized themselves for the inefficiencies in their current implementations. Parallel to the recommendations in the pertaining literature (Verakse et al., 2013; Sak et al., 2018; Zak-Doron & Perry-Hazan, 2024), these critics mainly focused on the need to balance teacher-child roles in the planning and implementing activities. Therefore, the study's findings regarding structural and process quality aspects of circle time could refer to the dependency of children's expression in a safe and inclusive environment to teachers' awareness and attempts to recover their existing practices to overcome the barriers attributed mainly to external factors.

5.1.2. Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children's Expression

During the circle time period, how children communicated their views to teachers was discussed with respect to the exploration of children's windows of expression, issues of expression, and the roles of preschool teachers in the facilitation of children's voices.

With the evolving understanding presented in the studies of childhood concerning children's agency and competence, children have begun to be considered as the right holders for advocating their rights (Ben-Arieh, 2008; James & James, 2004; Aksoy-Kumrular & Yilmaz, 2024). One of the most concrete equivalences of this changing understanding could be the provision and implementation of Article 12 of UNCRC, supported by Article 13, which claims that children can express views regarding issues concerning their lives regardless of age limit. However, the implementation of Article 12 and the evaluation of the image of child and childhood bring discussions concerning the children's autonomy, capabilities, and participation (Aksoy-Kumrular & Yilmaz, 2024). However, the studies attempting to solve the misunderstanding highlight the need to hear children's voices with acknowledgment, even though these views were not always incorporated by adults (Lundy et al., 2024). In findings, teachers' views supported this argument, claiming that children could declare their views in any situation in different ways. The aforementioned studies and findings of the current investigation could refer that children have the capacity to express their views on any issues regarding them, even if these views are not always incorporated.

Moreover, discussion from the ethnographic study of Blaisdell (2016) illuminates that children's expression is a lived experience and criticizes the conceptualization of voice for not outweighing the idea that children already have voices beyond giving voice to children. The findings of the current investigation seem consistent with the acknowledgment of Blaisdell (2016) that children attempted to express themselves in various ways on a broad spectrum of issues without teachers' initiative. Of the phases of circle time, the activity period was the time when children mostly expressed themselves during the community of conversation by initiating talk to express views and asking questions or contributing to the extension of ongoing talk. Even though

children mainly expressed themselves verbally, they sometimes communicated emotionally with teachers (e.g., crying) or by taking teachers' attention with inappropriate behaviors (e.g., screaming, running). Besides initiating speech to express views, children made their voices heard by adding to ongoing communication. The limited expansion of child-initiated speech might be due to teachers' tendency to involve children in teacher-initiated ongoing communication.

On the other hand, findings examining teacher-child roles during circle time activity periods (e.g., sharing, storytelling) indicated that teachers occasionally acknowledged child-initiated speech. In contrast, teachers tend to recognize the contributions of children who get permission from them to speak. Nevertheless, participant teachers paid attention to the need for kindness in language directed to children to ask children's views instead of giving directives to them. Even though teachers put forward external factors (e.g., crowdedness, time constraints) as barriers to promoting children's expression, their inefficiencies in creating inclusive spaces due to the dominance of teacher-initiated-teacher-led activities seemed to limit children's chances to express themselves via child-initiated instances. Parallel to these findings, the study by Shaw (2019) concerning engaging children's voices by practitioners within ECE settings recognizes the pressure of external factors limiting teachers from engaging in children's views. However, the findings, which are in line with existing studies, could be interpreted that practitioners need to follow alternative ways of listening and responding to children's voices, with the obligation of listening to children to understand their needs and interests.

Additionally, teachers' operation of classroom discourses functioned to elicit children's voices throughout the community of conversation. Previous studies exploring the potential of talk moves between teachers and children to progress children's participation noted that teachers' attempts to extend talk with sharing, clarifying, and expanding strategies could create much more space for children's full recognition (Graham & Fitzgerald, 2010; Theobald et al., 2011; Alexander, 2018). Even though participant teachers extended children's voices with these dialogic talk strategies, their attempts were mainly directed at inviting children to share their ideas or clarify what they intended to say. In contrast, teachers occasionally consulted the

expanding strategies (e.g., why, what else). These findings corroborate the findings of Mascadri et al. (2021) claiming that monologic talk moves outnumber expanding strategies even in ECE classrooms. Teachers' limited awareness, skills, and external conditions (e.g. crowdedness, time constraints) could explain teachers' limitations in expanding children's contribution with dialogic talk moves to operate dialogic classroom discourses.

Current literature about research processes with and about children guides scholars to conduct participatory research to recognize and promote children's voices (Ben-Arieh, 2008; Ranta, 2023). In response to this recommendation, this current investigation included children's voices in the research processes by examining their real-life day-to-day experiences. Observation of classroom discourses and examination of teacher-child interactions gave space for children's inclusion through examining their verbal and non-verbal talk. However, considering their participation rights, children's ideas could not be asked within the study's limits. If the researcher could ask the children for their opinion, she would ask them what they think about the 'sharing' activity and the conversation there. Even though the researcher considered that the sharing activity provides affordances for children's expression and satisfies them with the chances of recognition, one of the children stated, "I do not want to communicate" at the beginning of the sharing activity. As indicated in the findings and discussed under the heading of space, dominantly teacher-initiated-teacher-led activities probably restricted the chances of children to feel seen and heard even in sharing activities. At that point, even sharing activities might not satisfy children's need for expression when conducted in developmentally inappropriate ways.

5.1.3. Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children's Audience

Having a voice without an audience could not contribute to the full enactment of children's participation rights in a real sense (Murray, 2019; Mascardi et al., 2021; Correia et al., 2022; Tholin & Jansen, 2012). Preschool teachers around children are responsible for giving due weight to young children's voices as a requirement of ethics of care (Clark et al., 2005; Bath, 2011). Regarding children as meaning-makers in their own lives with the evolving image of child and childhood (Prout & James, 1997;

Mayal, 2000; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014; Ben-Arieh, 2008; Rinaldi, 2001; Clark, 2006; Murray, 2019), pertaining literature outlines the importance and necessity of adopting active listening strategies for adults in daily interactions and throughout research processes to understand and respond to the children. Findings recruited from this study illustrated that teachers shared their recognition of children's expression by showing respect and giving due weight, which is consistent with the literature mentioned above. However, experiences of in-classroom practices illustrated that teachers' observed practices were not always in line with their acknowledgment.

Considering the operation of classroom discourses (Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Mascadri et al., 2021), study findings presented that children were mostly listened to in monologic exchanges by teachers instead of expanding children's voices with dialogic talk moves. Thus, the current investigation showed that the monologic talk moves governed by teachers outnumber the dialogic exchanges in response to children's attempts to share their ideas. In dialogic exchanges, teachers mostly limited their active listening strategies to inviting children to share or clarify what children intended to say. The possible explanation for limited dialogic talk strategies might be related to the dominance of teacher-initiated-teacher-led activities and one-to-one talk restricting children's chances of engaging in a community of conversation with the facilitation of teachers.

Some studies examine the connection between children's recognition by an audience and children's satisfaction with the enactment of children's participation rights (Mascadri et al., 2021; Graham et al., 2022; Correia et al., 2024). Even though this current investigation could not ask directly about children's perspectives in that sense, in-classroom observations and teacher reports indicated that teachers were aware of the children's need to be listened to even if they could not create an open and active listening climate. Parallel to the findings of existing studies (Sak et al., 2018; Shaw, 2019), participant teachers initially attributed the external factors to explain the discrepancy with their practices observed. However, teachers' altered reflections through the end of the study about the possible influence of internal factors (e.g., lack of skills, fear of losing control) raise the possibility of transforming teachers' existing

practices on behalf of children's participation rights at the expense of external handicaps.

5.1.4. Discussion of the Findings Regarding Children's Influence

Even though the origins of children's rights go back to the Renaissance and Industrial Revolution for protection and provision rights, the flourishing of participation rights with the idea of influencing decision-making processes is the reflection of contemporary understanding about the capabilities and competence of children as meaning makers in their lives (Hart et al., 2018). In that sense, beyond creating space for children's expression to hear their voices as an audience, adults around children have the responsibility of acknowledging these views and acting upon them when appropriate with active listening strategies (Lundy, 2007; Lundy et al., 2024). Bath (2011) outlines this as the requirement of "democratic care and practice" for children and overall early childhood settings. Parallel to these notions, through pre-and post-interviews, participants reflected on their acknowledgment of children's decision-making capacity by claiming that children could declare and advocate their rights when their surroundings create the environments for their expression and listen to them with due weight.

Children's participation rights encompass having a say in matters concerning them and having a respectful and responsible audience to take seriously the incorporation of views (Quennerstedt, 2015; Theobald, 2019; Lundy et al., 2024). In that sense, children's participation rights were strongly connected to the dimension of influence in conjunction with the interrelated concepts of space, voice, and audience (Lundy, 2007). Within ECE settings, the study of Quennerstedt (2015) conceptualizes what influence means concerning day-to-day practices within early childhood settings. Parallel to their findings, this current investigation illustrated that influence was evident in the resolution of children's views and desires to be known and regarded by teachers. In the findings, participant teachers stated that children are capable agents of declaring and advocating their rights when teachers and parents are willing to listen to them throughout daily interactions with the ethics of care. Moreover, participant

teachers reported that they appreciated children's efforts to declare their views while also complaining about their inefficiencies in emphasizing their opinions more.

Based on the legal documents, teachers are responsible for knowing about children's views and acting upon these views seriously (Theobald, 2019; Correia et al., 2019). Parallel to the findings of pertaining literature (Şallı-İdare, 2018; Urfalıoğlu, 2019; Şişlioğlu, 2022; Turnšek, 2016; Kangas et al., 2016; Koran, 2017; Sandberg & Erikson, 2010; Correia & Aguiar, 2022), participant teachers associated the enactment of participation rights with children's involvement into the activities and engagement in decision-making processes. However, the findings of the current investigation could be interpreted that participant teachers had a limited understanding of decision-making processes because teachers primarily associated the influence with children's chances of making choices among the alternatives adults introduced.

Among the phases of circle time, the most fruitful period was the community of conversation, which was mostly identified during the circle time activity periods. Throughout observation sessions, children mostly attempted to express their views, preferences, and questions during the circle time activities (e.g., sharing and storytelling). Even though children mostly initiated talking to declare their opinions or ask questions, teachers rarely asked children's ideas. Instead, teachers sometimes invited children to make choices among the alternatives or permitted children to share their thoughts about the issues of discussion. Parallel to the studies of Sak et al. (2018), Verakse et al. (2013), and Zak-Doron & Perry-Hazan (2024) about balancing teacher-child roles, the dominance of teacher-directed activities and one-to-one communication between children and teachers could restrict children's chances to declare their views to the classroom community. Such factors seemed to lead teachers to postpone or ignore child-initiated expressions to realize what they had in mind. Teachers occasionally incorporated children's needs into decision-making processes, and they criticized themselves for not planning and negotiating with children and only inviting them to make choices among their pre-established plans.

In the current study, teachers' engagement with children's expression mostly happened in monologic discourses in which children were listened to but not

incorporated into decision-making. Findings indicated that the views that were not incorporated by preschool teachers were more inferior to the incorporated views. Considering the spectrum model of Shier's (2001) for participation, teachers only meet the basic steps of participation by listening and responding to children. Indeed, teachers' inability to support voice and being an audience with dialogical talk moves could be interpreted as limiting children's chances of participation with influence. Parallel to the claims of pertaining literature (Tholin & Jansen, 2012; Gilson et al., 2022; Lundy, 2007; Shier, 2001; Alexander, 2018), the current investigation illustrated that language use of preschool teachers is determinant in the creation of democratic conversation. Accordingly, how teachers engage in talk with children and operate classroom discourse throughout the community of conversation could demonstrate the actualization of children's participation through being asked, respondent, and respected for an opinion as the preconditions of incorporation of views.

Parallel to the findings of Theobald et al. (2012), the findings of the current study could be interpreted that teachers' impetuosity to implement their educational plans in mind and follow the intensive school schedule restricted them from negotiating with children. Even though participant teachers create spaces for children's expression by giving permission to speak and asking for ideas, they usually listen to what individual children mean to say without extending the talk to the classroom community or into the decision-making processes. However, the opportunities for children's participation were limited to the extent of participant teachers' strategies to overcome particularly external obstacles.

Even though participant teachers rarely connected the enactment of participation rights to daily practices due to the possibility of their limited understanding about influence, they shared through the end of post-interviews that children's participation rights are evident in day-to-day interactions during mainly less structured activities, including free play and circle time. In conjunction with this enlightenment, they reflected on how they could transform existing handicaps to enhance children's participation by encompassing more democratic attitudes. These findings were in line with the study of Bath (2001), indicating that the ability to promote children's participation is a technical work that responsible actors, mainly preschool teachers, could improve.

5.2. Conclusion

Acknowledgment, respect, and incorporation of children's voices to make an influence is one of the most profound transformations gained in the context of ECE (Landsdown, 2014), guaranteed by the national and international legal documents of children's rights. With a multiple case study design, this study aimed to contribute to the existing knowledge about children's participation rights in the ECE period in response to the need to elaborate on in-classroom practices besides solely consulting the views of adults.

Framed within Lundy's model of participation (Lundy, 2007; Lundy et al., 2024), this investigation underlined the need to acknowledge children's capability and competence regarding their rights while outlining the necessity of the expertise of adults around children to support the implementation of children's participation rights in conjunction to all other rights. In that sense, adults are responsible for creating safe and inclusive environments for children's expression and becoming an audience to acknowledge children's views with due weight. Within the zone of proximal development, adults around children need to use their expertise to address the needs of children for the enactment of children's human rights, even though children do not share their views on the issues.

Within the limits of the study, the current study's findings illustrated that children's participation rights in ECE settings could be evident within four interrelated dimensions of Lundy's participation model. Correspondingly, this current investigation illustrated that children's participation rights in ECE settings were evident in the resolution of children's views and desires to be known, regarded, and supported by preschool teachers. Even though participant teachers know the importance of considering children's views and acting on them through listening, involving, respecting, and responding to them, they have limited knowledge and expertise to promote children's participation in daily practices to balance teacher-child roles within classroom discourses and experiences of in-classroom practices. Thus, instead of solely attributing handicaps to external factors, the study's findings suggest that teachers must develop their expertise and enhance their strategies to overcome

existing barriers to giving due weight to children's views. However, it should not mean that teachers can act how they want with the justifications for acting on behalf of children.

Parallel to the key aspects of the aforementioned studies, participant teachers reflected on their dilemmas for incorporating children's views while necessitating the need to use their expertise to address the needs of individual children, the classroom community, and the whole school system. Primarily, the findings of the current investigation suggest that teachers need to be supported to enhance their abilities to create safe and inclusive spaces for children's expression and to balance teacher-child interactions in a classroom community by respecting and giving due weight to children's expression.

5.3. Implications

In the previous sections, while justifying the reasons for conducting this study, it was also mentioned how the study's outputs would contribute to various layers of society. With potential implications for various levels of society, this study contributed to exploring how children's participation rights are respected and promoted in everyday classroom practices. Notably, this study scrutinized the circle time period within independent public ECE classrooms of Türkiye as a case of investigation concerning the enactment of children's participation rights through day-to-day practices.

Firstly, the study adds to the literature on children's participation rights in the Eastern world, focusing on Türkiye. Considering the image of the child as linked to the social construction of child and childhood and emphasizing the importance of different layers of society, the indicators identified within this study can contribute to the understanding of children's participation rights and the roles of the environment in the enactment of these rights from socio-cultural perspectives. In the age of global crisis targeting children of all ages, understanding, acknowledgment, and promotion of children's participation rights by responsible actors could empower children to demand and advocate their own protection and provision rights. The current study's findings illustrating children's potential to advocate their rights suggest that the people around

children acknowledge the competent image of a child and facilitate children's expression even through the ECE period. Thus, responsible actors around children, particularly policy-makers, parents, and educators, need to become knowledgeable about the legal documents advocating children's rights and revise their accustomed beliefs on behalf of children's rights.

The findings can benefit preschool teachers by providing insights into communicating better with children and promoting their participation rights with playfulness through daily activities. Playfulness in managing classroom and learning activities guides teachers to become the audience for the voice of children by bypassing children's resistance to the schedule of intensive school day (Vartiainen et al., 2024). Thus, teachers could connect with children's desires instead of commanding them on urgent schedules. For instance, teachers' strategies for lining children up to go to the dining hall, such as making their wagons of train attending adventure, could be one example of playfulness. Playfulness for enacting children's participation rights is connected to teachers' strategies for creating spaces for children's expression and giving due weight to this expression.

Moreover, the study provides valuable insights into how preschool teachers can better recognize and respect children's participation rights through classroom discourses within everyday experiences. By identifying areas where improvements can be made to support children's voices and participation better, the study can inform the development of training and professional development programs for preschool teachers to improve their understanding and implementation of children's participation rights during classroom management and learning practices. Such programs could particularly focus on developing strategies for allowing open-ended discussions with children and improving dialogic exchanges between children and teachers to extend the ideas and contribute to each other. Such practices could enhance children's higher-order thinking skills, social competence, and overall well-being by means of being heard and understood within the classroom community.

Moreover, this investigation's methodology and limitations could guide researchers to design studies and research projects to add to the current findings and explore different

facets of phenomena. For instance, researchers could conduct ethnographic studies to elaborate on the issue with more engagement in research sites and extend the observations from circle time to other activities of daily flow. Collaboration of researchers in the field might ease the inclusion of children from younger ages (e.g., 0-3 years old) with participatory research methods and ethical considerations of studying with children, particularly in the early childhood period.

5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

This study's recommendations for the design of further research, including recommendations regarding the selection and involvement of participants in the research processes, are shared.

Firstly, this current investigation intended to explore the enactment of children's participation rights during the ECE period in response to the need to investigate the practical implications of children's participation rights in early childhood settings instead of solely adopting adults' views around children. In line with this purpose, in-classroom observations were conducted to observe children's ongoing interactions with teachers, and teachers were invited to reflect on their conceptualization of childhood and their understanding of children's participation rights. With such an approach, this study intended not to interfere with natural classroom experiences as much as possible during observation sessions. For further studies, researchers could intensively engage in research site with, for instance, ethnographic research designs and conduct deeper conversations with children to elicit their thoughts and reflections regarding their understanding and enactment of participation rights. In this way, the context of data collection could be extended from circle time to the whole school day. Moreover, there is a need to extend this study with the inclusion of younger children and children with special needs.

Moreover, considering that children's rights are a socially constructed phenomenon, the involvement of people around children (e.g., parents, siblings, school administration, policymakers) in the research processes might enlighten the factors influencing the investigation of children's participation rights to suggest better

practical implications while developing strategies to overcome handicaps. The current study purposefully selected participant teachers based on the case selection interview. Teachers who claimed they acknowledged children's participation rights were involved in the study to observe their in-classroom practices. Thus, for further studies, teachers with a limited understanding of children's rights might be invited for further exploration, and interventions might be developed to enhance the abilities of these teachers with design-based research.

Researchers or educational policymakers can also use the study's findings to develop measurement tools based on the typologies explaining individuals' positioning regarding children's rights. Moreover, indicators identified regarding each dimension of Lundy's participation model could expound the practical implications of children's rights in early childhood settings to form tools for teachers' in-service education practices. The outputs and recommendations of this study can support teachers' personal development and awareness and pave the way for further study of the subject with teachers and pre-service teachers through in-service and out-of-service training.

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APPENDICES

A. TEACHER INVITATION LETTERS

Çocuk Haklarının Keşfine Davetlisiniz!




Sevgili Öğretmenim,

Çocuk Haklarının kolaylaştırıcısı olduğunuza inanan bir araştırmacı olarak, çocukların okul öncesi eğitim ortamlarındaki haklarının keşfi için sizin değerli görüşlerinizi dinlemek istiyorum. İçtenlikle inanıyorum ki, sizin görüşleriniz, çocuk haklarına ilişkin araştırmamı güçlendirecektir.

Sevgiler,

Çocuk Haklarının Keşfine Davetlisiniz!



Sevgili Öğretmenim,

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Okul Öncesi Eğitimi Doktora Programında Prof. Dr. Feyza Tantekin Erden'in danışmanlığı ile Çocuk Haklarını çalışan bir araştırmacıyım.

Okul öncesi eğitim ortamlarında Çocuk Haklarına daha iyi anlamak için sizin değerli fikirlerinizi dinlemeyi istemekteyim. Çocuğa ve çocukluğa dair bakış açımız üzerinden gerçekleşecek olan sohbetimiz aracılığı ile Çocuk Haklarına ilişkin bakış açımızı genişletmeyi istiyoruz. İçtenlikle inanıyorum ki sizin görüşleriniz, çocuk hakları araştırmamızı zenginleştirecektir.

Görüşmemiz çevrim içi Zoom programı üzerinden gerçekleşecek olup yaklaşık 40 dakika sürecektir. Görüşme davetimizi kabul etmeniz durumunda sizlere en uygun olan zaman için görüşme planlanacaktır.

Sorularınız veya ek bilgiler için bize her zaman ulaşabilirsiniz. Sizleri heyecanla bekliyoruz ve çocuklara dair fikirlerinizi dinlemek için sabırsızlanıyoruz!

Sevgiler,

B. PRE-INTERVIEW (CASE SELECTION)

Tarih:

Görüşme Mekanı:

Görüşmeci:

Görüşülen Kişi:

Eğitim Durumu: Lise - Meslek Yüksekokulu - Lisans - Yüksek Lisans - Doktora

Meslekte Tecrübe Yılı:

Cinsiyet:

Yaş:

Öğretmenlik Yaptığı Yaş Grubu:

Sınıftaki Çocuk Sayısı:

1. Size göre çocuk kimdir? Çocuğu ve çocukluđu nasıl tanımlarsınız?
 - a. Sizce ne zamana kadar çocuktunuz, ne zamandan itibaren artık çocuk olmadıđınıza inanıyorsunuz? Neden?
 - b. Kendinizi çocuk olarak hayal ettiđinizde/ya da kendi çocukluđunuza gittiđinizde yetiřkini/yetiřkinliđi nasıl tarif edersiniz?
2. Çocukların yeteneklerini ve ilgi alanlarını nasıl keřfedersiniz?
 - a. Özellikle sınıfınızdaki çocukları düşünüđünüzde, hangi alanlarda iyi olduklarını hangi alanlarda zayıf ya da güçlü olduklarını düşünüyorsunuz? Neden?
3. Tüm gelişim alanlarını düşünüđünüzde, çocukların fiziksel, zihinsel, sosyo-duygusal olgunluk düzeylerini nasıl belirlersiniz?
 - a. Sınıfınızdaki bütün çocukların olgunluk durumlarını nasıl tanımlarsınız?
 - b. Sınıfta daha olgun olduđunu düşünüđünüz çocukları nasıl tanımlarsınız?
4. Çocukların karar verme kapasiteleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?
 - a. Hangi konularda çocuklar karar verebilirler? Hangi konularda karar veremeyeceklerini düşünüyorsunuz? Neden?
 - b. Bir çocuđun karar verebilmek için yeterince olgun olup olmadıđına nasıl anlarsınız? Bu konuda belirleyici unsurlar nelerdir?
 - c. Çocuklar çıkarlarına uygun olan ve olmayan şeyleri nasıl ayırt edebilirler? Hangi durumlarda çocuklar bu ayırımı yapmakta zorlanabilirler?
5. Sizce çocukların kendi yaşamlarından daha memnun hissetmeleri için ihtiyaç duydukları şeyler nelerdir?
 - a. Bu ihtiyaçları kimler nasıl öngörebilir?

6. Sizce çocukların haklarını savunmak, korumak ve sürdürmek kimlerin sorumluluğundadır? Neden?
 - a. Bu kişiler bu sorumluluğu nasıl gerçekleştirebilirler?
 - b. Sizce çocuklar kendi hakları konusunda bilgi, beceri ve söz sahibi midir? Neden?
 - c. Çocukların kendilerini ilgilendiren meselelerde fikir beyan edemeyeceği durumlar var mıdır? Örnek verir misiniz?
7. Siz sınıfınızda çocuk haklarının öğrenilmesi ve sürdürülmesi için neler yapıyorsunuz? Sınıfınızdaki çocukların fikirleri ve görüşlerine nasıl yer veriyorsunuz?

C. CONSENT FORMS (TEACHERS AND PARENTS)



EKLER

EK-1 Katılım Onam Formları (Öğretmen ve Veli)

Öğretmen Onam Formu

Sayın Katılımcımız

Katılacağınız bu çalışma, “Okul Öncesi Öğretmeninin Söylem Biçimi Ve Çocukların Katılım Haklarına İlişkin Sınıf İçi Uygulamaları: Karma Yöntemler Durum Çalışması” adıyla, Şeyda Karan tarafından Prof. Dr. Feyza Erden danışmanlığında Kasım, 2023-Aralık, 2023 tarihleri arasında yapılacak bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırmanın Hedefi: Katılımcı öğretmenlerin çocuklarla karşılıklı söylemlerinde çocukların katılım hakkına ilişkin etkileşimlerini keşfetmektir.

Araştırmanın Nedeni: O Bilimsel araştırma Tez çalışması

Araştırmanın Yapılacağı Yer(ler): İstanbul/Üsküdar-Bağımsız Anaokulları

Araştırma Uygulaması: O Anket

Görüşme

Gözlem

O.....

Araştırma T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın ve okul/kurum yönetiminin izni ile gerçekleştirilmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çalışmada sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Cevaplar tamamıyla gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Veriler sadece araştırmada kullanılacak ve üçüncü kişilerle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Uygulamalar, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular ve durumlar içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakabilirsiniz.

Katılımı onaylamadan önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra bizlere telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Saygılarımızla,

Araştırmacı : Şeyda KARAN

İletişim Bilgileri :

Yukarıda bilgileri bulunan araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

.....

İsim-Soyisim İmza:

Katılımcı Adı-Soyadı :

Telefon Numarası :

Veli Onam Formu

Sayın Veli;

Çocuğunuzun katılacağı bu çalışma, “Bir Okul Öncesi Öğretmeninin Söylem Biçimi Ve Çocukların Katılım Haklarına İlişkin Sınıf İçi Uygulamaları: Karma Yöntemler Durum Çalışması” adıyla, Kasım, 2023-Aralık, 2023 tarihleri arasında yapılacak bir araştırma uygulamasıdır.

Araştırmanın Hedefi: Araştırmanın amacı çocuk-öğretmen sözel etkileşiminde çocukların katılım hakkı kullanımlarını incelemektir. Çocukların katılım hakkı kendilerini ilgilendiren konularda fikirlerini ifade edebilmeleri ve bu fikirlerin uygunsu uygulamaya geçirilmesi anlamına gelmektedir.

Araştırma Uygulaması: Gözlem şeklindedir.

Araştırma T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın ve okul yönetiminin de izni ile gerçekleştirilmektedir. Araştırma uygulamasına katılım tamamıyla gönüllülük esasına dayalı olmaktadır. Çocuğunuz çalışmaya katılıp katılmamakta özgürdür. Araştırma çocuğunuz için herhangi bir istenmeyen etki ya da risk taşımamaktadır. Çocuğunuzun katılımı **tamamen sizin isteğinize bağlıdır**, reddedebilir ya da herhangi bir aşamasında ayrılabilirsiniz. Araştırmaya katılmamama veya araştırmadan ayrılma durumunda öğrencilerin akademik başarıları, okul ve öğretmenleriyle olan ilişkileri etkilemeyecektir.

Çalışmada öğrencilerden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmemektedir. Gözlemlerin doğruluğunun ve güvenilirliğinin sağlanması için araştırmacı tarafından gözlem notlarına ek olarak sınıf içerisinde ses kaydı alınacaktır. Tüm kayıtlar ve notlar araştırmacının şifreli kişisel bilgisayarında korunacaktır. Çocuğunuzun ya da sizin isim ve kimlik bilgileriniz, hiçbir şekilde kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Uygulamalar, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek durumlar içermemektedir. Çocuğunuzun araştırmaya katılmasının onun gelişimine olumsuz etkisi olmayacağından emin olabilirsiniz. Yine de, bu formu imzaladıktan sonra çocuğunuz dilerse katılımcılıktan ayrılma hakkına sahiptir. Araştırma sırasında herhangi bir nedenden ötürü çocuğunuz kendisini rahatsız hissettiğini belirtirse, ya da kendi belirtmese de araştırmacı çocuğunuzun rahatsız olduğunu öngörürse, çalışmaya katılımına derhal son verilecektir. Şayet siz çocuğunuzun rahatsız olduğunu hissederseniz, böyle bir durumda benimle ya da öğretmenle iletişime geçerek çocuğunuzun çalışmadan ayrılmasını istediğinizi söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır.

Onay vermeden önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir konu varsa sormaktan çekinmeyiniz. Çalışma bittikten sonra bizlere telefon veya e-posta ile ulaşarak soru sorabilir, sonuçlar hakkında bilgi isteyebilirsiniz. Saygılarımızla,

Araştırmacı : Şeyda KARAN

İletişim bilgileri :

Velisi bulunduğum sınıfı öğrencisi

.....'in yukarıda açıklanan araştırmaya katılmasına izin veriyorum. (Lütfen formu imzaladıktan sonra çocuğunuzla okula geri gönderiniz).*

.../.../.....

İsim-Soyisim İmza:

Veli Adı-Soyadı :

Telefon Numarası :

D. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS TIMELINE

2024, Spring Term	Observation	Field Notes ¹	Audio Transcription
PT06			
Pilot	18, January	18, January (Edited)	Completed on 23, May
1 st	06, February	06, February	
2 nd	08, February	09, February	
3 th	12, February	12, February	
4 th	15, February	16, February	
5 th	20, February	20, February	
6 th	23, February	23, February	
7 th	04, March	04, March	
8 th	07, March	08, March	
Teacher Post-Interview	24, May		
PT05			
Pilot	18, January	18, January (Edited)	Completed on 23, April
1 st	08, February	09, February	
2 nd	04, March	04, March	
3 th	07, March	09, March	
4 th	11, March	11, March	
5 th	18, March	19, March	
6 th	19, March	20, March	
7 th	25, March	25, March	
8 th	26, March	27, March	
Teacher Post-Interview	24, April		

¹ Field Notes are the structured files which compose jottings and running records written during in-classroom observations of researcher with the titles of time, site/location, date, duration, participants, and detailed descriptive information of the activity (where, when, with whom, how), excerpts from documents and materials, posing questions for further steps, and analytical reflections for initial analysis.

E. POST-INTERVIEW: TEACHER'S REFLECTION ON THEIR PRACTICES

Tarih:

Görüşme Mekanı:

Görüşmeci

Görüşülen Kişi:

Eğitim Durumu: Lise - Meslek Yüksekokulu - Lisans - Yüksek Lisans - Doktora

Meslekte Tecrübe Yılı:

Cinsiyet:

Yaş:

Öğretmenlik Yaptığı Yaş Grubu:

Sınıftaki Çocuk Sayısı:

1. Okul ve sınıf ikliminizden biraz bahseder misiniz?
 - a. Üyeleri kimdir? Üyelerle birlikte sınıfta ve okulda nasıl bir işleyiş vardır?
2. Okul ve sınıf ikliminde çocukların ne kadar etken/faal olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz? Bu etkenlik/faallik, onların katılım hakları ile nasıl ilişkilendirilebilir?
 - a. Çocuk katılımını nasıl tanımlarsınız?
 - b. Birleşmiş Milletler Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesini baz alarak çocukların katılım hakkını nasıl tanımlarsınız?
3. Sınıfınızdaki çocukların katılım hakkını öğrenmelerini ve sürdürülmelerini desteklemek için neler yapıyorsunuz?
 - a. Sınıfınızdaki çocukların fikirleri ve görüşlerine gün boyunca nasıl yer veriyorsunuz?
 - b. Çocukların fikirlerinin sınıf içi kararları etkileyişini daha iyi nasıl sağlayabilirsiniz?
4. Burada bulunduğum gözlem haftalarındaki sınıf için deneyimlerinizi düşündüğünüzde çocukların katılımın sağlandığı anlara bir ya da birkaç örnek verebilir misiniz? (*Eğer öğretmen örnek veremezse araştırmacı iyi örnek olarak seçtiği deneyimlerden birisini paylaşır*).
 - a. Örnek olarak seçtiğiniz o anlarda neler iyi gitmişti? Bu deneyimin daha katılımcı olması için neler yapılabilirdi?
5. Çocukların katılım hakkını kullanamayacağını düşündüğünüz durumlar var mıdır? Örnek verebilir misiniz? Neden?
6. Çocukların katılım haklarını daha bir biçimde kullanmaları konusunda öğretmenleri olarak sizin rolünüz nedir?
 - a. Çocukların katılım haklarını kullanabilmelerini desteklemek için nelere ihtiyaç duymaktasınız?
 - b. Bu ihtiyaçların giderilmesi için kimler size nasıl destek verebilirler?

F. FIELD NOTES STRUCTURE

Date:	Site/Location:	Time:
Activity with details (what, where, when, by whom)		
Participants		
Description and documents (e.g., photograph, material examples)		
Pose Questions for further steps		
Reflections		

G. ANALYSIS GUIDELINE FOR OBSERVATION DATA

Date:	Activity Type/Corner:		Start Time:	End Time:
Research Interest	Space (Providing safe and inclusive space to express views)	Voice (Facilitation of children's expression)	Audience (Communicating children's views by giving due weight)	Influence (Children's views are acted upon seriously when appropriate)
Focus of interest	Where/when the teacher asks children's views dialogically, listen children to express ideas by giving wait time and revoicing, and how the teacher invite children who do not express views.	Where/when teacher give information about the topic for children's expression, inform children they do not have to take part, and give alternatives for expression (e.g., drawing, dancing).	How the teacher communicates that children can talk to him/her to express views, and reminds that he/she will give due weight to the views, and where/when/in what topic/whom the teacher does not listen and/or respond to the view of child.	Where the teacher incorporates children's views into decision-making processes, and how teacher provides feedback explaining the reasons for decisions taken or not taken.
Areas of Observation				
Conversation (What, by whom, where)				
Topic-Content				
General Mood (What, How conveyed, by whom)				
Other areas of observation:				
Reflection of observer:				

H. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

13 EKİM 2023

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof. Dr. Feyza ERDEN

Danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz Şeyda KARAN'ın "*BİR OKUL ÖNCESİ ÖĞRETMENİNİN SÖYLEM BİÇİMİ VE ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKLARINA İLİŞKİN SINIF İÇİ UYGULAMALARI: KARMA YÖNTEMLER DURUM ÇALIŞMASI*" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek 0450-ODTÜİAEK-2023 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

I. APPROVAL APPROVAL MINISTRY OF NATIONAL EDUCATION



T.C.
İSTANBUL VALİLİĞİ
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü



Sayı : E-59090411-44-89106035
Konu : Anket ve Araştırma İzni (Şeyda KARAN)

07/11/2023

VALİLİK MAKAMINA

İlgi : a) Yenilik ve Eğitim Teknolojileri Genel Müdürlüğünün 21.01.2020 tarihli ve 2020/2 sayılı genelgesi.
b) Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesinin 27.10.2023 tarihli ve E-54850036-044-405 sayılı yazısı.
c) Müdürlüğümüz Araştırma ve Anket Komisyonunun 02.11.2023 tarihli tutanağı.

Araştırma Konusu : Bir Okul Öncesi Öğretmenin Söylem Biçimi ve Çocukların Katılım Haklarına İlişkin Sınıf İçi Uygulamaları: Karma Yöntemler Durum Çalışması
Araştırma Türü : Görüşme / Gözlem
Araştırma Yeri : Üsküdar
Araştırma Kişiler : Anaokulu Öğrencileri, Öğretmenleri
Araştırmanın Süresi : 2023 - 2024 Eğitim - Öğretim Yılı

Yukarıda bilgileri verilen araştırmanın; 6698 sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanununa aykırı olarak kişisel veri istenmemesi, öğrenci velilerinden açık rıza onayı alınması, bir örneği Müdürlüğümüzde muhafaza edilen mührürlü ve imzalı veri toplama araçlarının kurumlarınıza araştırmacı tarafından ulaştırılarak uygulanması, katılımcıların gönüllülük esasına göre seçilmesi, araştırma sonuç raporunun kamuoyuyla paylaşılmaması ve araştırma bittikten sonra 2 (iki) hafta içerisinde Müdürlüğümüze gönderilmesi, okul idarelerinin denetim, gözetim ve sorumluluğunda, eğitim ve öğretimi aksatmayacak şekilde, ilgi (a) genelge esasları dâhilinde uygulanması kaydıyla Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmektedir.

Makamımızca da uygun görüldüğü takdirde olurlarınıza arz ederim.

Doç. Dr. Murat Mücahit YENTÜR
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürü

OLUR

Mustafa KAYA
Vali a.
Vali Yardımcısı

Ek:
1- İlgi (b) Yazı ve Ekleri (5 Sayfa)
2- İlgi (c) Tutanak (1 Sayfa)

Bu belge güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Adres : Binbirdirek Mah. İmran Öktem Cad. No: 1 Sultanahmet Fatih İstanbul Belge Doğrulama : <https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/meb-ebys>
Telefon : 0212 384 36 32 Bilgi İçin : Aykut ÇELİK
E-posta : stratejigelistirme34@meb.gov.tr Urvana : Büro Hizmetleri
Kep Adresi : meb@hs01.kep.tr İnternet Adresi : <http://istanbul.meb.gov.tr/>

J. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Karan, Şeyda

Nationality:

Date and Place of Birth:

Marital Status:

Phone:

Email:

Research Assistant

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
PhD	METU Early Childhood Education	2024
MA	Boğaziçi University Primary Education	2019
BS	Boğaziçi University Primary Education	2015
High School	İstanbulluoğlu Anatolian High School, Balıkesir	2010

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2016-Continues	Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, İstanbul	Research Assistant
2015-2016	Beykent University, İstanbul	Research Assistant

ASSISTED COURSES

OOE219 Academic Skills Training

EMB401 Teaching Practicum I

EMB402 Teaching Practicum II

TML011 Early Childhood Education in Different Countries

TML402 Early Childhood Education Policies

EGK 301 Social Work Services

PUBLICATIONS

Published journal articles indexed by SCI, SSCI, and AHCI

Karan, Ş., & Erdemir, E. (2023). Subjective school wellbeing of refugee and local children: Voices from having, loving, and being dimensions. *Early Child Development and Care*, 193(9-10), 1141-1158.

Articles Published in Other Journals

Karan, Ş., Gülhan, M., Menteşe, Y., & Çetken, Ş. (2022). Put the Mask on Yourself First: Work-related Wellbeing of Preschool Teachers in the “New Normal. *Journal of Sustainable Education Studies*, 3(4), 180-193.

Books & Book Chapters

Karan, Ş. (2021). Dijital Çağda Çevrim İçi Uzaktan Okul Öncesi Eğitimi. Fatma Alisinanoğlu (Ed.), *Okul Öncesi Dönemde Çevrim İçi Uzaktan Eğitim* içinde (s. 1-17). Ankara: Nobel.

Kaya, F. T. & Karan, Ş. (2021). Çevrim İçi Uzaktan Okul Öncesi Eğitimde Kolaylaştırıcılar. Fatma Alisinanoğlu (Ed.), *Okul Öncesi Dönemde Çevrim İçi Uzaktan Eğitim* içinde (s. 295-318). Ankara: Nobel.

Karan, Ş. (2021). Erken Çocukluk Döneminde Medya. Fatma Alisinanoğlu (Ed.), *Çocuk Edebiyatı ve Medya* içinde (s. 103-126). Ankara: İzge.

Refereed Congress / Symposium Publications in Proceedings

Karan, Ş. (2024). *Erken Çocukluk Eğitimi Araştırmalarında Etik*. 4. Eğitim Araştırmaları Kongresi. İstanbul, Türkiye.

Karan, Ş. ve Tantekin Erden, F. (2024). *Unveiling Perspectives: Exploring Preschool Teachers' Approaches to Children's Rights*. Conference of Childhood, Education & Society (ConferenceCES), 6 June, İstanbul, Türkiye.

İmamoğlu, E., Dikker, G., İnan, Ş. ve Karan, Ş. (2023). *Dijital Çağda Kuşaklar Arası Medya ve Teknoloji Alışkanlıkları: Büyükanneler ve Torunlar*. 3. Eğitim Araştırmaları Kongresi. İstanbul, Türkiye. Tam Metin Bildiri: e-ISBN 978-605-2386-62-0

Karan, Ş., Gülhan, M., Çetken Aktaş, H., Menteşe, Y. & Sevinç, Ş. (2021). *Exploring Work-related well-being of Preschool Teachers in the Period of Covid-19 Pandemic*. 30th EECERA-European Early Childhood Research Association, 7-10 September, Zagreb, Croatia.

Karan, Ş. (2021). *Reflections of Pre-service Preschool Teachers Related to the Practicum Experience During Pandemic*. V. International Teacher Education and Accreditation Congress, 4-6 June, Ankara, Türkiye.

Karan, Ş. & Erdemir, (2019). *Subjective Well-being of Syrian and Turkish Children in Primary Schools: Home and Environment Conditions*. 29th EECERA-European Early Childhood Research Association, 20-23 August, Thessaloniki, Greece.

Karan, Ş. & Erdemir, E. (2019). *Çocuğun Öznel İyi Olma Hali: Okul*. Vith International Eurasian Educational Research Congress, 19-22 June, Ankara, Türkiye.

Seven, S., Uçar (Karan), Ş. & Çetintaş, Ş. (2017). *Attachment Stability in Children Aged 9 to 11 Years of Age in Nuclear and Extended Families*. 8th International Attachment Conference, 29 June-1 July, London, United Kingdom.

PROJECTS

Dijital Çağda Kuşaklar Arası Çocuk Medya Aracılığı, TÜBİTAK PROJESİ (2209-A), Danışman: Şeyda KARAN, Yürütücü: Ebrar İMAMOĞLU (ULUSAL)

AWARDS

2019-2020 Metu Graduate Course Performance Awards

CERTIFICATIONS AND CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION

- 2020 Philosophy for/with Children Educator Training
Instructor: Uzm. Tuğçe Büyükuğurlu
Institution: Bahçeşehir Üniversitesi Sürekli Eğitim Merkezi
Date and Duration: 28 Sep-10 Dec, 2021 42 Hours
Location: Online Education
- 2021 Emotion Coaching Basic Level Training
Instructor: Doç. Dr. Nalan Kuru
Institution: Emotion Coaching UK
Date and Duration: 16-17 Sep, 2021 5 Hours
Location: Online Education
- 2023 Emotion Coaching Advance Level Training
Instructor: Doç. Dr. Nalan Kuru
Institution: Emotion Coaching UK
Date and Duration: 16-17 April, 2022 5 Hours
Location: Online Education

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Sep 2014-Dec 2014 Tohum Autism Center, Istanbul, Turkey
(4 months) Assisted educators with supervision

K. TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

ERKEN ÇOCUKLUK EĞİTİMİ SINIFLARINDA ÇOCUKLARIN KATILIM HAKLARI: ÇOKLU VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

GİRİŞ

Türk Dil Kurumu (TDK), "katılım" kelimesini bir işe iştirak etmek ve dahil olmak olarak tanımlamaktadır. "Hak" ise TDK tarafından "adaletin, hukukun gerektirdiği veya birine ayırdığı şey, kazanç" olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Katılım hakkı, bir eyleme, işe veya göreve katılmanın ötesinde, kişilerin kendilerini ilgilendiren meselelere dair beyanlarıyla karar verme süreçlerine dahil olma hakkına sahip olduklarını ifade etmektedir. Katılım hakları yalnızca 18 yaşını doldurmuş yetişkinlere ait olmayıp her yaştan insanı kapsamaktadır. Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulu tarafından 1989 yılında kabul edilen Birleşmiş Milletler Çocuk Hakları Sözleşmesi (BMÇHS), çocukların katılım haklarını tanıyan ve güvence altına alan en bilindik yasal belgelerden biridir. 1990 yılından bu yana Türkiye'nin de aralarında bulunduğu taraf devletler, çocukların katılım haklarını güvence altına almak ve desteklemekle sorumludur. Birleşmiş Milletler, taraf devletlerin mevcut durumlarını ve çalışmalarını belirli aralıklarla Çocuk Hakları Komitesine rapor etme yükümlülüğünde olduğunu beyan etmektedir. Aşağıda sunulacak olan ilgili çalışmalar, çocukların katılım haklarının tanımlanması ve bu hakların göstergeler ışığında kavramsallaştırılmasının, özellikle erken çocukluk dönemi için karmaşık ve derinlemesine incelenmesi gereken bir konu olduğuna işaret etmektedir.

BMÇHS, 54 maddeden ve ek opsiyonel protokollerden oluşmaktadır. Çocuk haklarına ilişkin raporlarda ve akademik çalışmalarda bu maddeler genellikle standart kabul edilen bir sınıflandırma ile üç kategoride toplanmaktadır: korunma, sağlama ve katılım hakları. Çocuk haklarının gelişimini ele alan çalışmalar, korunma ve sağlama

haklarının uzun yıllar boyunca önceliklendirildiğini, katılım haklarının hayata geçirilmesinin ise çocuğa ve çocukluğa yüklenen anlamdaki değişimle birlikte 1900'lü yılların sonlarına doğru önem kazandığını göstermektedir (Cook, 2020). Çocukların korunma haklarına ilişkin maddeler, onların çeşitli tehlikelerden (örn. kötü muamele, ihmal ve istismar) korunmalarını vurgulamaktadır. Sağlama haklarına ilişkin maddeler ise çocuklara ihtiyaç duydukları sağlık ve eğitim gibi hizmetlerin sağlanmasının gerekliliğine işaret etmektedir. Katılım haklarına ilişkin maddeler ise çocukların kendilerini ilgilendiren konularda karar alma süreçlerine katılmalarının desteklenmesi için bakım verenleri, toplumu ve politikacıları sorumlu kılmaktadır.

En genel anlamıyla katılım hakları, çocukların kendilerini ilgilendiren konularda bilgi sahibi olmalarını, görüşlerini ifade edebilmelerini ve bu görüşlerin ilgili kişiler tarafından saygıyla dikkate alınmasını ifade etmektedir (Alderson, 2008; Lansdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007). Korunma ve sağlama haklarının yanı sıra, katılım hakları çocuğa ve çocukluğa yüklenen anlamın değişimi ile ortaya çıkmış devrimsel bir hareket olarak kabul edilmektedir (Prout & James, 1997; Mayall, 2000; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014). Bu açıdan, çocukların katılım haklarının tanınması ve desteklenmesi, onlara yönelik toplumsal anlayış ve beklentilerle yakından ilişkilidir (Hanson, 2020). Çocukları kendi yaşamlarında ve çevreleriyle ilişkilerinde etkin ve anlam üreten bireyler olarak gören bu anlayış, çocukların kendi yaşamlarını ilgilendiren konularda bilgi sahibi olmalarını, görüşlerinin dinlenmesini ve uygun yanıtlar verilerek karar alma süreçlerine katılmalarını gerektirmektedir (Hart & Brando, 2018; James & James, 2004; Mayall, 2000; Quennerstedt, 2010; Quennerstedt & Quennerstedt, 2014; Hanson, 2020).

BMÇHS'e göre, alt yaş sınırı olmaksızın tüm çocuklar haklara sahiptir ve katılım hakları da bu haklar kapsamındadır. Ancak özellikle erken çocukluk eğitimi (EÇE) döneminde çocukların katılım haklarının kavramsallaştırılması ve uygulanması üzerine tartışmalar sürmektedir (Cassidy vd., 2022). Ulusal Küçük Çocukların Eğitimi Birliği [NAEYC] (2020) ve BMÇHS (2005), erken çocukluk eğitimi 0-8 yaş arası dönemi kapsayacak şekilde tanımlamaktadır. Türkiye'nin de taraf olduğu BMÇHS'e göre, çocukların yakın çevresindeki birincil bakım verenler ve toplumun diğer

katmanlarındaki kişiler ve kurumlar, EÇE döneminde çocukların katılım hakları da dahil tüm haklarını koruma ve destekleme sorumluluğuna sahiptir.

Katılım, bireyler arasında ilişkiyel süreçlerde belirgin olan, insanın doğasında var olan bir eylemdir. Katılım hakları sadece fiziksel katılımı ifade etmez. Katılım hakları çocukların kendilerini ilgilendiren konularda söz sahibi olarak ve dikkate alınarak aidiyet duygusunun desteklenmesini ve saygı görmeyi içeren daha geniş bir kavramdır (Landsdown, 2005; Larkins, 2020; Sheridan ve Samuelsson, 2001; Mascadri vd., 2021). Bu da birincil bakım vericileri, uzmanları ve politikacıları, çocukların gelişim özelliklerini ve yaşam koşullarını bilerek, onları tanımak ve anlamak için çaba sarf etmeye yönlendirir. Çocukların katılım haklarını hayata geçirmeye destek olmanın en önemli koşullarından birisi çocukların kendilerini ifade edebilmeleri için onlara güvenli alanlar oluşturarak, onları dinlemeye ve dikkate almaya istekli olduğunu onlara göstermektir. Chicken ve Tyrie (2023)'nin çalışmasında da belirttiği gibi EÇE ortamlarında çocukların katılım haklarının hayata geçirilmesi öğretmenlerin çocukluk imajları ve kendilerine ilişkin rolleri ile yakından ilişkilidir. Atıfta bulunulan bu çalışmaya göre, çocukların katılım haklarının hayata geçmesi öğretmenlerin çocukluk anlayışına, öğretmenlik koşullarına ve çocuklardan beklentilerine ilişkin inançlarına bağlıdır.

EÇE döneminde çocukların hayatlarındaki en etkili mikrosistemlerden birisi okullardır. Okullarda öğretmenler çocukların birincil dinleyicileridir. Özellikle erken yıllarda çocukların katılım haklarını inceleyen çalışmalar (Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Theobald, 2019; Kangas vd., 2016; Sheridan ve Samuelsson, 2001; Sandberg ve Erikson, 2010; Mascadri vd., 2021) yetişkinlerin çocukların katılım haklarının desteklenmesindeki rolünü, günlük yaşamda seslerinin duyulmasına elverişli ortamlar yaratarak çocukları dinlemek ve desteklemek olarak kavramsallaştırmaktadır. Bu amaçla, bu çalışmalar, birincil bakım vericilerin (örn. Ebeveyn ve öğretmen) ve politika yapıcılarının çocukların karar alma süreçlerine dahil olmaları için fırsatlar sunmalarını, çocukların iletişim ve problem çözme becerilerini desteklemelerini, çocukların fikirlerine değer vermelerini ve saygı duymalarını ve katılımı teşvik etmek için çocukların etrafındaki çeşitli aktörlerle iş birliği yapmalarını gerektirmektedir. Bununla birlikte, çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin son tartışmalar,

ebeveynler/veliler ve öğretmenler de dahil olmak üzere çocukların yaşamlarındaki uzmanların, tüm insan haklarından yararlanmanın kabulü ile yüksek kaliteli erken çocukluk deneyimlerine öncelik vermek için mesleklerinin gerektirdiği yetkinliklerine sahip olmaları gerektiği çağrısında bulunmaktadır (Lundy vd., 2024).

Okul öncesi öğretmenleri, bakım etiği ilkelerini ve gelişime uygun uygulamaları göz önünde bulundurarak çocuk haklarının uygulanması ve teşvik edilmesinde etkili ve sorumlu olması beklenen aktörlerdir (Bath, 2013; MacNaughton, 2007; Lundy, 2024). Correia ve arkadaşları (2020) tarafından yakın zamanda yapılan kapsamlı bir çalışma, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin algılanan katılım uygulamalarının, gözlemlenen katılım uygulamalarına ve çocukların algılanan katılımına aracılık ettiğini göstermiştir. Dolayısıyla, katılımın benimsenmesi ve teşvik edilmesi, öğretmenleri çocukların gelişen kapasiteleri, yeterlilikleri ve hakları hakkında bilgi sahibi olma ve bunlara değer verme konusunda sorumlu kılmaktadır (Landsdown, 2005; Save the Children, 2005; Lundy, 2007; Clark, 2005; Robinson vd., 2020; Correia vd., 2020; Tholin ve Jansen, 2012; Hanson, 2020). Çocuk hakları alanında çalışan akademisyenler, çocukların katılım haklarının ve öğretmenlerin hakların kolaylaştırıcısı olarak rolünün öneminin altını çizse de, özellikle öğretmenlerin inançlarının uygulamalarıyla birlikte günlük etkileşimler yoluyla çocukların erken yıllardaki katılımını nasıl etkileyebileceğini araştıran çalışmalar sınırlıdır (Correia vd., 2019; Theobald vd., 2019; Chicken ve Tyrie, 2023).

Problem Durumu

Çocukların katılım haklarının tanınmasıyla birlikte, çocuk haklarının izlenmesi ve desteklenmesine yönelik araştırmalar artış göstermektedir. Ancak, erken çocukluk eğitimi (EÇE) dönemine yönelik uygulamaların araştırılması halen sınırlı kalmaktadır (Cassidy ve diğerleri, 2022). Mevcut araştırmalar çoğunlukla çocukları araştırma süreçlerinde katılımcı olarak almayı veya onların rutin yaşamlarını gözlemlemeyi değil, konuya ilişkin yetişkinlerin görüşlerine başvurmayı tercih etmektedir (Theobald, 2019; Correia ve diğerleri, 2019). Bu çalışmalar, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukluk algıları ve çocukların yetkinliklerine ilişkin görüşlerini inceleyerek, öğretmenlerin sınıf içi günlük pratiklerinde çocukların sesine nasıl yer

verdiklerini gözlemlemenin önemini vurgulamaktadır. Bu çerçevede, bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocuklara ve çocuk haklarına ilişkin inanç ve uygulamalarını incelemeyi bir araştırma konusu olarak ele almaktadır.

Okul ortamlarında çocukların katılım haklarının hayata geçirilmesini inceleyen araştırmalar, bu hakların yetişkinler tarafından çoğunlukla sonuç odaklı ve tek seferlik uygulamalarla (örneğin, sınıf başkanı seçimi) sınırlandırıldığını belirtmektedir (Theobald, 2019). Yetişkin görüşlerine başvuran araştırmalar ise genellikle idealize edilmiş durumları yansıtarak, çocuklarla kurulan ilişkisel süreçlerdeki gerçek deneyimleri aktarmakta yetersiz kalabilmektedir. Bu nedenle, EÇE ortamlarını günlük uygulama süreçlerinde gözlemlemeye ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır (Theobald ve diğerleri, 2011; Hanson, 2020; Larkins, 2020; Theobald, 2019; Graham ve diğerleri, 2018; Weckström ve diğerleri, 2020; Correia ve diğerleri, 2020). EÇE ortamlarında öğretmen-çocuk etkileşiminin süreç kalitesini desteklemenin bir yolu, çocukların günlük uygulamalar sırasında fikirlerine yer vermektir (Waters-Davies ve diğerleri, 2023; OECD, 2021). Araştırmalar, çocukların okul ortamlarında karar alma süreçlerine dahil edilmesinin aidiyet hissini ve yapabilirliklerine olan inançlarını desteklediğini vurgulamaktadır (Waters-Davies ve diğerleri, 2023; Wang ve diğerleri, 2018; Kangas ve diğerleri, 2016; Sandberg ve Eriksson, 2010). Çocukların karar alma sürecine aktif olarak katılmaları ve görüşlerinin dikkate alınması, kararlar üzerinde sahiplik duygusu hissetmelerini sağlar. Aidiyet ve özerklik duygusu, çocukların öğrenmeye daha hazır hale gelerek iyi oluşlarını destekleyebilecek bir güce sahiptir (Graham ve diğerleri, 2022; Wang ve diğerleri, 2018; Mascadri ve diğerleri, 2021; Murray, 2019; Lundy ve diğerleri, 2024). Bu olumlu çıktılar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, çocukların katılım haklarının tek seferlik uygulamalarla sınırlandırılması yerine, destekleyici pratiklerin günlük sınıf rutinlerine entegre edilmesi gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır (Correia ve diğerleri, 2020).

EÇE ortamlarında öğretmenler, çocukların ifadelerini dinleyen birincil kişiler olduklarından, onların sesini duyabilmek için nasıl bir dinleme ortamı yarattıkları, bu ifadeleri nasıl dikkate aldıkları ve yanıt verdikleri önemli bir araştırma konusudur (Lundy, 2007; Clark, 2005; Lansdown, 2015; Murray, 2019; Mascadri ve diğerleri, 2019). Neredeyse tüm EÇE ortamlarında yapılan çember zamanı etkinliği, sınıfın tüm

üyelerini güvenli ve kapsayıcı bir dinleme ve paylaşma ortamında bir araya getirmektedir (Bustamante ve diğerleri, 2018; Collins, 2007). Literatürdeki çalışmalar, çember zamanının yapısının incelenmesiyle sınırlı kalmakta olup, öğretmen-çocuk etkileşiminin süreç kalitesine odaklanılmasının önemini ortaya koymaktadır (Bustamante ve diğerleri, 2018; Zhang ve diğerleri, 2015; Chen ve Kim, 2014; Mumcuoğlu, 2022; OECD, 2015). Çember zamanı, çocukların fikirlerini ifade edebildikleri ve geliştirdikleri bir alan sunarak, katılım haklarını anlamak açısından öğretmenlerin bu süreci nasıl yönettiklerine dair değerli içgörüler sağlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma, EÇE ortamlarının günlük rutinlerinden olan çember zamanında çocukların katılım haklarının öğretmen-çocuk etkileşiminde nasıl hayata geçirildiğini, öğretmenlerin bakış açılarının ve uygulamalarının gözlemlenmesi yoluyla incelemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Çalışmanın Önemi

Türkiye, BMÇHS'yi imzalayan ülkelerden biridir; dolayısıyla Türkiye'deki devlet okullarında görev yapan öğretmenlerin, katılım hakkını bilmek ve desteklemek yasal olarak sorumluluklarının bir gereğidir. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) Öğretmen Yeterlik Göstergeleri (MEB, 2017) ve bu çalışmanın gerçekleştiği dönemlerde uygulanmakta olan Ulusal Okul Öncesi Eğitim Programlarına (MEB, 2013; MEB, 2024) göre, öğretmenlerin çocuk haklarını destekleyecek şekilde davranmaları beklenmektedir. Bu çalışma, sınıf içi uygulamaların incelenmesi ile Türkiye'deki devlet anaokullarında çalışan okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocuk imajına ve çocuk haklarına nasıl atıfta bulduklarına ilişkin mevcut bilgilere katkıda bulunmuştur. Bulgulara göre, öğretmenler, çocuk haklarına ilişkin alışlagelmiş inançları ve gündelik uygulamaları üzerine düşünme fırsatı bulduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu nedenle, araştırmacılar ve alandaki uzmanlar, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi öğretmenlerle bir araya gelerek öğretmenleri ve öğretmen adaylarının bu konuda düşünceleri için alanlar açabilir. Küresel krizler çağında, mevcut araştırmanın bulguları, politika yapıcıların dikkatini kamusal alanda çocuk haklarına ilişkin farkındalığı artıracak adımlar atmaya çekebilir.

Çocuk hakları çalışmaları alanında artan ilgiye rağmen, özellikle küçük çocukların yaşamlarını günlük etkileşimler yoluyla etkileyen konuları incelemek için daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır (Sinclair, 2006; Sandberg ve Eriksson, 2010; Correia ve diğerleri, 2019; Theobald ve Kultti, 2012; Theobald, 2019; Cassidy vd., 2022). Correia'nın (2019) yakın tarihli sistematik derlemesi, erken çocukluk döneminde çocukların katılımına odaklanan çalışmaların çoğunlukla yetişkinlerin katılımı ile ilgili fikirleriyle sınırlı kaldığını, günlük hayata katılımı teşvik eden uygulamaların incelenmesine daha az vurgu yapıldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırmalar yoluyla yetişkinlerin inançlarını öğrenmenin yanı sıra, çocukların katılım haklarını desteklediğini beyan eden öğretmenlerin sınıf içi uygulamalarını incelemek, inançlarının günlük uygulamalara yansıyor yansımadığını anlamanın önemli bir yoludur. Bu çalışma, EÇE bağlamındaki gerçek yaşam deneyimlerini inceleyerek çocukların katılımı konusunu anlamak için daha bütüncül bir bakış açısı oluşturmak amacıyla nitel veri toplama yöntemlerini kullanarak olgunun farklı yönlerini keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu çalışma, günlük EÇE uygulamaları boyunca öğretmen-çocuk söylemlerinde ve ilişkilerinde çocukların katılım haklarının nasıl hayata geçtiğini gözlemlemek için bir inceleme vakası olarak çember zamanına odaklanmıştır. Bu anlamda, bu çalışmanın bulguları, çocukların katılımı için güvenli ve kapsayıcı bir alan açabilecek nitelikte çember zamanı sürecinin tasarlanması ve uygulanmasına katkıda bulunabilir.

Özellikle, sınıf söylemleri içinde ortaya çıkan sınıf diyalogu veya sıradan konuşmalar, çocukların seslerinin birincil dinleyicisi olarak öğretmenlerin uygulamalarını anlamak için araştırılması gereken benzersiz yapılara sahiptir (Kaya ve Ahi, 2022; Graham vd., 2018; Vrikki vd., 2019; Alexander, 2018). BMÇHS ve alanın önde gelen akademisyenleri (Lundy, 2007; Moore, 2019; Landsdown, 2015; Clark, 2005; Rinaldi, 2001), çocukların günlük faaliyetlere katılım hakkı için sınıf söylemlerinin rolüne işaret etse de yetişkinlerin erken yıllarda çocukların katılımı ve güçlendirilmesiyle ilgili sınıf söylemlerini nasıl yönlendirdiklerini inceleyen çalışmalar nadirdir (White vd., 2015; Theobald ve Kultti, 2012; Tholin ve Jansen, 2012; Shaw, 2019; Sandberg ve Eriksson, 2010). Katılım hakları, günlük etkileşim süreçlerinde diyalogik öğretmen-çocuk söylemleri aracılığıyla yaygınlaştırılır (Tholin ve Jansen, 2012; Gilson, 2022; Clark, 2005; Landsdown, 2005; Lundy, 2007). Fakat örgün bir eğitim ortamı olan

EÇE’de bile öğretmenlerin yönlendirdiği monolojik konuşmaların baskınlığı, çocukların söz sahibi olmasını ve diyalogu sürdürmeye teşvik edilmesini sınırlandırabilmektedir (Mascadri vd., 2021; Alexander, 2018). Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin EÇE sınıflarında, özellikle de çember zamanında çocukların katılımının hayata geçirilmesi ile ilgili sınıf söylemlerini nasıl işlettiklerini inceleyerek mevcut literatüre katkıda bulunmuştur. Dolayısıyla, mevcut araştırmanın bulguları, hizmet öncesi ve hizmet içi öğretmenlere sınıf yönetimi ve işleyişi açısından katılımcı bir ortam yaratmayı destekleyecek sınıf ortamları oluşturmada destek olacak atölye çalışmaları ve kurslar tasarlamak için işlev görebilir.

Çalışmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın temel amacı, çocukların katılım haklarının erken çocukluk ortamlarında nasıl uygulandığını, Türkiye'deki bağımsız anaokulu sınıflarında sınıf söylemleri ve uygulama deneyimleri üzerinden incelemektir. Vaka seçim aşamasında söylemlerinde çocukların katılım haklarını destekledikleri belirlenen okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin sınıflarında, çember zamanı sırasında gerçekleşen günlük uygulamalar odak noktasıdır.

Çocuk haklarını sosyal olarak inşa edilen bir olgu olarak ele alan bu araştırma, sosyokültürel kuram (Vygotsky, 1978; Smith, 2002) ve ekolojik sistem kuramı (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Gal, 2007) gibi çocuk katılımını destekleyen kuramlara dayanmaktadır. Ayrıca çocukların katılım haklarının izlenmesinde rehber olan bazı modeller mevcuttur. Bu modellerin başlıcaları; Katılım Merdiveni (Hart, 1992), Katılım Dereceleri (Treseder, 1997), Spektrum Katılım Modeli (Shier, 2001), Matris Katılım Modeli (Davies, 2009) ve Lundy'nin Katılım Modeli (2007) olarak sıralanabilir. Lundy'nin çok katmanlı modeli, katılım haklarını “alan,” “ses,” “dinleyici” ve “etki” olmak üzere dört bileşen üzerinden ele alır. EÇE bağlamında “alan,” öğretmenlerin çocuklara güvenli ve kapsayıcı ifade ortamları sundukları yer ve zamanları, “ses,” çocukların görüşlerini ifade edebilme yollarının kolaylaştırılmasını, “dinleyici,” öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini dikkatle dinlemelerini ve iletişimi teşvik etmelerini, “etki” ise bu görüşlerin çocuklara değerli hissettirilmesini ifade eder. Bu çalışmada Lundy'nin Katılım Modeli çerçevesinde, okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin

erken çocukluk dönemindeki birincil bakıcılar olarak, çocukları toplumun çeşitli katmanlarını dikkate alarak nasıl değerlendirdikleri ve çocukların güvenli katılımını nasıl destekledikleri incelenmiştir.

Araştırma, çocukların sınıf içi katılım deneyimlerini farklı bakış açılarının ve uygulamaların katkıda bulunduğu bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla ele almak için çoklu vaka çalışması tasarımını kullanmıştır. Bu tasarım, her bir vakanın kendi bağlamındaki özelliklerini ve karmaşıklığını anlamaya ve de araştırılan olgulara bütüncül bir bakış açısıyla odaklanmaya olanak tanır (Meriam, 2009; Yin, 2018). Araştırma, çocukların katılım haklarını destekleyen iki okul öncesi öğretmenin sınıfına odaklanarak, öğretmen-çocuk dinamiklerinin çocuk hakları bağlamındaki nüanslarını keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışmada, Lundy'nin Katılım Modelinin dört ana unsuru olan alan, ses, izleyici ve etkinin, çocukların katılımının günlük sınıf söylemleri ve uygulamalarında nasıl yer aldığını belirginleştirmesi amaçlanmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, EÇE döneminde çocuk katılımına dair mevcut anlayışı genişletmeyi hedeflemektedir.

Bu çerçevede belirlenen ana araştırma sorusu ve alt soruları aşağıdaki gibidir:

1. Okul öncesi öğretmenleri, çember zamanı sırasında çocukların sınıftaki katılım hakları ile ilgili olarak sınıf söylemlerini ve öğretmen-çocuk deneyimlerini nasıl yönetmektedir?

1.1. Öğretmenler, çocukların sınıfta görüşlerini ifade edebilecekleri güvenli ve kapsayıcı ortamlar oluşturmak için nasıl stratejiler uygulamaktadır?

1.2. Çocuklar görüşlerini öğretmenlere hangi yollarla iletmektedir ve öğretmenler çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerini nasıl desteklemekte ve kolaylaştırmaktadır?

1.3. Öğretmenler, çocukların görüşlerini aktif bir şekilde dinlemeye istekli olduğunu göstermek için hangi yöntemleri kullanmaktadır? Çocukların ifadelerine yanıt verirken ne gibi engeller veya zorluklarla karşılaşmaktadır?

- 1.4. Öğretmenler çocukların görüşlerini karar alma süreçlerine nasıl dahil etmektedir? Çocuklar kendilerinininkinden farklı/kendilerine ters düşen fikirler ifade ettiklerinde nasıl karşılık vermektedir?

YÖNTEM

Araştırmanın Modeli

Vaka çalışmalarının temel kavramsallaştırması, devam eden olaylar üzerinde herhangi bir kontrol uygulamadan, araştırılan olguyu gerçek dünya bağlamında keşfetmek için bir birey, kuruluş veya faaliyet gibi belirli kriterlerle sınırlandırılmış vaka(lar)ın ayrıntılı olarak anlaşılmasını ifade eder (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2009). Nitel ve yorumlayıcı bakış açılarından, çoklu vaka çalışmaları, eğitim çalışmalarında, çapraz vaka ve bağlamsal analiz ile öğretme ve öğrenme süreçleri boyunca öğretmenler ve çocuklar arasındaki etkileşimlerin nüanslarını keşfetmek için olanaklar sağlar (Meriam, 2009). Bu nedenle, yapılandırmacı yaklaşımı kabul eden bu çalışma, katılım hakları ve öğretmen stratejilerinin dinamikleri hakkında kapsamlı bilgiler toplamak için ayrıntılı gözlemler ve görüşmeler içeren iki farklı EÇE sınıfında öğretmenler ve çocuklar arasındaki etkileşimleri keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır.

Vaka Seçimi ve Katılımcılar

Bu çoklu vaka çalışması, İstanbul/Türkiye'deki bağımsız bir devlet erken çocukluk eğitimi (EÇE) kurumunun iki sınıfında yürütülmüştür. Vaka seçimi süreci üç aşamada gerçekleştirilmiştir: okul türünün seçimi, öğretmenlerin seçimi, etkinlik türü ve zamanın belirlenmesi. Çalışmanın katılımcılarını, aynı okulun iki farklı sınıfında 60-72 aylık çocuklarla çalışan iki okul öncesi öğretmeni ile sınıflarındaki çocuklar oluşturmaktadır. Vaka çalışmalarının temel özelliklerinden biri, belirli sınırları olan amaçlı bir örnekleme stratejisine sahip olmaktır (Yin, 2018; Meriam, 2019). Bu nedenle, bu çalışmada da amaçlı örnekleme stratejisi kullanılmıştır. Amaçlı örnekleme, vaka seçimi sürecinde belirtildiği gibi bağlam ve katılımcı seçiminde sınırları belirlemektedir.

Bu çalışmada, katılımcıların belirlenmesi için öncelikle İstanbul/Türkiye’deki bağımsız devlet EÇE sınıflarında görev yapan öğretmenler hedeflenmiştir. Vaka seçiminde, bağımsız anaokulu sınıfları ve 60-72 aylık çocuklarla çalışan öğretmenlerin sınıfları öncelikli olarak seçilmiştir. Çalışmanın analiz birimlerinden biri, öğretmenler ve çocuklar arasında geçen diyaloglardır. Bu yaş grubundaki çocukların bulunduğu sınıfların, sözlü sınıf etkileşimleri açısından daha zengin bir bağlam sunacağı düşünülmüştür. Bu nedenle, 60-72 aylık çocukların bulunduğu bağımsız anaokulu sınıflarında görev yapan okul öncesi öğretmenleri çalışmaya aday olarak belirlenmiştir. Bu öğretmenler, çalışmanın genel amacı ve prosedürünü açıklayan mektuplarla ön görüşmelere davet edilmiştir. Ön görüşmeye katılan her bir öğretmene kod isimleri verilmiş (PT01, PT02...) ve demografik bilgileri Tablo 1’de sunulmuştur.

Tablo 1 *Katılımcı Adayı Okul Öncesi Öğretmenlerinin Bazı Özellikleri*

Kod Adı	Eğitim Seviyesi	Cinsiyet	Doğum Yılı	Deneyim Yılı	Yaş Grubu (Aylık)	Sınıftaki Çocuk Sayısı	ÇHP
PT01	Yüksek Lisans	Kadın	1993	7	36-48	25	Refah
PT02	Lisans	Kadın	1998	2	60-72	25	Özgürleşme
PT03	Lisans	Kadın	1992	7	60-72	20	Refah
PT04	Lisans	Kadın	1997	4	60-72	25	Özgürleşme
PT05	Yüksek Lisans	Kadın	1984	16	60-72	23	Özgürleşme
PT06	Ön Lisans	Kadın	1986	10	60-72	23	Refah

Çocuk Hakları Pozisyonu (ÇHB), Hanson(2020)’ın sınıflandırmasına göre katılımcıların ön-görüşme aşamasında belirlenmiş olan çocuk haklarına ilişkin kendilerini konumlandıkları pozisyona işaret eder. Refah ve özgürleşme bakış açıları kişilerin çocukların tüm haklarını (koruma, sağlama, katılım) tanımakta olduklarına işaret etmektedir. Refah bakış açısı koruma hakkını diğer tüm haklardan önceliklendirirken, özgürleşme bakış açısı katılım haklarını diğer tüm hakların üzerinde tutmaktadır. Ön görüşmeler sonucunda, her bir öğretmenin çocuk haklarını farklı derecelerde de olsa tanıdığı ve desteklemeye istekli olduğu belirlenmiştir. Her bir adayın amaçlı örnekleme kriterlerine uygun olması sebebiyle, öğretmenlerin görev yaptıkları okulların özellikleri dikkate alınarak tez komitesi kararı ile aşağıda bilgileri

verilen iki öğretmen ve sınıflarındaki çocuklar çalışmanın katılımcılarını oluşturmuştur (Tablo 2).

Tablo 2 Seçilen Öğretmenlerin Sınıf Oluşum Bilgileri

Sınıf	Cinsiyet	Yaş Grubu (Aylık)	Çocuk Deneyimi	Okul	Özel Gereksinim
PT05 Üyesi	Erkek (n=13)	60-66 (n=8)	İki Yıl (n=17)		Dil ve Konuşma
Çocuklar (n=22)	Kız (n=9)	67-72 (n=11) +72 (n=3)	Üç Yıl (n=5)		Terapisi (n=3) Özel Gereksinimi Yoktur (n=19)
PT06 Üyesi	Erkek (n=12)	60-66 (n=1)	Bir Yıl (n=3)		Özel Gereksinimi
Çocuklar (n=23)	Kız (n=11)	67-72 (n=18) +72 (n=4)	İki Yıl (n=20)		Yoktur (n=23)

Veri toplama sürecinin ana katılımcıları olan öğretmenler (PT05; PT06) aynı okulda çalışmakla birlikte, çalışma programları farklıdır (PT05 - Öğleden Sonra Oturumu; PT06 - Sabah Oturumu). Bu nedenle, okul bağlamında ve gözlem oturumları sırasında mesai saatleri boyunca birbirleriyle sınırlı iletişim kurmuşlardır. Aşağıdaki tabloda, her iki öğretmenin günlük akış planları sunulmaktadır (Tablo 3).

Tablo 3 Günlük Akış Bilgisi

	PT05	PT06
Okula Geliş ve Selamlaşma	13.00-13.30	09.00-10.00
Serbest Zaman	13.30-14.15	10.00-10.30
Yemek Saati	14.15-14.45	10.30-11.00
Çember Zamanı	14.45-15.30/13.15-14.00	11.00-11.45
Aktivite/Branş Dersi	15.30-16.30	11.45-12.30
Okuldan Ayrılış	16.30-17.00	12.30-13.00

Vaka seçim aşamasının son adımında, katılımcıların gözlemleneceği zaman dilimi olarak çember zamanı belirlenmiştir. Çember zamanı, genellikle daire şeklindeki oturma düzeni içinde, öğretmenlerin kolaylaştırıcı rol üstlenerek çocuklara ve öğretmenlere konuşma, etkileşim, paylaşım ve dinleme yoluyla sınıf topluluğu içinde kendilerini yansıtmaya imkân tanır (Bustamante vd., 2018; Collins, 2007; Mumcuoğlu, 2022). Bu nedenle, çember zamanına katılmak ve bu zamanı incelemek, çocukların katılım haklarına ilişkin öğretmen-çocuk etkileşimlerini araştırmak için daha zengin

bir bağlam sağlar. Çember zamanının bağlamı, çember zamanının haftalık sıklığı, süresi, oturma düzeni ve etkinlik türlerine bağlı olarak değişiklik göstermektedir. Okul öncesi öğretmen adayları (PT05; PT06) çember zamanını haftada en az iki kez günlük akışlarına entegre ettiklerini doğruladıktan sonra, çoklu vaka çalışması çember zamanı dönemiyle sınırlandırılmıştır.

Veri Toplama Araçları

Nitel bir çoklu vaka çalışması olarak bu araştırmanın veri toplama araçları arasında görüşmeler ve gözlemler yer almıştır. Bu veri toplama araçları kullanılarak analiz edilmek üzere ses kaydı transkripsiyon dokümanları, saha notları, araştırmacının günlüğü ve yansıtma raporları elde edilmiştir. Veri toplama sürecinin başından itibaren araştırmacı etik kurallara ve hususlara uymaya gayret etmiştir.

Ön-Görüşme (Vaka Seçimi Görüşmesi)

Bu çoklu vaka çalışmasının sınırlayıcı kriterleri dahilinde araştırmacı, öğretmen seçimi aşaması için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirmiştir. Araştırmacı, vaka seçimi görüşmelerini Zoom platformu üzerinden randevu olarak altı okul öncesi öğretmeniyle eşzamanlı çevrimiçi görüşme şeklinde gerçekleştirmiştir. Görüşmelerin süresi yaklaşık 40 dakika sürmüştür ve ses kaydı olarak kaydedilmiştir. Daha sonra araştırmacı ses dosyalarını kelimesi kelimesine yazıya dökmüştür. Öğretmenlerin katılım hakkına ilişkin inançlarının doğrudan sorulmasının makul/istenen cevapları alma riski taşıdığı düşünülmüştür. Ön görüşme protokolü, çocuk imajı, çocuğun yeterliliği, çocuk hakları gibi katılımın altında yatan kavramları sorgulayarak öğretmenlerin çocuk hakları konusundaki konumlarını belirleyen örtük inançları keşfetme işlevi görmüştür.

Son-Görüşme

Son görüşmeler, görüşme protokolüne dayalı olarak hazırlanan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme protokolü ile gerçekleştirilmiş ve ses dosyası olarak kaydedilmiştir. Son görüşmelerde araştırmacı, sınıf ortamında çocukların katılım haklarının hayata

geçirilmesi konusunda öğretmenler açısından nelerin iyi gittiğini ve öğretmenin bu süreçte karşılaştığı zorlukları veya engelleri keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu nedenle araştırmacı, gözlem döneminin sonunda öğretmenlerden randevu alarak ve öğretmenlerin gözlemlenen vakalar üzerine düşüncelerini kolaylaştırmak için videoya kaydedilen gözlemlerden bazı transkriptleri kullanarak son görüşmeleri gerçekleştirmiştir. Zoom platformu üzerinden gerçekleştirilen eşzamanlı çevrimiçi görüşmelerin gerçekleştirilmesi yaklaşık 30 dakika sürmüştür. Bu görüşmelerin çıktısını oluşturan ses kayıtları analiz aşaması için kelimesi kelimesine yazıya geçirilmiştir.

Gözlemler

Araştırmacı tarafından gerçekleştirilen sınıf içi gözlemler amaç odaklıdır. Araştırmacı, öğretmenlerin çocuklarla etkileşimlerine ilişkin uygulamalarını, Lundy'nin Katılım Modeli çerçevesinde hazırlanan gözlem analizi kılavuzuna dayanarak açıkça gözlemlenmiştir. Gözlem oturumları sırasında notlar, süreler (yaklaşık 5-10 dakikalık periyotlar) belirtilerek boş sayfalara karalamalar şeklinde yazılmış, materyallerin ve olayların tasvirleri krokiler halinde çizilmiştir; daha sonra her gözlemden sonra gözlemcinin notları ve analitik yansımaları yapılandırılmış saha çalışması yapısına aktarılmıştır. Ayrıca, katılımcılardan izin alınarak etkinliklerden ve materyallerden alıntılar fotoğraflanmıştır.

Araştırmacı, sahaya her girişinde sınıf içi gözlemler gerçekleştirmiştir. Gözlemlenen her sınıf için bir pilot ve sekiz ana gözlem yapılmıştır. Pilot gözlemlerden elde edilen veriler danışmanla paylaşılmış, böylece ana gözlemlere başlamadan önce gözlem formları güncellenmiştir. Gözlemler, öğretmenlerin beyan ettikleri inanç ve fikirleri ile sınıf içi etkinlikler boyunca katılım haklarını kullanma konusunda çocuklarla yaptıkları uygulamalar arasındaki uyum ve uyumsuzlukları keşfetmeyi amaçlamıştır.

Saha Notları

Araştırmacı gözlemlerini saha notları olarak belgelemiştir. Saha notları, araştırmacının sınıf içi gözlemleri sırasında zaman, yer/mekân, tarih, süre, katılımcılar ve etkinliğin

ayrıntılı tanımlayıcı bilgileri (nerede, ne zaman, kiminle, nasıl), belge ve materyallerden alıntılar, sonraki adımlar için sorular ve ilk analiz için analitik yansımalar başlıklarıyla yazdığı notlar ve koşu kayıtlarından oluşan yapılandırılmış dosyalardır. Araştırmacı, gözlemlendiği hissini açığa çıkararak katılımcıları rahatsız etmekten kaçınmak için notları gözlem boyunca el yazısıyla yazmış ve mümkün olan en kısa sürede yapılandırılmış bir forma dijital ortamda aktarmıştır.

Ses Kayıtları

Gözlemler sırasında araştırmacı sınıf içi ses kaydını iki cihaza kaydetmiştir. Öğretmen ve çocuk arasındaki söylemler analiz birimi olduğundan, ses kayıtlarının deşifre edilmesi ve analiz edilmesi, çalışma bulgularının geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği için gözlem sahnelerinden alıntıların desteğiyle gözlem verilerinin analiz edilmesini sağlamıştır.

Veri Toplama Sürecindeki Stratejiler

Pilot uygulama öncesinde okul yöneticisinden randevu alınarak araştırma sahasına bir ziyaret gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu görüşme sırasında, her sınıf için onay dosyaları ve onam formları, sınıf öğretmenlerine ve velilere iletmek üzere yöneticiye teslim edilmiştir. Ayrıca, çalışmanın kısa bir özeti ile ODTÜ Etik Kurulu ve MEB'den alınan etik onayların birer kopyası da yöneticinin bilgisine sunulmuştur. Görüşme sonunda, okul yöneticisi araştırmacının okul binası içinde fotoğraf çekmesine izin vermiş ve okul personeli ile sınıfları tanıtmıştır. Bu ziyaret sırasında, araştırmacıya serbest oyun saatinde öğretmen ve çocukları gözlemlene izni verilmiştir. Çocuklar yemeğe gittiklerinde ise araştırmacı, öğretmenlerle görüşerek, yaklaşık sekiz yarım gün boyunca randevu alarak sınıflarına geleceğini bildirip onamlarını almıştır.

Sahaya erişim sağlandıktan ve gerekli izinler alındıktan sonra, sınıf öğretmenleri araştırmacıyı çocuklara tanıtmış, araştırmacının belirli sürelerde sınıfta bulunacağını belirtmiştir. Araştırmacı da kendisini, çocukların deneyimlerini merak eden biri olarak tanıtarak çocuklardan sözlü izin almıştır. Sınıf içi veri toplama sürecine başlamadan önce, araştırmacı pilot gözlemler yapmış ve bu gözlemlerden elde ettiği ilk verileri tez

komitesi ile paylaşmıştır. Pilot gözlemlerden sonra, gözlem notlarının aktarımını iyileştirmek amacıyla yapılandırılmış bir saha notları dosyası geliştirmiştir.

Gözlemler süresince, araştırmacı sınıf ortamındaki varlığını mümkün olduğunca nötrleştirmeyi hedeflemiştir. Sınıf içinde gözlem yaparken, etkinliklere katılmamak ile katılımcılarla aynı deneyimleri yaşamak arasında dengeli bir rol üstlenmiştir (Saldana ve Omasta, 2018). Nitel yöntemlerde bir araç olarak araştırmacı, anekdot notları, yansıtıcı notlar ve etik ve geçerlilikle ilgili bir kayıt defteri tutarak gözlem, görüşme ve saha notları alma becerilerini geliştirmiştir.

Verilerin Analizi

Nitel çalışmalarda veri analizi, araştırmacı sahaya girdiği anda başlamaktadır (Saldana ve Omasta, 2018). Bu nedenle, araştırmacının saha notları ve ses kayıtları aracılığıyla veri toplamanın ilk sahnesinden yansımaları ve çıkarımları analizi başlatmıştır. Ayrıca, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve gözlemler yoluyla toplanan verilerin her biri, ilk yansımalar için hemen kelimesi kelimesine transkript edilmiş ve saha notlarının desteğiyle analitik notlar yazılmıştır. Araştırmacı verileri MAXQDA Nitel ve Karma Yöntemler Analiz Yazılım Programı (VERBI Software, 2023) ile analiz etmiştir.

Bu araştırmanın analizinde tümdengelimci refleksif analize başvurulmuştur (Braun ve Clarke, 2006). Bu analiz yöntemi genel verilerin daha az ayrıntılı bir tanımını sunma eğiliminde olsa da, verilerin belirli yönlerinin daha ayrıntılı bir analizini sunarak kuramsal çerçeve dahilinde derinleşmeyi sağlar (Braun ve Clarke, 2021). Lundy'nin Katılım Modelinin ana unsurlarına dayanarak çerçeveselenen kod kitabı, yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin ve gözlemlerin kelimesi kelimesine transkripsiyonunun tümdengelimli kodlamasına rehberlik etmiştir. Genel olarak araştırmacı, verilerin açık veya yüzeysel anlamlarını tanımlamak için semantik bir yaklaşım kullanmıştır. Böylece analitik süreç, temel kuramların ve önceki literatürün tanımlanması ve yorumlanmasıyla başlar. Ardından, saha notları ve analitik notların yardımıyla, tematik analiz, çocukların görüşlerini ifade etmelerini sağlamak için güvenli ve

kapsayıcı alanlar yaratmaya yönelik strateji kalıplarının belirlenmesine yardımcı olmuştur.

Braun ve Clarke'ın (2006) önerdiği gibi, araştırma araştırmadan elde edilen verilere ve araştırmacı notlarına transkripsiyon ve yeniden okuma yoluyla aşinalık kazanmaya başlamıştır. Bu süreçte araştırmacı yansıtıcı ve analitik notlar olarak analizin ilk aşamasını başlatmıştır. Kuramsal çerçeveye dayanan kod kılavuzu potansiyel temaların ve alt temaların tanımlanmasına aracılık etmiştir. Devam eden ve yinelemeli analiz süreçleri boyunca, araştırmacı nihai raporu oluşturmak için temaları gözden geçirmiş, tanımlamış ve adlandırmıştır. Araştırmacı, içsel olarak tutarlı, tutarlı ve ayırt edici temalara sahip olmayı amaçlamıştır.

Güvenilirlik ve Etik

Etik kurallar ve ilkeler, tüm araştırmacıları resmi düzenlemeler ve kurumsal inceleme kurullarının gerektirdiği etik standartlara uymakla yükümlü kılmaktadır. Bu nedenle, araştırmacı öncelikle ODTÜ İnsan Denekleri Etik Kurulu ve Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı (MEB) Etik Kurulu'ndan etik onaylar almıştır. Ancak, özellikle nitel araştırmalarda, araştırma sürecinde dikkate alınması gereken etik hassasiyetler bulunmaktadır (Mertens, 2012; Saldana ve Omasta, 2018). Bu doğrultuda araştırmacı, araştırma tasarımından raporlamaya kadar tüm süreç boyunca yararlılık, saygı ve adalet ilkelerine uygun davranmaya özen göstermiştir.

Ayrıca, araştırmacı geçerli bir araştırma tasarımı oluşturmak amacıyla kurumsal etik kurullara ve tez komitesi üyelerine danışmıştır. Veri toplama süreci boyunca, katılımcılardan bilgilendirilmiş onam alındıktan sonra her bir veri kaydedilmiştir. Katılımcıların gizliliğini korumak amacıyla veriler yalnızca araştırmacının kilitli kişisel bilgisayarında saklanmış, herhangi bir transkripsiyon yazılımı kullanılmadan bizzat araştırmacı tarafından deşifre edilmiştir. Analiz ve raporlama sürecinde ise katılımcıların isimleri ve okul bilgileri takma adlarla değiştirilerek gizlilik sağlanmıştır.

SONUÇ VE TARTIŞMA

İlk olarak, bu çalışma okul öncesi öğretmenlerinin çocukların kendilerini ifade etmeleri için nasıl güvenli ve kapsayıcı ortamlar yarattıklarını araştırmıştır. İkinci olarak, bu çalışma çocukların görüşlerini öğretmenlere nasıl ilettiklerini ve öğretmenlerin çocukların ifadelerini nasıl kolaylaştırdıklarını ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Üçüncü olarak, bu çalışma öğretmenlerin çocukların seslerini dinleme konusundaki istekliliklerini yansıtmaya yöntemlerini ortaya çıkarmayı ve bu anlamda karşılaştıkları engeller veya zorluklarla ilgili öğretmen görüşlerini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Son olarak, bu çalışma öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini karar alma süreçlerine nasıl dahil ettiklerini ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Genel bulgular, yukarıda özetlenen temel amaçlara ilişkin kapsayıcı araştırma amacına cevap verecek şekilde bir düzen içinde sunulmuştur.

Alan: Görüşlerin İfade Edilmesi için Güvenli ve Kapsayıcı Bir Ortam Sağlanması

Bu bölümde, öğretmenlerin çocukların katılımını desteklemek için çember zamanı bağlamını nasıl düzenlediklerine dair bulgular sunulmaktadır. Bulgular, çember zamanı etkinlik süresinin, özellikle sohbet topluluğu örneklerinde, çocuklar ve öğretmenlerin görüşlerini ifade etmelerine ve birbirlerini dinlemelerine olanak tanıdığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Genel olarak "alan" kavramı, çocukların EÇE ortamlarında özgürce görüşlerini ifade edebilecekleri güvenli ve kapsayıcı ortamları ifade etmektedir. Araştırma bulguları, bu alanın nasıl sağlandığını üç ana başlık altında incelemektedir: çocuklarla bir araya gelinen mekanın temel özellikleri (katılımcılar, zamanlama, yer, etkinlik süresi, aktivite ve materyal türleri), gerçekleştirilen etkinliklerin uygulanış şekilleri (öğretmen-çocuk rolleri, konuşmaların niteliği) ve kolaylaştırma stratejileri (konuşma kuralları, araçlar, söylem kalıpları).

Çember zamanı, vaka seçim aşamasında gözlemlenecek zaman dilimi olarak belirlenmiştir. Çember zamanı bağlamının düzenlenmesine, etkinliklerin seçim ve uygulanmasına ilişkin detaylar aşağıda verilmiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin çocukların

ifade alanlarını genişletmek için kullandıkları stratejilere dair bulgular da paylaşılmıştır. Bu bölümde sunulan betimleyici bulgular, sınıf içi gözlemlerin daha derinlemesine anlaşılması için bir zemin, bir çerçeve oluşturmaktadır. Tablo 4, her iki EÇE sınıfında da çember zamanı uygulamalarının temel yapısını göstermektedir. Çember zamanı gözlem dönemi, her sınıf için dokuz gözlem oturumundan ve toplamda 18 gözlemden oluşmaktadır.

Tablo 4 *Çember Zamanı Hakkında Genel Bilgiler*

Sınıf	Zamanlama	Ortalama Süre	Ortalama Çocuk (N)	Oturma Düzeni	Diğer Çalışanlar
PT05	Yemek Öncesi (n=6)	34 Dk	19	Çember Düzeni (n=8)	Stajyer (n=6)
	Yemek Sonrası (n=3)			Masa Etrafında (n=1)	
PT06	Yemek Sonrası (n=9)	30 Dk	20	Çember Düzeni (n=2) Masa Etrafında (n=7)	Stajyer (n=3)

Çember zamanına ilişkin ilgili alan yazın (Koczela, 2021) bu zamanın sınıf topluluğu olarak bir araya gelip paylaşım yapmak için bir fırsat olduğunu vurgularken, bu zamanın düzenlenmesinde belli başlı normların takip edilmesi gerektiğinin altını çizer. Bu normların başlıcaları yaklaşık 15-20 dakika boyunca çember düzeninde oturarak ve çember rutinlerini (yoklama, hava durumu vb.) gerçekleştirerek çocukların da aktif rol aldığı bir paylaşım fırsatı sunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın bulguları ise gözlemlenen sınıfların her zaman bu normlarla uyumlu olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Tablo 4'ün de işaret ettiği gibi çember düzeni yerine U şeklinde masa etrafında oturması ve okula ilk gelinen anda buluşmak yerine yemek saatinden sonra yeniden bir araya gelip çember zamanının başlatılması çember zamanı normları dışında hareket edildiğini göstermektedir.

Ayrıca, her ne kadar çember zamanı tek bir aktivite zamanı gibi düşünülse de bu süreç aslında yerleşme süreci, çember zamanı rutinleri, çember zamanı aktivite zamanı ve takip eden bazı etkinliklerin bütününe kapsayan bir süreçtir. Çalışmanın bulguları öğretmenlerin çember zamanı yönetiminde yerleşim süreci (%29) ve rutinelere (%29) harcadığı zamanının çember zamanı aktivite zamanına ayrılan zamanı (%29)

kısalttığını göstermiştir. Her gözlem haftasında olmasa da, bazı gözlem haftalarında gerçekleşen takip aktivitelerine ayrılan süre (%14) de genel çember zamanı aktivite süresini kısaltmıştır. Bu da çocukların katılımlarına olanak sağlayacak güvenli ve kapsayıcı çember zamanı aktivitelerine ayrılan zamanı azaltmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın odağında çember zamanının aktivite zamanı vardır. Bu zamanın nasıl yönetildiğine ilişkin bulgular aktivite türlerini ve bu aktivitelerde kullanılan materyallerini göstermektedir. Paylaşım etkinliği (n=12) her iki sınıfta da öne çıkan etkinlik olmuş, bunu hikaye anlatımı (n=10) izlemiştir. Hikaye anlatımı veya paylaşımı başlatmak için öğretmenler çoğunlukla çocuk kitaplarından (n=11) yararlanmışlardır. Bunun yanı sıra, kuklalar veya kitap ya da sohbet konusuyla ilgili örnekler (örneğin, geri dönüşüm malzemeleri, turşu kavanozu, kurallar tahtası) (n=4) gibi topluluk sohbetini başlatmak için uyarıcı olarak kullanılan başka tür materyaller de vardır. Öğretmenlerle sınıf içi pratiklerine ilişkin gerçekleştirilen son görüşmelerde, öğretmenler ideal bir çember zamanı yaratma noktasında eksikliklerini olduğunu beyan ederken, ideal çember zamanının çocukların kendilerini ifade edecek bir ortam oluşmasına aracılık edeceği vurgusunda bulunmuşlardır.

Çocukların kendilerini EÇE ortamlarında ifade etmesine alan yaratılmasına ilişkin diğer bulgular bu sürecin yönetilmesindeki öğretmen-çocuk etkileşimini ve öğretmen-çocuk konuşmalarındaki diyalogların yapısal ve içeriksel doğasını yansıtmaktadır. Gözlemlenen sınıflarda, öğretmenler çocukları kendi planları hakkında bilgilendirerek çember zamanına başlamışlardır. Bu bilgilendirilmelerin içeriğinde çember zamanının akışı (n=7), paylaşım yapılması beklenen sohbet konusu (n=18), seçilen kitapların isimleri ya da yapılacak etkinliğin uygulama basamakları (n=4) vardır. Zaman zaman öğretmenler çocuklarla, kendileri tarafından önceden belirlenmiş etkinlik türlerine (ör. hikaye anlatımı, büyük grup oyunları) devam etmek için sundukları alternatifler arasından seçim yapmak üzere müzakere etmiştir (n=2).

Öğretmen/çocuk rollerinin ve sohbetin doğasının farklı türdeki çember zamanı etkinlikleriyle kesişiminden elde edilen bulgular, öğretmenlerin etkinliklerin başlatılmasını baskın bir şekilde yönettiğini göstermiştir. Etkinlikler sırasında çocuklar ya öğretmenler tarafından başlatılan bir sohbet topluluğuna (n=9) ya da

hikaye anlatımına (n=5) katılmış ya da öğretmenin direktiflerinin baskın olduğu bir anlatıma paylaşım zamanı (n=2) ve hikaye anlatımı (n=5) boyunca maruz kalmışlardır. Zaman zaman, çocuklar da paylaşım etkinliğini başlatan kişiler olmuşlardır (n=3).

Çember zamanı aktivite zamanında öğretmen-çocuklar arasındaki konuşmaların doğasını yansıtan bulgular topluluk sohbetine katılım imkanı ile çocukların kendilerini ifade edişlerine ilişkin bilgiler sunmaktadır. Çalışmadan elde edilen bulgular çember zamanındaki konuşma doğasını dört kategoride gruplamaktadır. Paylaşım ve hikaye anlatım etkinlikleri boyunca en baskın olan konuşma türü topluluk konuşmasıdır (n=22). Bunun ardından gelen diğer bir konuşma türü öğretmen-çocuk arasındaki birebir konuşmalardır (n=10). Bu konuşma türü öğretmen ve çocuğun ayrı bir konuda/konuşma topluluğundan farklı olarak birbirleriyle iletişim kurdukları durumları yansıtır. Bunu takiben konuşmayı öğretmenin baskın olarak yönettiği konuşma türleri (n=4) ve topluluk konuşma konusunun yalnızca öğretmen ve çocuk arasında birebir konuşulduğu konuşma türleri gelmektedir (n=3).

Öğretmenler çember zamanı yönetiminde çeşitli stratejilere başvurarak işleyişi kolaylaştırmaya çalışmışlardır. İlgili alan yazına göre (Zaghlawan ve Ostrosky, 2011), çember zamanının çocukların ihtiyaçlarına yanıt verecek biçimdeki yönetiminin çocukların ifade alanlarını güvenli ve kapsayıcı bir hale getirme beklentisi ile çocukların kendilerini ifade edişlerinin kolaylaşacağı beklenmiştir.

Sınıf içerisinde gözlemlenen ve katılımcı öğretmenler tarafından beyan edilen stratejiler (Tablo 6) her zaman katılım haklarını destekler nitelikte demokratik bir sınıf yönetimini yansıtmayıp, zaman zaman öğretmen inisiyatifli-öğretmen liderliğinde yönetilen bir çember zamanının otokratik yönetimini sağlamıştır. Diğer bir ifade ile öğretmenler bu stratejileri topluluk içerisinde çocuklar ve öğretmen arasında süregelen paylaşımları kolaylaştırmanın yanı sıra kendilerinin baskın olduğu anlatılarda çocukların öğretmenleri dinlemesi için kullanmışlardır.

Tablo 5 Alan Kolaylaştırıcılarının Özeti

Kategoriler	Göstergeler	Veri Kaynakları	
Konuşma	Konuşma İzni Alma (n=11)	G*	
Kuralları	Konuşmadan Önce El Kaldırma (n=32)	G	
	Sandalyelerde Düzgün Oturmak (n=75)	G	
	Mevcut Sohbet Hakkında Konuşma (n=16)	G	
	Sıra ile Konuşma (n=24)	G	
	Saygılı Dinleme (Sessiz bekleme, hareketlerini kontrol etme, başkalarını rahatsız etmeme ve akranlarını aktif olarak dinleme) (n=75)	G	
	Net Artikülasyon (n=9)	G	
	Araçlar	Sakinleştirici Egzersizler (Nefes, Dans, Yaratıcı Drama, Fiziksel Egzersizler...) (n=14)	G, SG**
		Tekerlemeler (n=11)	G
Düdük (n=15)		G	
Fon Müziği (n=1)		G	
Kısa Mola (n=2)		G	
Serbest Oyun (n=1)		G	
Açık Havada Oyun (n=1) (Mülakat, PT06)		G, SG	
Davet-		Konuşmanın Başlatılması	G
Genişletme	Konuşmanın Genişletilmesi	G	

*Gözlemler, **Son Görüşme

Ses: Çocukların İfade Olanakları

Bu bölümde, çocukların seslerini nasıl ortaya koydukları ve öğretmenlerin çember zamanı boyunca çocukların kendilerini ifade etmelerini nasıl kolaylaştırdıklarına ilişkin bulgular sunulmaktadır. Bulgular, çocukların kendilerini ifade etmek için sözlü ve sözsüz yollar (örneğin, duygusal ifade, kabul edilemez davranışların sergilenmesi) dahil olmak üzere çeşitli ifade pencerelerine sahip olduklarını ortaya koymaktadır.

Sözlü ifadede, çocuklar kendilerini çeşitli amaçlarla (örn. İstekte bulunma, şikayet beyanı, fikir beyanı, izin alma, anıları anlatma) kendi başlattıkları konuşmalarla ifade etmiş (n=93) ya da sınıf topluluğunda süregelen konuşmalara kısa (örn. Onaylama/reddetme beyanı, isimlendirme) (n=513) ya da uzun cevaplarla (Örn. kritik etme, sebep belirtme) (n=430) katkıda bulunmuşlardır. Sözlü olmayan ifade edişlerin

duyguları yansıtma (örn. Ağlama, gülme) (n=6) ya da öğretmen tarafından yapılması kabul edilemez davranışların sergilenmesi (n=26) yoluyla gerçekleştiği bulgularda tespit edilmiştir. Öğretmen görüşmelerinden elde edilen bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocukların sözel olmayan iletişim girişimlerine karşılık olarak görülme ve duyulma ihtiyacının farkında olduklarını göstermiştir.

Öğretmenlerin, çocukların kendilerini ifade etmelerini kolaylaştırmaya yönelik stratejileri, öğretmenlerle yapılan görüşmeler ve sınıf içi gözlemlerle belirlenmiştir. Bulgulara göre öğretmenler; konulara ilişkin bilgilendirme yapma (n=167), saygı gösterme (n=33), çocukların anlamalarına aracılık etmek için ifadeleri açıklama ve yeniden seslendirme (n=274) ve kendini ifade eden çocuğun söyleminin anlaşılması için destekleme (n=67) gibi stratejiler kullanmışlardır. Ayrıca öğretmenler, diyalojik konuşma stratejileriyle çocukların ifadelerini genişletmeye ve sınıf topluluğu üyelerini sohbete dahil etmeye çalışmışlardır. Bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocukları kendilerini ifade etmeye davet ettiklerini (n=48) ve çocukların ifadelerini anlaşılır kılmak için açıklama ve yeniden seslendirme yaptıklarını (n=327) göstermiştir. Ancak, çocukların ifadelerini daha derinlemesine açıklamalarla genişletmeye yönelik konuşmayı uzatma girişimlerinin (n=147) sınırlı kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir.

Sınıf topluluğu içinde öğretmenlerin çocukların ifadelerini kolaylaştırma stratejilerinin dağılımı ve öğretmen-çocuk iletişim akışının analizi, öğretmenlerin ağırlıklı olarak bilgilendirme, anlamaya aracılık etme ve açıklama yoluyla çocukların kendilerini ifade etmelerini ve anlaşılmasını kolaylaştırdığını göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, öğretmenlerin, çocukların birbirlerinin fikirleri üzerine paylaşım yapmalarını destekleme çabalarının sınırlı olduğu görülmüştür.

Bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocukların başlattığı ifadeleri kabul etmenin yanı sıra, onlara ilgilerini çeken konularda bilgi vererek ve paylaşma isteklerine saygı göstererek çocukların ifadelerini kolaylaştırmaya çalıştıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, dinleyen topluluğun ifadeleri anlamasını sağlamak amacıyla çocukları net bir şekilde konuşmaları için desteklemişlerdir. Ek olarak, öğretmenlerin sınıf söylemlerini yönetme rolü, konuşma topluluğu içinde çocukların seslerini daha fazla ortaya koymalarını sağlamıştır.

Dinleyici: Çocukların Görüşlerine Gerekli Önemin Verilmesi

Bu bölümde, öğretmenlerin aktif dinleme stratejileri ile çocukların sesine nasıl dinleyici olduklarına ve karşılaştıkları engellere ilişkin bulgular sunulmuştur. Bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocukların sesine değer vermek amacıyla aktif dinleme stratejilerini kullanarak onları bilgilendirdiklerini, isteklerine saygı gösterdiklerini, nazik bir davetle paylaşmaya teşvik ettiklerini ve çocukların ifadelerine yanıt vererek (örneğin, onaylama, yorum yapma, övme) destek olduklarını göstermiştir.

Gözlemler, öğretmenlerin çocukları ilgilendiren konular hakkında bilgilendirerek onları paylaşmaya nazikçe davet ettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmenlerin aktif bir dinleyici olarak çocuklarla olan sohbeti önemseyip değer verdiklerini vurgulayarak sohbeti nasıl sonlandırdıkları da analiz edilmiştir. Bulgulara göre, öğretmenler çocukların ifadelerini sonlandırırken basit bir kabul ya da red ile yanıt vermekte (n=92), ifadeleri özetleyerek, yeniden formüle ederek veya üzerine inşa ederek sonlandırmakta (n=70), ya da çocukların katkılarını övücü ifadelerle tamamlamaktadır (n=36).

Görüşmelerden elde edilen bulgular ise, öğretmenlerin çocukların aktif katılımını sağlama sürecinde dinleyici olarak karşılaştıkları zorluklara işaret etmiştir. Bu zorluklar arasında okulun işleyişi ve fiziksel koşullar gibi dış etkenlerin (n=12) yanı sıra, sınıf içi öğretmen-çocuk ve aile ilişkisi dinamikleri (n=40) ve öğretmenlerin kendi içsel faktörleri (n=7) yer almaktadır. Öğretmenler, çocukların ifadelerine kulak vermenin ve onları dikkate almanın önemini vurgulamakla birlikte, kalabalık bir sınıfta her bireyin katılım hakkını desteklerken aynı zamanda grup haklarını öğretmenlerin zorluklarına da dikkat çekmişlerdir.

Etki: Uygun Olduğunda Çocukların Görüşlerini Ciddiye Almak

Bu bölümde, öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini nasıl kabul ettiklerine ve uygun olduğunda karar alma süreçlerine nasıl dahil ettiklerine ilişkin bulgular sunulmuştur. Sınıf içi gözlemlerden elde edilen bulgular, öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini

nerede, ne zaman ve hangi konularda dikkate aldıklarını ya da almadıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Yerleşim zamanı ve çember rutinlerinin aksine, çocuklar görüşlerini en çok çember saati etkinliği sırasında şikayette bulunma (n=29), görüş paylaşma (n=27), istekte bulunma (19), açıklama isteme (n=12), izin alma (n=16) ve anılarını anlatma (n=9) amaçları doğrultusunda beyan etmişlerdir. Fakat çember zamanı aktivite periyodunun (örn. Paylaşım yapma, hikaye okuma) yürütülmesindeki öğretmen-çocuk rolleri üzerine bulgular göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, öğretmenlerin çoğunlukta aktiviteye karar vererek başlatan ve sürdüren kişiler olduğu bulgusunu hatırlamaya yeniden ihtiyaç vardır. Öğretmenlerin genellikle kendi fikirleri doğrultusunda yönettiği çember zamanı aktivite periyodları boyunca çocukların konuyla ilişkili ya da ilişkisiz kendi fikirlerini beyan ederek konuşma başlattığı anlardır. Öğretmenler bu anlarda ortaya çıkan çocukların beyanlarına farklı şekillerde bu ifadelerle yanıt oluşturmuşlardır. Çember zamanı aktivite periyodu boyunca öğretmenlerin çocukların beyanlarına karşılıkları çoğunlukla görmezden gelme (n=37), erteleme (n=27) ve açıklamada bulunarak reddetme (n=20) ya da hiçbir açıklamada bulunmadan reddetme (n=9) şeklindedir. Öğretmenlerin görmezden geldiği anlar çoğunlukla çocukların ortaya kendi fikirlerini attıkları anlardır (n=21). Öğretmenlerin çocukların ifadelerini dikkate alarak yanıt vermeyi erteledikleri anlar ise çoğunlukla çocukların ricalarda buldukları (n=15) ve izin istedikleri (n=14) anlarla kesişmektedir. Bunların yanı sıra öğretmen çocukların beyanları ile ters düştüğünde zaman zaman çocuklarla iş birliği yapma (n=21) yolunu da tercih etmiştir. Öğretmenin çocuklarla işbirliği yaparak uzlaşmaya çalıştığı en belirgin anlar çocukların çeşitli sebeplerle şikâyetle buldukları anlardır (n=14).

Öğretmenlerin çocukların görüşlerini dahil etmeye nasıl karar verdiklerine ilişkin bulgular, öğretmenlerin bir denge noktası olarak uzman görüşünün önemini vurguladıklarını göstermektedir. Karar alma süreçlerinde uzman görüşünün benimsenmesi, öğretmenlerin çocukların seslerini kabul ettiği ancak çocukların yaşamlarında uzman olarak açıklama yaparak ve müzakere ederek karşıt görüşlerle başa çıkmaya çalıştığı durumlarda görülebilir.

Sonuç olarak öğretmenler beyanlarında çocukların katılım haklarının gerçekleşmesinde bilhassa kendilerinin ve ailelerinin rollerine işaret ederek,

çocukların seslerini duyurabilecek ve görüşlerine yer verecek bir dinleyici kitlesi aracılığı ile yaratılacak ortamlarda, çocukların haklarını beyan edebilecek ve savunabilecek yetkinliğe sahip bireyler olduğunu vurgulamışlardır.

Sınırlılıklar, Çıkarımlar, Öneriler

Bu çoklu vaka çalışmasının genel amacı, EÇE sınıflarında çocukların katılım haklarının günlük uygulamalar boyunca nasıl hayata geçirildiğini araştırmaktır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda veri toplama yöntemleri görüşmeler ve sınıf içi gözlemler olmuştur. Ancak, çeşitli nedenlerle (örneğin, kısıtlı zaman, tek başına bir araştırmacı olmak), araştırmacı araştırma süresini tüm okul gününden belirli bir dönemle sınırlandırmıştır. Bu anlamda araştırma, çocukların katılım haklarının öğretmen-çocuk etkileşimlerinde ve çember zamanındaki sınıf söylemlerinde nasıl ortaya çıktığı üzerineydi. Düzenli bir EÇE ortamında tüm okul günü, az ya da çok yapılandırılmış etkinliklerin karışımından oluşur. Normal okul günlerinde çocukların katılım haklarının araştırılmasını genişletmek için diğer etkinlik türlerinin de incelenmesine ihtiyaç vardır.

Ayrıca, araştırmacı sınıf içi gözlemler sırasında video kaydı yapma niyetiyle çalışmaya başlamış ve ODTÜ İnsan Denekleri Etik Kurulu'ndan onay almıştır. Fakat MEB Etik Kurulu, İstanbul'daki kamuya açık EÇE ortamlarında video kaydına izin verilmediğini araştırmacıya bildirmiştir. Araştırmacı, tez komitesi üyelerine danışarak sınıf içi gözlem formlarını gözden geçirmiş, geliştirmiş ve ses kaydı almıştır. Ayrıca, çalışmanın geçerliliğini arttırmak için araştırmacı, kodlanan bölümlerin kodlayıcılar arası uyumunu alan uzmanı bir araştırmacı eşliğinde MAXQDA programı üzerinden hesaplamış (%82), gözlemler, raporlama ve analiz boyunca gözlem notları, analitik yansımalar, araştırmacı günlüğü gibi stratejilere başvurarak güvenilirlik ilkelerini takip etmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın veri toplama sürecinin sonuna doğru MEB, devlet okul öncesi programlarının uygulanmasında revizyonlar için iki yeni müfredat başlatmıştır. Bunlardan ilki 2013 Ulusal Okul Öncesi Eğitim Programının revize edilmesi ile oluşturulan 2024 Ulusal Okul Öncesi Eğitim Programı, diğeri ise Maarif Modeli'dir.

Arařtırmacının veri toplama ve analiz srelerinde bu yeni programlar uygulamaya konulmamıř olduėundan, arařtırmacı mevcut alıřma iin 2013 Ulusal Okul ncesi Eėitim Programını dikkate almıřtır. Bununla birlikte, arařtırmacı literatr taraması blmnde mevcut arařtırmanın gerekesi ve amaları ile ilgili olarak 2024 Ulusal Okul ncesi Eėitim Programı'nın temel zelliklerini tanıtılmıřtır. Gelecekte konuya iliřkin yapılacak olan alıřmaların yeni tanıtılan mfredatların zelliklerini ve uygulamalarını dikkate alarak gerekleřtirilmesine ihtiya vardır.

ocuk imgesinin, ocuk ve ocukluėun toplumsal inřasıyla baėlantılı olduėu ve toplumun farklı katmanlarındaki dinamiklerin bu srete nem tařıdıėı dřnldėnde, bu alıřma kapsamında belirlenen gstergeler, ocukların katılım haklarını ve bu hakların uygulanmasında evrenin roln sosyo-kltrel bir bakıř aısıyla anlamaya katkı saėlayabilir. EE ortamlarında ocukların katılım haklarının hayata geirilmesi iin, yetiřkinlerin bu konuya iliřkin bilin dzeyini artıracak ve yerleřik dřnce kalıplarını gncelleyecek hizmet ncesi ve hizmet ii eėitimler ile atlyeler dzenlenebilir. Bylece gncellenmesi hedeflenen ocuk imgesi sayesinde, ocuklar kendi yařamlarının aktif anlam yapıcıları olarak grlmeye bařlanabilir; bu da, ocukların gnlk rutinlerde katılım haklarını nasıl gerekleřtirdiklerini gzlemleyerek ihtiya duydukları desteėi ėretmenlerin rehberliėiyle almalarını saėlayabilir.

Yetiřkinlerin ocuk katılımına dair inanlarını gncellerken, arařtırma sonularından elde edilecek somut gstergeler doėrultusunda, EE kurumlarında sınıf ii uygulamalara ocukların katılım haklarını destekleyici bakıř aıları kazandırılabilir. Bu sayede, sınıf ynetimi, planlama ve uygulama srelerinde ocukların katılımının saėlanabileceėine dair ngrler ieren eėitim programları hazırlanabilir. Kresel krizler aėında her yařtan ocuėu hedef alan sorunlarla bařa ıkmak iin, ocukların katılım haklarının sorumlu yetiřkinler tarafından anlařılması, kabul edilmesi ve teřvik edilmesi; ocukların korunma ve tedarik haklarını talep etme ve savunma konusunda glenmelerine katkıda bulunabilir.

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Bölümü / Department : Temel Eğitim, Okul Öncesi Eğitimi / Early Childhood Education

TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English): Children's Participation Rights in Early Childhood Education Classrooms: A Multiple Case Study

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans / Master** **Doktora / PhD**

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