CHILDREN'S CHILDHOODS: EXPLORING CHILDHOOD THROUGH CHILDREN'S INTERPRETATIONS OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS IN NORTH CYPRUS

Naile Berberoglu

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University of York
Department of Sociology

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ABSTRACT

In this study, I explore different aspects of childhood within a particular cultural and social space. I bring the sociology of childhood into dialogue with media studies to explore childhood in the lives of children themselves. In doing so I highlight the parallels that can be drawn between each discipline's approach to children and audiences, respectively. I use the similarities between the two disciplines and methodologies that are compatible with both in order to explore how children interpret constructions of childhood and depictions of children in Turkish media content in North Cyprus. To this end, I conducted 10 focus groups involving 40 children between the ages of seven and twelve. In these focus groups I asked children to interpret television advertisements that depict children and, using the discussions around these interpretations as a springboard, I encouraged them to talk about their experiences within their socio-cultural environment. I used discourse analysis to analyse the advertisements used in the focus groups and to incorporate the children's interpretations into my analysis as well as analysing the focus group transcripts using the cultural, social and economic backgrounds of the children as the context for my analysis. In addition, this study examines the fluid and ambivalent power dynamics between parents and children, both in terms of the actual exercise of power and in terms of constructions of meaning with regard to childhood. I argue for the importance of involving children's views and perspectives in research on childhood and demonstrate how doing research with children can work towards helping them to be heard. I also consider this approach to childhood as a step towards having children's social agency recognized in different institutions within society.

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To my mother...

1.1 Why Children and Media?

Although children spend a considerable amount of time engaging with the media, until recently, in fact as recently as when this project first started in 2006, it could be said that there was a dearth of studies and literature on children and media within sociology. In 2003 David Buckingham wrote that: 'Sociologists of childhood have largely neglected the role of the media in children's lives. Yet it is now impossible to understand contemporary childhood without taking account of the media' (p.184). Conversely, it was also hard to find examples of media studies considering children in their active role as audiences. Having said this, I also acknowledge that the link between children and media is increasingly becoming the focus of more studies year on year. Routledge's *Journal of Children and Media* started publishing in 2007. A year later, in 2008, the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media was founded by David Buckingham and has been contributing to the topic of children and media with research ranging from games to internet and media literacy. However, even with this recent interest, further research that combines media studies and childhood studies is needed to enhance understanding of children's involvement with and use of media in specific cultural contexts. On the other hand, it is equally important to explore and to understand the construction of children's identities, their perception of it, how they see their role within the society and how constructions of different childhood(s) compare with children's lived experiences and understandings.

To this end, this study not only integrates media studies with childhood studies, but in doing so with a child-centred methodology, it also involves children in questioning the concept of childhood. Therefore, one of the main aims of this project is to map out children's understandings and interpretations of what childhood is, how it differs from adulthood from children's point of view and also what role the media, in particular television, plays in children's lives while they formulate their perceptions and structure their interpretations. Hence, this study

presents alternative constructions of childhood in Northern Cyprus from children's point of view while taking their cultural and social circumstances into account. It is important to mention that this study sets a precedent in Northern Cyprus, not only because of its content but also due to the methodologies[1] used while researching with children. In Chapter III I explain how this study differs from any other study conducted on children in Northern Cyprus and the problems I faced in conducting qualitative research, from obtaining permissions to accessing samples.

In this thesis, I have two aims; one is to understand the discursive constructions of childhood in Northern Cyprus via an analysis of television advertisements. I realize this objective through applying discourse analysis on selected television advertisements. My second aim is to understand how children make sense of the way they are represented in television advertisements in the context of their everyday lives. I realize this objective through conducting focus groups. This thesis goes beyond expanding the theoretical discussion on discourses that are engaged with/by children and through childhood. I also use focus groups to collect data on children's everyday lives and practices.[2] Through focus groups I tap into how they engage with each other and with adults within the family and at school. It is through bringing together these different, but complementary, methods and methodologies that I am able to not only scrutinize the cultural constructions of childhood but also the micro dynamics of children's everyday experiences.

Bringing together theories and approaches from media studies and childhood studies enables me to add to the discussion on children as audiences as well as the development of communication and media studies and childhood studies and paradigm shifts within them. Moreover, this study considers the relationship between children and media in a new context by conducting qualitative research

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[1] While examples of qualitative research can be found in the field of communication and media studies (see Bailie, 2006, Azgin & Bailie 2008, 2011) the same is not the case for studies involving children.
[2] An example of such a study can be found in Janice Rodway's (1984) work on women and literature in her book titled '*Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and popular literature*'.

with children and media in Northern Cyprus. Hence, the importance of this study is twofold; first its focus on the theoretical underpinnings of communication and media studies and the sociology of childhood in bringing them into a dialogue, as well as the methodologies used to combine these two fields of study in exploring childhood from children's point of view. Second, its emphasis on exploring children's interpretations within a specific social and cultural framework, Northern Cyprus, in order to study their childhoods.

I will be using children's interpretations of Turkish media content, namely television advertisements, to analyse their experiences and interpretations of childhood within Northern Cyprus. To this end, in what follows, I will present a brief socio-historical and cultural history of Northern Cyprus in order to provide some background to this study. This will explain why I am using Turkish media content even though this study takes place in Northern Cyprus. The historical context presented here is important to understand the social location within which children's relationship to media in Northern Cyprus takes place. Children's engagement with media cannot be divorced from the cultural context within which this practice takes place. As will be discussed in Chapter II, media content is produced for specific audiences in accordance with cultural and social norms and values. In order to analyse media, its content, production and consumption, as well as audiences' engagement with it, one needs a cultural understanding of the production and consumption process. This forms the basis for why this research was conducted in Northern Cyprus, which is where I am from. Hence, my ability to analyse, interpret and present data obtained during the course of this study is assisted by my understanding of the culture within which I live.

1.2 Socio-Historical Background to the Media Culture in Northern Cyprus

Currently Cyprus is divided into two parts, Northern and Southern Cyprus with Turkish Cypriots living in the North and Greek Cypriots living in the South. This, however, was not the case in the mid twentieth century. In 1960, the Republic of Cyprus was established with both Greek and Turkish Cypriots living together

under one shared constitution. Three years after the Republic was established, President Makarios proposed to amend thirteen articles of the constitution, which were all rejected by Turkish Cypriots on the basis that these amendments were against the constitution itself and were detrimental to the democratic, political and social participation of Turkish Cypriots. Tension between the two communities then started building up and by December 1963 violence had erupted and was escalating dramatically. In 1964 the 'green line' was enforced by the United Nations in an attempt to stop the violence and killings on both sides. The United Nations still holds the 'green line' which separates the North from the South of the island. From the early 1970s onwards the threat of a possible annexation of Cyprus to Greece had increased. In 1974, Turkey acted on her power as one of the Guarantors of the Republic's sovereignty and carried out military intervention, which was greatly appreciated by the Turkish Cypriots. [3] In 1975, Turkish Cypriots established the Cypriot Turkish Federal State in the North of the island in order to govern their affairs. By this time almost all Greek Cypriots on the island were living in what is called the South of the island, which is to the south-west of the green line, and Turkish Cypriots were living in the North.

Even though this separation should have brought Turkey's role as a guarantor to an end, the Turkish military continued its presence on the island and still does so to this day. Official Turkish and Turkish Cypriot history might not write it this way, but it is not only common knowledge and belief, it is also accepted by many politicians, economists and the public that Turkey's continued presence on the island and dominance over internal and external affairs has left Northern Cyprus economically dependent on Turkey. In 1983, the Turkish Cypriot Federal State was abolished in order to establish the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

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[3] There are many versions of this historical account both from the Turkish and Greek Cypriots' perspectives as is the case in many conflict areas. It should be mentioned that neither side has a unanimous story, that the stories of each community differ among themselves, though official historical accounts for Greek and Turkish Cypriots are not only drastically different but also fail to take into account different life experiences unless they are in line with the official account. Here I do not acknowledge the different accounts as my aim is not to provide a full historical account but to offer a brief summary in order for the reader to be able to place the role of Turkey and Turkish media in Northern Cypriot life.

The reason for abolition of the Turkish Cypriot Federal State and the establishment of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) to replace the Federal State is important for understanding the extent of Turkey's involvement in the lives of Turkish Cypriots. The head of the Federal State was Rauf Raif Denktas, who was appointed by Turkey to lead the Turkish Cypriot community. According to the 1975 constitution, it would have been impossible for him to be re-elected. Hence, with Turkey's help and advice the Federal state was abolished and the TRNC was established. The first president was Rauf Raif Denktas, who stayed in power until 2005. [4]

It is not surprising given the Turkish social, political and economic influences dominating the lives of Northern Cypriots, that most institutions, from education to the media, are dominated by Turkish content. In addition most, if not all, of the media workers, teachers, nurses and tourism employees working in Northern Cyprus are Turkish nationals. At school children study books published by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Turkey and come home to watch Turkish national television channels. They can find the products they see being advertised on television in all the stores, from small village paper shops to big supermarkets. Even though the Turkish presence in Northern Cyprus is very dominant both economically and socially, there are many differences between the Northern Cypriots and the Turkish people living in Northern Cyprus. The cultural differences between the two communities have always been said to be greater than the cultural differences between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. My study will focus on the Turkish Cypriot children as opposed to Turkish children living in North Cyprus.

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[4] The reason why no one else was able get elected is because of the Turkish immigrants being brought to Northern Cyprus and given citizenship on the day that they arrive. They are given money by the Turkish military so that they vote for Mr. Denktas. In fact I have heard from friends that when they were on holiday in the North of Turkey visiting villages on a tour trip, someone approached them and said 'I'll go to Cyprus, don't exactly know where it is but there are elections there, I get a citizenship card to vote'. This story is not a one-off.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

In what follows I will clarify some key concepts that inform my research and analysis. My focus on constructions of childhood as perceived by children ultimately leads to a focus on children's understandings of themselves in relation to each other and adults. (As will be seen in Chapter II, I elaborate on the notion of 'children' and 'adults' as binary opposites and expand on the concept of 'childhood' as well as the implications of adult defined 'childhood(s)'). This expanded focus brings into question certain key concepts. Thus, questioning the self, the identity and agency of children as they live in an adult dominated society requires an understanding of the power dynamics that are at play in constructing the social space and context as well as their common practices. Questions of what it means to be an adult and what it means to be a child within a contextual framework requires focus on understanding how meanings are constructed within the society. Following Jackson (2006), I argue that childhood and adulthood are 'constituted as objects of discourse and subject to regulation through specific discourses in circulation at any historical moment'(Jackson, 2006, p.112). In addition, children are born dependent on adults. Following Smith (2006) it is assumed throughout this thesis that, while children's dependence on adults may at times position adults as the knower, 'the power of objectified knowledge arises in the distinctive organization it imparts to social relations'(p70).

Even though children's dependence on adults empowers adults, it is only through the active participation of both adults and children in social practices that brings about their 'lived actualities' (Smith, 1990, 2005). Therefore it is in this framework that I consider the concepts I discuss below which inform my research and analysis.

1.3.1 Identity and the self

The reason for why the term identity is important for my thesis is twofold: First, because I am concerned with the construction of children's identities within a specific social and cultural context. Secondly, because I discuss how children's

identities change in relation to their age and interactions with other children and adults. As my analysis will demonstrate, change in children's identity is partially dependent on the way that children exercise their agency, mostly within the family and school, where they are bound by adult surveillance. Adults' decisions on children's daily lives and surroundings tend to be authoritative and most often than not, also final. In turn, adults decisions have an impact on children's agency as well as identity. The power relationships between adults and children also influence on how children's identities change. '[Identities] happen in social practice' (Holland, et. al, 1998, p.vii). In terms of the thematic analysis of the focus group data, it is important for me to pay 'specific attention ... to the procedures of classification and interpretation inherent in all social action (Rustin, 1993, p. 168) involving children. Hence the concept of identity in which 'individuals and collectives are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectives' (Jenkins, 1996, p. 4) helps me establish how children identify themselves. [5]

Within the daily lives of children, as social practices are produced and reproduced by them and for them, children's identities are made and remade. 'At one level understanding the construction of identity in present-day society means understanding the whole complex social fabric through which identities are constructed, and the way they respond to the culture through which they are defined' (Osborne, 2002, p. 161).

As Osborne states, understanding the construction of children's identities means understanding their self awareness, self reflection and subjectivity within a social and cultural context. In defining their identities children position themselves as who they are, who they think they should be perceived as and how they interpret who they are from the point of view of adults. Often children refer to adults'

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[5] In this thesis I have specifically focused on children's everyday lives and their interpretations of representations of children in television advertisement. Therefore, in this section I will not be going into a discussion on national identity, a discussion topic that is common in Cypriot's lives in terms of being Cypriot, Turkish Cypriot, Cypriot Turkish or Turkish. Each wording of national identity is associated with different ideologies, political parties and attitudes towards life in Cyprus. Even though children and their daily lives and conversations are not exceptions to this, I have not included this aspect of their lives in my thesis.

description of themselves to talk about themselves, and they also consider who they are expected to be when engaging with either younger or older children. As Jackson (2011) states 'Our sense of self ... is responsive to the shifting contingencies of everyday interaction but also to the wider social relations within which the everyday is located' (p.18). Therefore, children's identities are (re)constructed, maintained and governed by themselves through the actions, interactions and discourses that make up their lives. 'The reflexive self is always anchored in sociality – and therefore in historically and culturally specific forms of social life' (Jackson, 2011, p. 19). Moreover, a discussion on children's identity differs from that of any other social group's for children's identities are contingent not only upon who they are at any present time but who they will become later in their lives. Childhood is defined in opposition to adulthood and this in turn also has an impact on how their identities are ascribed through adults.

In order to be able to adopt a particular identity we have to recognize the different identity groups that are around us. Our actions within any group and interactions with others provide us with a language with which we recognize our self. Hence children, through making sense of these interactions, form their identities. This is due to the fact that our understanding of the self depends on our understanding of the other. It is through this system that children can identify who they are and who adults are. While on the one hand they recognize themselves as a child, student, sibling, friend etc. they also distinguish what they are not. However, as mentioned this process is more complex than recognizing differences and associating with an identity or identities. In Chapter 5, for instance, I discuss how children's age plays an important part in constructing their identity and the implications of this for their lives from their point of view, as they interpret it. As our identities fluctuate within a contextual framework of social, cultural and environmental elements, our identities inform our actions. In the case of children, more often than not, adults' authoritative power over children's lives in deciding and determining which school they will go to, what they will wear, when, where and how they may speak[6] has an effect on how they express their identities and hence how their agency is exercised.

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[6] Examples of which are explored in following chapters.

1.3.2 Agency

Over the course of my analysis of and discussion on children's lives in their social environment I argue that their agency is either undermined or not recognized. I rely on my data to demonstrate how the relationship between adults and children help shape and limit how children exercise their agency. Rahman and Jackson (2010) define agency as 'the capacity for intentional action [which] presupposes ... human ability to reflect upon situations that confront us and to decide on appropriate courses of action' (p. 155). They add that the concept of agency is important also for 'the mundane conditions of our everyday ... lives' (p.155). The point Rahman and Jackson raise about human agency being important not only in terms of active political and social action, resistance and awareness but also important in mundane everyday life conditions is significant for the purposes of my study. This points helps in establishing that one of the reasons why children's agency is undermined or not recognised is that they are not considered as full participants or contributors to household affairs by most adults, especially by their parents. The differences between the roles of children and adults in everyday life and the way we interpret, give value to and experience these different roles causes inequalities between how the agencies of children and adults are exercised. This situation also highlights the impact of adults' agency over children's agency. Constraint and limitations on or acceptance of children's agency should not however be interpreted as children lacking agency. On the contrary, as Jackson (2011) posits:

> ...if reflexivity is essential for social being it would seem impossible to argue that subordinate groups are lacking in reflexive capacities. Since reflexivity requires the ability to imagine oneself from the other's perspective and anticipate the other's responses to oneself, subordinates often need to be highly reflexive. (Jackson, 2011, p. 18)

There are different dynamics at play within the society when we attempt to explore the differences between adult's and children's agencies and identities. These theoretical differences have an impact on how individuals exercise their agency and to what extend their agency impacts on their social surroundings and circumstances.

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Emirbayer and Mische (1998) argue that:

> The key to grasping the dynamic possibilities of human agency is to
> view it as composed of variable and changing orientations within the
> flow of time. Only then will it be clear how the structural
> environments of action are both dynamically sustained by and also
> altered through human agency – by actors capable of formulation
> projects for the future and realizing them. (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998
> p.964)

However, not everyone is situated equally in terms of exercising their agency. In a similar way that our identities fluctuate, our agency and the impact of our agency also varies depending on our engagements within any particular context(s). Jackson (2006) suggests that structural constrains that are in place through macro level inequalities 'impinge on everyday life, differentially enabling and/or constraining our patterns of existence' (p.111). She posits these should be considered in investigating the social. Hence, as my analysis will show children's agency is not just limited but also most often not recognized. This is mostly due to the way that power relationships between adults and children or between older and younger children are structured. This forms the basis of understanding the power adults have over children.

1.3.3 Power

In the editor's note to *Childhood and Society,* (Lee, N. 2001) Tim May argues that:

> There is a particular stage which is more pertinent to the idea of
> potentiality than any other: childhood. The ways in which adults view
> children and how they govern their activities is given in their
> contemporary practices. The question, of course, is whether these
> serve to maximize their potential or seek to constrain it in the name of
> the dominant ideas of the present? (May, 2001, p. x)

The simple reason for this question to arise is because adults do have power over children in the way that they govern their lives, activities and choices. Yet the

consequences of this need to be questioned in order to explore how and why power is exercised in certain ways and how this is reflected in the lives of children. In doing so, however, it is important to consider that the way this power is exercised and the way that it manifests itself consists of a complex set of dynamics that play a part in shaping the relationship between children and adults. This is because neither the relationship between children and adults nor power with all its aspects within this relationship is one dimensional (Lukes, 2005). There are different (yet interconnected and related) dimensions of power between adults and children. For instance, there is the coercive power that simply forces children to obey adults. Also there is the power that arises from the family agenda[7] which forces children to act/behave in certain ways as well as a hidden, taken for granted power that dictates adult ways, mannerisms, decisions, ways of seeing onto children's lives. Adults decide which school children will go to or what is for dinner. 'Schools are one particular institutional space through which adults attempt to control and discipline children' (Holloway & Valentine, 2003, p.7). More importantly, whatever the type of power exercised by adults (specifically parents, guardians, [8] teachers) over children the fact that it is seen as legitimate not only disguises adults' power over children but also makes it valid. There are different aspects of cultural, social, traditional and economic frameworks that constitute the contexts in which power exists within the relationships of children and adults. In addition adults' power over children due to children's dependency on adults (especially at younger ages, which helps establish a certain dimension of power relationship between children and their parents) allow for certain power relationships to develop between adults and children which result in parental authority. The authority or domination of adult decisions and actions over children's actions, opinions, interpretations or views are not natural or given, rather it is a consequence of how adults and children define themselves through tradition, values, social and cultural institutions as well

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[7] It should be noted that family agenda is to a great extent shaped by the wider society. For instance, even simple household chores such as nominating a certain day as laundry, cleaning etc. day or meal times and the like can depend on the socio-economic structure of the country and the family. These activities are generally organised around parents' work schedules (see Chapter II).
[8] In the context of discussing adults' power over children I specifically used the word guardian to emphasise the implied meanings of guarding, protecting which requires knowing how to protect in the 'best way'.

as how normative views on childhood and adulthood are practiced within any given society at any historical time.

It is within the environment of family rules, values and cultural beliefs concerning the 'betterment' of children that power exercised by adults over children's lives is overt and observable. In the way that education, schooling, play time and household rules are structured we can see adults' role in shaping children's lives which reflects adult authority and influence. However there are other aspects of this relationship that construct and produce different power dynamics at play within the relationships between adults and children. In establishing their identity and who they are as opposed to the 'other', children can also resist or reinterpret the power used by adults. What is more important here however, is not so much how power is used, but rather what these different uses mean and how they are interpreted. 'Disparities between asymmetrical, hierarchical relations of power in households and more symmetrical, egalitarian ones, greatly stem from parents' interaction styles, particularly in the types of directives used, the amount of negotiation allowed with children and in the number of choices offered to them' (Fasulo, Loyd & Padiglione, 2007, p.14).

I investigate the daily activities and habits that are common in different relationships between children and adults through examining children's interpretation of how adult's power play a part in their lives and exploring children's resistance/acceptance of power in different ways which are embedded in historical, social and cultural practices. In addition I also consider individual differences in different families and children from different backgrounds. It is these common practices over time become accepted as 'normal'. It is within this framework that I consider the power relationships between adults and children in this thesis.

1.4 Overview of Thesis

Throughout the thesis, I will be highlighting the importance of a socio-cultural approach to studying childhood and the media. I will be basing my analysis on the

point of view that children are active in their engagement with different media content. I will not be focusing on children's engagement with the media from the perspective of media literacy, but acknowledge that children in contemporary society possess a degree of what Buckingham refers to as 'basic media literacy' (1993, 2000a, 2000b). He explains this as being able to 'read', perceive and interpret media content with an understanding of how the language of images, sounds and words are constructed (Buckingham, 1993, pp. 24-36).[9] In the context of my study, I would argue that it is important to highlight today's media environment and children's level of engagement with, and perception of, the media. Within contemporary Western society, even a cursory glance at the contemporary media landscape shows how much more sophisticated and pervasive media content has become and how exposure to it opens up new possibilities and problems for today's children compared to previous generations. With the introduction of DVDs, computer games, and the production of programmes that include 'behind the camera' scenes as their content, which all reveal the production and construction that goes into producing media texts, it has become clear, especially to the younger audience, with or without any media literacy education, that media images and sounds are produced and are constructed.

My intention in this study is to give children the opportunity to express their opinions on their experiences of being a child through engaging them in a discussion about how childhood is represented in television advertisements. This will provide me with an understanding of how children perceive the way childhood is constructed within a consumer-oriented society. After all, as Goldson (1997) has argued, 'children are not only future members *of* society they are active participants *within* society, and as such the temporal and spatial institutional arrangements intrinsic to familial and state forms of socialization

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[9] Media education for children might help them to develop their perceptions and understanding of media messages and offer alternative ways of perceiving themselves and their environment. Research in this area suggests that children who receive media literacy courses are more critically aware and are more capable of sophisticated media analysis than their counterparts who did not receive media literacy courses (see Hobson, 2004). Media literacy courses often used and exemplified in David Buckingham's work are not present in the curriculum of schools in Northern Cyprus.

require critical scrutiny' (p. 27; emphasis original). Importantly, therefore, as I will outline in Chapter II, I am not so much interested in market oriented research conducted on children and consumer culture/marketing and advertising. Instead, I will be criticising work in these fields based on their focal points and methodologies. Indeed, the role that children are expected to play within contemporary constructions of 'childhood' will be examined through an analysis of television advertisements targeting children.

Before I move on to my analysis and findings, I will provide a rough overview on how children have tended to be perceived in childhood studies as well as how researchers of media studies have perceived media audiences. This is not intended to be a definitive or comprehensive history of either childhood, media studies or children in media studies. Instead, what I do here is to bring out some of the core themes within these respective fields that underpin the entire thesis.

At first these different areas of study might appear unrelated, but as will be argued, there are in fact parallels that can be drawn between the histories of these two academic fields which are not only important in themselves but also crucial in terms of the development of each field towards a more comprehensive, multi-perspective and critical approach towards their object of study. As even a brief review of the literature of childhood studies and communication and media studies will show, scholars in both fields have come to appreciate the great importance of the cultural, social and economic contexts within which their studies are situated. In Chapter II, I provide a literature review that covers a brief overview of communication and media studies with special attention to children and media, and also a sketch out some key work in childhood studies. This review is crucial in order for me to establish the theoretical framework, not only for the methodologies used but also for the discussions that I engage in during my analysis.

More importantly, I will be drawing on each field of study in order to highlight the similarities and the parallels that can be combined in exploring children's social role as active agents and as audiences. Indeed, I argue that the parallels and

the similarities that emerge between these fields help us understand how common public concerns about children and media have come about and how they are grounded. This not only paves the way for more comprehensive and critical studies to be conducted on children and media, but also suggests ways in which incorporating theories of communication and media studies into those of sociology, especially that of the sociology of childhood, can be successfully achieved.

In Chapter III, I explain the methodologies I used to elicit and analyse my data, which involves analysis of media texts and focus groups with children. I explain why I use mixed methods, i.e. discourse analysis of advertisements and thematic analysis of focus groups. I also detail the various implications of conducting qualitative research in Northern Cyprus and the effects of this on my study and sampling. The socio-cultural background of the study is significant both for the research process and in terms of my findings. I will be detailing how and why I use television advertisements in this study, explaining how these advertisements not only help me discuss the representation of children in the media, but also allow me to explore children's engagement with media, especially television. I examine five Turkish television advertisements that depict and target children. These advertisements are selected from among a variety that feature different ways in which children are depicted. Four of the most famous channels were followed over six months prior to selecting the advertisements that would be used in this study. The five advertisements that were selected represent adverts that are broadcast during the hours that children are most likely to watch television and in prime time. These advertisements were selected to represent different depictions of children in television advertisements.

One of the main reasons behind implementing discourse analysis of advertisements in conjunction with a thematic approach to the focus group data is to highlight how childhood is constituted without overlooking the realities children experience in everyday life. In other words, while questioning the concept of childhood, I also aim to capture the material existence and lived experiences of children from their point of view. Hence, as will be

demonstrated throughout the thesis, the methodological approach I have used allows me not only to contextualize the different constructions of childhood, but also to capture children's accounts of their lived experiences within the Northern Cypriot society.

In chapter IV, I apply discourse analysis to interpret these television advertisements (for detailed descriptive scripts of these advertisements see Appendix A-E) to explore different depictions of childhood with the help of the children I talked to within the social and cultural context of Northern Cyprus. I examine different constructions of childhood within the advertisements to unpack these constructions while bringing the elements of how children make sense of these constructions into my analysis. I explore how these advertisements, either through targeting children directly or indirectly, or targeting parents or adults, portray different depictions of children. It should be noted that, in 4 out of 5 of these representations, even though children are the central actors, their roles situate them in a subordinate status. Either the adult actors refuse to acknowledge them or they have been cast to play at being adults. In fact, what is portrayed in these particular advertisements are children's efforts to come across as 'future adults'.

The following chapter, Chapter V, broadens out the discussion on childhood and constructions of children's identities into the lives of the children. The discussions that the advertisement prompted during the focus groups also inform my analysis in this chapter as I further develop an argument against seeing children in terms of 'their futurity as adults' (Qvortrup, 2005a, p.5). This study will also seek to understand what childhood is for children; that is to say, how they experience it. I will explore how children's interpretation of what childhood is for them differs from the childhood that is depicted in television advertisements. In other words, I will be looking at how children understand the concept of childhood and in what ways they see this in the television advertisements that they watch. The concept of childhood as constructed by adults proposes different roles and models that structure children's activities, habits, beliefs and understandings.

Finally, in Chapter VI, I expand the scope of the discussions in the previous two chapters with a comparison of the inter-related constructions of childhood and adulthood specifically within the context of Northern Cypriot society, by using the interpretations and observations provided by the children who took part in this study. This chapter not only brings together the conclusions reached in the chapters preceding it with examples from children's daily lives, but also draws attention to the importance of how we come to define childhood and the implications this has directly on children's lives, their perceptions of adults and of themselves.

The main objectives of this study can therefore be summed up as follows. First the study provides a picture of children's lives in Northern Cyprus and contributes to the literature on childhood, children as audiences and explores and problematises the relationship between adults and children from a sociological point of view. I also intend to illustrate the benefits of using different methodologies, i.e. thematic analysis of focus group data and discourse analysis of television advertisements in conjunction with each other to construct an argument regarding childhood in Northern Cyprus and to contribute to the discussion on children's identities, agency and roles within the society.

CHAPTER II: CHILDREN, CHILDHOOD AND MEDIA

Most, if not all dissertations include a literature review in order to establish a theoretical framework and at the same time acknowledge the work that has been done in the field prior to the study at hand. One of the advantages of having a strong literature review is that it gives the author the ability to compare historical accounts of his/her study with contemporary thinking. A well structured historical account can establish a framework in order to ground the assumptions and findings of the study. In this chapter, I will take this one step further: rather than only presenting a historical review of the fields I am working in, I will compare and contrast their developments and highlight the importance of taking into account the parallels that can be drawn between them. My review of the literature will cover two fields, namely media studies and the sociology of childhood. The different approaches that have historically been adopted in studying the media, in particular its content and audience,[10] bear a strong resemblance to, and have close parallels with, theories on childhood, children's relationships with their surroundings, and studying (with) children. The parallels I will be drawing between the two fields of study will also demonstrate how the two disciplines can be brought into a dialogue with each other in order to incorporate different aspects of and perspectives on media studies and childhood studies.

The brief history of media studies presented here should not be thought of as all-inclusive or the only way to review the work in the field. Rather it is one that walks the reader through the stages of different schools of thought in relation to how audiences have been studied and perceived. The theories and conceptions of media audiences will be likened to those of children in the field of childhood studies in which children were first thought of as passive individuals and then gradually became seen as active participants within society. I provide the general framework of theories on audiences within media studies in order to illustrate the evolution from a sender-receiver based model to a more complex approach that takes into account sociological, ideological, economic and cultural factors.

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[10] Another approach is political economy which I am not going to consider in this study.

This presentation of the history of media studies will also reveal the foundations of how and why I chose to use critical discourse analysis in order to interpret the television advertisements used in this study. It should also be noted that, throughout the literature review, the concept of childhood as a social construct will be reiterated on several occasions while considering children's relationship with the media and children's interpretation of media content.

2.4 Media Studies: A Brief History

In my review of media studies I will focus primarily on audience studies, firstly because I am looking at how children interpret certain media texts, i.e. advertisements and secondly, because I wish to draw attention to what audiences and children have in common, in terms of their theoretical conceptualization within media studies and childhood studies, respectively. In early studies, audiences were perceived merely as passive receptors of media messages, much as children were perceived to be the receptors of socialisation. The perception of audiences as passive receptors was particularly evident[11] in the works of effects theorists.

2.4.1 Understanding the Media: What Effects?

The famous formula for what communication is, as stated by Lasswell (originally published in1948), explains the process as: 'who says what in which channel to whom with what effect' (1960, p. 117). It is important in understanding effects theories, which treat human beings as subjects who can readily be manipulated. For example, Shannon and Weaver's model, proposed in 1949, which as Fiske puts it, 'is widely accepted as one of the main seeds out of which Communication

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[11] This review will explore how effects theorists' perception of audiences was contested by different schools of thought in the following sections. While it was once mainly the dominant way of perceiving audiences, this has changed within academic studies. However, it should be mentioned that effects theories are still being used in relation to studying the media and audiences. It is also common to come across discussions in mainstream media, parenting sites, and magazines in general making arguments that centre around media's negative effects on children on issues such as sexuality and violence. Hence, regardless of the fact that studies on media's effects on audiences have been criticised within social studies, they dominate and are deeply engrained in popular consciousness.

Studies has grown' (Fiske, 1990, p.6). The model is simple, linear and one-way, [12] and its purpose is to investigate more *effective* methods of communication. In this model, communication is understood in terms of exploring possible ways for the sender (decision-maker) to be able to send his/her messages with higher *accuracy*.[13] The process of a sender transmitting a message through a channel to what was assumed to be the unified masses was in retrospect called the 'magic bullet theory' or the 'hypodermic needle theory'. Here, 'the basic idea is that media messages are received in a uniform way by every member of the audience and that immediate and direct responses are triggered by such stimuli' (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1989, p.164). Hence, as Wober and Gunter (1988) state, this approach is based on 'the simple "effects" model of television's supposed influence on individuals and through them, on society' (p.223). For instance, in the early 1950s when effects theories were considered to be the only valid model for studying the media and its audience, Berelson wrote that:

> ...technicians began to develop scientific instruments by which to measure public opinion; a new medium of communication with great potentialities for popular influence came vigorously upon the scene...Thus the background of academic interest was prepared just when dramatic events highlighted the urgency of the problem and when technical developments provided means for at least some solutions. As a result, interest in communication and public opinion is now at an all-time high. (Berelson, 1954, pp. 342-343)

It should be noted that this simple model of communication was embraced, not because it was an efficient way to think about what communication consisted of, nor because it provided an understanding of the process of communication, but because it was 'in line with methodological developments of the mid-century period, when a combination of advances in "mental measurements" and in statistical analysis appeared to offer new and powerful tools … and [was] especially valued because [it] seemed able to answer questions about media effects' (McQuail, 1994, p.43). Fiske (1990) explains that 'effect implies an

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[12] It does not take into account the feedback from the receiver which would transform the model into a circular one that involves a loop of feedback from the receiver to the sender rather than a linear, one-way process.
[13] Accuracy for the effects theorists referred to the extent to which audiences received the messages sent by the sender in the way the sender had intended.

observable and measurable change in the receiver that is caused by identifiable elements in the process' (p.31). Effects theories relied on quantitative methods to measure the presumed media effects on audiences through opinion polls. The results were regarded as objective and scientific.

Lasswell (1960) suggested that his formula offered a 'scientific study of the process of communication' (p.117). However, the scientific study of communication can only be thought of as something to celebrate from a positivist perspective that sets its own parameters for measuring. 'Effects research grew up alongside twentieth-century social sciences ... it exhibits many of the epistemological commitments fundamental to that disciplinary context. It shares mainstream social science's vision of scientific inquiry, one centred on the interconnected notions of theory, hypothesis and test' (Tudor, 1999, p.26).

Hence, an administrative approach to communication and media studies led to the development of theories that revolved around something the media industry would like to be in a position to measure, which can be summarized as a quest to measure the effects of the media on the audience. After the First World War, with the increasing use of radio as a channel for propaganda, research on the effects of the media on the audience became an expanding field. Centres were established in order to conduct research on media effects. Propaganda was seen as a powerful tool for persuading the masses. 'The manifest concern over the functions of the mass media is in part based upon the valid observations that these media have taken on the job of rendering mass publics conformative to the social and economic status quo' (Lazarsfeld, & Merton, 1948, reprinted in 1972, p.556). Therefore, it was important to be able to argue for the 'effects' of mass media on the audience and develop ways to measure the extent to which they were efficient. Yet, even in the early 1930s, Forman, one of the investigators for the Committee on the Education Research of the Payne Fund Studies was writing that their studies showed that the effects of motion pictures on the audience were not uniform (Forman, 1933, p.100). Payne Fund studies were conducted primarily with children. Regardless of the results indicating that media effects were not consistent, they nevertheless concluded that children were far more easily

'influenced' than adults by images and scenery in movies.

Wilbur Schramm, commonly known as the 'father of communication'[14] elaborates on the effects model of communication in his description of how communication works. To the existing three fundamental elements of communication (the source, the message and the destination), he added the processes of encoding and decoding, which not only highlights the importance of effective encoding but also how crucial the decoding of a message is for effective communication. Even though his explanations are quite technical regarding the use of a microphone for encoding the message and/or the compatibility of decoding mechanisms, such as speakers, with the encoding mechanisms (microphone, sound mixer), he nevertheless appreciates the importance of language use, for instance between the encoder and the decoder, for the process of communication to work effectively (Schramm, 1954, pp. 3-26). In short, he states that 'receiver and sender must be in tune' (pp. 5-6).[15] In doing so, Schramm begins to question the 'effects' of mass communication on individuals. While the focus remains the 'effectiveness of the communication process', he observes that: 'The more specific effects ... we must predict only with caution, and never from the message alone without knowing a great deal about the situation, the personality, and the group relationship where the message is to be acted upon' (1954, p. 26). The differentiation arising out of Schramm's emphasis on how the message is received by the audience, in contrast to how the effects model framed communication as a linear, one-way process, is the most fundamental distinction between effects theories and mass society theories.

2.4.2 Mass Media, Mass Society

With the growth of mass production, distribution and consumption, research in communication and media studies had to find other and alternative perspectives

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[14] Due to the fact that he was the founder of many Communication Studies departments in the United States and due to his influence on communication research.
[15] By the term 'in tune' he is referring to the compatibility of all the technical aspects of communication, from how the technology works to the language used in the communication process both for the sender and the receiver.

and research methods. The different perspectives on audiences as masses and the criticisms of this view are important within the history of how audiences were studied in media studies. In addition, highlighting these perspectives in their historical context is also helpful in recognising and understanding the parallels between how audiences and children were, and to an extent still are, studied in their respective disciplines.

The perception of the masses from the mainstream approach, also known as the administrative approach, was being catalysed through research conducted for the benefits of media institutions. Media institutions had an investment in 'proving' media effects, in order to convince other industries and investors to pay advertisement fees. The only way that media institutions could establish business was through demonstrating the existence of a mass society that could be manipulated. As, Krippendorff (1993) states, communication and media research 'was being sponsored by the networks who ... have an interest in its outcome; and industry would not continue to finance the mass media through advertising without reasonable expectations of a return on its investment' (p. 44). Since research was sponsored by the networks themselves, the results reflected their interests.

However, treating audiences as masses in the interests of industry was being heavily criticised, either on the basis that the media were being used to mislead the masses or on the basis of the total rejection of the very concept of 'masses'. First, I will present the perspective that took the concept of masses for granted and directed criticism at the structure and organisation of the media institutions themselves. Dan Schiller (1993), for example, stated that this effort 'seeks to set the changing structures of ownership and control of the means of cultural production within larger, historically specific processes of social and cultural change within heterogeneous class society' (p. 359). It should be mentioned, however, that research criticising the media and its social, cultural and economic role within capitalism was, at the time, not generally considered work that belonged within the field of communication and media studies or journalism, but more within sociology or philosophy, and later literature and political science.

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Theodor Adorno, a member of the Frankfurt School, a sociologist and cultural critic, criticised the intentions and the administrative methods of research on the media by stating that '[t]he aim itself, the tool by which we achieve it, and the persons upon whom it works are generally taken for granted in this procedure. The guiding interest behind such investigations is basically one of administrative technique: how to manipulate the masses' (Adorno, 1945, p. 208). The work of Frankfurt School theorists was critical of any determinist or positivist research. '"Critical theory", the umbrella title for the Frankfurt School's contribution to cultural studies, emerged out of the theoretical tradition of Marxism[16] and the critical philosophy of Kant' (Hartley, 2000, p. 90).

Scholars of the Frankfurt school, while criticising the media and its ownership and control, also perceived the audience as an undifferentiated mass. For them, the issues that needed to be questioned were structural, political and economic and they perceived the operations of the media as problematic for culture and society.[17] Originally the term 'culture industries' was coined by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer to explain how different media industries were being used to pacify the masses. They state that:

> It is quite correct that the power of the culture industry results in its identification with a manufactured need, and not in simple contrast to it, even if this contrast were one of complete power and complete powerlessness. Amusement under late capitalism is the prolongation of work. It is sought after as an escape from the mechanized work process, and to recruit strength in order to be able to cope with it again. (Adorno & Horkheimer, reprinted in 2007, p.35)

While criticising the effects theorists for their simplified and industry-driven approach to studying the media and audiences, members of the Frankfurt School nevertheless accepted the audiences as masses. Consequently, they were criticised

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[16] Having said that, they believed that capitalism had developed strategies to avoid crisis and hence the proletariat revolution, and saw the functioning and operations of media as a big part of these strategies at play (Hartley, 2002).
[17] This trend can also be seen in the history of how children were perceived by researchers and policy-makers in the early 1980s with the rise of theories relating to ways in which media and popular culture were corrupting children or stealing their childhood from them. These theories similarly perceived children as all the same, as if they can be thought of as one mass group within society which is being manipulated by different institutions and distracted from experiencing a romanticised conceptualisation of childhood.

in turn for implying that the concept of 'mass' was merely a consequence of how mass media actually operated or how it was controlled. McQuail, in his critique of this idea, argued that: 'The mass media simply affect the manner in which interest and attentions are mobilized, and we should be wary of attributing consequences for society directly to the media of communication' (McQuail, 1969, p.11). Raymond Williams' famous comment that 'there are, in fact, no masses, only ways of seeing people as masses' (Williams, 1961 p. 289), highlighted the fact that, as long as we perceive audiences negatively as large, undifferentiated aggregates (McQuail, 1983 p. 29), research will tend to satisfy the needs of industry. The perspective that rejects the existence of audiences as unified, unquestioning masses was crucial in moving audience studies towards the cultural studies paradigm, which recognises audiences as active interpreters.

2.4.3 Cultivation Theory and Uses and Gratification Theory

Before I move on to reviewing more recent and contemporary cultural studies paradigms that treat audiences as active participants in the process of meaning-making, I will present two theories that emerged within media studies alongside mass society theories, namely 'cultivation theory' and 'uses and gratification theory'. It could be argued that cultivation theory and uses and gratification theory belong to different paradigms of audience research since, while cultivation theorists considered the audience to be masses that have been created by the media, uses and gratification theorists perceived the act of television watching as an activity that the audiences actively take part in. While I do not wish to overlook[18] the importance of this change in perspective towards the audience, I am going to review them together due to their methodological orientations since both cultivation theorists and uses and gratification theorists mainly used quantitative methods (see Schrøder et al., 2003).

Cultivation theory moved away from linear models of communication, but it still perceived the audience as a unified and passive clutter of people. Cultivation

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[18] I will expand on the different perspectives each theory has on audiences and consequently the impact of this within the field of communication and media studies shortly.

theorist had not yet completely abandoned the focus on the media's influence on the masses, although attention was diverted somewhat from the medium itself to the wider society. George Gerbner, well known for his research in the area of violence and the media, emphasised the importance of the common symbolic environment, which he claimed media studies needed to take into account. In his argument on the 'Mean World Syndrome', he claimed that audience behaviour was being influenced by violent media texts. However, Gerbner claimed that this was not merely a 'direct effect' of the media, but of the larger system of culture within which the media operate. He states that:

> Bombarding viewers with violent images of a mean and dangerous world remains… [as] an instrument of intimidation and terror. This is not an isolated problem that can be addressed by focusing on media violence alone. It is an integral part of a market-oriented system of global cultural commercialism that permeates the mainstream of the common symbolic environment. (Gerbner, 1992, p. 106)

Cultivation theory conceptualises the masses as unified, especially in regards to its perspective on forming a collective culture among the community through the power of the media, but also highlights the importance of cultural significance and symbolism. Hence 'the heavy television viewers central to Cultivation Analysis remain victims of culture rather than parties to the constant construction and reconstruction of their cultural environments' (Tudor, 1999, p.31). Denis McQuail (1987), in his description of cultivation theory, states that 'in effect the media tend to offer uniform and relatively consensual versions of social reality and their audiences are "acculturated" accordingly' (p.99).

Even though cultivation theory is no longer a commonly applied theory in academic communication and media studies, media institutions' approaches to marketing children's programmes resemble it in some ways. Its emphasis on cultivating the audience remains popular among the general public when considering children in relationship to the media. Parents are often comforted into believing that the television programmes their children watch are helping to teach them 'good' values and knowledge. In presenting this popular view, James Steyer (2002) states that: 'Parents need to do some homework, too, to help their kids

make good media choices, learning more about the basic content, messages, and characters of the media their kids consume' (p.190). From a 'mainstream' point of view, creating a shared and common cultural environment for children's productions in children's programming not only helps reduce the questions about the 'ill effects' of media on children but also paves the way for the popularisation of commercial products related to media productions. As Seiter (1993) states, 'the contemporary mass culture of childhood can be found in magazine ads and television commercials, toys and toy stores, and television programs aimed at children' (p.12).

Earlier work in media studies overlooked the importance of the audience, the media content and the critical approach that was needed in analysing the control mechanisms within media institutions. In fact, these aspects gradually became paramount for later theorists and work that would pick up on such issues, in that they had helped to establish a field to which scholars from different disciplines could contribute. As the hegemony of 'scientific' research, which shadowed researchers' perceptions of audiences, was decreasing, scholars of media studies began to see the audience as more than just a unified crowd. Thus, audience studies became a crucial part of media studies because the audiences were now gradually being considered more and more as an involved party in the construction of meaning through their ability to actively decode media texts according to their own perceptions. Uses and gratification theory was born out of this paradigm, as Morley (1992) explains:

> The realisation within mass media research that one cannot approach the problem of the 'effects' of the media on the audience as if contents impinged directly on to passive minds, that people assimilate, select from and reject communications from the media, led to the development of the 'uses and gratifications' model. (Morley, 1992, p.51)

The uses and gratification model, which is an audience-centred approach, suggests that audiences actively seek out media content that would satisfy their needs and bring them gratification. What is more important is that uses and gratification research 'brought to the fore the notion that the audience's perception of messages

could be radically different from the meanings intended by their producer(s)' (Stevenson, 1997, p.233). Elihu Katz (1996), one of the founders of uses and gratification research, suggests that this process requires the audience to work, that is, to actively interpret and use media content. The importance of uses and gratification research is in the question they asked, which is essentially the opposite of the question that 'effects researchers' were asking. Instead of 'what does the media do to the audience?' uses and gratification researchers posed the question; 'what does the audience do with the media?' Theoretically, however, uses and gratification research 'rests on the same positivist foundations as effects research according to which the only way to carry out an objective analysis of media-related behaviour, uncontaminated by the researcher's subjectivity, is to carve social reality into measurable units' (Schrøder, et al., 2003, p. 38). In addition, due to the concentrated focus uses and gratification researchers placed on the individual's motivation to use the media, the importance of the text and the context within which individuals used media was overlooked by research in this tradition. As Katz (1987) himself explains:

> Early gratifications research had leaned too heavily on self-reports, was unsophisticated about the social origin of the needs that audiences bring to the media, too uncritical of the possible dysfunctions both for self and society of certain kinds of audience satisfaction, and too captivated by the inventive diversity of audience uses to pay much attention to the constraints of the text. (Katz, 1987, pp. 37-38)

While early work in audience research progressed within the field of media studies towards a multi-dimensional approach, it fell short of incorporating different aspects of the process of media consumption, such as the production of media texts themselves and the cultural context within which media texts are produced. '[T]he question[19] "who says what, how, to whom, with what effect?" ... [excludes] ... *intention,* and therefore all real social and cultural process' (Williams, 1990, p.120; original emphasis). What was needed was not only a radical and holistic approach but an approach that could, at the same time, take into account the different dimensions of the process of media production and consumption. 'Television's meanings for audiences – textual, technological,

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[19] As well as the question: 'what do people do with the media?'

psychological, social – cannot be decided upon outside of the multidimensional intersubjective networks in which the object is inserted and made to mean in concrete contextual settings' (Ang, 1996a, p.250). Moreover, as Stuart Hall (1996) states:

> the typical processes identified in positivistic research on isolated elements – effects, uses, "gratifications" – are themselves framed by structures of understanding, as well as being produced by social and economic relations, which shape their "realization" at the reception end of the chain and which permit the meanings signified in the discourse to be transposed into practice or consciousness. (Hall, 1996, pp. 53-54)

From the 1970s onwards, together with political and economic changes that had a great impact on daily life routines, media technologies and their production rate were changing and hence television sets, radios and music players, such as cassette players, were becoming more readily available to larger populations. These changes, together with the paradigm shifts in social studies towards more critical and constructionist approaches, altered the way in which research was carried out in media studies. In what follows, I will discuss the theoretical principles and methodological practices that were influential on audience studies after the 1970s.

2.4.4 In Comes the Audience: Audience Studies and Social Context

The shift from media *effects* oriented research towards more text/audience oriented analysis meant taking into consideration the contextual framework within which media texts were produced and received. As was suggested by Stuart Hall (2001), analysing media texts requires an understanding of the cultural context within which the messages of the texts are encoded and decoded. This is because media texts are constructed within a certain language including signs, codes and symbols that are culturally shared among the members of a society. Stuart Hall's key work on encoding and decoding messages is an essential text in understanding the premises and uses of audience studies. He states that:

> We must recognize that the discursive form of the message has a privileged position in the communicative exchange (from the point of view of circulation), and that the moment of "encoding" and "decoding", though only "relatively autonomous" in relation to the communicative process as a whole, are determinate moments. (Hall, 2001, p. 167)

The encoding/decoding model developed by Hall in order to study media texts and their audience was a key theory within communication and media studies. It assigned importance to the human experience as well as taking into account the social role of dominant ideologies. Hall also emphasised the importance of recognising the connotative levels of media messages as polysemic, but he equally stressed that meanings are bound within the constraints of the 'dominant cultural order' (Hall, 1996, pp. 54-57). 'Despite the fact that Hall's ideas were largely based upon textual analysis, encoding/decoding implied that the only way to assess the impact of a text was to look at the audience' (Ruddock, 2001 p. 125). Hall's work was essential in recognising the importance of audiences within the process of communication. The hegemonic values within society, ideological struggles against the dominant groups and attempts to maintain the dominant ideologies are all embedded in and find reflection through signs, codes and symbols that are used, not only in encoding visual and verbal messages in the media, but also by the audience to decode those messages. Hall proposed that these messages were decoded by the audience in one of three ways; dominant,[20] negotiated or oppositional reading. He identified the dominant reading with the 'common-sense constructs' that are taken for granted by individuals while decoding messages. Hall's use of the word 'dominant' as opposed to 'determined', sets his theories apart from those of effects theorists, who assumed that the messages coded in media texts were predetermined and that there was only one way to interpret them. Instead Hall states, 'We say *dominant* not "determined", because it is always possible to order, classify, assign and decode an event within more than one "mapping". But we say "dominant" because there exists a pattern of "preferred readings"' (Hall, 1996, p.57, original emphasis). Therefore, while he took into account the institutional, political and ideological

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[20] He also talks about the dominant reading as the preferred reading.

imprints that the messages carry, he also recognized that these imprints cannot be fixed and determined within the process of decoding.

The second way that Hall argued individuals can decode messages is through a negotiated reading. The '*negotiated version* contains a mixture of adaptive and oppositional elements' (Hall, 1996, p.60; original emphasis). Hence, while the audience acknowledges and understands the hegemonic definitions within a message, they also interject their own experiences from their situational micro-level into their readings. [21] The final way that audiences can read messages is an 'oppositional reading', in which the audience understands 'both the literal and the connotative inflection given by a discourse but [chooses] to decode the message in a *globally* contrary way' (Hall, 1996, p. 61; original emphasis). Hence, while using the encoding/decoding model, 'the message is treated neither as a unilateral sign, without ideological "flux", nor, as in "uses and gratification", as a disparate sign which can be read any way, according to the need-gratification structure of the decoder' (Morley, 1980, p. 10). Therefore, even though audience members are active agents in terms of their engagement with media texts, 'one should not overestimate the freedom of the media consumer to make whatever he or she likes of the material transmitted. Even if they could, their choice of materials to reinterpret would still be limited to the "menu"' (Morley & Robins, 1995, p.127). Hence, 'a more thoroughly *cultural* approach to reception ... should address the differentiated meaning and significance of specific patterns in articulating more general social relations of power' (Ang, 1996b, pp. 240-241; original emphasis).

Between 1975 and 1979, David Morley, together with Charlotte Brunsdon, applied Hall's model of encoding/decoding to study television viewing, text and audience at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University. This study, entitled *Nationwide*, [22] detailed how each group[23] taking

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[21] In order to exemplify negotiated reading Hall (1996) refers to the example of how on a large scale it can be understood that national/global economic cutbacks are necessary while people also consider their lives and decide to go on strike for pay raises. He recognises that the preferred reading has no relevance to people's decisions on the micro-level and that this is reflected in the way they decode messages.
[22] Same name as the television programme it was studying.

part in the study read television programmes and analysed the preferred, negotiated and oppositional meanings that the viewers expressed. He concluded that:

> We need to construct a model in which the social subject is always seen as interpellated[24] by a number of discourses, some of which are in parallel and reinforce each other, some of which are contradictory and block or inflect the successful interpellation of the subject by the discourse ... We cannot consider the single, hypostatised text-subject relation in isolation from other discourses. (Morley, 1980, p. 162)

Hence, not only is the text produced within a discourse and context, but the reader also engages with the text within a context. Moreover, audiences come to the text with their own cultural, social and economic backgrounds through which they negotiate their knowledge, prejudices, ideas and viewpoints. This makes audience studies rather complicated if one attempts to reach at generalisations and categorisations. Indeed, in 1986 Morley conducted a similar study to *Nationwide*,[25] this time taking into account the context within which television watching happened. He arrived at the conclusion that the context within which the viewing takes place is also a crucial element that plays a part in how people read media texts. He incorporated Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) critique of the 'essentialist view that individuals and classes are coherent, unified subjects whose actions and consciousness reflect their underlying essence' (Morley, 1986, p. 41), and demonstrated how the context of viewing can have an effect on whether an individual's reading would be preferred, negotiated or oppositional.

Fiske also sees the relationship between media and audience as an exchange of meaning in which both the audience and the producers of media texts are equally empowered. However, he does take societal power relations and the context

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[23] Each of these groups was made up of people ranging from school pupils to university students, from post-office workers to high end bankers.

[24] Morley is referring to the Althusserian notion of interpellation.

[25] For instance, Morley realised that the space in which viewing took place (in a school or a viewing centre versus in the participant's houses), or with whom they watched television, were factors in how they decoded the text. In the first study participants watched the programmes in 'neutral' spaces, whereas Morley conducted the second study in participants' houses. For a more detailed discussion on the theoretical and methodological differences between these two studies see Morley, 1981; Moores, 1990.

within which the media operate into account as well as placing emphasis on empowering the audience. He posits that:

> Cultural studies sees the television experience (that is, the entity constituted by text and the activity of viewing it) as a constant dynamic movement between similarity and difference. The dimension of similarity is that of the dominant ideology that is structured into the forms of program and is common to all the viewers for whom that program is popular. The dimension of difference, however, accounts for the wide variety of groups who must be reached if the program is to be popular with a large audience. These groups will be positioned to the dominant ideology in different readings they make of the program and the different ways in which they watch it. The play between the similarity and difference is one way of experiencing the struggle between hegemony and resistance. (Fiske, 1996, p.130)

Social and cultural meanings embedded in the signs, symbols and codes that form media texts are interpreted by the audience. As much as these signs and codes are shared, they are shared within the sphere of historical, political and economic contexts. 'Culture is a system of shared meanings that is based on a *signifying order*, a complex system of different types of signs that cohere in predictable ways into patterns of representation which individuals and groups utilize to make or exchange messages' (Danesi, & Perron, 1999 p. 67; original emphasis). Making and exchanging messages within the complex system of an endlessly changing culture results in shifts in the way meaning is constructed and reconstructed.

Media messages are constructed to convey meanings. Even though media texts are polysemic, they are not 'totally pluralistic; that is, while there is a degree of openness about their meanings, there are also limits. If meanings are not entirely *predetermined* by cultural codes, they are composed within a system that is *dominated* by accepted codes' (Turner, 1992, p.85; original emphasis). Within a system of cultural codes and symbols, we learn to recognise certain acts and concepts in particular ways which we then, through our interactions, help maintain as 'normal', 'logical' or 'true'. It is through these generalisations that, in time, we establish a cultural background and a discursive context within which we make sense of the world. 'Readers are always already formed, shaped as subjects,

by the ideological discourses which have operated on them prior to their encounter with the text in question. If we are to theorize the subject of television, it has to be theorized in its cultural and historical specificity' (Morley, 1991, p.21). While studying the relationship between media texts and audience, we cannot posit questions that ignore the cultural settings of both the text in its production phase, distribution or presentation and of the audience while receiving, making sense of or talking about it. Cultural settings and personal backgrounds also influence how childhood is interpreted and understood within a society. Therefore, within the scope of this study, the link between audience and text studies and childhood studies is crucial. Considering children as active agents and social individuals does not mean that childhood can be considered without its connection to culture and society. In addition, children's reading of media texts cannot be thought of as immune to the constraints of adult world-views.

I have reviewed how various scholars from different disciplines and fields of study have contributed to the study of audiences within communication and media research. As Wilbur Schramm noted, in his comments published in *Public Opinion Quarterly* (1959), 'we sometimes forget that communication research is a field, not a discipline … Scholars come into it from their disciplines, bringing valuable tools and insights' (Schramm, Reisman, & Bauer, reprinted in 2004, p. 448). This point is not only important in reminding us that the foundations of critical media studies were arguably laid by sociologists and social theorists, but it is also important specifically for the purposes of this study. It is important to realise that studies in media and communication signal a field that is not limited to the study of any specific social phenomenon. Just as television programmes, advertisements, internet sites or magazine articles use life issues as subject matter, they should also be studied within media studies. Hence, the convergence I am advocating in this study between sociology and media studies is not one that is new or unprecedented, but instead one with broken links, especially in regards to a link between media studies and the new sociology of childhood.

2.5. Linking Media Studies and Childhood Studies

A crucial point in my study is how different theories within the field of media studies on the perceptions and conceptualisations of audiences run in parallel with how children have been perceived and how childhood has been conceptualised within childhood studies in different disciplines over the years. So far I have traced the conceptualisation of audiences in media studies and highlighted how there was a shift in the way scholars perceived audiences from completely passive recipients of messages to being active interpreters of media texts.

In doing so, I established that the shift of emphasis from the media itself and the power of the text towards understanding the text 'as a complex and structured arrangement of signs rather than an empty vehicle for the transmission of information or opinion' led to the perception of receivers or audiences as 'readers' since 'they were seen to be involved in – and for a number of analysts, constituted by – a construction of meaning' (Moores, 1993, p.6). Furthermore, the power relations and political, economic and ideological relations between the producers of text and the readers of text cannot be ignored.

As someone who is affiliated with both media studies and childhood studies, I find it an interesting point that the shift from perceiving audiences as passive viewers to active interpreters of media texts is similar to the change in perception of children from passive beings who are yet to become fully social to active participants in social life. To put it somewhat crudely, scholars tended to perceive children as empty vessels that adults and society could shape (see Walkerdine, 2004, Woodhead, 2009), which is similar to the way in which mainstream administrative researchers of media studies tended to approach the masses. In much the same way as the agency of the audience within media studies needs to be considered within the framework of the place of media consumption in social life and the context of reading, the agency of children should also be considered within the framework of family relationships, their experiences of going through structured institutions such as education and the wider context of society and culture. As Walkerdine (2004) proposes:

The study of childhood must be able to understand the discourses and practices in which childhood is produced and the way that the positions within those practices are experienced and managed to produce particular configurations of subjectivity. (Walkerdine, 2004, p. 105)

Through perspectives within critical social theory, the emphasis was shifted towards childhood as constructed; likewise media texts were also seen to be constructed.

In what follows, I will review the literature on the different ways in which children have been perceived in scholarly work, as well as on children's social place and their role within society in order to elaborate on the above discussion.

2.6 Childhood is and Childhood was: Changes in Childhood and How Children were Studied

The meaning of childhood has gradually changed since pre-industrial times in accordance with the broader context of meanings constructed within social, political and economic spaces. As Cunningham (2003) states, 'prior to industrialization it was the norm for children to begin work as soon as they could make a useful contribution to the family's welfare' (p.84). Within the settings of industrial society, even though there were still children working in factories or for family businesses, perceptions, or ways of thinking about this, had changed. While in the agricultural era and rural areas it might be considered legitimate and acceptable for children to work in the fields or elsewhere, in contemporary Western society the way we understand child workers is different. While having children work in various jobs[26] was once a culturally accepted activity (and remains so in many countries), child-labour[27] in contemporary Western society is considered to be a social problem that has to be addressed, and it is worked on by social workers, NGOs, and the state. The 1920 *Employment of Women, Young*

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[26] Farming, mining etc.
[27] Indeed, Bourdillon et. al. (2010) in their exploration of different dimensions of children's work (ranging from economic to educational) question why children's work should be considered as 'unusual' in contemporary society 'even though most people in the world do some kind of work during childhood (p. 35)

Persons, and Children Act, which was binding on all member nations of the League of Nations, states that 'no child under the age of fourteen years shall be employed in an industrial undertaking or on board any ship other than a family vessel or school or training ship' and the *Children and Young Persons Act of 1933*, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, prohibits street trading by children and young persons (MacLennan, 1986, p.127). This is due to the changes that society has gone through and changes within society are reflected in the way we make and exchange meanings and vice versa. As Qvortrup (2005a) states:

> It is plausible to suggest that protection and participation, as we understand the terms, were hardly an issue at all in medieval society. They were neither part of a discourse, nor a socialisation or an educational agenda. If there was an idea of protection, it would most likely have been thought of in vague utilitarian terms. It was not primarily the child who needed protection; it was a prospective labour force that had to be nurtured. (Qvortrup, 2005a, p. 4)

Yet, while this is true, it is also true that as the value of children as labourers decreased, their individuality, presence and active participation within modern society has diminished due to the new adult understandings of what 'protection'[28] stands for. The role of children within society has changed, as well as the society itself. Children's lives, their activities and engagements with their surroundings have all been transformed, along with the institutions they enter into. In education, for instance, not only has the institution itself changed, but its aims, objectives and role have changed as well, together with the discourses associated with the meaning of education.

In fact, education is an institution that scholars of childhood often turn to in order to begin tracing children in history. Johnston and Nahmad-Williams (2009), for instance, begin their historical trace of early childhood studies with Rousseau's philosophy on children and education. They point out that 'Rousseau stressed that young children should be allowed to develop free of society's constraints and that early provision should provide a balance between societal freedom and happiness

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[28] I give a detailed account of this perception later on in the following section.

on one side and increasing independence and control on the other' (Johnston & Nahmad-Williams, 2009, p. 17). Rousseau's conceptualisation of children was extremely liberal compared to that of Locke, who identified children as 'an empty vessel to be filled, or a lump of clay to be moulded. [29] Childhood was characterised by adults rigorously instructing children and moulding them into the form they would like' (Johnston & Nahmad-Williams, 2009, p. 63). However, the philosophy behind the importance of child-centred experimental education for Rousseau stemmed from his emphasis on children as innocent beings who would gradually be corrupted by society and lose their purity as they grew up (Mills, 2000, pp. 41-60).

A century after Rousseau, Durkheim described the child as defined by 'the very instability of his nature, which is the law of growth. The educationalist is presented not with a person wholly formed – not a complete work or a finished product – but with a *becoming*' (Durkheim, 1982, p. 147). Durkheim views the child as problematic; according to him the instability that naturally resides within children needs to be addressed in order for children to become functioning beings/adults. For Elkin this process occurs through socialisation. He posits that:

> A child is born into a world that already exists. From the point of view of society, the function of socialization is to transmit the culture and motivation to participate in established social relationships to new members. The society has a patterned consistency so that one can predict, within limits, how people will behave, think, and feel. (Elkin, 1960, p. 7)

As previously discussed in this chapter, there is a parallel between how cultivation theorists perceived the role of the media (as a powerful tool in 'cultivating' the 'masses') and how socialisation theorists perceived the role of society in children's lives. Moreover, the way developmental psychology has approached children as biological beings going through different pre-determined life stages, which in turn are used to describe and define childhood, can be seen as another example of how children were being studied as unified and passive beings in a

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[29] In much the same way as audiences were perceived by those who controlled and studied communication and media technologies and texts.

state of becoming. For developmental psychologists like Piaget,[30] for instance, 'learning is largely an individual process with children passing through stages of development when ready' (Smith, S. 2000, p.85).

Ambert (1986) traces the lack of interest[31] in studying childhood and children in sociology to the fact that:

> ... [the] pillars of sociology have been macrosociologists. Within a perception of studying global social systems and relating individuals' behaviours to these systems, little attention was devoted to children as they were seen as peripheral to these systems, or, still simply viewed as future replacements for adult members. (Ambert, 1986, p. 23)

In fact, towards the end of the 1980s, and specifically during the early 1990s, sociology as a discipline started taking an interest in studying children and childhood from a completely different perspective. Not only were the theories being used by scholars of the sociology of childhood radically different to those used by developmentalists, but also their focus of study and methodologies were different. Coming from a constructivist point of view, they took a critical stance towards the concept of the child as 'an empty vessel' who is innocent, vulnerable and predictable. Childhood started to be seen as a construction rather than a natural state or stage of growing up (see Jones, 2009). Hence scholars of the sociology of childhood started to question the role of children within society and the definition of childhood(s) (see James & Prout, 2006, Qvortrup 1994, James and James 2004). As Qvortrup asks, 'Who can possibly claim there to be only one childhood when it is so obvious that children lead their life under a variety of conditions, depending not least on the socioeconomic background of their parental home?' (Qvortrup, 1994, p, 5).

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[30] I do not intend to summarise Piaget's theories on child development and children, here I am more interested in the consequences of what he theorised.
[31] She specifies that this is with the exception of Mead and, in part, Simmel.

2.7 Childhood as a Construct

James and James (2008) offer a definition of childhood, and then critique it. They write, 'at its simplest childhood is understood as the early phrase of the life-course of all people in all societies' (James & James, 2008, p.22). If childhood was merely a stage that human beings go through from birth to full growth,[32] why do we not all experience it in the same way? Indeed, one of the key positions assumed in this study is that childhood as a concept cannot be fixed with one meaning or interpretation in time and space. Like any other concept, childhood is contingent upon the practices and circumstances within which it is used and experienced. It should also be noted that there are many articulations of the concept of childhood. Yet, for the most part, it is adult articulations that definitively shape what childhood is understood to be through the media and other means since 'adults control the process of "growing up"' (Oldman, 1994, p.155). The conceptualisation of childhood as a process of growing up leads one to consider childhood as a stage that individuals go through as they become adults. This study rejects the point of view that considers children as 'human becomings' (Qvortrup, 1994) and suggests instead that children are individuals who already have the ability to interpret the world around them. As Mills and Mills put it:

> While many historians now agree that childhood is a social construct and not an immutable, common experience, they have not always thought in this way; indeed, arguments continue about the experience of the child and the concept of childhood. Such disagreements and changing perspectives are the essence of historical enquiry and result from the nature of history itself. (Mills & Mills, 2000, p. 164)

What we might like to think of as 'childhood' today may not directly refer to the ways in which it was understood in the past. The 'historical construction and reconstruction of childhood have relocated children from mill, mine and factory into school, family' (Goldson, 1997, p. 26) and playgrounds. Hendrick argues along similar lines:

> In 1800 the meaning of childhood was ambiguous and not universally in demand. By 1914 the uncertainty had been virtually resolved and

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[32] The ambiguity around when 'full growth' is completed could also be questioned.

the identity largely determined, to the satisfaction of the middle class
and the respectable working class...it was legally, legislatively,
socially, medically, psychologically, educationally and politically
institutionalised. (Hendrick, 2006, p.35)

Furthermore, prior to the 1970s 'whilst it *is* certainly true that sociologists have
devoted little attention to childhood ... [there was indeed a] massive corpus of
knowledge build up by psychologists and other social scientists through the
systematic study of children' (Prout & James, 2006, p. 9; original emphasis). In
fact, childhood and children themselves were being predominantly studied within
developmental psychology. Hence, inextricable links between 'the biological facts
of immaturity, such as dependence, to the social aspects of childhood' were being
made (Prout & James, 2006, p.10). Consequently, childhood was considered (and
still is within mainstream psychology and psychiatry) as 'unified' (see McNamee
et.al., 2005) and children as those 'identified by adults as non-adults' (Mayall,
2001, p. 114) with the rationale that 'the universal mark of adulthood with
childhood representing the period of apprenticeship for its development' (Prout &
James, 2006, p. 10).

From the 1970s onwards, together with the influence of theories on socialisation
stemming from the social constructionist perspective 'the sociological child' was
born (James et.al, 1998, pp. 22-34). This perspective challenged the taken for
granted assumptions about childhood and children's lifeworlds that were put
forwards by developmental psychologists. However, 'to describe childhood ... as
[solely] socially constructed is to suspend ... assumptions about the existence and
casual powers of a social structure that makes things, like childhood, as they are
(James et.al, 1998, p.27). Therefore, it should also be taken into account that
childhood is not merely a discursive construct, but rather childhood as it is lived is
shaped around social relations 'as much as it is shaped by them' (James et.al,
1998, p. 147).

While contemporary interpretations of what 'childhood' stands for may be
contested, a dominant interpretation is maintained, partially through media texts
(see Kitzinger, 2006 and Boyden, 2006). Though the intentions in ordinary

everyday living are usually naïve, the common belief is that:

> … children *should,* as a matter of principle, do what adults tell them.
> Thus, apart from reflecting adult authority in general the phrase ['do
> as you're told'] highlights the ability, and often the wish, of adults to
> exercise control not only over children but also over their childhood.
> (James & James, 2004, p.3; original emphasis)

This is partly due to the fact that 'the structures of adult society limit children's opportunities for asserting their autonomy. Children live in a world in which the parameters tend to be set by adults' (Punch, 2001, p. 22). Moreover, adults' ability to remember the actual feelings, anxieties, tastes, joys and fears in their own childhood and articulations of what childhood was for them might be different if it could be compared to how they felt at the time when they were children. Also, taking into consideration the major cultural, social, economic, political and technological changes that occurred while the adults of the present day were growing up, their understanding of what childhood is differs from that of children themselves. Gittins (2004) states that 'Childhood, rather than a real and material state of being, is more an adult construction that, while apparently simple, in fact disguises a multitude of contradictory memories, desires and myths' (p.26).

Furthermore, as James et al. (1998) put it, quoting Save the Children that:

> … children become the subject of policies made without any reference
> to them … In environmental planning, for example, settlements and
> neighbourhoods are usually designed without asking children their
> views. The resulting developments are likely to be unfriendly to
> children, leaving them without space to play and socialize. (Quoted in
> James, Jenks & Prout, 1998, p.135)

Yet, I would argue that even if the infrastructure of a society was built with children in mind, which occasionally is the case, spaces confine our perception. Therefore, playgrounds and similar facilities that are built for children tend to be built with an adult understanding of what children's desires and needs might be.[33] Also 'remembered childhoods ... whether "real" or "imagined" are used as a

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[33] This cannot, however, limit children's agency to interpret the environments and facilities provided for them in their own way (see Chistensen, 2003; Rasmussen & Smidt, 2003).

vehicle for expressing concern[34] with contemporary childhood ... and, indeed, are to some extent a root cause of ... concern' (Valentine & McKendrick, 1997, p.231) for adults. Moreover, while in some countries, there are easy access facilities for the disabled and the elderly, the same consideration is not often applied for children. This is due to the fact that, in general, children are not actually recognised as agents within society.[35] Though historically and geographically this might vary; they cannot vote and, therefore, are not considered to be entitled to citizenship rights. 'Childhood is defined, in part, by exclusion from adult rights of citizenship and also by dependence on adults. Children spend most of their lives either within families or within institutions catering for their supposed "needs"' (Jackson & Scott, 2000, p.216). Thus, Thomas (2005) argues for the need to revisit 'dominant' conceptualisations of children's needs in order to successfully 'engage children and young people in the process of defining and prioritising their own needs – both collectively and individually ... by focusing more on children's strengths and resourcefulness (pp.27-28).

Furthermore, descriptions of childhood would be incomplete without the recognition of the binary opposition between childhood and adulthood, which are both temporal constructs. Jenks' (1996) account of the similarities and differences between adults and children speaks to this point:

> …the child is familiar to us and yet strange, he or she inhabits our world and yet seems to answer to another, he or she is essentially of ourselves and yet appears to display a systematically different order of being. (Jenks, 1996, p. 3)

In order to recognise these differences, adults have to first distinguish the child as the other from his/herself. In critiquing orientalism, Spivak posits the question of 'how to keep the ethnocentric Subject from establishing itself by selectively defining the Other' (Spivak, 1988, p.292). Yet, in terms of applying this perspective to the relationship between adults and children, there might appear to be a contradiction. Adults tend to selectively define children as the other to

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[34] The anxieties regarding contemporary childhood will be critiqued shortly.
[35] In Chapters V and VI, I examine and explain why this is the case in Northern Cyprus and how the children come to accept this.

themselves by establishing children as a subordinate group under adult surveillance within society. It should also be considered that this particular relationship faces us with the dichotomy of the self having gone through a phase of being the other, i.e. child. Due to the differences between adults and children 'the child … cannot be imagined except in relation to a conception of the adult, but essentially it becomes impossible to generate a well-defined sense of the adult, and indeed adult society, without first positing the child' (Jenks, 1996, p.3). Furthermore, Honig (2009) argues:

> The concept of childhood operates, correspondingly, as an epistemological construct mediating the distinction between childhood as a symbolic order of knowledge and children as social actors. This distinction makes it possible to make an empirical theme of the relationship between children and adults and the agency of children within a de-naturalizing perspective. (Honig, 2009, p.69)

It should also be stressed that 'the social world is not only simultaneously gendered, classed, "raced", and so on; it is also organised in terms of generational ordering' (Alanen, 2009, p. 162). The 'generational ordering', like other classifications, is not immune to socio-political and economic context, 'A large-scale structural aim reinforces the construction of children as relatively passive socialisation objects – the perceived need to weld societies together and to assure the state of a useful future citizenry' (Mayall, 2009, p.176-177). Hence, it is not surprising that children's agency, their 'ability not only to have some control over the direction their own lives take but also, importantly, to play some part in the changes that take place in society more widely' (James & James, 2008, p.9) has not been recognised outside of certain academic circles.

In fact, Burr (2004) points out that 'the idea that children should be rights-bearing citizens of their countries' was not recognised until November 1989 when the 'United Nations formally adopted 54 principles that make up [the UNCRC] convention' (pp. 145-146). Yet, Jackson and Scott (2006) state that on a closer look at the Convention, due to the contradictory and conflicting conceptions of children's rights, two opposing perspectives emerge: 'in terms of rights to autonomy, control over their own lives and independent status as citizens or in

terms of rights to protection and freedom from adult risks and responsibilities'
(p.226). Since 'the UN Convention attempts to balance those opposing views, to
expand children's autonomy without undermining adult authority … children's
continued exclusion from citizenship is tacitly reinforced' (Jackson & Scott, 2006,
p.226). The feeling of anxiety that emerges due to adults' attempts to identify
children in their own terms partially structures what is expected from children. As
Cunningham (1995) mentions in his examination of the development and
integration of child policy matters in the political arena, 'children were seen as the
most valuable assets a nation had, one which, if not properly nurtured, would lead
to a process of degeneration and to a loss of power and status relative to other
countries' (p.172). I would thus argue that children's rights and their recognition
as active agents within society continues to be limited by mainstream and popular
adult perceptions of what childhood is. Furthermore, the dominant adult group's
interests in maintaining authority leads to an understanding of children as needing
protection and therefore not being equipped with the ability to take part in society
as active agents. As Scott et al. (1998) emphasise:

> A number of key antinomies have emerged in relation to children and
> childhood in late modernity: in particular, contradictions between
> recognising children's autonomy and the increasing emphasis on child
> protection; the paradoxical perception of children as both at risk and
> as a potential threat to other children and to social order. (Scott,
> Jackson & Backett-Milburn, 1998, p.689)

As Scott et al. argue, the conceptualisation of children as weak and passive
members of society, as well as the obverse view that children can cause harm to
others – either to other children or to adults – if not supervised by adults, originate
from another kind of anxiety that adults have. This adult anxiety results from the
failure to appreciate childhood from the point of view of children themselves. To
an extent, this can be explained by Hendrick's (2009) response to Kennedy's
(2006) work, in which he states, 'children are frequently excluded from being
"present" as persons with standpoints – their distance from us, established as it is
through *difference*, turns them into "liminal" figures, representations of the "limit
condition" of humanity – they are the "absent referent", the archetypal "Other"'
(Hendrick, 2009, p.99). Hence, this makes it ever more impossible for adults to

take the 'view that "child" is relational with "adult", in the sense that "the child" is defined in its difference from "adult"; similarly childhood differs from adulthood' (Mayall, 2009, p.175).

Recent literature on childhood has reiterated that childhood is a constructed concept within the context of any particular society, culture or sub-culture. Jenks (2004) posits that 'childhood is a variable of social analysis. It can never be entirely divorced from other variables such as class, gender and ethnicity' (p.77). Therefore, it is inappropriate to talk about childhood not only as a fixed and never changing phenomenon but also as a unified concept. Childhoods and children's identity differ according to the cultural, historical, geographical, economic, political, religious and social contexts within which they are situated. As Scott, et al. suggest, 'the construction of childhood needs to be understood at a number of different levels: the structural, the discursive and the situated' (Scott, Jackson & Backett-Milburn, 1998, p.162).

In doing so, it is important to take into account the production and maintenance of meanings around the concept of childhood. To a certain extent, this highlights why childhood studies can benefit from media studies and the role that media studies can play in helping to explore the production, reproduction and maintenance of mainstream, dominant, radical and critical meanings around the discourse of childhood. As Williams (2005) argues, 'a theoretical emphasis on the means of communication as means of production, within a complex of general social-productive forces, should allow and encourage new approaches to the history of the means of communication themselves' (p. 53). Williams' (2005) emphasis on the association between communication and production processes is an important one in regard to analysing the different representations of different childhoods in society in order to uncover the connotations of the dominant ideology around which the concept is understood, experienced and maintained within that society.

However, it is equally important to realise that means of communication must be understood beyond the communication technologies themselves. Buckingham

shows that media literacy, for both 'old' and 'new' media, is the only way for individuals to be able to use communication technologies in a creative and productive way and he states that 'we need to move beyond the idea that technology has consequences in and of itself (Buckingham, 2004, p.122). This means that it is not sufficient to consider how different media technologies are used by individuals, but it is equally important to consider the ways in which different representations of any concept, such as 'childhood', is interpreted by the audience and how certain productions are constructed.

2.8 Research on Children and Television

Childhood as a concept is a contextual construct that is founded upon culture, politics, economics and social values. In contemporary society, the media and, for the purposes of this study, particularly television, acts as one of the producers and distributors of meanings that help to shape the social world we live in. Therefore, since 'Popular media and digital culture are part of the everyday lived experiences of adults and children' (Arthur, 2001, n.p), the media plays a role in the construction and reconstruction of the term 'childhood'.

Studies on children and television since the mid 1950s, have often focused on the physical and psychological effects of the medium on children. Research in this era adopted a traditional and administrative perspective and sought to achieve results that presented evidence of the 'negative effects' of television on children. The early studies conducted by Wilbur Schramm and his colleagues, which were published in 1961 as a report entitled *Television in the Lives of Our Children* (Schramm, Lyle & Parker, 1961), concluded that 'children who had high exposure to television and low exposure to print were more aggressive than those with the reverse pattern' (Murray, 2007, p.184). In 2007 Pecora, Murray and Wartella published a review of research on children and television. In her introduction Norma Pecora states that 'from the beginning we have worried about the effects of television on children, questions carried over from motion pictures, radio and comic books, and we have been troubled by television's ubiquitous nature' (Pecora, 2007, p.2). While they highlight the lack of funding and consequential

lack of research on children and television they focus on and praise without any critical view psychological, economic and medical studies that have been conducted on children and media (see Pecora, Murray &Wartella, 2007).

Children and television are and were not merely a topic in social studies and social sciences but also in medical health studies as well. A significant amount of research focused on the medium to explore its implications for children's physical health. 'The 1950s provided a series of firsts in research on children's television … Of the 88 studies from this decade … only slightly more than 15% consider children's media environments; the majority look at television in isolation' (Pecora, 2007, p.11). An article[36] published online by BBC News in 1999 claims that television is harmful in terms of children's development. The article was based on a study published in the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and suggests that children who watch television before they go to sleep develop sleeping disorders. In his review of medical accounts of children and television, which includes among many other organisations reports from the AAP, Rich (2007) states that 'strong, consistent, and growing research evidence linking television viewing with significant health outcomes … led individual physicians and medical organizations to warn patients that they should limit and control their television viewing' (p. 141). Hence, even in recent years, neither the media nor disciplines outside social studies have caught up with research carried out in media studies or in the sociology of childhood. This has consequences which are reflected in the way that the 'effects of media' are perceived by parents and their reservations about regulating their children's television viewing (see Buckingham & Bragg, 2004, pp. 207-233).

It should be noted that television is a part of the everyday lives of children and consequently must be a key component of any studies of childhood. However, media studies scholars have included children and childhood less frequently in their research agendas than other socially disadvantaged groups, such as ethnic minorities or women. There is nevertheless a promising trend on the part of

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[36] BBC News, 1999. Television 'disturbs children's sleep', 8 September 1999. Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/441664.stm [Accessed, May 2007]

researchers and scholars dealing with the sociology of childhood and media literacy to incorporate issues relating to media and the construction of childhood. David Buckingham's work, especially *Children Talking Television* (1993), *Moving Images* (1996), and *The Making of Citizens* (2000b), can be said to be pioneering in terms of advocating and encouraging research on children and media literacy.

Yet the dominant tendency, even in recent research when children are considered in relation to media, is to take on either a technologically determinist[37] or an administrative approach, which leads most research to conclude that the content or the medium itself is, in some way, harmful to children. This in turn strengthens the argument for 'protection' since, from an administrative viewpoint, children are considered naïve, vulnerable, passive and innocent receptors (see Ornia, 2004, Götz, 2004). From such a perspective, research will tend to conclude that violence on television should be considered in terms of children's viewing habits and reactions. 'Young viewers may be susceptible to subtle influences … of television, to which most adults are immune. Whatever might be considered as appropriate viewing fare for grown-ups may, therefore, not be suitable for children, who may take what is shown the wrong way' (Gunter & McAller, 1990, p.114-115).

Similarly, research in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour echo the same concerns for children's psychology and the *effects* of advertising on their development. Nairn and Fine (2008) claim it is the responsibility of the advertising industry to take into account the moral and ethical implications of advertising to children. Their research focuses on the effects of advertising on younger children compared to older children. They claim 'much of advertising to children ... operates darkly, beyond the light of consciousness' (Nairn & Fine, 2008, p.463) and call on neuroscience and psychology to continue research in their focus area. Sarah Todd, Professor of Marketing in her criticism of research

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[37] Technological determinism refers to the perspective that sees technology as a determining element in social change. Technological innovations, rather than the political, economic or social and human aspects of how technology is accessed and used, are considered to lead social change and contribute to the reconstruction of the social order.

on marketing and children argues that:

> Much of the discussion regarding the rights and wrongs of marketing to children has centred on issues of age. That is, what age do children understand the persuasive intent of marketing? The rationale has been that, once the "true nature" of advertising or other forms of marketing is understood, children are no longer "vulnerable" and targeting them as a consumer market is therefore "fair". (Todd, 2010, p.222)

Her suggestion, not far removed from that of Nairn and Fine's argument is that 'before looking at the broader ethical questions about the fairness or unfairness of markets' actions, we need to understand the developmental capacities of children' (p.222).

Such views on media and children tend not only to conceptualise what childhood is in terms of a state that young individuals go through, but also to place children under protection from what adults decide is 'bad' or 'harmful' for them. Regardless of whether the effects of media are assumed to be positive or negative with respect to this paradigm, the approach to childhood and consequently perceptions of what children are capable of doing remains the same.

An in-depth look at the relationship between children and television is crucial in order to comment on the construction of childhood and analyse children's experiences of everyday living in an adult dominated world. Children spend a considerable amount of time engaging in discussions and arguments about television programmes both with their peers at school or in their social environments and at home with their parents and siblings (Seiter, 1993). Moreover, 'television goes on in the lives of children long after it is seen, and it is constantly subject to discussion and reinterpretation' (Seiter, 1993, p.34). Therefore, children's television programming and commercials are crucial in terms of researching the sociology of childhood, for together with 'popular media characters on children's clothing, sleepwear, bedding, lunchboxes, backpacks, hats and shoes [they provide] children with a "lingua franca"' (Arthur, 2001, n.p).

Children's relationship with television has for many years been considered from two seemingly opposite perspectives by various researchers. On the one hand, the

followers of 'effects theories' have argued that television has negative/harmful effects on the 'healthy' development of children while, on the other, scholars have discussed how media can be used by and for children's education and training. According to effects theorists, through presenting children with images and sounds that are considered violent, sexual or inappropriate for their age, television can evoke similar responses in children's behaviour. The common suggestion made from this point of view is to censor certain programming and to promote what is considered to be educational or 'suitable' programming for children to be aired at hours considered appropriate for children's viewing by adults.[38] It is no coincidence that with the beginnings of commercialism and the growth in the number of households with television sets, the idea of childhood shifted towards perceiving children as naïve beings in need of protection. 'At the heart of the "effects" tradition stands the figure of the "child": innocent, vulnerable, corruptible' (Baker & Petley, 1997, p.11). Effects theories had been used especially in researching children and television in which children are considered to be the 'other', not so much for their differences, but in terms of being in need of protection and guidance. Texts are seen as a powerful tool for 'injecting' children with ideas, views, perception and patterns of behaviour. Therefore, while effects theories were being questioned and research in the field of media studies was moving forward towards perceiving audiences as 'readers' of media text, rather than seeing viewers as completely inactive in their relationship to the media under consideration, it took much longer for researchers to consider the same perspective of readership in terms of children as active audiences. This is due to the general belief that children need protection from the media. As Hilty (1997) points out:

> The role of television, particularly children's programming, is seldom subject to scrutiny and critical analysis warranted by more 'serious' popular commercial programming. Programs in this latter genre are looked at carefully for content: violence, inappropriate language, or explicit sexuality. Yet the producers of children's programs frequently claim that the programs are educational and deal in appropriate ways with sensitive issues such as divorce, multiculturalism, handicaps and the like.(Hilty, 1997, p.79)

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[38] In Chapter VI, I discuss the issue of age-related classifications from children's point of view.

Even within the uses and gratification approach, in general the theories either centred on how children used television content in their lives or focused on how adults could help children make use of media content in their lives. Hence, on the one hand reception theories mostly centred on examining how children make sense of television programming in their lives in order to socialise with their peer groups at school or elsewhere. On the other hand, the media literacy approach focused on ways of increasing children's media awareness and encouraging them to think critically both while watching television and when encountering various situations in everyday life. As Livingston (1998) puts it, 'however vaguely defined, the concept of [active viewing] has provoked a considerable body of interesting research, often on children, whose passivity has been of great public concern and yet whose activity on viewing is most apparent if one actually watches them' (p.36).

Moving towards an understanding that minds and views are not necessarily manipulated by the act of listening to the radio or watching television, researchers shifted their focus towards the reasons why audiences choose to engage with the media. 'People rarely sit mindlessly watching just anything on their "box in the corner"; invariably some kind of choice has been made as to which programme they are going to watch. Children … are no different. They, too, have their likes and dislikes' (Gunter & McAleer, 1990, p.17). Although Gunter and McAleer refer to 'TV ratings' in order to establish that children have tastes, likes and dislikes, the move towards uses and gratification theories shifted the focus from the technology and the producers of media texts to audiences, thus to an extent empowering the audience.

Buckingham (1993) posits that, in challenging the notion of children watching television like zombies, researchers 'sought to represent children as active, sophisticated and discriminating viewers' (p.18). Thus far, the theories and perspectives I have presented in regards to television and children appear to be drastically different from each other in terms of their focus points, i.e. one focusing on what television 'does' to individual children's minds – and other more recent research exploring what children 'do' with television. Yet, I would

agree with Buckingham who states that 'to all intents and purposes, children appear to be regarded as not fully social – or indeed even as "pre-social" – beings' (1993, p.11).

2.9 Depictions of Children in the Media

Children are quite frequently depicted in media texts.[39] These depictions reflect many images of children and a diverse range of constructions of childhood. The fact that it is possible to comment on these representations as 'good', 'bad', 'proper', or 'improper' arguably suggests that we have preconceived understandings of what childhood is and how children should be represented.[40] Since our understanding of and ideas about childhood are conceptual and contingent upon various factors that are closely interrelated, the way we interpret these representations is likely to vary not only depending on the context within which the representations take place, but also, to a greater extent, on the way we interpret those contextual situations. It is mainly for this reason that in my study, I focus on depictions of children in television advertisements in which children either act as adults or display adult-like behaviour, as a way of exploring the different representations of childhood in general.

Different depictions of children, and consequently of childhood, in media texts help construct discourses of childhood with which children might identify themselves or towards which children might build various degrees of resistance. Similarly, adults who also engage with these discourses reconstruct what childhood is, in their own terms. This plays a part in shaping their interactions with children in terms of both the practices they engage in with them and the tools and artefacts they provide for children such as toys, clothing, personal goods and school equipment. However, the association of our interpretations of childhood through their representation within a consumer-oriented and commercialised

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[39] Though the term refers to different media productions such as movies, television programmes, series, advertising, magazines, news articles etc. the current study will only be conducted with television advertisements.
[40] In Chapter IV, I explore children's interpretations of and comments on the depictions of children in the advertisements I used in this study.

context should also be established.

Since there are varying interpretations of who children are and what their role is within society, varying representations of children can be observed in different media content; children are sometimes represented as 'cute', 'naïve' and 'defenceless' characters or as a 'menace' (see Mill & Mill, 2000). These media accounts also tend to reflect how adults perceive children. As Holloway and Valentine (2000) argue, even though seemingly contradictory, perceptions of children as either innocent 'angels' or troublemakers reinforce adults' control over children (Holloway & Valentine, 2000, p. 777). Not surprisingly, 'The representations of children as themselves (not in acting roles) in adult non-fiction television programmes, takes place in a context ... of a continuing public debate about the nature and security of childhood (Davies & Mosdell, 2005, p.208). Likewise, Davis and Bourhill (1997) note the following:

> Media treatment of issues about children relies heavily on such simplistic generalizations with children represented as objects of concern or as threats to adult order. The former relies on an idealized view of children as pure, innocent and vulnerable, needing protection or salvation from dangers they can neither identify nor comprehend. The latter, of children drawn innately (unless prevented) towards evil and anarchy. (Davis & Bourhill, 1997, p.31)

Bolzan posits that 'constructions are underpinned by the use of certain language, knowledge and power, which are interconnected at the level of discourses' (Bolzan, 2005, p.98). The discourses through which children are represented play an important role not only in terms of adults' reproduction of what childhood is from their perspective, but also in shaping children's understanding of how they are perceived by adults, thus an understanding of what is expected of them. While analysing these representations, it is vital to take into account the context within which the content is displayed.

Identifying an increased viewing of television and a decrease in adult control as a threat to 'childhood' can mislead one into perceiving television and its content as corrupting childhood. Instead, a broader analysis of the sociological, cultural and

economic changes that society goes through should be taken into account. Cox (1996) states:

> More and more children become central figures in soap opera, their preoccupations merging with those of adults. Even children's games are either disappearing or being organized and packaged increasingly by adults. Increased juvenile crime, teenage pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol and drug abuse, rising divorce rates, the growth of child liberationist movements – all these are brought about by the coming of television and the decline of adult control through traditional literacy. (Cox, 1996, p. 181)

Cox's perception of the media and children is an example of technological determinism where by how changes to childhood are attributed to new media technologies, their content and how they depict and represent children. Such a deterministic, essentialist and judgemental account conceptualises childhood to a construct that is shaped and fixed by media content of particular and limited representations of children that is claiming a supposed reaction of children to that content. While holding the media representations of children responsible for the supposed changes that have occurred in the way children act within society, Cox is also presenting the reader with a picture of what childhood and parenting should be like.

Even though there are many programmes and commercials that focus on children's lives through using different representations of children viewed by both children and adults, studies conducted on children and television tend to focus on how children are affected by television or how they use the images they see on television. Recently, researchers at Göteborg University initiated a series of studies conducted by scholars from a wide range of countries from South America, Europe and Africa on children's viewing habits and their reasons for watching programming such as soap operas and reality television (Von Feilitzen, 2004). The aim was to stimulate research on children and young people and television. The research, published in the 2004 Year Book, centres around why, for how long and under what conditions children watch television and which programmes they choose, with some emphasising the importance of media literacy (Von Feilitzen, 2004). However, there is a dearth of analysis about how

children are represented in television programmes and commercials (see Davies & Mosdell, 2005). 'The selective character of representation leads us to the view that it is through discourse and other semiotic practices that ideologies are formulated, reproduced and reinforced' (Baker & Galasinski, 2001, p.65). Thus, the fact that children are presented in commercials, series, and other television programming in stereotypical ways highlights a need for research that might provide a better understanding of the ideological undertones of the concept of childhood. 'Stereotypes, however inaccurate, are one form of representation … they are created to serve as substitutions, standing in for what is real. They are there not to tell it like it is but to invite and encourage presence' (hooks, 1992, p.341).

Stereotyping reduces any social group to a homogeneous entity without acknowledging differences within these groups; hence stereotypical representations cannot accurately depict actual individuals. bell hooks' emphasis on representation as perpetuating stereotypes should be taken into account in childhood studies. Studying constructions of children and childhood in the media in order to understand how representations and/or stereotypes are constructed – as well as what children think of these constructions – would help us to question the different ways in which children as a social group are invited and encouraged into certain identities in relationship to the 'childhood' presented to them by adults (and to a lesser extent, other children). Furthermore, children in mainstream media tend to be depicted as vulnerable and weak or as cute, naive and innocent in a variety of different media texts from different genres.

As will be illustrated, closer look at the way children are depicted in media texts, and television adverts specifically, reveals the different ways in which they are represented. Though it is beyond the scope of this study to do so, a contextual analysis of depictions of children in different media texts may show that these representations can also be used in contexts that are either relevant or irrelevant to children and childhood. As Hartley (1998) suggests:

> Media campaigns against young people are a staple genre, whether
> they are about sex, drugs, rock'n'roll or violence, they are always
> available to serve for the time being as the immediate signifier of the

general need for governability. Too often the news media deal with the tension between their own propensity to communicate via sexualised young people, and their own tendencies to police young people's sexuality, by having their cake and eating it; showing the pictures (communicatively, democratically) while wagging their fingers (truth-seeking, governmentally). (Hartley, 1998, p.48)

Hartley suggests that, in print media, the use of images of children and young people (beside stories that criticise the exposure of children), attract the attention of readers who might also have a negative approach towards such representations:

the 'children' who are being placed firmly outside the frontiers of the 'we' community of adults … are … available to serve as the very icon of that community, in the communicative, inclusive, 'paedocratic' mode of address that is necessarily employed by news media in the quest to attract, address and retain readers. (Hartley, 1998, p.50) [41]

Likewise, Gittins argues that 'images of children are invariably constructed *by adults* to convey messages and meanings *to adults*. The meanings they are used to convey change and vary, although there are certain recurring and central themes: dependency, victimisation/helplessness, loss, nostalgia, innocence, danger, nature' (Gittins, 1998, p.111, emphasis in original). In another account questioning the media coverage of teenage girls, Jackson (1999) posits that:

'Innocence' appears to be taken for granted as a defining feature of childhood, so that anything which threatens it is seen as a danger to childhood itself. Hence a recurrent theme in media discussions … [is] the idea of lost or stolen childhood. (Jackson, 1999, p.136)

Indeed, children's innocence is often used as a theme in advertisements directed at adults (see Kincaid, 1998). Images and representations of children are often used in advertisements that are geared towards children and/or adults.

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[41] Though Hartley's concern here is to criticise the process of news production, he nevertheless posits a framework for children and childhood as they are understood by media institutions, which has an impact on the way representations of children are used in news media.

2.10 Children as Consumers in Contemporary Consumer Society

The depiction of children in advertisements and children's interpretations of these representations are at the heart of this thesis. According to Hill children today are 'immersed in cultures of consumption' (Hill, 2011, p. 347). There is a growing literature on children as consumers (Martens, Southerton & Scott, 2004; Arthur, 2001; Guldberg, 2009). This thesis is not concerned with children's consumption of consumer goods, instead it views children as active consumers of the media. The importance of advertising, as part of consumer culture, is that it 'provides children with a shared repository of images, characters, plots and themes: it provides the basis for small talk and play, and it does this on a national, even global scale' (Seiter, 1993, p.7). Martens et al. (2004) point out that 'children are largely invisible in theories of consumption' (p.162) and even though, more often than not, they do not have direct control over the purchasing of goods, the symbolic imagery conveys meanings that are used by children in their daily lives.

Media texts and the discursive context within which they are presented should not be taken for granted. While considering children's identity within the context of consumer culture one theory that has been stressed by a significant number of researchers has to do with the 'disappearance of childhood'. Hill (2011) suggests that 'Children's identities have been inextricably linked to a corporate agenda that promotes and entices consumption. Children have been losing their grip on childhood as a result of the gradual but steady encroachment of media into every aspect of their lives (p. 359). She continues to argue that 'Children's habits, attitudes and behaviours including the way they dress, the music they listen to and the discourse of childhood more and more resemble those of adults' (p. 359).

The idea that childhood is disappearing, which in effect results in our understanding of who children are as opposed to what it means to be an adult, is one that is closely associated with the work of Neil Postman. His famous book, entitled *The Disappearance of Childhood*, first published in 1982, is considered to be a breakthrough in studies that concentrate on the construction of childhood. In

his book, Postman[42] posits that childhood is a construct; however, rather than critiquing the ways in which childhood is socially constructed within society, he, to an extent, celebrates this construction and instead criticises the media for creating representations of children which are similar to representations of adults.

Similarly, Elkind (2001, originally published in 1981) states that 'the concept of childhood ... is threatened with extinction in the society we have created'(p.3). He continues his argument by claiming that 'we do our children harm when we hurry them through childhood' (p.3). This, I believe, is because neither Postman nor, and to a greater extent, Elkind[43] or in recent years Hills (2011) acknowledge the fact that, while a particular way of understanding childhood might be disappearing, other interpretations of what childhood is become shaped within a different social setting.

Referring specifically to Postman and Elkind's arguments, Lynott and Logue (1993) state that their work 'lacks empirical support in general and relies on a deterministic model and negative bias' (p. 472). In contrast to Postman's notion of the disappearance of childhood, Buckingham states that 'a particular *idea* of childhood may well be disappearing; but it is much harder to identify the consequences of this in terms of the realities of children's lives' (Buckingham, 2000a, p.35, emphasis in the original). Moreover, in response to Postman's concerns that children are missing out on experiencing childhood due to their engagement with the media and that they are being 'robbed of their childhood', Jackson and Scott (1999) point out that 'worries about children being denied a childhood are occurring in the context of social trends which appear to reinforce childhood dependency' (p. 98). Hence, it is this context that needs to be scrutinised and not the notion of childhood being lost. I would argue that the death of childhood as a notion might be discussed in terms of how research surrounding children and the media within the administrative paradigm considers what it

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[42] In Chapter V, I provide more details of Postman's argument on the disappearance of childhood and criticisms of his theory in association with my analysis.
[43] In Elkind's argument, the fact that children are being perceived as a subordinate group is something that is taken for granted, which is clearly obvious from his use of possessive language such as 'we' the adults 'created' the society, or 'our' children.

means to be a child. Childhood does not end with changing technologies and media unless we allocate that sort of power to technologies and media. Postman's view of childhood is to a large extent a technologically determinist one which disregards the fact that childhood stops being about children when children are reduced to limited and unified beings who are innocent, naïve, vulnerable, in need of protection and in many ways incompetent.[44]

In a different account, approaches to the phenomenon of children's increased computer and new digital media use take traditional understandings of children for granted. Zizek argues that 'with the computer, childhood loses the last appearance of innocence' (Zizek, 2001, p.21). I do not argue against the fact that new technological innovations have an impact on our daily lives, and hence how we define ourselves. However, it is not solely the technologies themselves that change the way we live. Rather, it is how they are introduced into our lives and the meanings and uses that are assigned to them in larger socio-economic and political contexts. Children are part of the socio-cultural and economic structure, to a greater or lesser extent depending on the particular technology in question. 'Technology both requires and produces social and organizational change. There are structural differences, of course, since different media have developed their own institutions' (Briggs & Burke, 2002, p.189).

Another account of children as consumers which has recently been the focus of study, especially in marketing and advertisement, stems from the idea that in the Western world 'Youths also shape the buying patterns of their families. From vacation choices to car purchases to meal selections, they exert a tremendous power over the family pocketbook' (Calvert, 2008, p. 207). Calvert in her argument refers to 'experts'[45] quoting that expenditure of over 500 million US dollars is influenced by two to fourteen year olds in household purchases (Calvert,

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[44] It should also be noted that Turkle's account of children's relationship to the computer is also rather strong in terms of framing children's understanding of technology as naive. Turkle argues that 'children develop the two concepts [machine/person] in parallel and take what they understand to be the computer's psychological activity as a sign of consciousness' (Turkle, 2001, p.239).

[45] She does not clearly identify who the experts are her referencing suggest that the experts she is referring to are publishers for Institute of Medicine on children and food consumption. Even though this point is not necessarily relevant for my argument it is still worth mentioning that clearly such an institute's role is to work and publish for the industry they are run by.

2008). While such research relies on different data and starts the discussion from a different platform than that of examples I have presented earlier in this chapter regarding children's engagement with television the fact remains that research relies on psychological effects of media to deliver the conclusions. Moreover, the power that children are said to have over their parents in consumption behaviour is used as an argument to support the effects theories rather than exploring the dynamics between children and adults. Hence such examples of research on children, marketing and consumption fall short on attempting to question the discourses that children and their parents engage in.

Tinson and Nancarrow's (2010) account of children as consumers differs from Calvert's in that they argue the following:

> Whilst socio-economic changes may in part explain [children in the] decision making role, it is likely that the consumption of brands is becoming more important for children as a way of expressing their personality to others as well as to themselves – a sort of self concept or ego-reinforcement. (Tinson & Nancarrow, 2010, pp.133-134)

Their assessment of the market approach to teenagers particularly, suggest that they attribute the involvement of children in decision making to their parents allowing this. Also they suggest that from a marketing point of view 'tweenagers' are 'the new teenagers in terms of mindset' (Tinson & Nancarrow, 2010, p. 135) which draws on the idea of children 'growing older younger', an argument closely related to the disappearance of childhood theory discussed earlier. Hence not surprisingly their use of words 'a sort of self concept' to refer to children's representations of themselves undermine children's need to express themselves.

Young (2010) traces the relationship between marketing, advertising and children to 'two of the most common aspects of what have been called the "unintended" consequences of advertising [which] are obesity and materialism (p.127). David Marshall puts forward the claim that:

> With direct and indirect marketing to children on the increase there is a question over how children engage with ...[the] commercial world. A number of discussions, for example, around food marketing and

childhood obesity, online activity and sedentary lifestyles, or increase materialism among the young tend to place children as hapless victims subject to onslaught of marketing activity. (Marshall, 2010, p.1)

Rather than relying on marketing research which patronizes children or poses questions on children and media from an administrative perspective on the effects of media on children, I would argue that a critical engagement is crucial. Questions about media content having a certain impact on children's attitudes and behaviour and about technology having an impact on how we conceptualise children might be rephrased by shifting the focus away from the content and the technologies towards children as active interpreters of media and towards the changing world system, taking into account the influence of the rapidly growing means of production within a capitalist society as well as the growth of consumer culture, which alter the way media institutions operate. As Herman and McChesney (1997) argue, 'in the United States, the growth of the commercial broadcasting media has tended to ... erode the quality of children's programming' (p.160) as part of a wider decline of quality broadcasting.

In this light, Buckingham's suggestion for a need to 'move beyond a determinist view of the effects of media technology on children' (Buckingham, 2004, p.108) is necessary so as to be able 'to consider these new media and communication technologies within the context of broader changes in children's culture – changes which are characterized by a growing convergence between different cultural forms, but also by increasing commercialism' (Buckingham, 2004, p.108).

Unlike Postman's notion of the disappearance of childhood due to the increased use of media technologies in our daily lives, a critical analysis of media institutions and their content might help to uncover different interpretations of how childhood is transforming and the reasons behind this change. Such an analysis would enable us to question and critique whether these changes are in the interests of children or of the commercial system driven by transnational capitals' control of the media and consumer culture and habits of consumption. Lee (2001) states that:

> Though Postman's claim that television has made childhood 'disappear' is rather extreme, and though we might not want to share his 'anti-television' stance, it is … quite clear that television has changed children's position within the family home, gradually reducing their 'triviality' as consumer society developed. (Lee, 2001, p.75)

Childhood as a social construct 'is subject to change whenever major social transformations take place' (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1997, p.2). Industrialisation and the rise of consumer culture are key phenomena in considering the changes that have taken place in people's lives – not only in economic but also in cultural and social terms. Thus 'industrialization … was more than a question of producing more goods in a new way [i]t also entailed a process of socialization which aimed at stabilizing and inculcating fidelity among those whose labour was being conscripted' (Ewen, 1976, p.6). Changes in the mode of production led to the emergence of new manufacturing lines that encouraged the development of what we now call consumer culture. Gradually everyone was to become the target of the market and be socialised into consumerism. 'The mechanism of mass production could not function unless markets became more dynamic, growing horizontally (nationally), vertically (into social classes not previously among the consumers) and ideologically' (Ewen, 1976, pp.24-25).

A dynamic and ever-growing market cannot be maintained unless consumption means more than consuming products that are necessary for everyday living. In other words, what 'necessities' are for individuals, to an extent, are determined through their interactions within the everyday living routines which carry symbolic associations with goods that have been categorised as 'necessary' within the socio-economic system. 'Consumers consume not so much specified objects to accomplish specific concrete ends, but signs in general for general social ends' (Corrigan, 1997, p.20).

It is important to take into account the dominance of popular culture through mass marketed products that are widely advertised on television – even on commercial-free television through merchandising products of popular shows (see Zanger,

2002) – in that they not only help to maintain the consumer culture but also help to shape our conceptualisation of what childhood is. As Arthur (2001) states, 'Mass market products connected to licensed characters are woven into every aspect of children's lives. As well as television programs, movies, toys, books, magazines and advertisements' (Arthur, 2001, n.p).

As will be discussed later, the focal point of discussion is not whether commercials or commercial television programming influence children's lives and behaviour or the way we conceive the concept of childhood. Rather, the crucial point is that childhood and therefore children's everyday practices – in interaction with each other or with adults – are not only socially constructed but are also imbued with political, economic and ideological influences that need to be considered within a broader context of consumer culture and as part of the capitalist mode of living.

Critical paradigms within media studies and the sociology of childhood often use contextual and intertextual approaches in their studies. Inter-disciplinary and multiperspectival studies that take into account the social, historical, cultural and economic contexts within which life occurs are important for any social study. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, in terms of studying children, childhood and the media this approach is long overdue. Through highlighting a pivotal parallel aspect within media studies and childhood studies, I have laid the groundwork for being able to conduct a study that is multi-disciplinary and allows me to borrow methodologies from each that help me to contextualise my study and my approach to childhood and media in Northern Cyprus. Such an approach would enable future studies not only to expand the scope of each discipline but also to help develop trends in each discipline towards incorporating methodological, theoretical and practical applications for studying childhood with children and the media and children further.

CHAPTER III: TEXT, DISCOURSE AND CHILDREN: METHOD AND METHODOLOGY IN RESEARCHING CHILDREN AND MEDIA TEXTS

As should be clear from the previous chapter, in this thesis it is assumed that children are social agents rather than passive receptors of media messages. O'Kane (2008) states that the emergence of a paradigm that treats children as social actors gradually led researchers from studying adult's constructions of childhood to studying children's status as a distinct group and finally to exploring children's own perspectives (pp.125-126). O'Kane's point speaks directly to one of my aims in this study, which is to explore representations of children in television advertisements through children's interpretations of them. I use discourse analysis to explore different depictions of children in television advertisements, but this analysis is also informed by children's interpretations of these advertisements. I also go beyond this and explore children's understandings of childhood through their experiences within their family and school life using the data I collected from the focus groups with children. In addition, I also present the differences children perceive between childhood and adulthood in Northern Cyprus from their point of view.

My approach is influenced by past research on text and audiences in media studies which examines how the meanings that are discursively constituted in texts are interpreted and renegotiated by audiences (Moores, 2000; Radway, 1984). Such research juxtaposes the analysis of media texts with focus group or interview data and treats these analyses as complementary to each other. To explain the research process, this chapter is divided into two main sections. In the first section I discuss my application of discourse analysis to television advertisements, and in the second, I explain how I collected my focus group data and conducted a thematic analysis of it. In this latter section I also cover practical and ethical issues that arose in gaining access to the children and setting up and conducting the focus groups. First, however, I provide a general introduction to this chapter and briefly explain how these complementary methodologies helped me achieve my objectives.

I selected television advertisements that feature children to explore depictions of children in them. I not only analysed these advertisements to explore how children are represented in the media, but also used these representations to provide children with a framework to talk about their lives. I conducted focus groups with children in order to include their perspectives and points of view, not only on the advertisements but also on what childhood is for them. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), 'the focus group can be a useful "social laboratory" for studying the production of interpretations, perceptions, and personal experiences' (p.182). Hence, focus groups enabled me to record children's interpretations and perceptions and their accounts of experiences. This allowed me to engage with children, to talk to them about their lives and learn about how television advertisements that depict children are interpreted in relation to their own experience. Children's participation in this research was important in relation to my perspective on childhood and children. As Harden et al. (2000) suggest, 'the extent to which researchers embrace or reject the idea of children as "different" shapes the nature of their research' (paragraph 1.1). I concur with their argument in favour of conducting research *with* children and not perceiving children as 'adults in the making'. Therefore, I used focus groups as a platform to engage with children and instigate discussions on their lives within various frameworks I provided to them.

The television advertisements that I used during my focus groups were chosen to represent differing depictions of children in television advertisements.[46] Over a period of six months, the four channels that are the most watched in Northern Cyprus were followed to select the five advertisements that are used in this study. It was also important to pick the advertisements that children who took part in this study were most likely to have seen. Indeed all children expressed that they had previously seen the advertisements that were used in this study, while some expressed a few of the advertisements were their favourite. I applied discourse analysis to these advertisements in order to investigate different representations of children and hence constructions of childhood in the media. For

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[46] This selection was based on being able to capture an array of different depictions of children, Hence advertisements that were repeating similar representations were filtered.

further inclusion of children in this study, my analysis was also informed by the children's interpretations of these advertisements. Later, in Chapters V and VI, I explore the concerns that dominated the children's discussions while they were watching the advertisements and the subsequent accounts of their daily lives.

The use of different methods of analysis allowed me to conduct a comprehensive study in which I not only examine depictions of children and children's interpretations of these images, but also tap into their lives, habits and relationships with each other and with adults. This also helped me to reveal how children understand the ways in which the different portrayals of childhood are reflected in their lives. This is in keeping with Moores' argument that we need to consider not only the meaning encoded in texts and audiences interpretations of them, but also the wider context of audience members' lives (Moores 1996, 2000). Thus it was important for me to conduct this study within the social and cultural context[47] in which the children live.

The television advertisements provide me with one of the many texts that are present in children's cultural environment. Within this study, I consider the television advertisements as texts, these texts represent different variations of discourses about children and childhood. I understand the term 'discourse' to be a body of language that is governed within a particular context and that produces meaning. Yet, at the same time, in using children's interpretations of them as a context for my focus group discussions, I treat the term 'discourse' in a theoretical sense as frameworks of meaning to which children have access and which provide them with resources for making sense of their world.

> Focus groups are a method of choice when the objective or the
> research is primarily to study *talk*, either conceptualized as a
> 'window' on participants' lives or their underlying beliefs and
> opinions, or as constituting a social context in its own right.
> (Wilkinson, 2004, p.194)

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[47] While the television advertisements are produced in Turkey, my study takes place in Northern Cyprus.

I use focus groups in the latter sense, as a 'window; on children's worlds. Thus rather than analysing the data from them as talk, I instead explore the themes that dominated the children's discussions. In so doing, I was able to refer to multiple dimensions of the social context that is constituted by the focus groups and the general social-cultural context within which the children live and watch the advertisements I used with in this study. In other words, while applying discourse analysis to examine television advertising that is targeting and/or depicting children, I attempt to deconstruct the discourses around which childhood is built; but when analysing the focus group data I concentrate on children's substantive concerns. This analysis helps me to engage with the focus group data from a perspective that incorporates the broader social context.

Even though the overarching purpose of this study is to understand children's interpretations of childhood, the specific purpose is to highlight how children incorporate their own experiences within the already-constructed cultural frameworks that define what childhood is. Hence, it is important to pay attention to the texts that are built upon constructions of, and assumptions about, childhood within any given society. It should also be recognised that adults help to shape the discourse of childhood for children through the texts that they offer (or just happen to make available) for the consumption and use of children. Taking into account my perspective on children's social agency, the methodological approaches used in this study allow me to prioritise children's interpretations within their social and cultural context. In addition, children's lives, their interpretations and their actions are already bound up to some extent within socially constructed contextual frameworks. Fairclough emphasises that social agents are not 'free' insofar as they are socially constrained within different social settings, yet at the same time not all their actions are socially determined. He continues his argument by stating that agents possess 'causal powers' which are not reducible to the causal powers of social structures and practices (Fairclough, 2003, p.22). Fairclough's views on how social agents interact within socially constituted settings apply to children as well.

3.1 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is not one single method or perspective. As well as there being a variety of ways to define discourse analysis, there are also different ways to apply it within social studies. I have been influenced by both Fairclough's and van Dijk's critical discourse analysis (see Fairclough 1995a, 2003, van Dijk 2006, 2009). That said, since there are different dimensions to the relationship between children and adults that help shape childhood, the analysis of these relationships and subjects within it would require:

> to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power. (Fairclough, 1995a, p.132)

Van Dijk interposes a third dimension between the social and the discursive which is the 'cognitive', by which he refers to the constitution of meaning 'in discourse production and comprehension' thorough 'mentally organising' them (van Dijk, 2006, p. 102). He writes of a 'mental "definition of the situation"' which mediates between the production and comprehension of discourse and the social environment (van Dijk, 2009, p.66). What van Dijk conceptualises as 'cognition', Fairclough refers to as 'reflexivity'. He states that '[s]ocial actors within any practice produce representations of other practices, as well as ("reflexive") representations of their own practice, in the course of their activity within the practice'. He goes onto say that '[r]epresentation is a process of social construction of practices, including reflexive self-construction – representations enter and shape social processes and practices' (Fairclough, 2006, p.123).

This study takes account of discourses, practices and the wider social environment. In aiming to conceptualise children's interpretations of childhood I assume that this involves reflexive (or cognitive) processes. Thus, I apply discourse analysis, specifically an adaptation of critical discourse analysis, as a method and also employ it as an approach to power relations and social context,

since critical discourse analysis is 'committed to social equality and justice' (van Dijk, 2009, p. 63). Hence, through exploring children's social practices and their social status within the culture in relation to their agency and in contrast to the authority of adults over children, I will be examining different articulations of childhood within the social order. According to van Dijk (2009), discourse analysis (or discourse studies as he recently began to call it) concerns more than the analysis of text and talk (p. 62), and also encompasses:

> ...the study of mental representations and the processes of language users when they produce and comprehend discourse and participate in verbal interaction, as well as ... the knowledge, ideologies and other beliefs shared by social groups. (van Dijk, 2009, p.64)

Discourse analysis, therefore, involves more than just methodology (Wood & Kroger, 2000, p.27). Through applying discourse analysis both as a theory and a method I will explore how social practices are articulated by children as well as how they are constituted within the social practices of childhood. Hence, I use discourse analysis both as a methodology to allow me to discuss the advertisement texts within their discursive context and as theory to explore children's social and cultural surroundings.

In what follows, I first detail my application of discourse analysis as a methodology to examine the television advertisements. Later I also explain the theoretical implications of discourse analysis and how they help shape the theoretical framework for the analysis of the focus group data.

3.1.1 Discourse analysis as methodology

The reason why I choose to use discourse analysis while analysing television advertisements is because this approach, which takes its origins from semiology and linguistics, allows me to deconstruct the signs, symbols and language used in the advertisements within a social framework in order to excavate the meanings through which their message is constructed and conveyed. While I am not so much interested in why and how the television advertisements convey their

messages, I am interested in, firstly, how images of childhood are used in these advertisements in order to communicate their message and how they portray children and, secondly, how these elements find reflections within the broader social and cultural context. Wooffitt (2005), in his discussion of critical discourse analysis, states that:

> a television advertisement, in which spoken language, written words, visual images, music and special sound effects may all be used to portray a product, each of which adds layers of meaning and contributes to the sense or force of the advert. To obtain a rounded understanding of the production of meaning in texts it is thus necessary to extend the focus of analysis to include these kinds of non-linguistic representations ... because they reflect broader cultural and social influences. (Wooffitt, 2005, pp.139-140)

As Wooffitt's statement demonstrates, discourse analysis allows me to ground my analysis within the contextual setting of how the signs, symbols and language elements used in these advertisements are deployed. Since the construction of advertisements involves a high level of intertextuality within their specific cultural context, it becomes crucial to analyse the language elements and signs that are used in association with the product they advertise and in relation to the cultural concepts that they rely on. Hence, as Wooffitt suggests, I include both linguistic and non linguistic elements in my analysis. I examine the conversations that take place in the advertisements, the camera angles, physical positioning of the actors in different scenes, written words that appear on the screen at different times, facial and body gestures used, etc. While analysing the television advertisements, I also look at the common discourses, language use, and significations that were highlighted during the children's discussions in the focus groups, which alerted me to some of the ways in which the meaning is produced within these texts.

Combined with the children's understanding of what childhood is, I also examine the different ways in which concepts related to childhood are constructed. I consider the denotative and connotative meanings of the advertisements individually as well as in comparison to each other. First, I analyse each text individually and then consider the similar and differing discourses which refer to different frameworks of meaning. I also consider each advertisement and the

comparisons I draw between them within the cultural context of the readers, i.e. myself and the children who took part in this study.

Phillips and Hardy (2002) put forward four different types of discourse analysis according to their focal point and the degree to which they take into account context and text and their constructivist and critical orientations. These four types are: social linguistic analysis, interpretive structuralism, critical linguistic analysis and critical discourse analysis (pp.18-39). They suggest different applications for each, but they neither suggest nor say that these four types have to be thought to as separate approaches or that they cannot be combined. On the contrary, these approaches can be combined with each other in different ways in order to help the researcher to focus on the research questions from different angles. In choosing which type or types would be most appropriate for research, they suggest a careful consideration of the focus of the study and in what way the researcher would choose to express this (pp.59-66). For instance, since interpretive structuralism focuses on a much wider and larger societal context and since studies using this type of analysis are 'concerned with the way in which broader discursive contexts come into being' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.24), I will not use this approach in my analysis; it is beyond the scope of my work to consider how the concept of childhood became a social reality. I do however, accept the utility of Foucault's approach to studying 'the "rules" which constitute a specific discourse, which thus make a certain text' (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p.267), in this case, a text on childhood. Although I am not using interpretive structuralism, I am paying attention to the wider context in which the texts are situated.

In my research, due to the varying form and structure of the texts that I will be looking at, i.e. television advertisements, questioning their context becomes highly important for two main reasons. First, I interrogate different constructions of childhood in broader terms, and incorporating children's interpretations, which all takes place within a specific context. Second, this boarder scope will enable me to explore whether or not social constructions of childhood remove children from the process of constructing and reconstructing childhood, and also to what extent and under what circumstances this happens. In other words, do children

accept the adult way of constructing childhood as the only way? Do they negotiate or oppose it, and what are the contextual frameworks for these dynamics? As the television advertisements are produced by adults, through incorporating children's discussions on these advertisements, I will be demonstrating children's position in interpreting adult constructions of childhood.

One of the key aspects of social linguistic analysis is 'to undertake a close reading of the text to provide insight into its organization and construction, and also to understand how texts work to organize and construct other phenomena' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.22). Therefore, social linguistic analysis is one of the types of discourse analysis that I draw on and apply to the television advertisements. I examine the way these advertisements are constructed, the way they situate children around the product they advertise and the discursive elements used in doing so, in order to analyse how childhood is being articulated though the media. The discursive dynamics involved in the construction of meaning are important for locating and being able to explore how social reality is formed. Like social linguistic analysis, critical linguistic analysis also focuses on individual texts, however 'with a strong interest in the dynamics of power that surround the text' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.27). This is relevant to the study of childhood, and especially when considering the relationship between adults and children, since most childhood studies literature highlights the power relations between adults and children.

The last approach Phillips and Hardy (2002) offer is critical discourse analysis, which is another approach that is applied in my study. Arguably the best known studies applying this approach to media texts are van Dijk's analyses of newspaper articles focusing primarily on discourses of race. Both in his early studies and in his more recent work, van Dijk (1988, 1998, 2009) not only calls for critical discourse analysis (or in more recent years critical discourse studies) to be a 'historical, cultural, socio-economic, philosophical, logical or neurological approach, depending on what one wants to know' (2006, p.97), but also argues that:

> CDA as a specific form and practice of discourse analysis ... always needs to account for at least some of detailed structures, strategies and functions of text and talk, including grammatical, pragmatic, interactional, stylistic, rhetorical, semiotic, narrative or similar forms of verbal and paraverbal organisation of communicative events (van Dijk, 2006, p. 97)

A crucial aim of critical discourse analysis is, therefore, to uncover the interpretations of signs and moments within a discourse in order to tease out its articulations and interpretations of power relationships and to highlight the already constructed meanings within it. When analysing the construction of childhood in media texts, a structural analysis of the form and content of the text would not be sufficient to uncover the underlying connotations that help shape the concept of childhood. Hence, as Fairclough argues, discourse analysis, through questioning the interaction between social action and text, goes beyond the structural analysis of texts while giving importance to conjuring social action within the text and taking into account the role of agents within the context of the social practice. He posits that:

> The relationship between social action and text is mediated by interaction: that is the nature of the interaction, how the texts are produced and interpreted, depends upon the social action in which they are embedded; and the nature of the text, its formal and stylistic properties, on the one hand depends upon and constitutes 'traces' of its process of production, and on the other hand constitutes 'cues' for its interpretation. (Fairclough, 1992, pp.10-11)

Therefore, texts cannot be understood outside of the contexts in which they are produced and consumed. Moreover, critical discourse analysis highlights the importance of 'a thorough theoretical analysis of a social issue ... so as to be able to select which discourse and social structures to analyse and to relate' to (van Dijk, 2006, p. 98). In order to explore the context of a text's production and interpretation, it is imperative to identify both discursive practices themselves and how social agents are situated within these discursive practices through the social practices they engage in. In other words, '[t]he relationship between texts and social practice is mediated by discursive practice. Hence it is only through discursive practice – whereby people use language to produce and consume texts

– that texts shape and are shaped by social practice' (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.69).

Discourse analysis is therefore suitable for the purposes of this study, since it not only analyses the text in its contextual setting, but also takes into account the form of the text. I have so far discussed discourse analysis as a *methodological* approach, a means of dissecting representations of children and constructions of childhood within advertisements. Since I go beyond this in incorporating children's readings of these advertisements and exploring broader aspects of both children's lives and the construction of childhood, I now move on to consider discourse analysis as a *theoretical* perspective.

3.1.2 Discourse analysis as theory

Meanings are constructed by agents who are involved within the deployment of discourse, and these agents are also involved in the nodification of meanings through their position in inter-discursive environments. Institutions within society constrain or enable us to act in certain ways. These institutions are pre-constructed, that is to say they exist prior to our entry into them with relatively prescribed formulae for performance as 'already positioned' actors; our actions and limitations are learned and socially constructed. However, our participation within these institutions works in two ways. On the one hand, we participate in the maintenance of rules and regulations within institutions while reinforcing the meanings, values and norms that we perceive as normal. On the other hand, we also reshape and renegotiate these rules and regulations through our interactions within the institutions and through our involvement with other agents within these institutions.

Childhood does not exist outside the social and economic institutions within which it is experienced. It is especially important when establishing the structure of the unequal relationship between adults, and children, since children's identity is partially shaped around the parameters of this relationship. Due to its emphasis on the relationships between discourses and power, critical discourse analysis is

useful for me in theoretical terms in examining the power dynamics between children and adults. For example, economic dependency has long been recognized as a linchpin in power relationships within families (Bell & Newby 1976) and is a theme that emerged from the focus group data, enabling me to explore children's accounts and interpretations of the use and handling of money. Thus I analyse the different ways in which children express their involvement with money in terms of spending and/or saving money and being given or giving money and what this reveals about their interpretation of childhood.[48]

This is just one example illustrating why, in conducting discourse analysis of television advertisements depicting children, it is important to engage children in a discussion of how they interpret the messages about childhood that are encoded within the discourse of the texts. Their interpretation of how childhood is represented in these texts is crucial for the purposes of this study in terms of providing clues as to how children see themselves situated within different social practices. In fact, especially when media texts are concerned, Fairclough argues that a 'wider contextual matrix must be attended to because it shapes discourse practices in important ways and is itself cumulatively shaped by them' (Fairclough, 1995b, p.50). Thus, while I apply critical discourse analysis as a methodology to deconstruct the television advertisements, I also use it as a *theoretical* perspective while in engaging with the transcripts of the focus groups.

Another crucial theoretical insight of critical discourse analysis is that it sees discourse as constitutive of the social world and at the same time as constituted by the social world. Fairclough's approach applies these notions in a three-dimensional model where texts are shaped by and/or shape the discursive practices – through alternative use of language – and the interconnection between the discursive practice and the social practice makes it possible for discourses within this sphere to be both constitutive and constituted. Therefore, during the focus groups, I encouraged the children to discuss how what they watch on television (in this case specifically advertisements) relates to the way they interact

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[48] The analysis of how children introduced money-related issues in their discussions during the focus groups is performed partly in Chapter V and partly in Chapter VI.

with their parents and with other adults. I combine the analysis I conduct on the advertisements with the stories of these children to understand whether or not such texts have any influence on their social practices.

'[Social actors] "recontextualize" other practices – that is, they incorporate them into their own practice, and different social actors will represent them differently according to how they are positioned within the practice' (Fairclough, 2001, p.123). How do children as social actors recontextualise the practices of childhood and adulthood? How do everyday practices situate children in their childhoods and how do children experience childhood? Through deploying these questions in my analysis, I will be positioning myself as an interpreter of how childhood is being portrayed in television advertisements and how children who experience childhood in their 'own' way construct their social status. Discourse analysis provides me with the tools for this questioning because it 'tries to explore how the socially produced ideas and objects that populate the world were created in the first place and how they are maintained and held in place over time' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.6). Phillips and Hardy also state that: 'Whereas other qualitative methodologies work to understand or interpret social reality as it exists, discourse analysis endeavours to uncover the ways in which it is produced' (p.6). The social status of children, as they tend to be perceived within society by adults, constitutes the basis for certain articulations of social reality to be shaped around and reflected through the decisions made for children and the conceptions of childhood. Exploring how different representations of childhood are interpreted by children while they experience *being* children should illuminate the ways in which they live within this discourse.

Questioning the social realities that help to shape childhood would be incomplete without taking into account the fact that adults' views on what childhood is also play a role in shaping the activities that are structured for children. Taking up a position that not only questions this but also empowers children requires adopting a perspective that provides the means to deconstruct children's interpretations of childhood and adulthood. Foucault (1972) argues that the rules of discursive practices 'define not the dumb existence of a reality, nor the canonical use of a

vocabulary, but the ordering of objects' (p.49). For Foucault discourse creates its own object, substitutes 'for the enigmatic treasure of "things" anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse' (Foucault, 1972, p. 47). Children and childhood can be considered as discursive constructions and in this sense a Foucauldian framework is useful in highlighting the social construction of childhood. Where I differ from Foucault is in emphasising that children are not merely subjects positioned by/within discourse but are also active agents interpreting their world and engaging in everyday practices and interaction.[49]

Wodak (2001) posits that critical discourse analysis 'should also justify theoretically why certain interpretations of discursive events seem more valid than others' (p.65). When thinking in terms of who dominates the construction of meanings within the context of children's childhoods the boundaries become blurred. This is not only because, as in any discursive context, subjects' identities fluctuate depending on the situation and the context, but is also due to the fact that the historical and cultural background that helps to shape the relations between children and adults is complicated. Fluctuations of identity in terms of 'being small/old enough' or 'being grown up' are evident in the advertisements that I analyse. I examine how children interpret the meaning of being grown-up and also how they negotiate and conceptualise what is being said to them through this concept.

In engagements with children, adults often draw on differing discourses of childhood – as adults who used to be children and as adults who are now not children. Children also draw on discourses of adulthood and childhood in their engagements with adults and other children. As I will show in Chapter VI, children are highly aware of their self-identity, in terms both of who they are now and the fact that they are growing up. For children, 'growing up', 'age' and 'being grown-up' are all parts of the discourse of childhood as they experience it. In addition, their language and behaviour are all part of how they situate themselves

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[49] I argue alongside Lois McNay (2000) who highlights the importance of not overlooking individuals' ability to exercise their agency within their everyday lives while considering the discursive constructions of subjects.

within the social bounds of childhood. 'Our ability to act strategically is limited by the discourses that accompany our intervention and the complex processes of social construction that precede it' (Phillips & Hardy, 2002, p.2). Hence, I am not only looking at particular texts that portray childhood but also exploring the context and how they are being understood by participants in that discourse.

3.2 Focus Groups

For this study, ten focus groups were conducted with, in total, forty children between the ages of seven and twelve. Morgan (1997) states that one of the greatest advantages of using focus groups in a study is that it provides the researcher with the 'opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time based on the researcher's ability to assemble and direct the focus group sessions' (Morgan, 1997, p.8). Through using this method I had the opportunity not only to observe how children interact and engage with each other, but also to obtain their ideas and comments about the topic of study. While the themes emerging from the focus groups should not be considered representative of how children interpret what childhood is for them universally, I would argue that my analysis nevertheless contributes empirically to the field of the sociology of childhood. Morrow and Richards (1996) advocate 'moving on from the narrow focus of socialisation and child development to a sociology which attempts to take children seriously as they experience their lives in the here and now as children' (p.92). This is what the focus groups were intended to achieve. Hence, the focus groups, during which children discuss topics relevant to their lives through interpreting television adverts, is crucial for my study, since the aim of this study is twofold: to understand how children interpret media representations of childhood through different depictions of television advertising and to explore how children make sense of their childhoods.

When deciding on the methodological approach for any study, one of the most important questions that a researcher must pose relates directly to how the research question is set. The way in which children are perceived in this study played an important part in how I approached it and hence in determining the

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overall research design. Thomas and O'Kane (1998) posit that their perception of 'children as social actors with their own distinctive abilities to understand and explain the world' led them to 'use methods that would enable [children] to participate in meaningful ways in the research project' (p.338). Along the same lines, Samantha Punch (2002) states that 'within the new sociology of childhood many of those who call for the use of innovative or adapted research techniques with children, are also those who emphasize the competence of children' (p.321). Therefore, any attempt to understand children's interpretation of the different childhoods that are depicted in the media should adopt a research design that is not only inclusive of children, but also one that gives them a voice. Through the focus groups conducted with children, therefore, I had the opportunity to give children the occasion to express their point of view on issues related to media and their childhoods.

3.2.1 Accessing Samples and Choosing Schools

I decided to access children through schools for a number of reasons. Firstly, I wanted to be able to talk to children who live in different parts of the country under different conditions, such as children who live in cities and villages. Secondly, I wanted to make sure the children in the focus groups were familiar with each other or knew each other prior to meeting for the focus groups. Furthermore, by accessing the children through schools I could make sure that the same or similar aged children were in each group. In addition, I thought I would save time if I chose to access children through schools, since once I obtained the necessary permissions I would be able to arrange my focus groups quickly. While this decision proved right in many respects, I came to realise that, both during the process of obtaining permissions and gathering the focus groups, I had not saved much time. As I will detail shortly, it took longer than I expected to obtain the necessary permissions and when I did, it took longer than I envisaged it would to organise the focus groups due to a teachers' strike that was going on at the time.

Having decided to access children through schools, I first needed to obtain permission from the Ministry of Education in order to approach schools and,

through them, the children. This, however, turned out to be a complex and time-consuming process. I had to prepare reports and present them at different stages of the process. Also I had to wait for long periods of time for decisions to be made at each and every level of my application to the Ministry.

On the 24th of October 2007, I visited the Ministry for the first time with a proposal for my application. I was given an appointment on the 13th of November 2007 to meet with the head of the Training and Discipline Department. He told me about the application procedure for the permission and told me to get in touch with someone in charge of the Elementary School Division. I contacted them the next day; however, I was told that the forms I needed to fill in to submit my application were not applicable in my case, since they were for conducting surveys. I did not have a sample questionnaire to attach with the application form, which was specifically prepared with quantitative research in mind. Because there had never been a research application prior to mine that was not survey-based, the Ministry did not have any application forms for conducting qualitative research with children. I prepared reports about my research and presented them to the Elementary Schools Division, together with a detailed activity and questions list that would be part of the focus groups. I provided details of the procedures involved in my research and was told that it would not be possible for me to complete the forms as they were not applicable. My research did not involve a questionnaire that would be distributed to the children, which is what I was told was usually done in the case of research with children and which meant in many cases that the researcher would not come into contact with the children at all. I left a copy of my proposal in Turkish and a covering letter for application purposes, explaining the procedures involved in my research.

On the 14th of January 2008, I was contacted by the person at the Elementary Schools Division who had first dealt with my application. She informed me that they had examined my application and that the Ministry would issue permission for me to conduct my research. This coincided with my travel to the UK for my semester supervision and I thanked her for giving me this news and told her I would be in touch as soon as I came back. Upon returning from the UK on the 11th

of February 2008, I visited the Ministry of Education and was told that they could not prepare my permission letter since they needed to see the questionnaire. I asked to talk to the head of the Elementary Schools Division to explain the situation to her myself. After our meeting, even though I had already submitted sample questions and an activity list to the Ministry, she asked me to prepare a set of questions similar to the ones that I would be asking the students during the focus groups. The next day, I visited her with my questions, she examined them and told me they would be in touch with me. On the 18th of February 2008, I was contacted again and was told that I could pick up my permission, which still needed a signature from the authorities. I collected the letter of permission issued for my research and took it to the head of the Elementary Schools Division for her signature. My permission letter was dated 31st January 2008. It still talked about a survey to be carried out in elementary schools but I was assured that it would not matter and if the headmasters had questions concerning the letter and my research they could contact the Ministry, and that the necessary explanation would be given to them. So, at the end of this process my research was finally approved by the Ministry and I had the signed document I needed from the head of the Elementary Schools Division. The five month period that I had to wait to gain access[50] to my sample was finally over.

What was surprising to me was that the people I encountered at the Ministry of Education were not at all concerned with who I was or what I really wanted to do. When I told them I was a PhD student at University of York, that was good enough for the Ministry, yet the fact that I did not have a questionnaire and that my research methods were different from the ones they were familiar with troubled the Department. Even after presenting reports on my methods and methodology and explaining the details in person to those in charge, the permission letter, a copy of which I am sure the Education Ministry will hold on file, was written as if my research were a survey.

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[50]Also, on the 6th of March 2008, when the Ethics Committee at the University of York granted me permission to begin my fieldwork.

Upon completing the ordeal of obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education, I met with an officer whom the head of the Elementary Schools Division had advised me to consult about which schools to visit. I expressed my wish to choose schools from both rural and urban areas. After a discussion with this officer at the Elementary Schools Division, we mutually agreed on four schools, two located in a city, and two village schools within the district area of another city. These schools will be referred to in this study as City School 1, City School 2, Village School 1 and Village School 2. Village School 1 was selected because it is representative of a highly rural village, Village School 2 was in a bigger village with better facilities and at a closer proximity to the city. In Northern Cyprus, villages are either highly rural or, even though they are referred to as villages, resemble a town more than a village. Therefore, both types of village have been included in the study. People who live in the area of Village School 2 are well off financially compared to Village 1 residents. While most residents of Village 1 are either farmers and/or engage in husbandry, residents of Village 2 have civil service jobs and the like. Since Village 2 is closer to the city, its inhabitants' lifestyles are different from those of Village 1. The schools located in the city are typical average state schools which are attended by children from a variety of social and economic backgrounds.

A second criterion was that the pupils who would participate in the focus groups would be from Cypriot families. The reason for this is that, especially in certain village areas, there is much immigration from South-Eastern and Eastern Turkey, where cultural mores are different from those of Cypriot families. Since this study is not at a comparative stage and such elements would require taking into account many social and historical factors that would require more time and resources to process, I aimed for a degree of cultural homogeneity. Therefore, while choosing which schools to include in my study I specifically chose ones located in places where the level of immigration was low.

Even before I started conducting the focus groups, one main difference between the village schools and schools in the city became apparent. While the village schools paid special attention to parental consent, city schools informed me after

my initial visit that parental consent would not be sought. This was mainly due to the fact that, while in village schools there was only one person dealing with my request to carry out research in their school, in city schools the headmaster or in the case of City School 1, the Vice Dean of the school first informed the board. Hence, the administrative structure of the school played an important part in how they handled my application. The people I contacted in City Schools 1 and 2 both told me that they had examined the topic of my research and unanimously decided it was not a sensitive or delicate issue that would require parental consent.[51]

In terms of the differences in discussions that took place during the focus groups about media use, it is very hard to exactly pinpoint specific differences between village and city schools since all the children, regardless of where they lived, talked about the same programming and all had access to a television set, in some cases their own, both in the villages and the city. However, it was more common in the city schools for children to mention more than two television sets in the house (usually one in the living room, one in the kitchen and one in their parents' room), whereas village households either had one or two television sets. It should also be mentioned that, even though their uses of different media were similar to each other, children from the city schools mentioned more extra-curricular activities than those living in the villages.

While grouping the children, I opted for a segmentation in terms of age, since their experiences and daily practices would differ with age,[52] and I paid attention to having children in similar ages groups who were familiar with each other in the same focus group. The groups were formed of mixed genders to be able to compare and discuss differences in how boys and girls experience childhood. Each group was made up of four children. I formed one group with first year students, at the age of seven, and one group with fifth grade students at the age of twelve. The remaining eight groups were mixtures of two grades that were consecutive with each other. For example, I grouped two first grade children with

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[51] I will expand on the issue of consent in more detail in the next section and explain how it played out during the course of my research.
[52] This is mainly because in general children's practices and the education are already segregated by age, however, this does not represent my own views on this.

two second graders, and in another group two third grade children were grouped with two forth graders. In total there were eight children from each of the five grades. In Northern Cyprus a dialect of Turkish is spoken by 90% of the population and mainly Turkish television is watched, therefore the focus groups and the interviews were conducted in Turkish.

3.2.2 Gate Keepers and Negotiation

Davis (1998) categorises ethical issues in regard to doing research with children into three groups: informed consent, confidentiality and protection (Davis, 1998, p.328). Unlike research with adults, research with children involves not only the consent of the participants but also usually parental consent. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 'children are taken to include all those under 18 years of age' (Morrow & Richards, 1996, p.90). In order to conduct focus groups with children, I had to first obtain the consent of the children and, in the villages, their parents.

My emphasis was on making my research as child-centred as possible and therefore I wished to prioritise the children's consent over that of their parents. Due to the administrative hierarchy of the city schools, they deemed that my research did not require parental consent. However, the village schools insisted on my obtaining parental consent but said that they would seek the consent of the parents on my behalf. This was mainly because teachers in village schools knew the parents and were in touch with them concerning their children on a regular basis due to the close proximity of their houses (in fact in some cases they are neighbours), and so they said they would talk to parents.

From previous experience, the teachers knew that parents might think this was a psychological test, which might suggest that there was something wrong with their child. Upon my insistence, they agreed to talk only to the parents whose children had expressed a wish to take part in the research, rather than first getting permission from the parents most accessible to them. Mahon et al. (1996) go through a detailed account of how they sought children's consent and parental

consent while they conducted their research. Some research topics and questions are considered to be more sensitive than others, and since theirs was a sensitive issue they write that they were warned that some of the issues they might raise could be 'upsetting for the children'[53] (Mahon et al., 1996, p.150). They also point out that advisors and colleagues expressed anxieties concerning children's ability to fully comprehend what was being asked of them. In addition, 'it was also argued, children somehow needed extra "protection" from the invasive questioning of researchers' (Mahon et al., 1996, p.150).

My experience concerning consent was different from that of Mahon and her colleagues. This might be partly because the topic of my study was not considered to be sensitive and partly because of cultural differences between Northern Cyprus and England. An interesting point however, is the anxiety that teachers warned me parents might have in terms of what the research results would reveal about their children's psychological state. The teacher in Village School 2 offered to help with this matter on the basis that parents feeling the need to 'protect' their children might react by saying 'there is nothing wrong with my child, s/he does not need to be researched on'.

Morrow and Richards (1996) point out that 'in the UK, consent is usually taken to mean consent from parents or those "in loco parentis", and in this respect children are to a large extent seen as their parents' property' (p.94). Due to the cultural differences in Cyprus, I was lucky enough to be able to initiate seeking children's consent first, which is an important step in terms of giving them more control over the research process. However, the fact remains that this decision was negotiated with the headmasters and teachers and was based on their judgement about my research topic. It should be mentioned that ethical limitations and procedures are in place for a reason and they are necessary, but in my view they should not be any different for children than they are for any other social group within society. The position of the researcher in terms of her/his understanding of the abilities and social status of children and the topic of the research are important in

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[53] In this particular study, which was centred around the Child Support Act, they were interviewing children on their relationships with their separated parents and children's views on their parents' financial obligations.

anticipating different ethical concerns while conducting research (see Mauthner, 1997).

The first school I visited was Village School 1. The headmaster greeted me and said that he felt privileged that his school had been selected to be included in this study. Village 1 is a small village quite far away from the main cities and the main road, so, as the headmaster told me, not very many people except those who live there or who have relatives in the village go there. He then introduced me to some of the teachers who were in school that day. Due to the general strike that was going on at the time, not all teachers were at school and the children had been told that classes would not be held that day. This was on the 14th of March, 2008. I met with him again on the 19th of March, 2008 since I needed to make sure they were not selecting[54] children but asking them to volunteer to take part in the study. The issue of schools wanting to select students rather than asking children to volunteer was the main obstacle I faced during my initial visits to schools. I sensed that, from the point of view of the headmasters and teachers, it was a competition as to which school could provide children who would give the 'best' answers. They were asking me if I wanted them to *choose* children who did well in their classes, or who were more articulate in their thinking. Therefore, I had to give long explanations about what I intended to do and the ethical concerns related to such an approach, as well as providing them with a written report on what I would be doing and how. I politely asked them to read the report while I was there so as to be able answer any questions they had or to clarify points that I felt needed reiterating. When I was certain they understood how they needed to approach children, I arranged another date for the actual focus groups to take place. This was more or less what happened in each school; I had to convince each headmaster that I was not interested in the intelligence or the grades of the children who would be involved in my research.

The only exception to this process in terms of initial contact with teachers and negotiating children's participation in the study was Village School 2. My first

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[54] As mentioned, the headmaster was quite pleased for his school to be part of this research project and was under the impression that only the best of his students should be considered to take part in it.

visit to this school was on the 24th of March, 2008 and I met with the headmaster. After listening to me explaining my project he introduced me to one of the teachers at his school. He was, at the time, doing his PhD at one of the universities in Cyprus, so it was easier to talk to him about my project and he was aware of the ethical issues involved in children volunteering for this research. He assured me that I need not worry about this and that he would be the person to talk to other teachers and to the children.

3.2.3 Conducting the Focus Groups

The intention of setting up focus groups with children was not only to engage them in a discussion around the concept of childhood but also to enhance my understanding of how they articulate the experience of being a child. I initiated this discussion through showing children selected television advertisements that portray and/or are targeted towards children and moderated a discussion around how they interpreted these images. 'Focus groups provide researchers with direct access to the language and concepts participants use to structure their experiences and to think and talk about a designated topic' (Hughes & Dumont, 1993, p.776). Therefore, through the advertisements that portrayed children I not only was able to elicit how children interpreted the different portrayals of childhood(s) on television but also learned about what they consider childhood should be like.

In terms of technical difficulties that I encountered during the recording of the focus groups, to ensure that the recordings were safe I was planning to both record the sound and do a video recording of the sessions.

> If interviews are audio-taped, identification of individual speakers may be very difficult unless the interviewer has included frequent reference to speakers by name. ('That's an interesting point Tony, what do you think Emma?' etc). However, this may create a false tone in the interview and lead to interjections by the interviewer which disrupt the flow of children's discussion. (Lewis, 1992, p.419)

As suggested by Lewis, a video recording of each focus group eliminated the problem of lack of information in my notes. During the first two focus group

sessions I used both a video tape recorder and a digital sound recorder. However, later I discovered that, even though I had tried the video recorder prior to using it to record the sessions, the tape developed several errors and I had to consult experts to secure the recordings. I was told that the camera I used was giving tape errors due to the moisture levels in Cyprus and not having been used for an extended period of time. I was told that there were several techniques to avoid these errors but that this would not be a 100% guarantee that the errors would not be repeated. Therefore, instead of taking a chance with it, I searched several places to hire or borrow another video camera. Finally, since my focus groups were already scheduled and I was running out of options and time, I had to buy one. After watching the footage and checking the sound levels of the recording I made with the camera I had purchased, I decided that the video recordings were sufficient by themselves and separate sound recordings were not necessary. Therefore, the sound recorder was only used in the first two focus groups and not for the rest. The old tape recorder that I had used for the first two sessions was clunky and set-up was difficult, with wires going from one place to another. This, coupled with the fact that I had to use a sound recorder with external microphone and cables, meant that it took a long time to set them up and I found this disruptive for two reasons. Firstly, these particular focus groups were conducted in the headmaster's office and the longer I took setting up meant the longer his office was occupied, and secondly, I was constantly worried at the back of my mind about the quality of the sound on both the video and the sound recorder. Hence, using equipment that I was sure produced good quality recordings proved to be beneficial for a number of reasons.

3.2.4 Key Issues and Incidents

As Fasoli rightly points out, there are many issues that need to be considered before and while engaging children in a research project.

> We often take for granted what is entailed for young children to be involved in research processes. They are being asked to move from the familiar context in which we found them to a new and unfamiliar one, the research context. This is the case regardless of the fact that the research is conducted on familiar ground because the process

involves a number of practices that contain largely unstated assumptions about its purpose and nature. (Fasoli, 2003, p.7)

Therefore, it was highly important to pay attention to making the children[55] feel comfortable, both physically and psychologically. To this end, the focus groups were conducted in places that the children were familiar with and felt comfortable in. I informed the children about the different equipment that would be used during the focus groups, such as the sound recorder, video recorder and computer. It was important that the children were familiarised with how the equipment worked and why it was necessary to record the focus groups sessions. As I had expected, all the children who took part in the study were familiar with laptops, some mentioned that their elder siblings or one or both of their parents or someone from the extended family owned one. In fact some mentioned that they owned one, but made sure to specify that it was for them to learn maths and English and that theirs were different from the ones adults owned. The children were also familiar with sound recorders and video cameras. Their reactions to being videotaped varied. I explained to them that it was for me to be able to watch afterwards to remember what we had talked about. While some children liked the fact that they were being videotaped and in fact asked me, if it was going to be broadcast, to let them know the date and time of it, others expressed concerns. I talked to these children in order to understand the basis of their concerns. Their concerns had to do with the fact that they did not want anyone to watch it. While the ones who were hoping for it to be broadcast were disappointed, those who were concerned were relieved to find out that the recordings of sessions were strictly confidential and that no one other than me and my supervisors would have the right to see or hear them. At the end of the session, children in some of the groups wanted to watch the recordings of their session and so I showed them bits from the recordings.

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[55] I have to add that, during any research, the researcher sould pay attention to making the participant comfortable. The differences in doing research with children should not stem from the belief that children are more 'vulnerable', but should rather appreciate the differences between children and adults and be tailored for children.

Before I proceeded with the actual activity of showing advertisements and initiating a discussion on their interpretations, I asked them to make drawings related to television in their lives. In order to clarify what I meant by this I gave them suggestions as to what they could draw, such as their living room, or where they watched television if different from the living room. While some children liked the idea and made these sorts of drawings, others said that they would instead like to draw other things. Children who said they would like to make other drawings mostly drew their house. Mahon et al. (1996) posit that drawings are a method that can be used to overcome the sensitivity of talking about or raising certain sensitive issues. Punch (2002) suggests that the use of drawing as a method while doing research with children can be used for a variety of different reasons, from being used as a warm-up activity to a more exploratory manner (p.331). In my research, I used drawings as a warm-up activity,[56] and during the time that the children were engaged in their drawings, I introduced the topics that we would be talking about, but allowed them to lead the conversations in a free-style way. I wanted them to talk about whatever they liked while they were drawing because this also helped me to establish rapport with them as a person who wanted to hear their ideas as opposed to an authority figure who was there to assess their understandings on childhood. Also, the drawing activity helped the children to get comfortable with each other as they commented on each other's drawings.

Another side activity that I used during the focus groups was to get them to produce their own advertisements at the end of the focus group study. Although originally developed as a way to make expression possible for those who are less literate and therefore lack differentiated ways of communication,[57] Christensen and James (2000) suggest that they used this sort of activity in their research as a mediator in their communication with children, which helped them to 'concretize what are often rather abstract or implicit ideas' (p.162). I asked the children to choose two products and allocate them to two different size boxes that I already

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[56] While this was my intention, some of the children had their own take on the drawing activity and used it to their own ends. Examples of such situations are given and discussed in Chapter VI.
[57] See Punch (2002) and Thomas & O'Kane (2000) for more detailed discussion on similar methods.

had with me wrapped in different colours. I explained to the children that one product would be something that would belong to adults and the other to children. As a group they had to decide what role they would play in the advertisement and how they would advertise the products they chose. Even though they were critical of children acting like adults in the advertisements they watched, during this activity many of the groups opted for role-play and 'acted like adults' themselves. Therefore this activity was useful in terms of children expressing how they perceive advertisements. This was a motivating activity in the sense that, after sitting for hours (each focus group lasted at least an hour and a half) and talking about advertisements, the children seemed to like moving around.

After the activity was over and they said their adverts were finished, I asked them if they wanted to keep a diary in which they could write or draw about things they thought were relevant to our discussions. All except five children who took part in the focus groups not only said they would like to but were also really excited about being given notebooks to keep that they could write and draw in. With four of the five children who did not participate in this, it was because they were in a hurry to leave and I did not have time to introduce the idea of keeping diaries. Only one of the children said he was not interested in keeping a diary. Unfortunately, due to the fact that I came back to England and the school year had finished before I went back to Cyprus again, I was not able go back to the schools and collect the diaries. If I had been able to collect them I believe I would have gathered invaluable data since the children who agreed to keep the diaries were very enthusiastic about the idea of keeping them and said that they were really excited and happy to be doing something like this.

3.2.5 Power Relations while Doing Research with Children

The last issue that I want to bring up concerning the focus groups with children before I conclude this section is one that is common in doing research *with* children as opposed to *on* children, and this is the power relations between the researcher and the children. The children who took part in my study are

elementary school children and are in the process of learning to accept the authority and domination of adults in their lives. When asked about their opinions and their interpretations, they might tend to give responses that they believe adults would approve of or would like to hear. As Krueger and Casey (2000) rightly point out, 'young people may be sceptical of the moderator's claim that all opinions are wanted and that both negative and positive views are appreciated' (p.177). In order to minimise this problem, I needed to explain clearly and without intimidating them that this study was not designed to judge them in any way or to find out what sorts of 'mistakes' they make or whether their thinking is 'wrong'. While I did not want them to approach their role in this study as homework I also had to make sure they understood the importance of their participation. Davis (1998) writes:

> Empowerment is associated with allowing children to choose to become active participants in the research process, employing tools which offer children the maximum opportunity to put forward their views and reducing the social distance and re-negotiating the power relations between researcher and child. (Davis, 1998, p.329)

One of the methods I used to make sure they felt comfortable with their participation and to increase their active involvement with the research was to give them the choice of which activities they wanted to attend or in what way they wanted to attend during the focus group, such as drawing or taking a video of an advertisement for a product they chose or keeping diaries. Also, at the stage when I explained issues related to confidentiality to them, I told them that if they wished to do so they could choose their own pseudonyms that would be used in the transcripts of the focus group. Nearly all of the children above the age of ten were really excited about this idea and wanted to choose their pseudonyms and were really pleased to do so, while the younger children did not find this interesting or worthwhile.

At the beginning of all the focus group sessions, while I was introducing myself and explaining my research in detail to the children, I specifically expressed to them that I needed their active involvement in order to complete my project. I stressed that my research was on childhood and asked them who I should talk with

to learn about childhood and children. All the children gave the same reply: 'by talking to us', 'from children'. This was not only important for me in terms of ensuring that they did not perceive me as an authority figure but was also equally crucial in terms of the children's comprehension of how I was perceiving them.

3.3 Follow-up Interviews

I also conducted separate semi-structured interviews with seven children, one from each of seven[58] focus groups, in order to give the children the space and privacy to talk about the issues discussed during the focus groups. My intention while selecting the children for individual follow-up interviews was to provide those who appeared to have more to say and who appeared to hesitate talking in a group setting with more space and time to express themselves and 'to learn more about any perspectives that may have been underrepresented in the group' (Morgan, 1997, p.23).

During the focus groups, the course of discussions on what they think of and how they interpret the television advertisements led them to reference their daily habits and experiences while expressing their interpretation through using examples they could relate to. The main reason behind this was, as Lewis suggests:

> Group interviews produce statements which are in line with group norms to a much greater extent than will happen in individual interviews … This provides an important reason for employing groups as well as, or instead of, individual interviews when exploring research questions which involve group norms. (Lewis, 1992, p.414)

My initial approach was based on my expectation that a combination of the two would provide me with data that could enable me to conduct my analysis by drawing not only on the interactions between the children but also on the cultural and social hesitations they bring to their accounts of how they experience childhood.

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[58] In three of the groups I did not find it necessary to conduct separate interviews with children since the focus groups were considerable longer compared to the other ones and all the children were engaged with the discussions fully.

The interviews, however, did not prove to be as useful as I expected. Children were far less talkative during the interviews than they were in the focus groups because of the lack of interaction and group dynamics. As a result the interviews were extremely short and yielded no additional information about the children's views. The interviews might have served me better had I conducted them after transcribing the focus groups recordings. Having gone over the recordings in detail, I realised that I could have concentrated on some of the issues children brought up but had not elaborated on during the focus groups. Even though, in terms of resources, time and logistics, it would have been very hard for me to go back to Cyprus a second time to conduct interviews at a later stage, if I had planned for this or had had the opportunity to do it after I established the framework for my analysis, I could have used the interviews to gather data on some of the themes that I had not expected would come out at the initial stages of collecting my data.

3.4 Translation Issues

As I conducted my focus groups in Cypriot Turkish[59] I needed to translate my data into English before I included any part of it in my study. However, with the encouragement of my supervisor, Professor Stevi Jackson, I only translated the parts of the transcripts as I used them in my work and conducted the analysis in the original language. This was mainly to avoid missing nuances that were present in the native language. Rather than translating the transcripts and then doing the analysis, I opted for forming my analysis and translating parts of the transcript in pieces when it was necessary. Therefore, I started with compiling an index and a grid charts in Turkish for my thematic analysis. Since Cypriot Turkish is my first language this did not present a problem as I was sure I would not miss out data or information due to translation. However, one minor problem this technique presented me with was keeping track of each translation I did. In the early stages of writing my analysis I was faced with the problem of multiple ways of wording a sentence in English. Even though the meaning remained the same if I had used a piece of data somewhere in my work I had to make sure I used it with the same

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[59]The dialect of Turkish spoken in Northern Cyprus.

wording if it was necessary to refer to it again. In order to eliminate this problem I devised a coding system and as I used each part I noted in which part of my thesis and within what context it was used. Therefore, as my work grew and I produced different versions of my chapters through revision I was able to make sure I always used the same wording for translating the same piece of data.

One of the aspects regarding translation that I needed to ensure was being able to put forward children's words as they were said. I wanted the English translations to reflect how each child spoke including their vocabulary, sentences structure and style. As this study centres around the concept of doing research with children my invisibility was an important aspect in translating the transcripts. Venuti states that:

> the illusion of transparency is ... the translator's effort to insure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continues syntax, fixing a precise meaning ...The more fluent the translation, the more invisible the translator, and presumably, the more visible the writer or the meaning of the foreign text. (Venuti, 1995, pp. 1-2)

Even though my level of English is enough to write academically and for socialisation I recognised quickly that my ability to translate the transcripts fell short in situations in which I was not familiar with the English version of a word or concept that the children used. In order to overcome this problem I had to consult with a few native English speakers, including my supervisors Stevi Jackson and Emma Uprichard. I would describe the situation with similar examples to give the feeling and the contextual understanding to the people I consulted in order to choose the right words.

However, as Birbili (2000) rightly points out 'researchers need to keep in mind that translation-related decisions have a direct impact on the validity of the research and its report' (n.p). Therefore, it was equally important for me to not translate literally but be able to convey the meaning across in my translations. Both Turkish and Cypriot Turkish are languages that are very different from English in terms of syntax and sentence structure. For example, different suffixes are used to stand in the place of tense and personal pronouns rather than

individual words. There are also some different conceptualisations for different verbs.[60] Moreover due to cultural differences even when the verbs/words represent the same meaning sometimes the cultural interpretation of words can be very different. 'Although obtaining grammatical and syntactical equivalence is not something that can be taken lightly, it does appear that the more important aim of researchers-translators should be to achieve conceptual equivalence' (Birbili, 2000, n.p). In situations like these, my translations reflected the meaning as much as it can, and when necessary I used footnotes to explain the differences in order to represent what was said by the children.

3.5 Managing the Focus Group Data and Conducting Thematic Analysis

Upon completing my fieldwork, I first transcribed all the focus group recordings. This process involved watching and listening to the recordings and typing everything that was said during the focus groups. I rewound and replayed every sentence, sometimes several times, in order to write down everything that was said. I paid specific attention to transcribing the recordings as they were and did not try to use correct grammar or change the way the children worded their sentences. When necessary, I also included comments on expressions, tonal changes in voice and gestures as well. Since I had conducted ten focus groups, each of which lasted at least one and a half hours or more, I ended up with a pile of transcripts. I needed to sort this data to be able to locate when and what each of the children were saying on a particular topic or during a discussion.

At first this seemed like a daunting task; however, through creating an index chart, I was able to condense the transcripts into a manageable-sized sheet. Ritchie et al. (2003) identify index charts as a first step in data analysis in order to categorise the data. My initial index chart was based on the television advertisements and how different age groups interpreted them. I went over the transcripts and noted the issues that children raised in regards to each advertisement in the form of a grid chart. Under a separate column for each

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[60] An example of this is given in Chapter 6 in regards to the verb 'drinking' which is used for cigarettes.

advertisement, I created a list of bullet points that described the issue that was being mentioned and the context for it. I used rows to identify the different ways in which children talked about an issue according to their age. This initial index chart proved to be useful to me in two ways. First, it helped me to identify the context of the discussions around each advertisement. Second, this chart formed the basis for my second chart, which was a framework chart. 'The name "Framework" comes from the "thematic framework" which is a central component of the method. The thematic framework ... is used to classify and organise data according to key themes, concepts and emergent categories' (Ritchie et al., 2003, p.262). Through using the index chart as a stepping stone, I was able to identify the themes that were dominant in the focus groups. In order to do this I used different coloured highlighters and specified which themes were discussed at length by the children. I also charted the dominant themes in relation to age groups, however this time I also included the village school/city school distinction in the grid (see Figure 1).[61]

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[61] The photograph in Figure 1 does not reflect the actual size of the chart that I used. The length of the actual chart is that of four A3 pages. This photograph has been cropped in order to save space and only represents the chart.
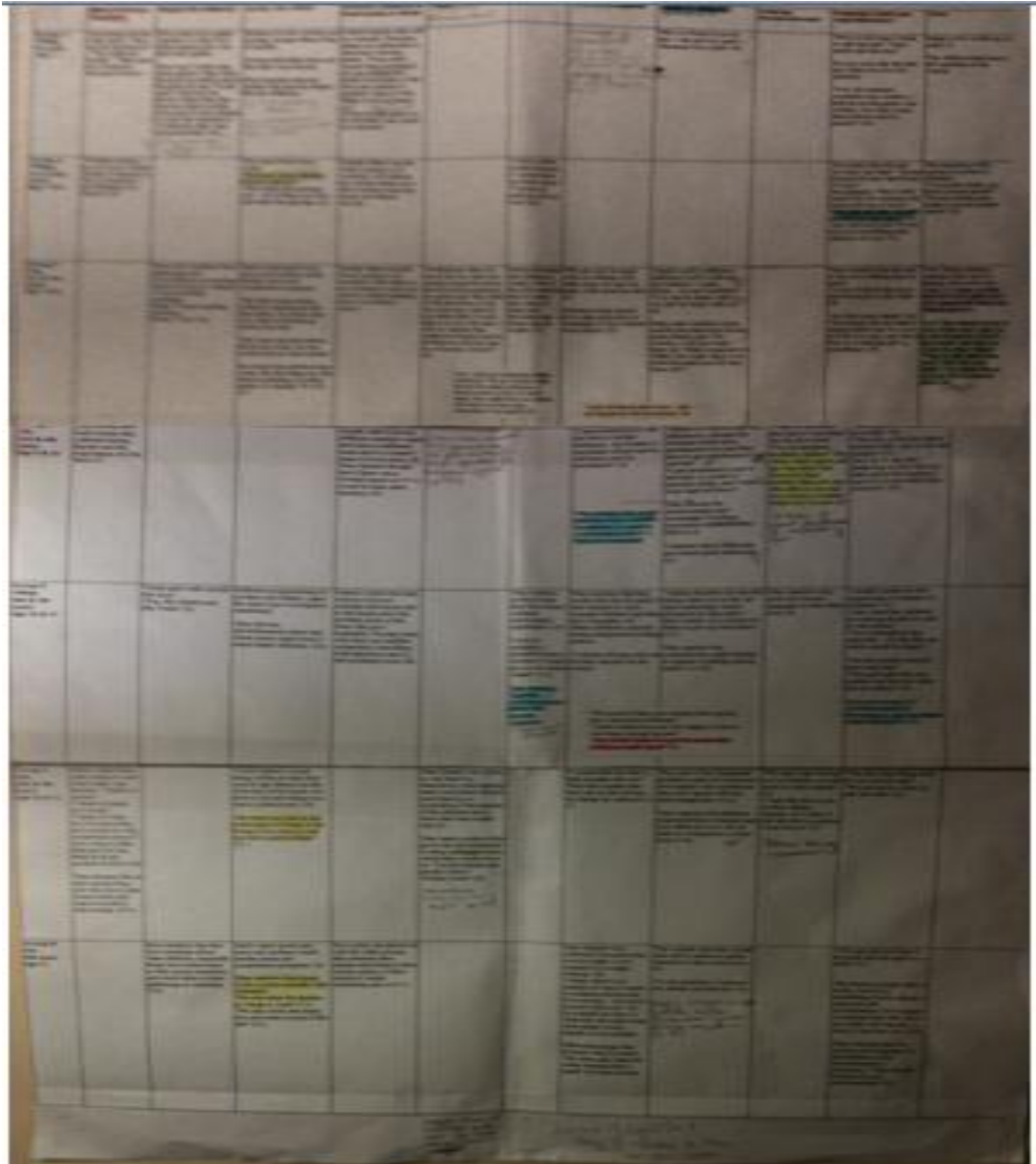
Figure 1 Grid chart of thematic framework

 In doing so, I obtained a matrix grid chart that allowed me to see different connections, overlaps and links between the themes and in relation to different age groups and locations. By using colour coding, I specified the overlaps between the themes. Therefore, rather than basing my judgement and starting my analysis on the themes that I thought were apparent, I was able to clarify to myself the themes that the children thought were important to bring up during our discussions.

I found the technique of producing index and framework charts to guide the thematic analysis I conducted in Chapter V and VI extremely useful in managing large amounts of qualitative date. However, the danger of relying only on these charts is that it becomes possible for the researcher to miss out on valuable information that might have been overlooked. Therefore, the original transcripts should always be revisited at times during the analysis. Through revisiting the transcripts towards the end of my analysis, I realised that I had not included a discussion the children had about the 23rd April, Children's Day,[62] because it did not fit under any of the themes that had come out of my initial index chart or the secondary framework chart. In fact, the discussions around this Day, the context for it and its relevance in terms of my research became a significant section in one of my analysis chapters (Chapter VI).

In terms of achieving my objectives in this thesis, the discourse analysis of television advertisements to unpack different representations of children and childhood in the media, and the thematic analysis of my focus groups, to engage children in the discussion of what childhood is and how their lives are carried out through the decisions adults make for them and how they interpret/incorporate these decisions in their lives worked well. Moreover, in adopting these methodologies I have also had the opportunity to review and question the literature on media studies and childhood studies.

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[62] A detailed explanation of what the Day is and its importance in terms of my analysis and study can be found in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IV: CHILDHOODS IN ADVERTISEMENTS

This chapter, using discourse analysis, will examine the advertisements that have been used in this study to engage children in a discussion about how they view and experience childhood. In doing so, I will present different interpretations of the advertisements and the concepts that are being referred to in them, while considering the cultural and linguistic context within which they are used. As mentioned in previous chapters, the study of childhood has rarely engaged in a discussion of children's relationship to media from a social constructionist point of view. Therefore, this chapter will combine an analysis of the media texts together with the cultural context within which children live and grow up. This will in turn provide a framework for the latter part of this study while considering children and their childhoods in relation to media.

Furthermore, I will not only analyse the adverts using critical discourse analysis, but I will also question what children do with advertisements. In other words, I will be exploring how children make sense of advertisements in relation to their daily lives and how they incorporate their interpretation of the messages that are being conveyed to them through the advertisements. This will enable me to establish the context within which I consider these particular advertisements in the cultural context where they are being broadcast and watched. In addition, I also believe it is important to go beyond some of the obvious questions around children and advertising, which are rooted either in effects theories or those that criticize the effects theories, such as those put forward by Gunter and McAleer (1990): 'Are children aware of advertisements as distinct from programmes? Do children understand what advertisements are about? Do children remember and believe what advertisements tell them? Are children likely to respond to advertising by wanting the things advertised for themselves?' (p.135). Hence, in what follows, I will present arguments for how and why advertisements should be considered as text before I move on to analyse each television advert that has been used in this study.

4.1 Advertisement as Discourse: Analysing the Text

While *The Advertising Handbook* defines advertising as 'a paid-for dedicated space or time sequence in which only the advertiser is represented' (Brierley, 1995, p.264), Goddard's (2002) description of advertising as 'a form of discourse, as a system of language use whereby, on a daily basis, huge numbers of readers have fleeting 'conversations' with the writers of countless texts' (p.5) offers a multi-dimensional account. Advertisements combine and bring together a variety of texts that are juxtaposed together, overlapping with and/or complementing each other to convey their message. Advertising is not only a discourse but it also relies on other social and cultural discourses to construct meaning in order for it to be able to maintain the 'conversation' to which Goddard refers. Hence, a product from a multinational company that is on sale in different countries with different cultural backgrounds and practices is likely to be marketed in rather different ways. Cook's (1992) emphasis on the fact that 'the ad assumes a great deal of cultural knowledge in the receiver' (p.149) speaks to this point. Advertisements are constructed with cultural and social norms in mind so that the television audience can perceive cultural references easily within the hegemonic structure through interpreting the signs and symbols that are used in constructing the meaning. To this end, as Fowles (1996) puts it:

> The symbols appearing in advertisements reflect a remarkable width and depth of communicative effort. The symbols must be comprehensible by the many, since the advertising strategy strives to enlist multitudes, and so must be composed of familiar elements that articulate commonalities within the society. (Fowles, 1996, p.167)

Through combining visual and audio signifiers and stimuli woven into a blanket of cultural meanings and understandings, advertisements are made up of multi-dimensional texts, working within discourses as well as working together with a number of other discourses. They are a part of the television industry and consequently a part of our daily television experience. Television advertisements take up considerable air time, especially on commercial channels. [63] Children

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[63] Unlike the UK, Turkish state run television stations also air commercials, hence they are not non-commercial.

spend a significant amount of time engaging with different signs and concepts that are related to television advertisements as well as watching advertisements. Thus, 'by the time children reach preschool, they are watching their favourite toy-based cartoons, seeing several hours' worth of TV advertising each week' (Strasburger, Wilson & Jordan, 2009, pp. 87-88). Advertisements, therefore, not only maintain the consumer culture through constantly exposing us to commercial products but also construct a language for people who share common interests through articulating cultural discourses.

In what follows I will provide a discourse analysis of each of the advertisements that have been used in this study, both separately and in conjunction with each other, within their cultural, linguistic, and social context. These five advertisement, namely Pınar sausage for sausages, Ülker Gallery for sweets, Digitürk for a television channel package, Nesquik, and Çokokrem for a chocolate spread, will be analysed drawing on the representations they portray of children, taking into account the double layer of intertexuality they provide both as television advertisement texts and texts that have been used in my focus groups. Therefore, I will also focus on the thematic links between the chosen advertisements while incorporating children's reactions to and interpretations of certain scenes depicting children. While I highlight the similarities and differences between the cultural interpretations, children's interpretations and the message that is being conveyed in the advertisements, the different discursive themes that shape the overall outline of this thesis will come forward as well. These themes will be explored in the following chapters in relationship to children and childhood, as well as in terms of children's relationship with adults and adulthood. Children's interactions with each other and with adults while they decode the meaning of childhood and adulthood for themselves have a variety of different behavioural and linguistic dimensions. I will specifically focus on dimensions that are linked within the context of each text in my analysis.

4.1.1. Pınar Sosis (Sausage) Advertisement

The first television advertisement that was used in this study is for Pınar sausages. Pınar is a company that produces dairy products as well as cooked or ready to cook meat products. The first scene opens with a little girl, around the age of eight, pushing a trolley among the aisles of a supermarket. She spots a woman who is shopping with her son next to her. The woman is about to reach for the sausages in the refrigerator. The girl leaves her trolley and starts walking towards the woman, saying: 'Oh my, oh my!! She is buying Pınar sausages, she is doing shopping, oh my, oh my! My sweetie.' At this point, the woman bends down towards her and the girl grabs her cheeks between her hands as if showing affection to a little child and continues, 'Oh oh, my dear, come here you, ooo ooo I could eat her'. [64] She turns her gaze to the boy next to the woman while still patting her face and asks: 'How old is she?' The little boy points to his mother and says: 'She will turn thirty-two soon'. In the next scene we see a close-up of the little girl saying 'God bless her (maşallah, maşallah)'. We see and hear the two mothers giggling. The little girl continues to talk to the woman: 'If I take you to my house, would you come with me, would you cook Pınar sausages with my mother?' The woman, still bending forward while the little girl is squeezing her cheeks, looks up towards the mother of the girl and she sees her giving a smiling nod of approval while she also has a smile on her face from the amusement she has been having.

The scene changes to a few sausages being cooked on a grill pan and the female narrator's voice says, 'Mothers choose Pınar sausages over any others, and they get the reward. In Turkey Pınar sausages are loved the most since they are eaten the most, they are eaten because they are loved,' while the images change from one type of sausage to another. The last caption of the advertisement has the writing at the top left-hand corner of the advertisement, visually reinforcing what the narrator last said, which is: 'they are loved thus they are eaten, they are eaten thus they are loved'. The last scene concludes with a close up of the girl saying: 'I

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[64] While explaining the connotative meaning of the phrase the use of it in this sentence in its context will be examined.

could eat you, I could!' The advertisement is 37 seconds long and is a very long-running advertisement which is widely known by all Northern Cypriots of all ages.

This advertisement is one that represents and comprises many aspects of the interactions between adults and children in an unusual way, which consists of elements that are unexpected and different to real life situations, through reversing children's and adults' roles. Children are portrayed talking and acting in ways that would be considered inappropriate in their interactions with adults. Due to the unusual and unexpected nature of the advertisement, the reaction of the adults in this text is also different to that of real life. They display signs of amusement and surprise. In the first scene the expression that the girl has on her face while pushing the trolley can best be described as a witty self confidence together with pride. She comes across as self-assured and in control as she is pushing the trolley. These adjectives are rarely used to describe children. As established in the literature review, the general adult perspective on who children are and what childhood is like are often described using adjectives such as 'innocent', 'vulnerable', 'weak' and 'susceptible'. As Prout suggests:

> By the end of the nineteenth century, conceptions of children as innocent, ignorant, dependent, vulnerable, incompetent and in need of protection and discipline were widespread. In general terms, by the start of the twentieth century these ideas had been diffused through most of the different social classes and groupings within industrial societies. (Prout, 2009, p.23)

Hence, the perception of children has for many years been very different to that depicted in this advertisement. When the little girl spots the woman who is about to reach for a packet of Pınar sausages, she leaves the trolley behind and walks towards her, speaking for the first time. The children I talked to during the focus groups confirmed that her words and the expressions that she uses are not ones that a child would use in any situation. Some find it funny and some do not, but across the spectrum of different ages of children living in different locations and attending different schools, all expressed the view that the way the girl in this advertisement talks is like an adult. To exemplify a few, Batu age 7 says 'she

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might be crazy' while we talk about the phases she uses like 'oh my, oh my'. Likewise, Ekrem age 8, remarks 'as if the children became mothers, they pretend to be'. Berna age 9 says 'She talks as if she is the mother'. Cemre age 10 explains 'because we never talk like this it sounds weird to us'. When I ask the children 'Do you ever talk like this?', Alp age 11 replies with the question 'you mean as if the person I am talking to is my child?'

The words and the phases that the girl in the advertisement is using are clearly associated with being an adult within the cultural context. Though in essence what she is saying describes her acknowledgement of the fact that she has spotted someone buying something that she also wishes to buy, or something that she approves of, the discourse used in the advertisement is one that locates the girl within a particular contextual understanding of how adults are expected to interact with children who perform desired actions.

The linguistic undertone of approval of an action is juxtaposed with the inappropriate actions of a young person towards an adult. The advertisement invokes interest in the product by using this technique. While we hear the girl talking to an adult she does not seem to know about her choice of sausages, the camera zooms in to her action of picking a packet of Pınar sausages from the shelf. The woman responds to the girl's action and approach by smiling in surprise and she leans forward to let the girl squeeze her cheeks. As she is doing that the woman looks up to the mother of the girl with a happy/surprised grin. The girl does not acknowledge the interaction that is established between the two mothers and directs her question to the son of the woman (see Figure 2). Both the way in which she asks the question and the way he replies, saying 'she will turn thirty-two soon', are linguistically what would be considered specifically adult ways of talking about children. Therefore, while we are presented with two children engaging with each other using adult discourses, on the other hand, the text is engaging the audience in a rather more culturally expected and accepted discourse: the presentation of children as cute and adorable. This engagement not only re-establishes the role of adults in the viewer's mind but also undermines the children's attempt to establish themselves outside the culturally accepted

parameters of childhood set by adults. Children in this text are using language and behaviour patterns that are familiar to them through observing the adults' behaviours towards them.

Figure 2 The girl as she is squeezing the woman's cheek

On another note, while in the whole of the advertisement both the girl and the boy pay no particular attention to the adults around them or the way the adults react to their 'grown up' behaviour, there is one point in the girl's speech that recognizes or acknowledges[65] her status as a child and her mother's role as an adult, when she asks 'would you cook Pınar sausages with my mother?' However, neither her body language nor her tone suggests this recognition to be relevant to the way she is positioning herself. She speaks as if she is talking to a three-year-old saying 'would you come to our house and play with my child's toys?' Therefore, even though there seems to be a denotative acknowledgement of the difference between adult and child, the connotative meaning suggests the opposite.

The scene immediately before this one establishes her position as the child who is acting like an adult when she comments on the woman's age, saying 'maşallah,

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[65] In Chapter VI I will explore children's awareness of themselves as different to adults in detail.

maşallah', which literally translates as 'may God preserve her from evil'. This is a commonly-used phrase to denote blessing by adults on children who are doing well, growing up healthy, or have achieved something nice. Maşallah is never used by children and if someone younger were to use the phrase it would be to refer to someone much older and usually in poor health. Therefore, the girl in the advertisement is not only talking like an adult and acting like an adult but is also using words and phrases that are specifically considered as suitable to be used by adults towards children within the cultural context.

The text contextualizes the way that the adults in this advertisement respond to their children's actions, and the interaction between the adults is placed within a context through the narrator's words. The narrator implies that mothers, by choosing Pınar sausages over any other, are rewarded, connoting that they get their money's worth. The surprise that is followed by the amusement that the adults are displaying in this advertisement, which in no way the same as giving the children approval for their actions therefore, gain meaning when considered in relation to the discourse of associating the product with quality. This is achieved through directing the focus of the viewer from the unexpected and inappropriate to attributes that are desired, such as cleverness, maturity, and wittiness. Hence, redirecting the discourse used in the advertisement towards the message that is being conveyed here is that these particular sausages are good for children's development and growth, as demonstrated in the way that the children spoke and acted throughout the text.

Hence, the advertisement is using cultural context in two ways to promote the product. Firstly, by showing healthy children engaging with each other using adult-like social conduct, which emphasises their potential as human beings in the process of becoming adults, the quality of the product is being promoted. Sausages are being presented as food that can make this possible, rather than as snack or fast food. I should mention that sausages as they are known in England are not the same as they are in Turkey and North Cyprus. They are made with beef and are much thinner compared to sausages in England. Within the food culture of these countries, sausages are not considered as a dish, they are usually

served as part of breakfast. If they are used to make a dish, as presented in this advertisement, culturally they would be thought of as simple fast food, which is never associated with health food. This point is further made in the scene when the rhyming words[66] are heard from the narrator's voice, together with the caption on the screen appearing on the left-hand corner 'they are loved thus they are eaten, they are eaten thus they are loved' while we see a plate of sausage roll like pastry served on a plate with green garnish and a glass of orange juice next to it. Secondly, by focusing on the approval of the adults, which is not acknowledged by the children in the advertisement, the text is able to bring forward a sense of impartial endorsement for the product.

The statement made by the narrator towards the end of the advertisement 'in Turkey Pınar sausages are loved the most since they are eaten the most, they are eaten because they are loved' is important for the whole of the advertisement. As a statement, as it stands linguistically, there is not much of a rationale in the text, however the tone of the narrator together with the rhyming element used in the text turns the statement into a factual proclamation, which works well with the scenario presented earlier in the advertisement in which we see the children acting like adults in a way that goes beyond the bounds of the rational. However, the approving giggle that the adults display, helps portray the adult-like acts of the children as an acceptable action, when considered around the concept of buying the 'right' product for their children. Hence, the incongruity of the children's adultness is undermined.

During the very final scene of the advertisement a play on words is used within the text that makes a semantic use of the phrase 'I could eat you' or 'I'll eat you'. Though in the English language it might make little sense, unless used in relation to toddlers, both literally and otherwise in the Turkish language the phrase is very often used by adults to express affection towards younger children of any age. The girl uses the phrase both while interacting with the mother she met buying her

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[66] Though the English translation does not necessary form a rhyme and is substantially long, in Turkish the sentence consists of two main words, while the suffix drops a line on the screen to form the second sentence out of the same words: 'Seviliyor ki yeniyor' is switched to 'Yeniliyor ki seviliyor'.

favourite sausages and at the end of the advertisement. Though at first they both appear to be the same, they are used slightly differently and the camera angle used on each occasion also helps with the construction of different discursive uses. The first time she uses the phrase is when she is squeezing the woman's cheeks while she leans forward to indicate how well she has done with choosing to buy the sausages. The way she uses the phrase is in the third person, rather addressing the boy, letting him know that she finds the woman so adorable. The camera, in this instance, is positioned where the boy would be, capturing the girl in medium shot, and we also see the two women in this scene because they are both leaning forwards. The girl says: 'ooo ooo I could eat her', followed by the question the girl asks the boy regarding the woman's age. This act further establishes the children's roles as adults in the context of the advertisement. Through the reversal of the adult/child roles, the children become the ones giving approval to and being proud of the actions of the adults. This also highlights children's experience of being left out of adult-like business, how they are undermined by adults in their interactions even when it might involve them. Undermining children and formulating conversation about or on them without their participation, which puts adults in a position of not even acknowledging their presence, is very common in conversations among adults, such as asking their age to the adults children are with, rather than the children themselves. Adults often refer to children in the third person when another adult is present, referring their comments or questions to the adult rather than the child/children themselves. This point is further developed in the following chapters.

The second time the girl uses the phrase at the end of the clip is more like a punch line for the advertisement and the phrase is associated with the product. In fact the phrase became very popular within the culture in the context that is being used in the advertisement, and people of all ages have since started to use it to refer to food even though originally the cultural use of the phrase does not actually refer to eating or food. Though when she is using the phrase the second time she is still in the same setting of the supermarket, the angle of the camera this time has changed to face the girl, hence creating the sense that she is talking to the audience. Also this time her use of the phrase includes second person rather than

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third person. She says 'I could eat you' (see Figure 3), looking up towards the camera as if still talking to an adult, hence creating the sense of referring to the audience, appreciating and admiring the audience.

Figure 3 Last scene as she says 'I could eat you'

This thirty-seven second television advertisement for Pınar sausages begins to tell us something about the construction of childhood in relationship to adults, through focusing on the linguistic and behavioural aspects of adults' and children's interactions within their broader cultural context. The different dimensions of the concept of childhood in relationship to and in comparison with adulthood have been examined and exemplified in their various ways as they were displayed in this advertisement. Children's take on adult behaviour, and their interpretation of how it can be used in their lives, is in fact a theme that becomes common throughout this thesis through other examples in the advertisement analyses, such as the one that follows, Ülker Galery, and later on in the Nesquik advert. Also adults' reactions to children's adult-like behaviour, and their behaviour in establishing the incongruity of children's adultness, becomes apparent when I analyse the Çokokrem advertisement, not only through the way in which the

advertisement is constructed but also through the comments and remarks of the children I talked to on the roles of each family member. The way that constructions of adulthood require a certain undermining of childhood, in a way reveals how children establish their role in the family. The next advert will focus on similar issues, as well as others. However this time the text does not involve adults. Rather we see adulthood being represented by children in the absence of adults.

4.1.2 Ülker Galery Advertisement

This advertisement is for Ülker brand candies, which is an old and very well-established brand for many varieties of sweets, biscuits and chocolate. The particular candy pack that is being marketed through this advertisement is a big packet of assorted candies specifically sold during one of the Islamic religious holidays, the Eid,[67] which coincides with the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting.

The scene opens with a group of four children, two girls and a boy sitting on sofas in a living room and one boy kneeling down on the floor. At the top left-hand corner of the screen, the caption reads 'feast's greetings to the adults of today and tomorrow'. Also at the beginning of the advertisement at the top left-hand corner there is a sign saying 'A feast message to today's and tomorrow's children' which during the adverts curls up into the shape of a candy wrapping and moves across the screen to the bottom right-hand corner. This advertisement uses different discursive elements from religion, tradition and children's games, combining them all into a message and a celebration of the feast. The advert ends with a caption that reads 'Gatherings as tasty as sweets… happy Eid with Ülker'.

The children start a conversation, one of the boys says: 'Is everyone all right?' The girls both reply, 'All right'. The second boy specifically asks one of the girls,

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[67] Throughout this analysis, I will be referring to the Eid as a feast since that is how it is culturally experienced among families. While Eid (in this case Eid ul-Fitz) is a religious term referring to the end of Ramadan, the feasts itself, which lasts for three days involves family gatherings and festive celebrations.

'How do you do?' using a formal and official phrase. She nods and replies, 'I am good'. In the next scene, one of the girls, the one who is supposed to be the hostess, says 'Well then, in that case I will bring the sweets, so that our mouths can get sweetened'. This is a variant of the saying: 'eat sweet, talk sweet', which is used to refer to keeping away from vulgar talk, quarrelling or talking about bad memories. The girl comes back with a big bowl of candies, and as she carries them she is not able to stop laughing. This is because the children in the advertisement are not actually trying to behave like adults per se; in fact they are playing a game, pretending and imitating adults. All the children start laughing and giggling, not able to control themselves as she serves candy to them one by one. After eating his candy, the boy who started the conversation says: 'Hmm this is very nice, wait I will get some for my children', and the camera zooms in on the bowl, showing his action of picking one candy after another. Then one of the girls says: 'Aren't you taking one too many?' and he replies by saying 'Excuse me, but I have 10 children, that is why'. This amuses all the children and they start to laugh again. The living room scene ends with the other boy saying: 'He doesn't have 10 children'. In the next scene, we see a variety of different assorted bags of Ülker galery candies and the narrator says 'The new sweets of the feast, Ülker galery'. The twenty-four second advertisement ends with a caption 'Gatherings as sweet as candy, happy feast with Ülker' in the middle of the screen and the logo of Ülker on the lower right-hand side of the screen.

This advertisement refers to the discourse of 'bayram' (feast), specifically one that is called 'şeker (candy) [68] bayramı', which is the religious holiday that comes at the end of a 30 day fast during the month of Ramadan in Islam. The reason why it is called Candy Feast is because it is traditional to offer candy and/or sweets to visitors. Every year, coming to and during the month of fast, candy producers start advertising their special products for the feast. Usually, these products would come in bigger quantities, rather than being specially designed for the feast, since it is the custom for everyone to have a large stock of candies in their house for guests. The reason why candies are served during this feast relates to a religious discourse. According to the rules of fasting, during this month those who fast are

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[68] Literally translation could also mean sugar.

not allowed to have bad thoughts, those who had disagreements in the past should negotiate their differences and offer each other food during the breaking of the fast and desserts and sweet things should be served to signify good intentions. The saying 'eat sweet, talk sweet' originates from this tradition and is commonly used before the consumption of desserts within the culture. The four children we see in the advertisement are playing a game of 'house', which is a role-playing game. In this variation of the game three of the children pretend to be visiting the other one. The scene is constructed to depict children in the act of playing 'house', with one of the children kneeling on the floor to make it clear that children are engaging in play. Children often use the floor during play, either sitting on the floor, or placing various objects on the floor, where they can easily arrange the space and logistics required for their game.

The Candy Feast, or the Sweet Feast, is commonly associated with children since the dominant socially construction of childhood is associated with liking sweet things. Most chocolate, candy and ice-cream advertisements use this notion, and in contrast to those produced targeting children, the advertisements that concentrate on female adults liking these sorts of products usually use eroticism in their discourse, such as the advertisements for Unilever's ice-cream Magnum, and in the case of male adults concepts such as being strong and macho are preferred, as in the advertisement for Yorkie chocolate bar. This helps to produce a social practice around which this and many other advertisements are shaped. As Fairclough (2005) explains, social practices are 'more or less stable and durable forms of social activity, which are articulated together to constitute social fields, institutions, and organisations' (pp.76-94). In this particular advertisement, children are acting like adults but while doing so they giggle, constantly making the audience aware of the fact that they are playing a game of 'house', pretending to be adults. When the child who goes off to get the candies comes back and offers the guests some, one of the other children says, after having had one, 'Hmm this is very nice, wait I will get some for my children' and starts grabbing more and more candies from the bowl. At which point one of the girls responds by saying: 'You sure have a lot of children!!', while giggling. He replies: 'Excuse me, but I have 10 children', and all the children start laughing out loud at the

phoniness of the whole situation, and in the end one of the other visiting children says: 'He doesn't really have 10 kids', while they all continue to laugh. This indicates the purpose of their game as an excuse to consume candies, as many as they like since within the context of the advertisement the candy is being presented as part of the game, that is to say, as a toy. In the next chapter, where I analyse the focus group conversations that took place around the concept of the candy feast, children's attitudes towards consuming candy will be discussed. The examples that will be provided there will show how the advertisement has constructed a rather unusual interpretation compared to the one that children presented me with.

If we take a closer look at the conversation and the language used in the advertisement, references to certain cultural discourses relating to how children perceive adult conversation can be observed. One of the children who is pretending to be a visitor asks: 'How do you do?' using the second person plural 'you', which in Turkish either means that the question is being asked to two or more people or to someone official, distant, or much older. Since the question is answered by only one of the children, we know that the 'you' in this question is the formal second person which is not normally used by children interacting with each other. It is used as part of the game of pretending to be adults visiting each other's houses. When I asked the children during the focus groups if they talk to their peers like this, or how the way that they talk to their peers differs from the way the children in the advertisement talk, the answers I got were all very similar, in the sense that they all recognized formal speech as something that is used when interacting with certain adults, and the only explanation for the children in the advertisement to be talking in this manner was, to these children, clearly for play purposes. One of the children I talked to in Village School 2, Simge, age 10, said 'I say what's up [to my friends]'. Gamze and Nisan, who are a year younger than Simge, both agree with her and Metin says 'I have a friend called Kemal I tell him 'what's up bro?' and that's how he talks to me as well'. He continues by adding that the only people to whom he speaks with formal language are his teachers. Gül, age 7, from City School 1, comments on the behaviour of the children in the advertisement and says 'he sits there like a boss as a man and says how do you do,

the other says I'm fine…I say hi to my friends'. Nehir, age 8, pointed out that she uses formal speech when the parents of her friends are around and adds that she speaks 'normal' when the parents are not present. Dilara, age 9, from City School 2, says 'I don't say *siz* (formal you) I say *sen* (informal you), but we don't play games', indicating that it is understandable to use language forms that are not considered normal during play. Arif, age 10, says '[I use formal you] for someone I don't know, or have seen for the first time'. Cemre, age 10, identified me as someone they would use the informal way of referring to as an example of people she does not know well or has just met.

Children of all ages who were participating in this study recognize and understand the cultural functions of social undertones in grammatical elements of the language, they know how to use them and when to use them or not use them. However, there are certain linguistic aspects of the language that was used in this advertisement that were unfamiliar to children of younger ages. The children who appear in the Ülker Galery advertisement seem to be around the ages of six to eight. When the child who is in the role of the 'host' stands up and says: 'Well then in that case I will bring the candies, so that our mouths can get sweetened' the children in the advertisement use and interpret this sentence in reference to the saying 'eat sweet, talk sweet', in other words it signifies one's way of expressing to a guest that s/he is glad to have them visiting and would like to offer them sweets, so as to make their time as pleasant as possible during the visit. During the focus groups, while the children were interpreting the use of this phrase in the advertisement, the explanations from the younger children aged seven, eight and nine gave their interpretations of what they thought it might mean. However, the phrase was interpreted in the way it is used in its cultural context by the ten and eleven year olds.

When I asked them what they thought the girl meant by saying, 'I will bring the candies, so that our mouths can get sweetened', Mert, age 8, (Village School 1) said: 'It's easier to talk when the mouth is watery', therefore describing what eating candies does biologically, which is the production of saliva. In Village School 2, one of the focus groups I conducted only had seven year olds and three

out of four of them said they had never heard of the expression and none of them knew what it meant. They started talking about whether their parents like sweet pastry or not when I mentioned the expression 'eat sweet talk sweet'. In City School 1, when I asked the children of seven and eight years of age about the expression, Nehir, age 8, said: 'I suppose it's a proverb…about sweets…maybe someone says it so they can eat chocolate', and from there on the conversation revolves around the children describing which sweet they like the best. Ekrem, age 8, at the same school explains 'to get the mouth watery, to have a good taste'. Berna, age 9, (Village School 1) recognizes the expression as having a connotative meaning relating to social actions and interactions, however she explains the expression as meaning 'talking politely'.

When I asked the children of ages ten to twelve about the expression in Village School 2, Su, age 12, was very quick to answer: 'So we don't talk about sad things, it has nothing to do with eating sweets and having a tasty feeling'. Gülçin, age 11, says: 'It is not real, it is a proverb… we can eat sweets and become better'. Equally in City School 1, where I had a group of four children of the age of eleven to twelve, the answers were similar. Alp, age 12, said: 'Not to mention bad things, not to have arguments', while the other children said they understood the expression and provided different variations of it, which made it apparent that they found it pointless to explain something that was so obvious to them.

I have provided an account of how the advertisement makes use of a linguistic elements which can easily be associated with the product that is being promoted in terms of the age groups of children and how they interpret it here in this section because the children expressed that even for play purposes they found it ridiculous and meaningless for the children in the advertisement to be acting in the way they are acting. Many of them expressed the view that acting like adults, the way the children do in this advertisement, does not make sense. This point is very much in line with the way the children in the advertisement are made to act. The way they laugh and giggle right after the formal conversational discourse is introduced in the text and followed by the use of the expression signifies how they find the setting rather awkward. That is to say, the caption at the very beginning of the

advertisement which reads: 'Feast's greetings to the adults of today and tomorrow' is rather misleading in that the age group of the child actors is not the age group that would correctly interpret[69] the discourses used in the advertisement. Evidently the message is for the adults of today rather than tomorrow. This also points to the fact that children are being considered not as themselves but as what they will become, which is also represented in their acting, play and conversations.

The game that the children are playing revolves around the concept of a particular type of visit that is being called the 'feast visit'. During feast visits children are often given pocket money by adults and they usually consider the feast as a time when they can save up money. Candies are not usually a part of what children themselves associate the bayram with. As the children themselves mentioned during the focus groups, bayram is mostly associated with visiting elderly people, getting new clothes and a time when they can get some extra pocket money for saving towards things that they want to buy. While younger children were expressing this idea much more, older children, especially those who reside in the cities, mentioned that it is 'rude' to talk about bayram as a time when they can get money, they said that it *should be* considered as a time to show their respect to adults. This point will be further analysed in the next chapter.

In analysing the Ülker Galery advertisement, I have explored the discursive components that relate to the culture around celebrating the feast (bayram) which is an important part of the culture and gives the opportunity to children to engage with adults in different ways than those of their ordinary daily routines. Although in this advertisement children are acting like adults, as in the previous text, in this case the children are behaving like adults in the absence of adults, within the context of a game, which is different from the first advertisement, where adults were present. Consequently, since the possibility of adults undermining their actions, words and behaviour as incongruous is not possible, they are not taking the position of being oblivious to the incongruity, as was the case of the girl and

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[69] It should be noted that I am not suggesting this age group would not be able to learn and know certain linguistic discourses within the culture, it is possible that within the culture it is not custom for this age group to have been introduced these linguistic elements yet.

boy in the supermarket. They are stepping out of the role they have assumed in the game during times of amusement, in an acknowledgement of the fact that they are children acting like adults. Unlike the previous advertisement, the way in which the role of children versus the role of adults, and how they are positioned in relationship to one another, becomes established through the children's acknowledgment rather than an adult's interaction with another adult when faced with children's out of place behaviour. Also, this advertisement is a strong indication of how play and games have an important role in the establishment and maintenance of childhood in the lives of children.

The following advertisement is different to the ones before in the sense that this text presents the interactions between an adult and a child rather than adult to adult and child to child interactions that have been analysed in the previous texts. Therefore, in the following section I will be looking at childhood and adulthood from a different perspective and analysing how the text establishes the boundaries of each concept around the product that is being marketed.

4.1.3 Digitürk Advertisement

The third text is a thirty-two second television advertisement for a satellite television package, which only allows the viewer to tune into specific channels targeting children. The product is called the Digitürk Child Package. The first scene opens with a man (the father) saying 'match' and the camera pans right towards a girl (the daughter) saying 'JoJo', which is a children's channel showing mostly cartoons. Then we see that they are holding each end of the receiver box, each pulling it towards themselves (see Figure 4). The father repeats, in an elongated tone 'match' and pulls the box, which is at the time black in colour, towards himself and the daughter this time says 'Jetix', pulling the box towards herself. Once again the father says 'match' and the daughter pulls the box, saying, 'Disney', each time in a higher pitched voice. The camera zooms out and we see that they are in the middle of the living room, in front of a television set, which is showing a football match at the time.

Figure 4 Tug of war between the father and the girl

The contest between the father, who is kneeling down to be at his daughter's height, and the daughter, who seems to have a good grasp of the box, continues and all of a sudden we see the box blaze with light as beams of light splash around. The narrator's male voice, over this lighting, says: 'The quarrel is over in houses with Digitürk'. As we hear this statement, out of the big glow the receiver box divides into two, pushing the father, who appears surprised, back while still holding the black receiver box. The girl takes a step back with a pink receiver box in her hands (See Figure 5).

Simultaneously, the image on the television in the background changes from a football match to a cartoon. We see the astonishment on the father's face while the daughter swings the box around with pride, as we see the colour of the box change from pink to yellow, then to green and to orange whilst the narrator continues: 'For children's rooms there are now Digitürk receivers in candy colours'. The scene changes from the daughter swinging the receiver to a succession of scenes

from different cartoons in which the characters are making victory impressions and gestures and we hear the background voices of a group of children cheering 'heeeey!!' The narrator continues: 'These colourful boxes that only show channels suitable for children are available for only 7.90 a month, father'.

Figure 5 End of tug of war, the receiver box divides into two

As the narrator makes this statement, the viewer goes through a series of images containing the logos of the channels that are being mentioned as suitable for children, such as Babytv, Disney, JoJo, Jetix, National Geographic, History channel etc., followed by a full screen giving telephone numbers and web site information. In the next scene we see the daughter and the father in the daughter's room. She has a proud look on her face, while her father is holding one of her soft toy, staring at the television (camera) and asking: 'Can I watch with you?' Her reply is: 'Oh well, I guess you can,' which she says with a sarcastic tone in her voice and a grin on her face (See Figure 6).

Figure 6 The father is asking permission to watch television with his daughter

This advertisement is constructed to serve mainly as a text around the discourse of parental values and parental consciousness. The scenes are constructed in such a way that we clearly see what the product is about through the intertexuality that is used between what we watch as audience and the television programming that we see in the advertisement. This intertexuality in turn connects the audience to the disagreement, or divergence, between the family members in the advertisement in terms of their choice of programming, referencing a rather apparent dilemma between the different audiences possibly watching the advertisement together in their living room, which is also the space in which the advert is staged. While an in-depth analysis of what programmes different family members choose to watch will be made in the following chapters, here I will provide examples from the focus group transcripts in order to place the advertisement within its broader cultural framework.

Almost all of the children I talked to during the focus groups revealed that what their fathers liked to watch on television was football. They also mentioned news and movies, however football matches and sports-related programmes were the first that came to their minds. Hence, the text is referring to a widely accepted notion of fathers wanting to watch football and sports programmes, which are often broadcast during the weekends when all family members are at home.

Therefore, in essence, the text is using this widely accepted notion and presenting two types of programming as the choices of the family members involved. The father wants to watch the football match while the daughter wants to watch cartoons. Whilst the father persists in his choice, the daughter lists a variety of channels that target children, all of which parents would approve their children to watch. The denotative message that the advertisement is designed to convey is presented in the way that the daughter reacts to her father's choice through providing a list of channels she is allowed to watch. In addition, the objectification of the receiver box used in the disagreement that the father and daughter are experiencing makes it not only possible to visually present the fact that the problem of different family members wanting to watch different programmes can be solved by purchasing two different receivers with different specifications, but also allows the power dynamics between the father and daughter to be contextualized.

During the tug of war between the father and daughter we see the father kneeling down, in other words on his knees, with nothing behind him. In comparison to one of the previous advertisements, Pınar sausages, here we see the father already in a submissive position in relation to his daughter. Whereas in the earlier text there was an undercurrent of going along with the child's role-playing in a framework of amusement, in this text, we see the father engaging with the daughter at a level of negotiation.

The result of the tug of war between them can be interpreted in two different ways. It is possible to interpret it as a tie, meaning they both got what they wanted and no one lost, since they both end up with a receiver box, each of which would

allow them to view what they want. On the other hand, it can also be interpreted as the daughter having won the competition over what channel to watch. Even though at first we are visually presented with a tie, it is the second interpretation that the text is directing our attention to through the use of the scenes showing different cartoon characters, each in their moves of victory. This is not only reinforced with the effect of the image on television in the living room changing from a football match to a cartoon, but is also further established later on in the last scene where the father approaches the daughter in her room asking for her permission to watch cartoons together. Here we also observe a role reversal and how this is justified through the use of space. The previous advertisements, where children were assuming the roles of adults, were taking place in spaces that are occupied mostly by adults for the use of adults, like the supermarket and the living room. However, this text, by taking the scene from the living room to the daughter's bedroom, depicts the role reversal and children's adult-like attitude in connection to an adult's submission to children in a special context.

This interpretation becomes symbolic when considered within a broader framework. The advertisement is referring to the relationship between the father and the daughter by using the discourse of the domination of the father versus a parent's responsibility to respond to the wishes and the needs of his children. While he is expressing his desire to watch the football match and pulling the receiver box, his face is serious and he looks adamant. After the receiver box divides itself into two distinct types, namely black for adults and brightly-coloured for children, the father seems to not be able to make sense of the situation while the daughter looks as if she knew that would happen. This also brings the disagreement between the father and the daughter to an end. Hence, the domination of the father is replaced with his feeling of being responsible, which is a necessary step if he is to respond in the way that the producers would want him to, which is the purchase of the Digitürk Child Package. We hear the voices of several children cheering to this end while the narrator informs the father of the price for the Children's Package in a tone of voice that suggests it is well worth getting at that price.

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However, the implication of this outcome is controversial in terms of idealistic family values. The narrator's solution to the problem, and the explanation of how it can be achieved, hinders a crucial aspect of family life. The declaration made by the narrator: 'Now there are Digitürk Receivers in candy colours for children's rooms,' posits that with the extra receiver box children can be made happy. However, this is achieved through sending children to their rooms, away from the family space, away from common areas and consequently leads to a family structure that has moved away from the idealistic values of togetherness to individuals in their own space. The text works around this dilemma by referring to another contradictory discourse in the last scene, where we see the father in his daughter's room asking her permission to watch television with her. The contradiction between the cultural discourses that surround father-daughter relationships and this scene can be said to be balanced with the image of the father sitting next to his daughter in an obedient posture, holding a soft toy. Even though it might on the surface appear to be taking the contradiction between these levels of discourse one step further, the fact that the scene becomes culturally unrealistic gives the text a humorous edge, hence turning the idea of the daughter giving permission to her father or the father asking for permission from his daughter into a joke.

The last aspect of this advertisement that I would like to analyse is in fact a vital issue in terms of how adults perceive children and how discourses that belong to adults' perceptions of children can have a significant influence over constructions of childhood and also how children perceive themselves. When the narrator informs the father, or rather the audience, of the price of the product his words are: 'These colourful boxes that only show channels suitable for children are available for only 7.90 a month, father'. As the voice states 'only channels suitable for children', we see a variety of channel logos, mainly channels that broadcast cartoons and programmes specifically targeting certain age-groups, with the Digitürk Kid's Club logo in the middle of the screen. The text is constructed so that an adult is talking to another adult, informing him of this product that can help him in choosing and controlling what his children should or should not watch.

The argument made in the statement 'suitable for children' is one that goes beyond the scope of the analysis in this chapter in terms of the number of questions that might be raised to critically analyse the meaning behind it. In fact, it needs to be treated as a discourse on its own while scrutinizing the way children are perceived by adults. I will be detailing the discourse of something being 'suitable for children' within the context of children's relationship to media in the following chapter, tracing its roots in the research that has been conducted on children and television in the twentieth century.

Here, analysis of the uses of this discourse within the cultural context also provides an account of what children think about the issue of something being suitable for them or not. The notion of parents having control over what their children watch is a complicated one that not only undermines children's ability to decide for themselves but also places children in a position where they are unified and their individuality is challenged under the assumption that what is best for children can only be advised through certain authorities and decided by adults. In the case of this text and the product being advertised, the interdiscursivity that is used through linking the notion of suitability being structured by adults to the Digitürk Kid's Club is one that constructs a contradiction on one level, since on the one hand, we have adults, and on the other, the Kid's Club. However, a closer look at the discourse that is being used in constructing this text, through the use of Digitürk Kid's Club reveals this notion to be a label rather that a reality. Even though it is named 'Kid's Club', it neither belongs to children nor brings them together as in the classical use of the term 'club'. It is, in actual fact, an interactive channel offered within the Digitürk Child Package that allows children to play games using the television remote control. On Digitürk's web site, it is presented as 'the secret of happy children' (Digitürk campaigns). Elsewhere on the site, Digitürk Kid's Club is being promoted with the caption: 'Children in front of the television are safe with the Children's Package'. Hence, it reduces the multifaceted phenomena of Kid's Club within the Digitürk package down to an offer to parents to make them think and feel they are keeping their children not only happy, but also safe. I will be providing a more detailed analysis of

children's responses and understandings of what is suitable for them or not and how they interpret the concept later on, in the following chapter. In Chapter VI, I will also refer the notion of responsibility and how this ties into the relationship between adults as parents and their children.

In reference to the issue of childhood behaviour and language versus adult behaviour and language in comparison with each other, I have shown how associations of living and occupying different types of spaces has been used by the advertisement texts to establish who children are in comparison to who adults are. In a supermarket environment, we have seen children acting like adults whose language use and behaviour has been acknowledged by the adults in the advert and is widely considered by the public, the audience, as cute. In a living room environment we have seen children amusing themselves with their act of adultness. In the Digitürk advertisement the role reversal, and children's opportunity to have a say, has been made possible through a move from the living room to the child's bedroom. The next advertisement takes place in a child's bedroom as they engage in an activity that children I have talked to could not relate to themselves. The concept of associating spatial use with self is a vast area of study that I will not expand on here, however in terms of the way that the texts examined in this study have used this notion is interesting at a minimum in terms of depictions of childhood and children.

4.1.4 Nesquik Advertisement

This advertisement is one of a series[70] of advertisements for Nestlé Nesquik, which is a milkshake powder that comes in chocolate or strawberry flavours. The scene opens in a children's room, a big, bright room, full of toys with a study desk in the right hand corner. In the middle of the room there is a small stand-up blackboard with a boy standing in front of it. The blackboard has a milk bottle drawn on it and the word 'MILK' written in capitals and underlined. There is also a drawing of a glass of milk below the bottle and a drawing of a cow. The boy is pointing to the board with a giant pencil and talking to a group of four other

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[70] There have been other similarly themed advertisements for this product.

children who seem to be around the age of eight to ten and are seated on the floor either on a cushion or a beanbag. The boy says: 'Friends, did you know we are obliged to the benefits of milk?' As he is saying this we see the heads of the other children nodding in agreement. One of the boys from the floor speaks next: 'Of course, if it wasn't for milk how could we drink Nesquik?' The next scene is a close-up of a Nesquik box next to four glasses of milk. As a woman lifts up the lid of the box to spoon out some Nesquik to mix in with the milk, the female narrator's voice says: 'Nestlé's Nesquik, with its incredible chocolate taste, makes milk lovable'. While the voice-over continues, we see the image of Nesquik being stirred into milk and dissolving in the glass. This fifteen second television advertisement comes to an end with Nesquik's mascot rabbit making a move with a magic wand in mid-air and creating a Nesquik box.

This advertisement is based on discourses around certain aspects of parenting, such as how parents cope with their children and consequently how children negotiate their parents' terms for and among themselves. In a way, this is similar to the previous advertisement in terms of the depiction of parental responsibility and negotiating with children. The difference is that in the previous advertisement for Digitürk the interaction between the father and his daughter was depicted in a way that brought forward the importance of signifiers such as, what is commonly considered to be child-friendly colours, programmes and living space. Here we see a similar use of signifiers, however in the absence of adults we see children contemplating a point of negotiation that they need to resolve with adults on their own terms.

The product is being marketed as a means to assist parents in turning the act of drinking milk into a habit for their children. The female voice-over towards the end of the advertisement, stating that Nesquik makes children love/like milk, is providing adult viewers with the interpretation that the product is attempting to transmit through an explanation of how the children's acts in the advertisement should be viewed. Through placing the children in a stance of power, the advertisement is aimed at targeting the vulnerability of parents' – especially mothers' – desire, or in some cases struggle, to make their children drink milk.

The text denotes the image of powerful children by placing them in the room in which they would be most comfortable, which is their bedroom, surrounded with toys and their personal belongings. They are gathered there to resolve an issue that is important to them, and they do this through an enactment of a classroom situation, which is where they go every day to learn things that they consider to be 'important'. In the scene where this performance is taking place there is a blackboard and a child (boy 1) standing by it with a pointer. He gives a speech, while referring to the blackboard, to the other children in the room who are sitting on the floor.

Hence, the children are practising something they experience on a daily basis under the supervision of an adult authority figure, namely a teacher, by themselves. They are depicted as children who have an issue to discuss and something to resolve. Boy 1 starts the scene by saying: 'Friends, did you know…' and pointing to the picture of the milk bottle on the blackboard. At this point the camera cuts to a close-up of one of the girls (girl 2) sitting down. Her moody facial expression, indicating her thoughts on what is being pointed out on the board, can best be described as resentment and anger. Her act, within the intertextual setting of the classroom re-enactment, constructs the discourse of children's reactions to various subjects they cover at school and the text is representing this discourse in contrast to the discourse of children's own will to learn and discuss through this game they are playing.

At this point, before I continue further with the analysis, I believe it is important to provide a description of the layout within the room and the positioning of the children at the beginning of the scene. This will strengthen the earlier point made about the clashing discourse use, which not only provides a sense of game for children, but also points to the fact that the children are in fact exercising something they believe is worth discussing. Before the camera turns to Boy 1 as he starts his first sentence addressing his friends, we see a wide-angle shot of the room where we can see all four of the children who are sitting on the floor. Girl 1 is playing with her toes and ignoring Boy 1 (the teacher figure), Boy 2 is rubbing his eye, which gives the impression of being bored, and Girl 2 is staring blankly

away from the blackboard and Boy 1. The only child who is paying attention to what Boy 1 is pointing to and talking about is Boy 3, who is sitting in an upright position and even leaning forward to have a better look at what Boy 1 is pointing to. Hence, he is representing the 'clever' kid in the class who sits by the window (which is where he sits) and obeys every word of the teacher. Within this context, the children are depicted as taking what they are doing very seriously, acting out every single detail that might come to mind when considering the discourse of a classroom.

Boy 1 continues with his sentence, saying: 'we are obliged to the benefits of milk'.[71] When he is pronouncing 'benefits of milk', we see a medium close-up of the three children who were in the previous shot depicted as not paying attention to what was being discussed. They move around in their seats, make faces, put their tongues out as if being 'cheeky' and 'taking the mickey out of the teacher', which is the sort of undermining that would be expected in the context of a real classroom if and when the teacher presents something children do not enjoy. While the boy is ending his sentence with the word 'obliged', the camera turns to him and we see him with his arms wide open, moving them in a circular motion, a gesture that suggests inclusion, receiving, acceptance. This is what the discourses used within the text are attempting to get across to children, which is an approach to milk that children should have, and in fact *would* have with Nesquik. The deconstruction of 'milk' within this context becomes apparent in the words of Boy 3, who speaks right after Boy 1, saying: 'Of course, if it wasn't for milk how could we drink Nesquik?'

The next scene, where we see a glass of Nesquik being prepared, shows a female hand opening a box of Nesquik, taking a spoonful of it and stirring it into a glass of milk. This is showing parents how easily a problem they might be encountering can be solved. Having had the evidence of children acting it out in the previous scene, the colour of milk slowly turning from white to chocolate colour is

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[71] Due to the structural differences between the English language and Turkish, the ordering of the words is not the same. In Turkish the closest sentence structure in literal translation would be 'Milk's benefits to us we are obliged to'. I will be analysing the scenes using this structure since the places of the words in English would not match the actions described.

displaying an almost 'magical' transformation as the narrator speaks: 'Nestlé's Nesquik with its incredible chocolate taste makes milk lovable'.

During the closing scene of the advertisement, the mascot rabbit stands on the worktable in a kitchen, making a move with his magic wand to create a Nesquik box with glittering stars around it. The way that he stands, with one hand in his pocket and his legs in a position indicating that he is on a relaxed walk, further establishes how easy the solution is for parents who wish to ensure that their children get their needed nutrition.

In regards to the use of a magic wand, I will refer to the initial argument made at the beginning of this analysis in relation to the conceptualisation of vulnerable parents versus powerful children. Without a doubt, magic has been and still is an essential part of the entertainment provided by adults for children. It is either a main or a side theme in movies, television series, fairy tales, and books targeting children. Children love magic because they would like to believe in it. It is a way for them to be able to realize how their imagination can take the world that surrounds them from where it is to where they would like it to be. Yet, while adults provide this type of entertainment for children, they also make sure, starting from a young age, that children understand that magic is not real. Within the context of this advertisement we see children having a discussion around the concept of milk, while the parents are being presented with the discourse of Nesquik being able to create magical results for them in their challenge to make their children drink milk.

Hence, through using the concept of magic to address adults rather than children, this Nesquik advertisement is positioning children as individuals who can and would identify and discuss their problems, while at the same time using their naivety[72] as a twist in the text to reassure adults that it is they who would make the final decision. Unlike children,[73] adults would not feel the need to prove that they are not vulnerable in believing in magic, hence they would benefit from a

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[72] Children expressing their need for milk in order to consume Nesquik.
[73] In Chapter V I will present and explore children's views and interpretations of magic.

'magical' tool, method or approach that would resolve their difficult encounters with children. This is why the advertisement founds the discourse of magic on adults' perceptions.

The concept of what is good for children and how they conceptualize the goodness that comes from consuming certain foods and beverages for themselves in their own way is one that comes forward in the next advertisement as well. In contrast to the previous advertisements, the next advert does not depict children in role-play or role reversal in relationship to adults. However, the way the children establish and identify childhood in this example points to how children use the image of adults to compare themselves with and how they rely on the construction of adulthood to build their own identity. Therefore, in the last text that I will analyse, I will point out how children, without assuming a role-play, act out their assumed role in association with adults around a family gathering.

4.1.5 Çokokrem Advertisement

The last advertisement used in this study is a television advertisement for a chocolate spread product; one that is very similar to Nutella. The forty-four second advertisement starts in what seems to be the kitchen of a middle-class family. The parents are dressed in casual, everyday clothes, which suggest the scene is taking place at the weekend, presumably Sunday morning. The father is sitting at the table reading the newspaper while the mother is in front of the kitchen counter preparing more food to put on the table. The two children in the kitchen, a boy (the elder of the siblings who looks around the age of 9 or 10) and a girl (the younger of the siblings, around the age of 6) are also sitting at the table and we can see tea for the parents and milk for the children. In the middle of the table there is a Çokokrem jar, though it is out of focus at this point in the scene.

The boy starts off the conversation with a puzzle for his sister: 'Now look, in it[74] is a huge glass of milk, [the camera zooms onto the Çokokrem jar on the table], how big do you think this glass is?' The girl replies: 'A huge glass, I couldn't hold

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[74] He is referring to Çokokrem, which is the answer to his puzzle.

it with one hand'. The scene cuts to a close-up of the girl, who is holding a big glass of milk with both hands, smiling and demonstrating how big she thinks the glass of milk her brother has mentioned is. The brother continues: 'Very nice, and there is also a handful of hazelnut'. As he says this, the camera focuses on the father, showing him as he takes a sip from his tea and glances at his son with an expression that reads 'let's see where he's going with this'.

Then the brother continues on with the puzzle: 'Whose handful do you think it could be, can it be mine?' She replies by saying: 'Not yours'. She looks at her mother as she is about to sit at the table with a smile of amusement on her face, and continues: 'Not my mother's either'. After she says this, the mother looks at her husband with an expression that reads 'what's going on?' The girl continues with her answer: 'As much as my dad's handful, a huge handful'. And she puts both of her hands together in front of her to show how big the handful of hazelnuts could be.

The advertisement cuts to another demonstrative scene, this time one that consists of a male hand holding a handful of hazelnuts as more hazelnuts fall from above into his palm, making the pile in his hand bigger. The following scene is again in the kitchen and the brother once again gives approval by saying: 'Yep, nice'. After this, we see both children take a bite from a slice of bread with Çokokrem on it, first the boy and then the girl. He says, 'and it also has a super…' and she jumps in to complete his sentence: '…taste'. He says: 'Bravo! Well then, why do you think the taste of Çokokrem is so super?' She sits up straight and lifts her head up and says: 'My mother spreads it on the bread, that's why'. The boy raises his hand to his head in surprise/amusement (see Figure 7) as he looks at his dad for his reaction. As this happens, the audience hears the male narrator voice saying: 'Çokokrem with lots of hazelnuts and lots of milk is now in its new jar', and we see an image of the new container as a female hand dips into it with a knife.

The scenes changes to a close-up of a female hand spreading Çokokrem on a slice of bread as the narrator continues: 'The sweetest mornings start with Çokokrem'. The next scene shows a glass of milk, hazelnuts spread around a table, a jar of Çokokrem and two slices of bread spread with Çokokrem on a plate. The caption at the top middle of the screen reads: 'The sweetest mornings start with Çokokrem' and: 'Turkey's first choice' written on a yellow star below the caption, and the brand name logo (Ülker) appears at the bottom right-hand corner of the screen. The advertisement comes to an end with the boy saying: 'You mean, if my dad had spread it, it wouldn't have been so nice?' and the girl looking at him with an expression that reads: 'Of course!'

Figure 7 The boy's reaction to his sister's comment

I will begin my analysis of this advertisement by first making reference to the product's slogan, which is reiterated at the end of the advert, firstly spoken and then written, appealing to as many senses as a television advertisement can. The slogan is: 'The sweetest mornings start with Çokokrem'. The way that this advertisement is constructed around the discourse of what would be considered as the 'content and happy family', or 'ideal family', and the product's slogan go hand in hand through the way in which the text itself displays and represents each element used within the advertisement. For instance, the fact that we see the girl holding a big glass of milk with both hands right after she has mentioned it and the way that we see a male hand full of hazelnuts after she mentions a big palm full of hazelnuts. Also the words 'super tasting' are said after taking a bite from the slice of bread with Çokokrem. Therefore, visual and verbal representation is a running theme within the text. Hence the slogan, 'the sweetest mornings start with Çokokrem', is being visualised not only in writing at the end of the advertisement but throughout the text with the visual imagery of a happy middle-class family.

If treated separately, the reinforcement of verbal statements with the use of their visual clarification might give the impression of being excessive or unnecessary, however within the context of the advert, the text builds on this running theme, climaxing in the visualisation of the slogan for the product. Hence the text is marketing not just a chocolate spread but the discourse of family values displayed through the interactions of the family members. The way that the two siblings interact with each other and the responses of their parents in conjunction with their interaction assists the statement made by the slogan.

The conversation between the children from the start of the advertisement to the end revolves around a puzzle that has been made up by the boy, who is the elder of the siblings. It is through this puzzle that the advertisement structures a set of representations that encompass a variety of cultural discourses. In the opening scene, we see both adults in this advertisement engaged in individual activities; father is reading the newspaper and mother is preparing food to bring to the table. This gives the children the opportunity to have a conversation; I will come back to this point later on in the analysis. When the boy makes the first statement of the

puzzle, referring to a big glass of milk, the camera moves from the wide shot of the kitchen to a close-up on the Çokokrem jar that was previously blurry on the table. Therefore, the answer to the puzzle is revealed to the audience immediately after the big glass of milk is mentioned. With the answer the girl provides after her brother mentions of a big glass of milk, the discourses of identity begin to be revealed and the way in which each member of the family is being portrayed using cultural references begins to be established within the text. The fact that she defines what a big glass of milk is by saying: 'I couldn't hold it with one hand' refers to her understanding of her limited abilities as the younger child within her family structure. After she gives her answer, we see a close-up of a glass of milk, which she grabs hold of with two hands, but does not lift. The fact that this scene is closely followed by her father taking a sip from his tea, holding the glass[75] with one hand, reinforces the argument I have just made concerning why her description of 'I couldn't hold it with one hand' works in helping to establish her role and presence within the family.

Before the brother moves on to the second part of the puzzle he gives an affirmation to his sister, saying: 'Very nice,' which, depending on the context, can also mean 'well done'. This situates the brother as the older sibling and identifies his role within the family in comparison to his sister and in relation to his parents. The following two chapters will focus more heavily on how age differences between children play a part in their conceptualisation and experience of childhood.

The second part of the puzzle requires her to figure out who has the biggest hands, which suggests strength and power. Her brother offers a choice for her: 'Can it be mine?', which she rules out right away, and referring to her mother she declares it cannot be her either. Finally she answers, and the huge hand, hence the power and strength, belongs to her father. The next part of the puzzle, which she seems to enjoy the most – as clearly indicated by her high-pitched voice when she is talking – is to do with the taste of the product. The final part of the puzzle is perhaps the

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[75] Tea is traditionally served in glasses that have the shape of a sand clock in Turkey rather than cups or mugs.

most interesting in terms of the identities of each family member, since the taste of the Çokokrem is associated with the fact that her mother had prepared the bread slices with Çokokrem on them. Therefore, she identifies her mother as the person who makes food taste better. In other words, we are not only being presented with stereotypical gender roles as a discourse within the text, but also the discourse of 'happy and contented family' is being used in conjunction with these gender roles to construct an interdiscursive framework.

Closely related to how the identity of each family member is being represented within the text in relationship to cultural understandings is the next point I will be taking up in reference to the boy's reaction when his sister says: 'My mother spreads it on the bread, that's why'. Having heard her answer, the boy makes a gesture by raising his arm and touching his forehead with the inside of his hand. Prior to this gesture, having gone through a set of questions regarding the product with his sister, almost in a teacher-like manner, his last question indicates a desire to elicit a summary or an understanding of what they have been talking about on the part of his sister. This is made obvious to the audience through the way that he starts his sentence with: 'Well then…', and also in his tone of voice. Even though he expects her to associate the good taste with the quality and quantity of the ingredients, she gives a completely different account from that of his expectations.

Thus, this advertisement is heavily reliant upon cultural discourses around identity and gender roles. However, from a marketing point of view, while making use of cultural and social phenomena, an advertisement also has to bring forward the product in the best way possible. Hence, his gesture of slapping his forehead together with the scene at the very end of the advertisement where the boy, in a mildly sarcastic tone, remarks: 'You mean, if my dad had spread it, it wouldn't have been so nice?' aims to prove this point from a marketing perspective.

During the focus groups, I asked the children I talked to how they interpreted the gesture he makes, in a way to see how they associated the concepts the advertisement is referring to with the discourses used in the construction of the text. Some interpreted it as being a gesture of surprise, as a means to express

shock at how she had actually answered correctly, and also offered examples of differences of taste when their mother cooks something compared to when their father cooks something. The discourse of adult gender roles from the point of view of the children will be discussed in depth in a section in the following chapter. However, I find it crucial to include the interpretations of the gesture by the children to be able to offer a comparison to mine. While some of the children's interpretations were in line with mine, others' were not. For instance, in Village School 1, while Ferdi, age 7, Yesin, age 8, and Fatos, age 7, thought he meant: 'How come I didn't think of this but she did?', Mert, age 8, thought that she had misunderstood the question and his gesture was a reaction to that. In the same school among a different group of children, aged between 8 and 9, Pınar, Mehmet and Berna interpreted his gesture as being shocked at how much she knew. In fact, Pınar provided her own experience as an example: 'I mean, I can't believe it! My dad makes toast and butters it but I can't eat it, it's greasy and dry, but when my mum makes toast it's delicious'. In City School 1, the story does not change; while Sinem, age 9, and Fatma and Kerim, age 8, think that the gesture means he thinks her answer is spot on, Ekrem, age 8, hesitantly says: 'We'll know [what the gesture means] at the end of the advertisement'. In Village School 2, all four of the children in one of the groups between the ages of 9 and 10 believe his gesture means that he agrees with her assessment.

Yet another group from the same school, between the ages of 10 and 12, virtually protested and thought the whole concept of 'better because mum made it' was ludicrous. Merve said: 'He thinks it's illogical…how can it matter whether her dad made it or her mum?' and Sude remarks: 'He's shocked …wouldn't it have been as nice if her dad made it!?...after all what you eat has taste…the thing you eat has taste, 'whoever made it isn't something that has taste'. Su offers an example, a different account this time: 'For example, when my mum makes a sandwich or when my dad makes a sandwich I find they both taste the same … it's not as if one is salty and the other sweet!' On a similar account, yet sharper, Caner, age 9, from City School 2 says: 'Of course if you ask a kid that age, what else will she say?'

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When I further detail this discussion within the context of adult gender roles from a children's point of view, it will become more apparent how and why there is such an array of different opinions as to how to interpret the gesture made by the boy in the advertisement. Not surprisingly, different interpretations and different ways of constructing meaning closely relate to one's own experiences, understanding of different gender roles and socio-cultural background.

The final aspect of this advertisement that I want to focus on relates to the cultural framework around mealtime activities and the practices of family members versus what the advertisement reflects, which establishes the earlier point made about the verbal and visual display of 'sweet mornings' and 'ideal families'. In order to be able to place the discourse of meal-time practices within their cultural context, I will once again be referring to the focus group transcripts.

The advertisement portrays the whole family in the kitchen during a meal and while the children are talking to each other, the parents are silent throughout the whole length of the advertisement. Based on proverbs such as 'water for the young and words for the older' or 'the young cannot blend into the talk of the old' and most importantly the cultural belief that having a conversation whist eating (which is upheld as somewhat sacred) is not a good practice, I asked some of the children to share their mealtime practices with me.

Nisan, age 9, from Village School 2 says: 'For instance, in our house I wait until the adults finish what they are saying, then when they stop, if I have something to say I say it, but first I wait for them to finish'. Merve, age 10, says: 'We don't talk. If we do, my dad say no talking at the [dinner] table'. Sude continues: 'In general, adults say no talking during meals', and Su adds: 'My grandfather often says this'. However, in City School 2 the accounts the children gave were quite different. Dalga, age 10, says: 'We talk about what we will do that day and make a schedule for ourselves'. Naz, age 11, says: 'The best thing I like talking about is what my mum will cook that night, and what sort of errands everyone has'. Arda and Murat say they ask about what happened in a movie that was on the previous night which they had missed. Hence, the different accounts that the children

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provide point to the fact that, while the cultural discourse of mealtime practices based on sayings and proverbs that is being challenged in this advertisement is still being exercised to an extent in some families (dominantly in village areas), in others this is not the case.

This text not only brings together some of the concepts around childhood and adulthood that have been dealt with in this chapter but also provides a perspective within which the broader cultural and social settings around childhood and adulthood are experienced within a particular culture. Through the depiction of a typical family with two children, one of each gender, we are able to situate children in relationship to their parents.

4.2 The Other Side of the Text

Television advertisements work on the basis of a cluster of visual and audio signs and symbols that are combined to produce a social and cultural message. They refer to and reference the cultural understandings of their target audience while at the same time helping to maintain meanings assigned to certain cultural moments and conditions within a cultural setting.

The Pınar sausage and Ülker Galery advertisements present different types of role-play for children and it is through the cultural context and the children's reactions, as well as the acting involved in the text, that we can identify the identity of children and their role within this society. By and large, all the texts that have been analysed in this chapter refer to the concept of childhood in relationship to adulthood and vice versa. The establishment of behaviours, concepts, language use and perceptions that are child-like or adult-like and that belong to childhood or adulthood are used by the adverts to convey their messages. The remarks that the children I talked to made in regard to these conceptualizations point towards the fact that childhood is understood and experienced from the point of view of how adults construct it both for children and adults. For instance, child to child interactions when adult presence is involved differ in terms of their reconceptualization when the children are alone

than when adults are present. On the other hand, we have the example of children dealing with an issue at hand in both the Nesquik and Çokokrem advertisements in one of which adults are not present and in the other they are.

In this chapter I have discussed television advertisements that I used in conducting this study using discourse analysis through looking at how each text is constructed, in terms of both visual and verbal elements within their broader social and cultural framework. While I have offered my own understanding of how the wider cultural discourses operate within Northern Cypriot culture, I have also included children's interpretations, accounts and examples from their experiences. The next chapter will focus more on the specific cultural discourses and interdiscursive practices around and with which children grow up.

CHAPTER V: TALKING WITH CHILDREN

The previous chapter presented a discourse analysis of the advertisements used in the focus groups while facilitating a conversation with children. This analysis not only puts forward the different perceptions and depictions of children in advertisements, but also children's readings of these advertisements through their reactions to, and evaluations of, these depictions within a cultural context. The key themes that emerged during the analysis of the advertisements also formed the essential premises that shaped my conversations with the children. Hence, this chapter will provide a more detailed thematic analysis of the conversations I had with the children, paying specific attention to how certain social concepts and cultural discourses shape their lives.

This chapter, then, while presenting an analysis of the focus groups with children, will also highlight the common themes around which the lives of children revolve. I will be examining the language children use to talk about concepts relating to their childhoods in relation to how they interact with the adults around them and with each other within a cultural framework. Their understanding of childhood in terms of the use of domestic space and the media will be discussed in the first section of this chapter. Also, their experiences of being a child and different ways of interacting with other children will be explored through the examples they shared. Leading on from the discussion that will be established in the first section of this chapter concerning the disappearance of childhood, as opposed to the different appearances of childhoods, the second section will demonstrate, through an analysis of the discussions with children, how children's age differences play a role in their perception of their role in society as well as how they perceive younger children.

The last section will focus on children's childhood from a linguistic perspective, looking at what children think or believe is the appropriate language for them within the social environment in which they live as well as how they use language in different ways to construct their childhoods.

5.1 (This)Appearance of Childhood: Interpretations of Children's Childhoods

What is childhood? Through the title of this section, '(This)appearance of childhood', as opposed to 'disappearance' of childhood, my aim is to embark on a discussion of some of the themes that make childhood what it is in our contemporary society, not from the perspective of adults but from the perspective of children. Children's assessment and understanding of a particular situation is unique to themselves, yet they live with adults and are familiar with their concepts and share the constraints and advantages of life with them.

Theories relating to the disappearance of childhood, which claim that 'the traditional assumptions about the uniqueness of children are fast fading' (Postman, 1994, p.131), have great impact on how we perceive children within society. In this section, through an examination of the conversations I had with children, I will demonstrate that the disappearance of childhood has less to do with the fast fading of children's uniqueness than it has to do with adults' undermining of children as social agents. Therefore, this section will present how children appear in their own words and can be heard in their own voices.

For such an endeavour, the theoretical perspective on who children are, what childhood is and how it can be studied plays a crucial role. Within the last decade and a half childhood studies has started to be seen as 'a field of academic endeavour [that] offers the potential for interdisciplinary research that can contribute to an emergent paradigm wherein new ways of looking at children can be researched and theorized' (Kehily, 2004, p.1). There has been a clear shift from the promotion of developmental theories, which argue that 'sociology alone cannot fully explain the experiences of childhood and youth: reference must also be made to biology and psychology' (O'Donnell, 1985, p.13), towards promoting children as agents. Thorne (1987) demonstrates how developmental approaches to childhood and children consider children as 'learners of adult culture, [whose] experiences in the present continually referred to a presumed future, the endpoint

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… of adulthood' (p.92), while at the same time considering childhood as merely a state of dependency until children reach adulthood. Wells (2009) states that:

> The new sociology of childhood established a field of inquiry about children (the lived experiences of children) and childhood (the concept that informs expectations and attitudes towards children) that sought to understand children's lifeworlds as they were lived. This focus on children as they are, rather than how their childhood experiences might shape the adults they may become, differentiates the sociology of childhood from other social science disciplines, particularly education and developmental psychology, that have been most engaged with the academic study of children and childhood. (Wells, 2009, p.14)

Consequently, conceptualising children as who they are now and as agents entitled to their childhoods as they experience it, which has been solidly established in the childhood studies literature during the last decade, makes the 'disappearance of childhood' argument futile. Unlike Postman's (1994) argument that childhood is disappearing because, when children appear in the media, 'they are depicted as miniature adults' (p.122), this chapter will show that depictions of children who act like adults are in fact interpreted, critiqued and analysed by children in many different ways. Hence, in this instance, the fact that adults chose to depict children in adult roles has more to do with marketing techniques, as some of the children I talked to also argued, rather than being a representation of what childhood is. Yet, children do sometimes choose to act like adults, in some instances such as during play. In fact, as I mentioned in Chapter III, while they were constructing their own advertisements during the activity before concluding the focus groups, most of the groups decided to depict a family with two of the children acting as the children and the other two as the parents.[76] Children, as James and James (1998) argue, see play as a reflection of life; 'it provides the medium through which children's friendships and peer cultures are facilitated and is a key context for the process of interpretive reproduction – that which enables children to learn about the social world' (p.99). Hence, role-playing as adults might in turn be seen as a way for them to have adult representations in their game.

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[76] There will be more on the advertisements children produced towards the end of Chapter VI.

Therefore, my argument in this section will focus on studying children and childhoods as they appear rather than as the 'next generation' or from a technologically determinist or adult determinist point of view. As Thorne (1987) points out, 'adults are understood by their present actions and experiences in the world; children are understood more by their becoming, as adults-in-the-making' (p.93). Conceptualising children as passive beings in a waiting period within a cocoon, who need protection until they reach a certain maturity, leads adults to make decisions about children's lives that go far beyond the intention of attending to their natural and biological needs and understanding their limitations. Hence, in conceptualising children as 'the next generation', adults not only facilitate their interaction with children within that context but this also reflects on policies concerning children and how adults represent children in different media content. Rather, children should be '[taken seriously] as social agents in their own rights' (Alanen, 2005, p.35).

5.1.1. Domestic Authority within the Family in Relation to Media Usage

In what follows, I will focus on children's decision-making processes on family matters with an analysis of the way in which where they are situated within the family might have an effect on their decisions as well as the ways in which their participation in the family plays out. Also, I will be looking at how they compromise and negotiate their ideas, desires and wishes. In addition, I will also focus on what sort of influence they think they have over other family members and how they practise this influence. Through referring to the conversations that took place around the concept of domestic authority on the subject of watching television, children's viewpoint and understanding of family dynamics will be revealed.

During the focus groups, after watching the Digitürk advertisement, which depicts a child getting her way about having the opportunity to watch what she wants to watch, I started a conversation with the participants about who decides which programme will be watched in their house, who would decide what will be on the television when they are watching television together as a family. Almost all of

them state that their fathers decide what will be watched, though their explanations as to why this is the case differ. Also they provide an account of what this means to them as well.

Gamze, in Village School 2, says: 'generally my dad decides, but for example if my dad goes to a meeting and my mum watches movies then I go to the other room and watch something else'. Therefore, in Gamze's case, it is not about who decides what is watched, it is rather which room is available for her to watch what she wants. Yasemin, in Village School 1, also says: 'my dad decides' and Berna says: 'my dad and sometimes my mum'. In City school 1, Beran not only says that his father decides but explains why by saying: 'dads decide because they are the man in the house'. Compared to Yasemin and Berna, who use the possessive adjective 'my', Beran chooses to distance himself from using the possessive adjective and generalises his comment on the topic while using a phrase such as 'man of the house'.

Although the answer does not change much in village schools in terms of fathers' domination over the television set, in city schools, together with the fact that every house has more than one television set, the focus of the conversation varies. In City School 2, Dilara without hesitation said: 'me', because she has the option of going to her room and watching what she wants to watch. Rather than a certain family member dominating the television set, it is more to do with considering ownership of 'my television' and 'their television'. Even though, for Dilara, the special division of the house and its properties is not a problem, Alp raises a different perspective. He says: 'the day that we have the most disputes is Tuesday … because my parents put *Bin Bir Gece*[77] on and I watch it, you know I don't want to watch in my room on my own … but most of the time we watch what I want'. Therefore, for Alp, spending time with family is important and compromise is essential for this. Nazli, from City School 1, first says: 'my dad decides' then adds, 'but it has changed now, because I have D smart[78] in my room, there is another television set downstairs, so I watch whatever I want but

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[77] Television series (Drama)
[78] A television package offered by Digitürk.

there is only one problem, my sister, if I don't do what she wants she starts crying'. Clearly, for Nazli, domination over the television is not associated with her father deciding what they will watch, it is more to do with an assessment of whether she has the resources to make a decision of her own. Similarly, Kerim (age 8) says: 'we have two television sets in our house; one is like a rectangle and hangs on the wall, that plasma thing'.

Fatma's account of how to gain control over the television set surprises the rest of the children in the group when she explains how she got herself a television set. She says: 'when my mum has her series my dad watches with her and when my dad has his series my mum watches with him. I saved money and got a television set for my room'.

While some children might go along with what their parents watch, others, as in the last example, might go to the extreme of deciding to save money towards purchasing their own television set in order to be able to watch what they want. In fact, in her reply to Naz, who had said: 'dads decide', Cemre, from City School 2, says: 'I don't think that such a thing exists any more, in the old days they used to say dads are the chief of the house but now there is democracy, mother, siblings, whichever, there is democracy'. Both Murat and Arda agree with this comment, though Arda adds: 'I agree everyone is equal, of course, my dad gets really tired, gets his dinner and sits in front of the television and eats there'. In a little while Cemre reveals how they apply democracy in their house; she says: 'there are four television sets in our house, one in the living room, one in my room, one in my brother's and one in my parents' … My mum watches her shows in her room, me in mine, my brother in his and if my dad is watching something different than my mum he watches it in the other room'. It is obvious that parents in these households, rather than giving children the opportunity to participate in family time and negotiate over what might be watched on any particular night, have isolated their children into their rooms through providing them with their own television sets.

5.1.2 When Do Children Talk and What Do They Talk about?

It is interesting to observe how children differentiate between their own activities and interactions between themselves and how they interpret the interactions between adults, as opposed to theirs. As James (1993) puts it, 'childhood is … locked into a relationship with adulthood … [and] is … the cultural space within which children learn not only what they were but also what they are not and what they will become' (p.29). Hence, the level of interaction they have with adults and the responses they get concerning their actions help shape children's understanding of who they are. In order to obtain an insight into how the dynamics of children's interactions with their parents play out when they are all together, leading on from the Çokokrem advertisement, where we see a stereotypical family with two children around a breakfast table, I asked children about conversations they have during breakfast or at meal times.

> Davita: During a conversation while you are having breakfast or a meal, do your parents join in your conversations with your sisters or brothers?
> Merve: My sister gets up really late so we don't sit together at the table as a family.
> Su: We don't, if we do generally my dad would say it is wrong to talk at the table with food.
> Davita: Do your mum and dad talk at the table?
> Su: They maybe sometimes.
> Merve: Usually adults say it is wrong to talk at dinner.
> Gülçin: My grandfather says this.

Su, and later others, are referring to a cultural practice which suggests that it is not socially acceptable to talk and to have conversations during meal times. Food, often also referred to as 'bread', is considered to be sacred and hard-earned and conversation during engagement with food is traditionally considered to be disrespectful towards the 'blessing'.[79] However, even in traditional families and

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[79] 'Blessing' or 'bread' would commonly be used among Cypriot Turks to refer to food.

amongst older generations in contemporary society, it is hard to come to terms with this cultural practice, since the way food is obtained has drastically changed and wartime scarcity is a distant memory. However, it is still common to mention this understanding even though it is not practised any more. Yet children have to make sense out of this dilemma, and they observe:

> Su: They [my parents] are teachers so they talk about what happened at school.
> Merve: My aunt lives in Nicosia and comes to visit my grandparents on Saturdays. She, for instance, talks nonstop, my granddad say 'no one speak', it is wrong to talk during dinner so that she doesn't talk as well.
> Davita: How about in your house, do you speak during meals? (to Sude)
> Sude: Yes, we always talk about funny things.
> Davita: Do your parents join in with your conversation with your sister, or you join in theirs?
> Sude: While we speak they join in and while they speak we join in.
> Merve: Usually adults get angry if we jump into the conversation.
> Gülçin: If we talk a lot they say get back to eating your food.
> Merve: And adults say it is wrong to talk during meals but they talk the most.
> Su: We talk during breakfast but during lunch and dinner we don't.
> Merve: For instance grownups do a barbeque, others also come and they, for example, get angry at children, but I see them chat away yap yap yap yap.

Children are often placed in contradictory situations through adults' words and actions. Children are told it is wrong to talk during meals, yet everyone talks. The reason why parents are sometimes displeased and get angry with children when they talk during meals will be discussed shortly. Before I move on, it is important to highlight that there are a variety of factors surrounding the relationship between parents and children; one of these factors is tradition. Parents' efforts to pass on traditional values, practised or otherwise, might sometimes clash with modern day

living practices and this can lead to such contradictions. This particular practice is also encouraged and promoted through sayings and proverbs such as, 'water for children, words for adults', often used to refer to the idea that children should know their 'place'. This attitude is based on the approach that views 'children as naturally "less" than adults in so far as they are in a stage of becoming (adults), rather than being seen as complete and identifiable persons' (Hendrick, 2008, p.42). They are seen as not yet complete. In other words, '[t]hey are constructed not as different from adults but as less than adults' (Valentine, 1997, p.67). Hence, their practices should differ from that of adults. The children I talk to paint yet another familiar picture of the conceptualisation of children, as troublemakers who needs to be told off and controlled until they become adults. They learn and experience how it is all right for adults to do certain things and how it might be wrong if they do the same as part of their socialisation involving cultural and traditional practices within the family structure. As James and James (2004) state, 'childhood is … identified as the site of key social problems and children are … defined in terms of their futurity rather than being recognised in their own right' (p.193). Hence, as will be seen in the extract below, children give meaning to this dilemma, not as their present selves but as future adults, through justification of how difficult being an adult is.

> Su: It is normal for them [adults] to talk, because they have a lot of
> things to talk about, they have worries. What worry do we have, what
> do we have to talk about?
> Merve: Also because children speak loud grownups can't hear each
> other and they get angry with children.
> Gülçin: They say 'come on kids'.

The undermining of children on the part of adults and expressions of anger when they attempt to participate not only forms an idea of what adulthood is like for children but also makes them realise how they are being perceived and, hence, who they might be. I side with Jenks (2005) that, 'if we are truly committed to childhood as an active expression of human being should we not be listening to

the challenges they present as critiques of the current order rather than as disruptions of a properly normative life?' (p. 127). However, this is not the case in the picture these children have painted for me. The extract below clearly points out how adults' undermining actions and words towards children might lead children to undermine themselves.

Davita: Do you really not have anything to talk about?

Merve: We do, school stuff for instance.

Su: Yes, but our stuff is not that important like the grownup stuff.

Gülçin: For example, me and my brother talk when we are playing a game or when we are inventing something together, I say 'so brother how shall we do this, how shall we do that'; these we talk about in the mornings.

Merve: Generally my parents talk about the tractors, the fields, but what do we have to talk about?

Gülçin: For instance we sometimes …

Su: Theirs is more important.

On the one hand, children suggest that they also become used to the idea of conceptualising themselves as future adults, they are familiar with the rules presented to them by adults and experience how they change as they age, concepts such as growing up and being a grownup are constantly used within different discourses of which they are part. On the other hand, children arguably cannot help but differentiate themselves from adults. These two views are closely intertwined in the way children perceive themselves. The link between these perspectives makes them almost inseparable, yet the theoretical implications between them are worlds apart. The above conversation continues from where Gülçin was interrupted as she explains how she differentiates herself from adult ways and thinking:

Gülçin: … sometimes we go somewhere, I don't get it, you don't see that person so often, what do they find to talk about I really wonder.

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Whenever I look, for example, when a guest comes to our house, who rarely comes who we don't see that often, they talk yap yap yap. What do they talk about I wonder!

Su: I think it is more normal for those who don't see each other often to talk; it is less normal for people who see each other a lot to talk to each other. Because they don't see each other often and they are not close they have lots more to talk about.

Merve: My house is right next[80] to Ayşe for instance, when I go to her house, for example, I go in the morning and we talk, in the afternoon when she comes over to my house we find something to talk about again.

Davita: Doesn't all this mean that you also have things to talk about?

Merve: Of course we do.

Su: But not important stuff I think.

Sude: Not much, I mean it's only important to us.

Sude's remark 'it's only important to us' clearly demonstrates how 'children are presenting themselves as subordinate, as dependent, not as autonomous', since 'for them, part of the condition of childhood is not having ultimate responsibilities' because 'children propose that mothers in particular but also fathers have total, absolute responsibility for keeping the family afloat, both financially and socially' (Mayall, 2005, p.84). 'Grownup important stuff', as they put it, is what they are being told is necessary to maintain life: the bills, work, household matters are all grownup stuff that they are not allowed or expected to participate in. Children live in an adult-centred world in which their experience and understanding of life is limited to adults' desire to keep them not ready for life. Their biological and emotional dependency is interchanged and used against their individuality and, therefore, their interpretations of their habits, experiences, and actions are deemed to be less important, even insignificant.

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[80] She is from Village 2, and it is quite common for everyone to know each other in the village and most often people live in close proximity to each other.

The issue of what it is important to talk about and who talks about important issues was a predominant theme among the participants. They presented a complete internalisation of how they have no role in the family since their parents are doing the 'important stuff', such as paying the bills and making a living, and this leads them to consider what they have to talk about as not that important. Gül, from City School 1, says that her parents do not normally join in the conversations she has with her sister, they do so only when it is important. Ekrem, a participant from the same school but a different group, says: 'they only join in when we talk about school stuff, for example what results I got from my exams today'. I ask them why they think that what they talk about is not important.

> Su: What the grownups have to talk about is more important I think. Money, for instance.
>
> Merve: For instance, they don't see each other every day.
>
> Gülçin: We usually gossip, saying this person did this and that person did that, like that.
>
> Merve: Yes, that is what we talk about.
>
> Davita: So, grownups don't do that?
>
> Merve: For example, we gossip about other children, why did such and such do this, why is that person nasty to me, like that. Grownups gossip as well and gossip is a bad thing.
>
> Gülçin: It's a bad thing but we do it anyway.
>
> Sude: My mum goes over to the neighbour's house every day for coffee and they meet.
>
> Su: They don't talk like that to gossip, it's sharing.
>
> Gülçin: For instance, my aunt and my mum are neighbours and they call out to each other from the window: 'are you going to come or shall I come?'

Merve: They talk to each other from window to window! [81] [She laughs sarcastically.]

Su's effort to rationalise adult behaviour and make sense of it as different from hers, and Merve's insistence on remarking that adults do things just as irrational as they might claim children's behaviour to be, are two examples of how children cope with adult behaviour and interactions while they adjust their behaviour and their interactions.

The children in this example are led to believe that their presence only counts if they are being students. Lee (2005) argues that one of the ways of valuing children is by seeing them as state investments (pp.10-11). Therefore, unless they are successfully fulfilling the task of being students, what they say seems to be irrelevant and disturbing, and in some cases even the very act of talking is traditionally wrong. Nonetheless, I believe it is remarkable how, even though they have to compare and contrast adult behaviour to their own in order to claim their childhoods, it is clear that they do have concerns and they do have serious matters to talk about.

5.1.3 Serious Matters: Children's Concerns

In a critique of traditional practices that keeps children 'silenced' [82] and hence under adult control, Nick Lee (2001) states, 'if what a child is saying happens to be important, it would seem that an adult probably knows it already, so the more dependent children are the less their "voices" are likely to be heard and listened to' (p.89). In fact, children do have important things to say (Hallett & Prout, 2003), however the traditional conceptualisations of children as passive beings in

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[81] Even though I did not find significant differences between children living in villages compared to children living in cities in terms of how they interpreted the context within which they lived or media texts, as seen in this example, their surroundings and therefore life experiences are in fact different. In Chapter VI, I highlight other differences that arise within different contexts with particular content.
[82] In Northern Cypriot culture it is common for children to be told and taught where to stand/sit, what to say and not say and how to do things, especially in public or in the presence of others, i.e. anyone who is not family.

the process of becoming has led to cultural perceptions of children, both for adults and, to an extent, for children, as discussed in the previous section.

Even though my focus during my fieldwork was not on children voicing their opinions on matters of health or finance or money-related issues, and I did not specifically instigate discussions on such issues, these issues did come up. This in and of itself points to the fact that children are both self- and socially conscious of certain matters.

While the group was discussing the Ülker Galery advertisement and talking about sweets and desserts, Metin, Village School 2, made the following remark:

> Metin: Sometimes we don't know in what sort of kitchens desserts are made but when you see it on camera, for example, I saw the Danone advertisement. I didn't used to like Danone, but then I saw the advertisement and saw how it's produced. The packaging on it, I thought could take air in, but because it doesn't I now eat it.

The advertisement Metin is referring to does mention the importance of vacuum-packed food. However, this is not a case of Metin receiving information from television and accepting and being affected by it. On the contrary, this example shows how children can be very selective in their interactions with the media. To be able to establish this point I challenged him with a different product that cannot be vacuum-packed.

> Davita: How about bread, do you not get bread and eat it?
> Metin: Bread, I often eat brown bread.
> (The other children join in)
> Simge: That is not the same thing.
> Nisan: Bread needs [holes on the package] to breath, otherwise it would go bad.

Metin: True, for example that [Danone] is a protein thing, I mean for it to be healthy, if microbes got into it, it wouldn't be [healthy].

They were genuinely concerned about how food was produced and in another group children shared their knowledge about which food contains unhealthy ingredients and components. Su, Village School 2, is talking about the type of cornflakes they eat:

Su: The ones we get are the chocolate ones, I put it into a cup and eat it like that.
Gülçin: The one, the Nestle's one apparently has lots of carcinogenic materials in it that cause cancer.
Su: For example Patos,[83] those also have them.

The fact that, while talking about what they eat at breakfast, the children are sharing health related information and concerns points to the fact that children do have serious issues to talk about and that they should be taken seriously. The sorts of health concerns they are mentioning might not be news for adults or they might even have heard them from their parents or teachers, however, the first step to ensuring that children are heard and that they are involved in decision making as active participants is to hear what they have to say.

As Kiely (2005) states, 'children have valuable knowledge and insight, which can assist in ensuring that there is complete and accurate information available upon which to base plans' (p.220). In order to achieve what Kiely is referring to, the key institutions within a society such as education, media, welfare and law, as well as the cultural institutions involving children, should be considering and perceiving children as active, participating agents. However, in many societies, especially in the developing countries, it is very common and in some instances convenient to regard children as insignificant, and not quite just 'right' yet, in the

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[83] A crisp-like snack made from corn.

becoming. Consequently, it is also very common to use the phrase 'child's mind' to mean insignificant, irrelevant or bizarre, which is yet another cultural piece of evidence that children are undermined by adults. However, the voices of children that I heard during the focus groups suggest that they should be taken seriously.

One of the most important concepts that leads to the undermining of children has to do with their age. Since, in an adult-centred society, children are considered to be not-yet-adults rather than active individuals, age, hence the generational order, plays a significant role in how they are perceived by adults and also how they learn to perceive each other. The next section will explore the importance and the role of the concept of age in children's lives.

5.1.4 Age Matters to Children in Identifying their Childhoods

While children make sense of the adult world and as they situate their thinking and perceptions in accordance with adult expectations, how they view the concept of 'age' becomes crucially important in terms of how they understand what being small, young, old (enough) or being a grownup is. This is partially because it is to an extent through the passing of years that their actions, their language and their roles change. As Solberg (1997) states, 'family members negotiate the meaning of childhood more abstractly through reference to conceptions of 'age and age-related activities' (p.127).

I will be focusing on the conceptualisation of age in terms of children's activities, behaviour patterns and possessions as well as considering 'age' itself as a discourse. In doing so I will attempt to uncover not only how the age a child is plays a part in shaping certain aspects of childhood, but also to understand the part that children play in shaping the discourses around age. Solberg (1997) refers to the process of interaction between parents and children that ultimately constructs childhood as a negotiation. She argues that 'conceptually, children may … "grow" or "shrink" in age as negotiations take place. In much the same way children's own conceptions of age are subject to change over time in and through the negotiating process' (Solberg, 1997, p.128). Nonetheless, further analysis of

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children in different locations and cultural surroundings would be necessary to determine how fair this negotiation process is. Within Northern Cypriot society, where children are often wished to be 'seen but not heard', this negotiation would better be referred to as a dilemma.

This dilemma around the concept of age is clearly demonstrated by Metin from Village School 2, who is 10 years old. He states: 'my mum, whenever it suits her, tells me I am small and whenever it suits her tells me I am grown [old enough]'. This is a very common theme with children in grades 4 and 5 and also with children who have younger brothers and sisters. The latter because the inclusion of a younger family member in their family lives changes the role of children within the family, hence making what stage of childhood they are at a more complex issue in connection to the concept of age. Furthermore, by the time they are in grade 4 or 5 they are only a year or two away from their teens. Even though in Northern Cyprus the concept of 'being in the teens' does not linguistically apply, conceptually it does in the sense of being close to the years of adolescence. Also, the fifth grade is when they are between the ages of eleven and twelve, which coincides with the last year of Elementary education before they move on to what they consider to be school for older children. While mapping the history of childhood, Ariés (1962) points out that 'family and school together removed the child from adult society' (p.397). The school grading system, therefore, since its introduction has played a role in how children are perceived, and what role they play within society.

Simge, who is also 10, approaches the concept of age from a different point of view, revealing another aspect of how age plays a role in constructing childhoods. She says: 'being little is, I think, a beautiful thing, because all the adults around me complain, saying I wish I could go back to my childhood. I would also want to go back to being little, there is no school and you can do whatever you want'. When I asked her what is different in her life now that she is not little she replied by saying: 'For example, sometimes I want a necklace and the necklaces I like are very expensive, my parents say we can't buy it or that I should save my money if I want it. But before when I was little they would have got it. They would have paid

twenty million[84] and got the toy I wanted without blinking'. Simge provides an example which emphasises the importance of Solberg's (1997) approach to age and childhood by using the term 'negotiate'. Clearly in Simge's experience the interactions between herself and her parents have been altered in accordance with her desires and resources.

Metin also referred to the same age Simge did in her example and gave a different account of how his behaviour had to change in accordance with his age. He says: 'in the old days I could use shameful words but now I can't say any of them. Only maybe if I am at home watching football and my team isn't doing well'. What he is referring to makes better sense when it is considered within the cultural context in which little children who swear, especially little boys, are considered by adults as cute and something to be laughed at. However, as they get older, that is, as they get old enough to take part in different institutions, children are told that swearing and foul language is bad and they cannot talk in that manner since it would be damaging to the image of the parents in the wider society. Once again, growing up as a child is associated by the dilemma of increased responsibility towards community versus figuring out what it is acceptable to do as a child, and when and where. Saving money and helping out or watching your language are techniques children start adopting in their lives as they become 'older' children. However, in the latter example, the level or degree of negotiation is different than of the one Simge provided. The changing of age, getting older, for Metin meant he had to evaluate the reactions he was receiving from the adults around him. He recognises that his age is changing his childhood, however, he does not have much influence on this change in regards to the example he provided, if he wants his parents not to exercise their authority to implement punishment.

In terms of age and conceptualisation, another issue that came up during the focus groups was in relation to the Digitürk advertisement that was marketing a viewing device and package with channels that are suitable for children. I asked the

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[84] In Turkish currency, at the time she is referring to, twenty million would have been the equivalent of roughly £8.00

participants what they thought of the concept of something being suitable for children.

> Davita: In the advertisement that we will watch next the narrator uses a phrase which is 'suitable for children'…
>
> Murat (10 years old): How do you mean?
>
> Davita: For instance, some channels, some things are suitable for children and some…
>
> Naz (11 years old): Seven years and older violence and horror.[85]
>
> Cemre (10 years old): Sometimes it says seven years and older or magazine [paparazzi] programmes say thirteen years and older but I watch them.
>
> Davita: You watch, ok, but I wanted to hear about other things as well not just television programmes. What does it mean for something to be not suitable for children? Who decides this?
>
> Cemre (10 years old): Our families.
>
> Davita: Do they get it right?
>
> Cemre: Sometimes.
>
> Arda (11 years old): I think sometimes, but sometimes not, I sometimes think they never care about what I think.

The fact that Murat interrupts my sentence as I mention the phrase 'suitable for children' to ask what I mean by that phrase, and that Naz does the same to give official and formal information about what is suitable for them or not, followed by their testimony about how most of the time adults decide what is suitable, reveals parents' unwillingness to include children fairly in the negotiation process. The children continue by providing examples of what types of movies their parents forbid them from watching. Arda, 11 years old, remarks: 'I really wanted to go watch that movie but they didn't take me [to the cinema] because of swear words. I really wanted to go, in fact I cried a lot in my room'. The movie he is referring to, 'Recep Ivedik'[86] is a comedy that is rated '12A' for strong language by the

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[85] This is one of the categories used by the Turkish Radio and Television High Council.
[86] http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1193516/ accessed 7th January 2010.

British Board of Film Classification (BBFC). The main character in the movie, Şahan Gökbakar, is a well-known comedian who had his own television show at the time on one of the major national channels. Due to the fact that the movie was widely criticised by the media and child psychiatrists at the time it came out, a lot of parents had the same attitude towards taking their children to this movie as Arda's parents, even though the main actor is a well-known comedian children watch on television regularly. Loreman (2009) states that:

> Adult members of the family, usually the parents, can become victims of probably well-intentioned but nonetheless bad advice in the form of expert commentary in the media and some popular psychology texts aimed at parents. This advice can often have a significant detrimental impact on family relationships. (Loreman, 2009, p.37)

Hence, expert opinions might also sometimes be damaging to the negotiations and communication between parents and children. Children's identity, together with how they experience childhood, is closely related to how they believe they are being perceived by the adults around them. I side with Solberg (1997) in her use of the term 'negotiate' to cover different kinds of interactions and communications between children and parents since, 'although in many ways children's position is a weak one, they do not passively adapt themselves to what their elders say or do' (Solberg, 1997, p.127). This is not to say that children are left feeling like they can completely exercise their childhood or that their identities will not be constructed around what adults think is the 'right childhood' for them at any particular age.

Thus, I wanted children to elaborate on what they think is suitable for them and what is not since they understand what types of programming adults think is suitable for them and do not agree with it. I reiterated the question, asking them what they believe is suitable. They paused to think for a while and their answers showed that their interpretation of the concept of 'suitable' for themselves is entirely different.

Alp (11 years old): I think what is not suitable for me is love films and romantic films. But I like horror films a lot; they have a lot of adventure.

Eylül (12 years old): I don't like horror movies that much.

Arzu (11 years old): I like them, I have a CD, I turn the lights off and watch it in the dark. The guy comes up behind the woman and strangles her like this. (He performs the facial expression and gestures.)

Eylül: Eurgh, I don't like those ones.

Davita: So you don't watch them because you don't like them and you do because you do like them.

Alp (Nods in agreement): I like them for instance, and I never dream about them.[87]

Eylül: I like some of them but when there is lots of blood I don't want to watch.

Children interpret what is suitable for them to watch, if it was up to them, according to their taste. They understand the implications of watching horror violence and choose to watch these types of movies knowing it is all right for them, or avoid watching them because they do not like the implications. In terms of having a taste for watching horror or violent imagery, children are not different from adults. The difference applies when adults consider suitability without the will to negotiate with their children, preferring to value expert opinions.

There are many concepts which play a part in making this negotiation an unequal one. I have dealt with the two prominent ones that came out of the fieldwork I conducted in this section; namely, traditional constraints and official expert opinions. However, the concept of how age plays a determining role in the way that children experience childhood is not limited to their relationships with adults. Children also apply age as a discourse in understanding and interpreting the behaviours of other children, either older or younger than themselves. A very important reason for this is the education system, in which children are divided

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[87] A clear acknowledgement of his recognition of adult anxieties discussed in Chapter II.

into grades in schools solely on the basis of their ages rather than their talents, abilities and interests. In the next section I will be looking at how children talk about other children and how the interactions between them in a school environment can distinguish them from each other.

5.2 Me and Others: Children's Perception of other Children

Within any given social surrounding, children also position themselves in relation to other children of different ages, and how they interact with one another plays a crucial part in constructing their identity at any particular age and time. Hence their childhoods, how they interpret each other's social positioning and their role within the cultural context, can be observed through an analysis of their interactions. One way of accomplishing this is through analysing the interactions between children during a particular activity. Susan Danby's (2005) work on preschool children, in order to examine 'children's social episodes to show how they use their talk and action to build and maintain the social scenes' (p.180) is one example of this type of observation based analysis. In what follows, I will be looking at how children talk about each other, paying particular attention to when they refer to each other as 'us' and when they refer to other children as 'them', thus highlighting and identifying how children construct their identity around other children in their surroundings.

Age plays a crucial part in children's perception of other children. Since, in their interactions with adults, children are often told they cannot do something, say something, or watch something because of their age, they apply the same criteria to their interactions with and perceptions of children of different ages to them.

> The importance of age as a classificatory marker of identity has become, therefore, particularly important for children, since it is used not only to separate them out as a special group in society, but it may also restrict the kinds of activities and social spaces to which they have access. (James & James, 2008, p.8)

Children also rely on adults' personification of them to interpret what childhood must be like for other children at different ages and accordingly they situate their role within their childhood to accommodate the 'appropriate' interpretation of how they should react or comprehend a situation for other children. Beran, age 8, from City School 1, for instance, says: 'we can't be angry with people older than us'. What he is doing here is situating the meaning of childhood for himself in accordance with how adults behave towards him and calculating how he can be with other children younger than himself.

While children incorporate their observations of how adults perceive them into their understanding of what their childhood is, they also know they will be adults one day, which complicates their interpretations of other children's childhoods as well as their interpretation of their role, as a child, in different circumstances within a particular cultural and social setting. Su and Sude, age 12 and 10 respectively, in Village School 2, for instance, express the way in which they think 'warning' is something adults do, and when they see younger children playing hide and seek in the school playground they warn them: 'you will fall, don't go there'. While James and James (2008) suggest that, 'because children everywhere occupy a position of powerlessness, it is important to explore the nature of child-adult relations from the standpoint of children' (p.69), this example demonstrates how children's standpoint is influenced by the adult positioning, since the interesting point here is that they were talking about when they talk like adults when they gave this example. Therefore, they associate a tone of warning in conversation with being an adult, being older. Accordingly, the way Su and Sude position themselves in relation to younger children is to take up an 'older' position and be the knowing, adult voice that they know older people are towards them. As Alanen (2009) puts it, 'generationing practices ... are distinguishable in the particular behaviours that were acceptable to engage in with other children, in parents' positional power as well as in the power that inheres in the interaction between children and parents' (p.170).

Assuming the role of an adult is something children are very familiar with, from role-playing games to more extreme examples where children act as the caretaker

for a sibling or for disabled parents (see Woodhead, 2006; Hockey & James, 1993). It is especially when they are considering themselves to be the older person that they refer to children as 'children' when they want to express an opinion.

When the children were asked what they thought was not suitable for them to watch, Beran, from City School 1, age 8, said: 'things with death is not suitable' and Fatma (age 9) added: 'if we see death we *might* be scared because it is *scary*'. Even though this statement may seem to represent a straightforward way of thinking, at first, indicating that if something is scary it will make one scared, it points out how little control children feel they have over associating certain discourses with concepts. I have emphasised 'might' to indicate the relevance of this lack of control. I will further explore children's lack of involvement in decision making around issues that concern them in the next chapter.

In terms of how adult-constructed discursive phenomena seem to have been adopted by children and may have been internalised, Mert's, age 8 (Village School 1), response to the question of what is suitable for them to watch is interesting. He says: 'programmes like Mickey[88] and stuff are suitable for children'. Rather than using the term 'us' or 'me', he chooses to express himself with a word that would be used by an adult. In a slightly different way Metin age 10 (Village School 2) remarks: 'For example, 13+ might be rudeness, things that would affect us when we grow up', giving the same impression as Mert and also Fatma. The way he phrases his sentence, even though he says 'us' and 'we', makes it clear that he is referring to information that has been provided to him by an adult. He is relying on comments he has been told or heard about 13+, which is a symbolic sign denoting parental guidance to over 13 year olds, to make his opinion on what might not be suitable for him and why.

Following on from the conversation about what is suitable for children to watch on television and what is not Alp, age 12, from City School 1, remarks: 'For example, children watch movies with magic and stuff and they get affected, they

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[88] Mickey is used as a common word to refer to cartoons in general in Northern Cyprus.

try to do the same. It means something like this. Because, for example, the other day my cousin went to a meal, there were two kids there and they were trying to do magic to a cup so that it would fly in the air.' Through referring to younger children as 'children', which distances him from the children he is referring to, Alp is not only expressing a concern for children but also stating that he is not affected and that his childhood experience is different to that which he ascribes to younger children. Even though it was not a point I had raised within the structure of the focus groups, some of the children made comments about magic and explained what their attitude towards magic is. Interestingly, these comments were either raised in the case of younger children or while older children were comparing themselves to younger children. Ayşe, from Village School 2, age 7, says in the middle of a completely different discussion: 'Can I say something? Magic is never real' and Onur, in a tone suggesting 'how boring', remarks: 'we know Ayşe!'.

In a different account, while children are discussing how advertisements would use anything to attract attention, Merve from Village School 2, age 10, states: 'it is always like this in some series as well, everything that wouldn't happen in real life happens in series, like magic and that sort of thing'. Gülçin, age 11, adds: 'magic isn't actually real but we love watching it'. In City School 1, where I talked to a group of children all from the fifth grade, which is ages 11 and 12, there was a long discussion about how younger children should not watch programmes that contains elements of magic even though they are produced specifically for children. For instance, Eylül said: 'I do watch them but I think they are not suitable for children at the age of four or five, because they affect children and children think it's real', and Alp says: '… and she [his mother] tells me not to watch cartoons or films with magic in them but then she lets me and she watches them as well'.

From the account I have provided above, it is not only clear that these children consider magic to be an element of entertainment but also that they feel the need to prove somehow that they understand what it is in terms of real versus imaginary or constructed. Yet, quite clearly, they differentiate between themselves

and other, younger children even though shows involving magic in fact target young children. I wanted to further explore how they expressed their childhood to be different to that of other children.

> Davita: You mentioned films with magic, aren't they series for children?
> Eylül: Yes I think so.
> Davita: There is 'My magical mummy' 'Serena' and 'Little wizard'
> Alp: Yes they are for children.
> Davita: They are for children, but didn't you mean they are not suitable for children when you mentioned them?
> Alp: I watch them but I think they are not suitable for children at the age of four or five, because they get influenced and they think it is real.

Buckingham (1993) suggests that, 'what is seen as "suitable" [for children to watch] is subject to a process of negotiation, in which a certain amount of power has been 'delegated' to the children' (p.125). Hence older children feel that they need to carry out the same 'negotiations' that their parents carry out with them with younger children, thus doing to younger children what adults do to them, which makes the younger children the 'children' as opposed to themselves. In other words, they are reaching verdicts about how life might be for younger children, which is what adults do when they make decisions on their behalf.

5.3 'How do I talk?' Children's Language Use

In this section I will be looking at how children use language, and also how their perception of cultural and social interactions are shaped by language. Language is an integral part of the culture and the way in which language is used and how words and phrases help construct a contextual meaning for cultural discourses are crucial parts of life for everyone within any particular society. Children are no exception to this. They too understand the important role of language in their lives and they exercise their understanding of the intrinsic aspects of language as a

means to experience and express their childhood. In addition, some cultural undertones of the different significations that language holds allows them to interpret how children are different from adults in the way they use language. Therefore, they apply their knowledge of how language is used within their culture to interpret and make sense of their role within the family/society.

Language for children is not only a tool for expressing themselves but also a method for them to differentiate between being adult and being children. They have clear understandings of what is acceptable for children to say and what is not, and also how certain phrases and expressions can only be used by adults or what it would mean if they used phrases or sentences that sound like adults' talk. Batu, in Village School 2, says: 'She could be crazy', referring to the girl in the Pınar sausage advertisement, because she talks like an adult. Mert, in Village School 1, referring to the boy in the same advertisement, says: 'She'll turn 32 soon, but this isn't something that children can say'. All the children in Mert's group express the opinion that they find it funny that children act and talk like adults in the advertisement. Mert continues by saying that I (referring to me) could say Fatos is turning 8 soon but she cannot do the same to me, because I am an adult. In City School 1, Nehir says: 'she talks as if she is the mum and her mum is the child'. All the children I talked to during the course of my research agreed that the way the girl and boy in this advertisement were talking sounded like adult talk regardless of their age or where they lived. In fact, Arda, in City School 2, remarked: 'how about we say we are not so crazy to be talking like that'. The only exception to the rule that they should not talk as if they were adults that they mentioned was if they were playing a role-play game such as 'house'.

Therefore, children recognise certain styles of speech or particular wordings as specific ways of talking only suitable for adults and that they can only use these forms if they are playing a game in which they imitate adults. This is due to the fact that children can differentiate themselves from adults. Adult ways of doing and saying things, even telling someone's age, as the boy in the advertisement was doing, are different from the way they feel is normal for them to do it. Clearly, children can establish themselves as different; however, a closer look at

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the styles of speech they were distancing themselves from would once again reveal the theme that has been repeated over and over in this thesis. The way that both the girl and the boy were acting in the Pınar sausage advertisement was representing the stereotypical adult reaction to children, in which the adult is showing affection to a child and emphasising her/his cuteness and sweetness. Laden, in Village School 2, says: 'I mean she shouldn't do something like this to someone older than her', while talking about the way the girl in the advertisement referred to the lady in the supermarket as 'oh dear, oh dear' while squeezing her cheeks.

Children tend to distance themselves from this form of approach towards adults because they believe, as Gül from City School 1 points out when I ask them if there are differences between the way adults and children talk, that: 'adult stuff is different, children's stuff is different, my mother's, I mean, adult's … we cannot interfere', and Beran and Nehir continue the sentence by saying: 'you can get angry with us but we can't get angry with you'. For them, the dominance of adult identity is very clear, hence they realise that their words and expressions cannot be undermining or mischievous towards adults. Hence, through the cultural practices around styles of speaking and the use of certain phrases, children are kept in their place and they are made to believe that it would be 'crazy' for them to assume styles of speech that denote adult connotations of care and affection.

Another issue related to the way children use language relates back to the issue of age as well as highlighting the differences children see between themselves and adults, which will be the topic of the next chapter. As was briefly described in Chapter IV, in the Turkish language the plural 'you' is used to refer to people significantly older and in cases where two people do not know each other well. It is customary for people to refer to superiors with the plural 'you' even though they are talking to only one person. Metin, from Village School 2, who is 10, mentions that he did not have to pay attention to how he talked when he was little but now that he is older he feels he needs to be formal while talking to adults he does not know. In response to the Ülker Galery advertisement, in which the children are employing the plural second person towards each other, all the

children I talked to mentioned that they only talk to strangers and to their teacher in that manner. However, teachers do not refer to children in the same manner. Therefore, language is yet another concept that plays a part in maintaining the relationship of subordination and domination between children and adults.

In this chapter, I have examined how children not only underestimate themselves because of how adults underestimate them but also sacrifice their childhood in an attempt to exercise what they have come to believe is the right behaviour towards children younger than themselves. As was discussed in the section entitled, 'Me and others', children learn to act in a decisive and prejudiced manner towards younger children, which is the approach adults take towards them.

In addition, I have highlighted the cultural, social and linguistic aspects that influence childhood and the discourses that help maintain the hierarchical relationship between children and adults. The dominance of adults in the lives of children and the culture that is structured around the concept of children being dependent on and subordinate to adults, causes adults to make decisions on behalf of children without the need to negotiate with them or to consult them. Even acts on the part of the adults that are seemingly considerate towards children can, in fact, be very misleading. When considering children's wellbeing, isolating them from the very discussions that surround their lives not only leads to the undermining of children but also causes them to undermine themselves. A relatively recent example of such an issue where adults' understanding of consideration is nothing but a misdirection, is the changing of certain words and lines in nursery rhymes like 'Humpty Dumpty,[89] which points to a mutual perspective on childhood both for those who claim the change is necessary[90] and those who are against it. The voices that claim children need happy ever afters as opposed to the voices that state 'I have heard it as a child and I am fine' are all adult voices. These adults, regardless of their viewpoint, are making decisions on

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[89] see http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1221355/BBC-takes-big-fall-changes-words-Humpty-Dumpty-rhyme.html and http://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/tv-radio/humpty-dumpty-had-a-great-fall-but-dont-worry-hell-be-fine-1804870.html as an example, accessed 29th October 2009.
[90] Even though official statements made by BBC claim the change to be for 'creative reasons' it is widely believed, as it can be seen in the examples provided that it is done 'not to upset children'.

behalf of children. Adults claim to know what is best for children more often than necessary, which consequently undermines the possibility that children might want to have a say in matters that concern them.

My aim in this chapter was to highlight the importance of listening to children's voices as opposed to silencing them and locking their unique experience of being a child into certain restricted and limited stereotypical and mainstream views that view childhood as merged with adulthood because of technological advances and how childhood is represented in the media or view children as merely 'adults in the becoming' who are 'cute and vulnerable'. The next chapter will focus on the differences between adults and children looked at from children's point of view.

CHAPTER VI: CHILDREN'S ADULTHOODS

As I established in Chapter II, childhood as a socially constructed concept cannot be divorced from adulthood, either conceptually, defining childhood in relationship to adulthood, or empirically, experiencing childhood together with adulthood within the same cultural and similar contextual contexts. On the one hand adulthood and childhood are defined in opposition to each other, on the other hand they are intertwined with each other. This is what makes the connection between children and adults a very interesting one to study, not only at a conceptual level but also at an empirical one. It should be mentioned that, while the relationship between adults and children can be explored at many different levels, I will be paying specific and focused attention to issues that concern, and revolve around, children's relationships with adults as parents and as teachers.

The interrelated characteristic of the relationship between adults and children cannot be generalised, not only because the role of each adult interacting with each child or group of children is different, but also because individual, cultural and social circumstances might produce completely different interpretations of how this relationship is practised. Nevertheless, the dominant discourses on how the relationship between children and adults plays out help to shape this relationship and, hence, how childhood is understood within any given society. To explore the ways in which adults construct their relationships with children, which in turn construct children's relationships with adults, helps us deconstruct the discourses behind childhood. Therefore, an analysis of the intricacies of this relationship requires an overall understanding of cultural discourses that encompasses the socialisation process that children go through in different institutions, as well a consideration of individual circumstances of how different dynamics within this relationship work.

Children and adults living within the same social and geographical space share the same culture but understand it in their own ways, and in their own language. Their interpretations are, or can be, immensely different from one another, hence they live together whilst at the same time experiencing life differently. Yet, in general,

adults play a crucial role in shaping childhood for children. From early on, starting with family life, through to schooling, children are presented with concepts and phenomena which adults refer to as rules, values, norms dos and don'ts.[91] In essence, their institutionalisation establishes their place within society.[92] As Alanen (1988) points out:

> ... the child remains *negatively defined* – defined only by what the child is *not* but is subsequently going to be, and not by what the child presently *is*. The child is depicted as pre-social, potentially social, in the process of becoming social – essentially undergoing socialization. (Alanen, 1988, p.56)

Children's socialisation through different institutions forms a large part of how their childhoods are constructed. In fact, Jackson and Scott (2006) state that even 'children's participation in constructing their own everyday world takes place within the constraints set by their subordinate location in relation to adults' (p.218). They further establish that the historical and cultural construction of adulthood enables parents to, consciously and/or unconsciously, socialise their children (pp.218-222).

Likewise, Lee (2001) traces the reason for adults to socialise children, which I argue leads to underestimating children's agency, to the history of adulthood. He suggests that:

> [The] change in the experience of adulthood is of central importance to the social study of childhood because after some decades of adult stability, we had grown used to making sense of childhood *through* adulthood, interpreting everything children do, or have done to them, in terms of how this will affect their journey towards adulthood, or in terms of what it might tell us about how far a given child has travelled. (Lee, 2001, p.8)

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[91] This of course would not be the case for street children who live independently of adult supervision, though they may come in contact with other forms of adult authority such as the police (see Boyden, 2006; Wells, 2009).
[92] In the last section of this chapter I provide examples of how dominant discourses on gender and age are interpreted, experienced and reflected in children's lives through the advertisement scripts they put into production.

Lee's argument in a way explains why, and how, schooling and hence age-grading works. The stability that adults have acquired within modern capitalist society, which mainly revolves around family, work and socialising with friends, has been reflected in children's lives, with the difference that work has been replaced with schooling. This is seen as the division of labour for the modern family, in which either one or both of the parents work to provide for the family while children go through the education system so that they will be able to do what adults do when they are adults. Also, parents are either inclined towards feeling responsible or held responsible by their surroundings for carrying out the role of passing on cultural norms and social values. However, feeling responsibility towards children and making sure that children are socialised within the boundaries of dominant discourses are different things. On the issue of schooling as a part of the social division of labour, Qvortrup (2005b) states that 'stressing protection and socialization measures at the cost of interpreting schooling as children's participation in the social division of labour was … an irresistible temptation and interest [for the state and businesses], but nevertheless also a way of suppressing children's contributions' (p.7). Therefore, due to an adult-defined childhood and through conceptualising children as adults in the becoming, the dominant discourses around the relationship between children and adults are maintained. However, children are social agents and are well aware of their bodies, their ways and their understandings. In other words, they are conscious of the fact that they are growing up. 'Growing up … is often taken to be a process in which something (a child) turns into its opposite (an adult), a process in which the boundary between becoming and being is crossed' (Lee, 2001, p.8). Children's experience of growing up while going through the process of socialisation evolves into a criss-cross of being and becoming while they constantly interpret and reinterpret their childhoods.

Sinem, from City School 1, points out: 'for example, adults talk about work and children talk about school and classes', because each individual's role within the family is predetermined through institutionalisation. From the point of view of the adults, this is for the 'betterment' of children, it is a result of concern for what sort of adults children will become. The cycle that encompasses the lives of adults and

children within different institutions moulds their relationship into a double-sided coin, with a dichotomy engraved on one side that exacerbates the differences between the two groups, and an intertwined understanding of closeness and togetherness on the other, which highlights the similarities between adults and children that comes from living within the same society. While adults tend to lock their understanding of childhood into the adults the children will one day be, these children make sense of adulthood and the adults around them in reference to themselves, as who they are in the present. Ekrem, from City School 1, for instance, points out: 'I think it's all the same because they [adults] used to watch funny cartoons'. Fatma adds: 'for example, adults don't watch cartoons, some watch football, some though love watching cartoons'. Kerim adds: 'For example, my dad was watching football one day, and another day I was watching football'. From the point of view of Ekrem, Fatma and Kerim, adults are similar to children because they too enjoy the same things.

Theoretically, the quest to understand the relationship between children and adults at different levels would require a variety of approaches, taking into account a multitude of practices and interactions that govern the numerous aspects of their lives. Yet, in practice, the relationship between the two parties is structured enough for it to be understood and taken for granted by both children and adults and at the same time unsystematic and spontaneous enough for it to differ from situation to situation, and also from one individual to another. Furthermore, as aforementioned, generational differences also play a part in enhancing the asymmetrical structure of the relationship between children and adults. As Mayall (2002) points out:

> Relations between men and women or between ethnic groups can, for some purposes, be studied in terms of their relations to the social and temporal space they all live in as a cohort, that is as people born in roughly the same period of time, in the case of children this is not so. (Mayall, 2002, p.28)

This not only highlights questions in regard to social time and the historical construction of childhood and adulthood under different generational circumstances, but also the different interpretations of local cultural values and practices and the temporality that presides over this relationship. Adults and children are bound into historical contexts that shape not only their relationship, but also their roles within society. While children are growing up within this society, adults have themselves grown up within the same society but at a different time and within a different historical context.

In the next section and the following ones, I will attempt to elaborate on some aspects of this relationship in order to take a theoretical look at the practice of the relationship between children and adults within a cultural and social context.

6.1. 'My Day in Your World': Children's Day

As has previously been argued, while childhood is recognised within the historical and social constructions around which children experience childhood, it is crucial for the researcher to let children find ways to express their childhood in their own ways and participate in decision-making through producing and experiencing their own ideas as much as possible. In other words, children should be accepted as 'social actors in the cultural contexts or "developmental niches" that constitute their particular worlds' (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2008, p.27) within a given society. Therefore, Mayall (2002) suggests a multi-layer analysis of the relationship between children and adults. She suggests that, 'in their relationship with adults, children find themselves faced with adult knowledge and experience derived from an earlier time. In turn adults must face up to children's distinctive ways of understanding the social world, derived from their learning' (Mayall, 2002, p.28). In other words, while engaging with children adults should not only incorporate their understanding of childhood and their own experiences, together with social norms and values, but also provide the space and the means for children to express themselves.

The way that children's ideas are utilised by adults reveals a significant amount of information about how children are perceived by adults. In this section, I will demonstrate how the 23rd of April, which is celebrated as 'Children's Day' in Turkey and Northern Cyprus, is imposed on children rather than being exercised *by,* or *with,* children. To this end, I will first provide some historical and background information about Children's Day before I move on to demonstrate the contradictions between how children experience this day with what it stands for.

During the last few years of the Ottoman Empire, the Grand National Assembly was established by Mustafa Kemal on the 23rd of April 1920, in what is now Turkey. Following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923, in 1929 National Sovereignty Day and Children's Day began to be celebrated on the 23rd of April. Mustafa Kemal's famous call to the nation, and to children, 'today's children, tomorrow's adults'[93] explains why the establishment of the Grand National Assembly, signifying Sovereignty, has been associated with children and hence the creation of Children's Day. Since 1935, which was the year in which the two celebrations came to be known as National Sovereignty and Children's Day, the 23rd of April has been a National holiday and has been celebrated nationwide in Turkey and Cyprus since 1958.[94] In 1979, UNESCO recognised the 23rd of April as Children's Day, also proclaiming 1979 as the International Year of the Child.

The reason behind having a Children's Day is closely related to a time when Turkey was going through major cultural, social and economic reforms in a short space of time. These included the alphabet reform in education, the opening of the National Bank and what is referred to as the 'hat reform', changing the cultural acceptance and understanding of dress codes, which were essential in highlighting the importance of children within society and for the future of a newly established state that had fought many wars. All the history books, from basic school books to

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[93] A similar version of the same phenomenon was also used in the Ülker Galery advertisement in which the caption read 'a feast message to today's and tomorrow's children'
[94] In 1958 the island was not divided into two separate territories, hence until 1963 the 23rd of April was celebrated among Cypriot Turks around the island.

academic literature, mention how Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, as he was called following the 'surname reform', upheld children. However, the modern practice of honouring and celebrating Children's Day neither upholds children as the future generation, nor celebrates them as who they are. Officially,[95] children between the ages of 7 and 12 are considered to be the target for the Day's events, though younger children also get involved in celebratory activities and rituals in kindergartens. Generally, each elementary school is responsible for putting on demonstrations, marches and dances on the Day and within the week leading up to and including the 23rd of April. Courses, especially literature, art and social studies, dedicate their content to National Sovereignty Day and Children's Day.

The point I would like to raise in regards to Children's Day stems from the schools' approach to getting children involved and engaged in the Day's activities. The dominant element in causing a divide between appreciating and realising Children's Day as being for and by children and turning it into a routine military-like burden for children, has resulted from the fact that Sovereignty Day was joined with Children's Day. Yet, within the cultural context, to raise such an issue concerning the day, and claim it should be recognised for what it is above and beyond its political and historical significance would be very controversial. Children are taught in history classes that this day was given to them because they are the ones to uphold and maintain sovereignty, yet their thoughts are hardly ever taken into account, even when it comes to how the 23rd of April is celebrated. Children eventually understand for themselves that this day has little to do with them, and that their presence is only to maintain the image of children's involvement. Gamze, in Village School 2, says: 'the 23rd of April can be a torturous day for us'. When I asked why she said: 'Iyy because all the time, open close [demonstrating the moves with her arms] crouch stand'. From the tone of her voice and the facial expressions of all the children in the group it becomes obvious that they not only do not like the rhythmic moves they have to perform on

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[95] The reason for this is that, once children start middle school at 13 years of age, they take part (in almost exactly the same way as elementary school children take part in the 23rd of April celebrations) in the celebrations of another national holiday, which is called the 19th of May Youth and Sports Day. Again this is considered an important date within the history of the Turkish Republic. On the 19th of May 1919, the Turkish War of Independence began against the Allied partitioning of the Ottoman Empire.

the day of the celebrations, but also feel alienated from the concept of the Day. Gamze expressed her feelings about the activities carried out on the 23rd of April during the ice-breaker activity of painting pictures of the rooms they watch television in, before our conversation on the television advertisements started. Metin was taking a long time and drawing a detailed picture, very slowly taking his time, carefully drawing and meticulously filling in his picture when we heard his teacher taking his classmates out for the rehearsals, at which point Metin sighed, explaining that he was taking his time with the painting in order to avoid the rehearsals.

Metin: I get bored of those.

Simge: Yes, I think the teachers are crazy.

Gamze: At first I thought it was going to be fun, told my dad to put yes on the [consent] papers, then I see open close, open close, crouch stand, crouch stand.

Nisan: Yes, for example there is a move you do that four times and go back to the beginning.

Gamze: Military.

Nisan: Never finish a move.

Davita: Isn't the 23rd of April for you though?

Gamze: Yes, but maybe it might be torture day for us. [reiterating]

Simge: If it wasn't for the outfit I wouldn't have done it, I like the outfits.

Figure 8 Picture showing the celebrations carried out on the 23rd of April

Pupils dressed in different colour outfits march to the stadium and demonstrate different collective figures. [96]
Source:http://lh4.ggpht.com/ramiilkogretimokulu/Ri_BYcUT6I/AAAAAAAACY4/VSbY0aqrh3M/23nisan10.jpg

My memories from the mid 1980s and knowledge of the Children's Day celebrations when I was growing up suggest that it has not changed over the years. Each year children are given class assignments and homework to do: paintings related to Children's Day, writing poems or essays about the day, though most of the paintings and a large number of poems and essays, if not all, are heavily based on a discourse of sovereignty with a nationalistic framework rather than on children themselves. This is also the case in Northern Cyprus since the history books used in schools as well as the curriculum are the same. Poems and essays depicting victory, being saved from the enemy, a country governing itself, override any theme to do with children, even though these poems and essays are written by children, which leads children to be alienated from Children's Day. A large number of the pictures painted by students at school would depict the Turkish flag (and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus flag in the case of Northern Cyprus), either held by children or in the corner or as background (as seen in Figure 9 and 10).

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[96] From what I can make out, the pupils in this picture are forming the shape of UNESCO's Children Around the World, holding hands, which symbolises peace. The clash of the flags signifying nationalism is clearly visible, while also being reinforced with the writing on the seats, which is formed by children holding up cards. The writing on the seats reads; 'How happy I am to say I am a Turk', a famous quote by M. K. Ataturk.

Figure 9 An example of a 23rd of April themed drawing

Source: http://www.ozek.org/Bygerek/2007Yarisma/Yarismaresimleri/2007Yarisma002.jpg

Figure 10 An example of a 23rd of April themed drawing

Source:http://www.finlandiyaturkdernegi.fi/faaliyetler/2008/resimler/23Nisan_resim_yarismaUcu ncu Resim.jpg

The rhetoric behind Children's Day and the way in which children actually experience it are very different from each other. The day's activities are organised by schools and the state, decisions about the show that will be put on, the essay topics that will be written, the themes for the pictures to be drawn, are all made by adults. When I asked the group if they had told their teachers this was not what they wanted to do on Children's Day, Simge's reply was: 'even if we did we would be wasting our time'. This is a classic example of adults' undermining of

children and childhoods that affects the way in which the relationship between adults and children are constructed. Since adults can exercise power over children at different levels within the family and the education system, the way they define childhood becomes the dominant way childhood is understood.

This lack of communication and exchange of ideas between adults and children results in parents and teachers leaning towards being protective of children, since they exclude children from the negotiations as active participants, rather than engaging with them. MacKay (1973) points out that 'teachers and other adults remain cultural strangers to the world of children, and their interactions with children often result in the generic type of misunderstanding' (p.31). Referring back to an earlier point, made in reference to Mayall's (2009) argument about identifying children's relationship with adults as different to any other social group that might be studied, MacKay (1973) also notes that 'culturally different persons who are serious about understanding each other spend long periods of time working out [their] ... problems. I can think of no similar attempts on the part of teachers and other adults to understand children' (p.42). Perceiving 'children as relatively passive socialisation objects' (Mayall, 2009, p.176), hence ignoring what James (2009) calls the 'notion of the agentic child' (p.37) results in a gap between adults and children, placing them worlds apart from each other.

6.2. Worlds Apart, Together We Live: Adult-child Relationships from a Different Perspective

Household habits and the division of labour and property within the household are other factors and practices that play crucial roles in setting the parameters of children's actual lives. As Solberg (1997) argues, 'it is the daily life, the dividing up of tasks between family members, and the laying down of rules of conduct that implicitly determines what it means to be a child' (p.126). Therefore, in order to uncover the multiple meanings of childhoods, we also need to concentrate on the relationship between children and their parents. Adults as parents form an important category in analysing the relationship between children and adults, since, generally and traditionally, it is they who feel the pressure from society on

the issue of being 'responsible' for how their children are or will turn out to be. This enhances the hierarchical and unbalanced power dynamics between children and their parents. The same argument could also be made for teachers, with whom the age group of children who participated in this study spend most of their time. In accordance with the scope of my focus groups, in this section I will be paying more attention to how children perceive adults while they engage with their parents and teachers in their daily lives.

In most cases, children have either no or little control over the division of labour and property within the household. The way that they incorporate already-set values on these issues into their lives not only reveals certain aspects of their relationship with their parents, but also identifies a variety of discourses they rely on in order to interpret and make sense of their childhoods. Jackson (1982) states that: 'If a child expresses interest in adult affairs or engages in adult pursuits it is thought unusual, even extraordinary. Children who behave like adults are regarded as at best amusing and at worst thoroughly obnoxious' (p.27). Media texts, advertisements more so than others, are constructed with the aim of provoking emotional experiences that can be rationalised by the audience. While choosing to make children act as adults, producers anticipate how feelings of amusement and/or expressions of distaste will be provoked in the audience. This not only emerges from an embedded and culturally accepted understanding of what childhood is but also reinforces the maintenance of traditional assumptions about how children should act or be. In what follows, I will examine children's experiences and interpretations of the differences between their roles and adults' roles within the family. Continuing the discussion from the previous chapter relating to the ways in which children identify certain linguistic characteristics as belonging to the 'adult world', as opposed to the different speech patterns they use, or do not use, I will elaborate on how children very specifically distinguish their world from that of adults, both in language and actions.

In Village School 2, while we were discussing the Pınar Sausage advertisement where the girl squeezed the cheeks of the woman, the children in the group remarked that I can do this action to them as an adult, whereas they cannot do it to

me as children. I asked them to demonstrate on me, so Onur squeezed my cheeks which led to the laughter of all the children. Onur remarked: 'this doesn't work because I am a child'. 'Because I am a child' is given as a reason for it not being appropriate for certain actions to be performed by children, or not being as effective and also not having the same effect when performed by children. Though, as mentioned before, children's relationships and interactions with adults are also contingent upon who the adults are. Here, in this example, the children all agree that for Onur to be squeezing my cheeks does not work. However, other examples given with other types of adults show that it is not the action per se, but the parties engaged in the interactions that is more important. For instance, in City School 1, Alp says: 'I do that to my Granma, I hold her cheeks like this and give her a kiss'. Demonstrating on his own face, he continues: 'I go, oooo oooo, this is what I do'. When I asked him if he did this when he wanted to show his love towards her, his reply was: 'Yes. Or I do it whenever I feel like it', and Eylül agrees with him, saying she does the same. Almost all the children, including Alp and Eylül, as discussed in Chapters IV and V, deemed the girl in the advertisement 'crazy' or 'inappropriate' because of this very action. The reason why children find that they can be 'cuddly' with their grandmothers, but not towards adults who are strangers, or in some cases, adults as their parents, is partially because of children's ability to recognise and act upon their social status, and partly because of their understanding of the hierarchical power relationships already established between themselves and the adults within their social structure. Apple's (1956) study on 'grandparenthood' shows that 'friendly equality between grandparents and grandchildren appears only with certain patterns of authority in the family' (p.656). She further states that 'when the grandparental generation continues to exercise considerable authority over the parental generation after the grandchildren are born, the relation of the grandchildren to the grandparents will not be one of friendly equality ... when there is no such authority, there will be friendly equality' (p.657).

Similarly, Neugarten and Weinstein (1964) state that when authority is irrelevant in the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren there is a 'latent demand that both parties derive fun from the relationship' (p.202). Since, in most

cases,[97] children do not have the same hierarchical relationship with their grandparents, who do not feel the need to exert authority over their grandchildren, the structure and dynamics of their relationship can be immensely different. This is why children have expressed the opinion that they can give and receive affection to and from their grandparents at any time.

6.2.1 Reduced Childhoods

In order to examine the example above, about the appropriateness of squeezing cheeks, within a broader perspective I will pose and critique two theoretical questions: do children perceive the concept of being a child as a kind of limited adulthood? And: do they perceive adulthood as different from childhood? In light of the focus groups conducted, I believe these two questions cannot be seen as unrelated. They are intertwined in such a way that they cannot be answered independently from each other.

Cultural circumstances, traditional discourses and social structures all play a crucial part in why these questions should be considered together. Children do see themselves as different from adults, and they do experience life with its limitations within any cultural setting. The social interpretations derived from tradition and customs not only frame these questions in an inseparable way but also, as will be argued shortly, provide the structure without which these questions could not be discussed. In addition to this, it should also be taken into account that:

> The parents, through their decisions, are partially responsible for the manner in which community and institutional forces impinge on the child. The parents decide where to live, where the family goes on vacation, whom the child may invite to the house, and often to which evening programs the TV set is tuned. Moreover, the family inevitably interprets this wider community to the child, passing judgement on

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[97] This would be the case if the family structure and living conditions are similar to the children I have talked to. For instance, in some parts of Turkey it is very common, especially for female children, to be scared of their grandfathers since he represents the head of the family, the chief. Many examples can be provided which would show the example given above to be wrong, however my aim here is not to establish an argument based on the outcomes of the focus groups, but to establish the fact that power relations and authority exercised between family members do play a part in how we describe and understand childhood within the family, school and society.

institutions, neighbours, programs, and local group activities. (Elkin, 1960, p.48)

Hence, we can neither explore these questions individually, nor can we make assumptions about childhood and adulthood in separate terms. In City School 1, at one point during our focus group, other children in nearby classrooms came past the room we were in while they were having their recess and started making noise, shouting and throwing curious looks. Beran commented: 'not to worry, I'll go get him now' to which Nehir said: 'sshhhh how rude, while there is such a grown-up person here [referring to me], *you'll* go get him!' Ignoring for the sake of the argument that the action being referred to is not appropriate for an adult or a child, the customary role of children and adults is very obvious in the statement Nehir made. Children are at the receiving end of punishment and lessons to be learned, while adults mete them out. Here, what Nehir is referring to, with regards to childhood, is neither a limited version of being an adult nor a separate entity in itself. She is not saying to her friend that he cannot beat up the other child, nor is she saying that this is not something that children should not do. What she is claiming is that, in the presence of an adult, it is not appropriate for him to challenge a peer, which is a traditional discourse that surrounds childhood and adulthood. This exchange makes it clear that in Nehir's mind the social status of adults and children within the cultural context are different, and hence, the roles of children and adults within the social rules differ. Thus, the asymmetrical and hierarchical relationship between children and adults is once again revealed.

Children comply with adult thinking and rules, either 'because a parent "said so" [or because] the child wanted to be liked by the person issuing the directive' (Stafford & Bayer, 1993, p.35). In this instance, Nehir identifies an opportunity that would result in approval of her actions and thoughts by an adult (me) and performs what has been labelled as the good boy, good girl stage by Kohlberg (1969, 1976) and conformity by Loevinger (1966) (in Stafford & Bayer, 1993, p.35). Nevertheless, whilst Nehir's actions might be interpreted in this way, Beran's individual interpretation of the situation and his words should not be overlooked. It would be at best naïve to assume that his understanding of the

context that we were in was limited. It would also be wrong to ignore his stance and mark it as an issue of upbringing, and hence as his parents' fault. On the other hand, this situation can also be interpreted from the point of view of the first question I posed: it can be said that both Nehir and Beran are exercising their agency in the presence of an adult (me) and displaying how they can use their power, Beran through physical force and Nehir through using her understanding of cultural norms and values.

While discussing children in relation to adults, it is important to recognise, identify and represent *their* views within a cultural discourse rather than merely analysing childhood in relationship to adulthood and vice versa. The dynamics between adults and children and the parameters of their engagements within the framework of this relationship relies heavily on culture, social norms and values. Yet, it should be recognised that neither culture, nor norms and values are properties owned by adults, they are also inclusive of children's presence, and maintained, altered and interpreted by children as well as adults. Taking childhood and adulthood out of these contexts, hence isolating the relationship between children and adults solely into theoretical arguments, would undermine the complexity of both childhood and adulthood. Therefore, the questions I posed earlier need to be answered within cultural and social contexts.

Having pointed out the importance of cultural frameworks, I will now attempt to uncover some aspects relating to the first question: do children perceive the concept of being a child as a kind of limited adulthood? Since children present a good awareness of the things they like which they experience as being advantages in their lives, this question could also be rephrased as: do children perceive the concept of being an adult as a kind of limited childhood? For instance, in Village School 2, while we were discussing differences between adults and children with regards to food,[98] I asked them whether they see a difference between the food they eat and the food adults eat, or if there is a difference between food for children and for adults. All the children in the group agreed that food for adults

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[98] It should be mentioned that in Northern Cyprus children are not given a different menu or dish from adults for lunch or dinner. Whatever is cooked for dinner is eaten by the whole family. In restaurants a children's menu, if present, would only offer less food, not anything different.

and children should not be different because, according to them, any difference is simply a matter of personal taste. However, Su remarked: 'but for someone going to university to eat Cici Bebe[99] I think it is a bit not normal'. Therefore, even though in general, for them, food is a matter of taste rather than a divide between adults and children, they occasionally find examples of extremes that are, or should be, limitations on either children or adults. Another example given, for instance, was cigarettes. Seemingly unrelated, when I asked them if they can think of something that adults eat but would be awkward for children to eat, Gülçin, after thinking for a while and a long pause, said: 'for example things like vegetables, sometimes children don't like, adults eat' which is liking versus not liking, rather than a cultural conceptualisation of food for children. The conversation went on for another few minutes, with the children telling me about what they or their siblings like or dislike, then I rephrased my question, reiterating my point.

Su: For example there are drinks.

Gülçin: Coke, for example, is forbidden because I put on weight.

Su: For example cigarettes.[100]

Sude: Cigarettes are extremely dangerous, my sister's friend said there is polish remover, carbon dioxide, lots of things in it.

Su: Nicotine.

Davita: So, children should not consume harmful things?

Merve: Adults shouldn't either but in the past technology wasn't so advanced so they didn't know, and because they started now it's not easy for them to stop.

Hence, unless it is specific food for babies or something both physically and socially harmful, children in Northern Cyprus do not see food as something that divides themselves and adults. In fact, when Su mentions Cici Bebe, Merve

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[99] A type of high calcium biscuits for babies that are mashed with milk as a supplement to breast-feeding.

[100] In Turkish, the verb for cigarette smoking is the same as 'drinking', so a literal translation would be drinking cigarettes, which is why they provided it as an example while talking about food/beverages.

responds by saying: 'if he [Su's brother at university] likes it, it is normal I think'. Food consumption and food as a concept is a cultural and social variant and can be used in a variety of different ways to construct different discourses and meanings. However, when the children I talked to thought about whether food can be considered to set differences between themselves and adults, they said that they did not think so. Rather, they consider it to be a matter of individuals' choice about different foods, including their own.

When considering different actions that might give the impression of children's limitations in comparison to adults, their examples are rational, and from their point of view are not considered to be limitations. In City School 1, Kerim says: 'grown-ups can drive, children can't'. Fatma adds: 'but children can ride bikes'.[101] The difference Fatma sees between adults and children has to do with how she understands body size and related activities because a second or so later, when she gets the opportunity, she finishes her sentence by saying: 'for example, children can ride bikes but adults can't'. Similarly, Ekrem reveals that he sees the difference in how a person's size, and in comparison to this their ability, is perceived. He states: 'we aren't scared of climbing up there [trees] but they [adults] are scared of us climbing up. For example the roof, they are there[102] but still they want me to come[103] because they are scared'. Hence, it can be concluded that, from the point of view of children, being a child is simply different from being an adult. It is not a mere stage that they go through while they live with limitations until they become adults. They identify themselves as different from adults as far as their observations and the skills that they recognise are concerned. They are also aware of the fact that they are growing and one day will be able to drive and carry out the other 'grown-up' actions. However, children being self-aware of their condition and observant of their physical abilities is not the same thing as adults considering them as 'adults to be'.

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[101] In Cypriot Turkish society it is not very common to see adults riding bikes as a means of transportation or as sport.

[102] As in they are in close proximity where they can keep an eye on him.

[103] What he means is that his parents want him to go near them, i.e. down from the roof.

On the other hand, the limitations that they recognise, as children, have more to do with the negotiation process that Solberg (1997) describes, which I referred to as dilemmas in the previous chapter. It is these limitations that encompass the cultural rules, values and norms of the adult world that children are introduced to without any control or say. In City School 1, Beran and Nehir both said that they cannot be angry with adults but adults can be angry with them. Referring to me, they say: 'you can get angry with us, but we can't be angry with you'. Gül says: 'Adults recognise different things, children recognise different things, my mum's, I mean adults ... we cannot interfere with adults'. In essence, what they are all referring to has to do with the limitations of childhood, though not from their point of view, but from the point of view of adults. They learn that they have no right to feel or at least express anger towards an adult, and they cannot interfere in their business or lives. It is the lack of negotiation between adults and children, causing the dilemmas for children in understanding childhood for themselves, that is embedded in these statements made by children. This hierarchical structure reduces the interpretation of childhood to a limited version constructed by adults, which alienates children and undermines childhood.

6.2.2 Divergence of Childhood and Adulthood

The second question I posed, which has more to do with children's perception of their childhood as different from adulthood, should not be thought of as exclusive to adulthood per se. Children recognise the binary relationship between adults and themselves. In City School 2, when I asked the children if they could think of other examples of differences between adults and children after having had the discussion on language use differences, Arif stated: 'children think differently, adults think differently that is why children have different thoughts'. This statement clearly states Arif's view on why children with their own rights and thoughts should be considered different to adults. The reason he puts forward from his point of view is simply put, children are different from adults.

In City School 2, the children state that the biggest difference they see between themselves and adults has to do with responsibilities. I asked them if they believed

children would want to be like adults sometimes. Naz and Cemre agreed that children want to grow up and be like adults, however, Murat goes on to say: 'it is because they [children] don't know the hardship of adulthood'. Naz provides examples: 'for example to work and to pay the electricity bills', and Arda adds to her comment by stating: 'if you got a car there is the car payments every month'. Cemre agrees and adds: 'for example, even if you are tired the kids want to go out and you've got to take them places, and what have you'. The identification children make with adults while they talk about responsibilities and the 'hardship' of everyday life, and the way they phrase their sentences in the last two quotes as if they are the adults, which is followed by Naz's expression of empathy towards her mother when she says: 'my mummy says "we are tired" and I understand them and I am considerate when it comes to this', can be interpreted, on the one hand, as how children observe and understand adult life, while at the same time they feel apart from it to the extent that, in order to talk about discourses of adulthood, they rephrase their words with those of adults. On the other hand, even though they answered positively when asked whether children would sometimes want to be like adults, their answers indicate that this is a general belief, while as themselves, they recognise that it is not what they would want since the differences in the way they think, live and talk would go beyond such an impossible desire. It should also be mentioned again that they are aware of the fact that they are, in actual fact, growing up.

On a different note, in Village School 2, while talking about the differences between being an adult and a child, the discussion takes a different route towards discussing gender rather than the differences between adults and children. Metin says: 'the most difficult thing is to be a mother … they give birth, man, it is rude to say, dads just put in the seed'. Gamze offers her arguments and adds: 'yes, but they get circumcised and they have to go do military service, these are hard too'. Nisan agrees with Gamze, saying: 'the hardest for men is the military'. They all specify that the gender differences mentioned are for adults, which is how they perceive the difference, since all four of them agree on what childhood is like; they describe it as being 'fun' and 'nice'. It is worth noting that, while the male children mention the difficulties of female adults, male adults' difficulties in life

are stated by the females. Having given this example, I believe the issue of gender for children should not be overlooked. In an earlier example provided from City School 1, the conversation between Beran and Nehir clearly points to the fact that when children are establishing their social status within a context they do bring gender and power relations to the table, such as Beran wanting to hit the boys outside and Nehir shutting him down.

Children's views and perceptions of adults and adulthood are important, not because they will grow up to be adults, but because the things these perceptions are based on can highlight certain aspects of the relationship between adults and children. Children's lives and their surroundings are significantly shaped by adults. As I have shown earlier in this chapter, even on a day dedicated to them and dedicated to appreciating children's importance, they suffer adult judgements and structures. When one contrasts the examples I provided regarding the 23rd of April, Children's Day, with the joyful way they talk about Bayram, and the ease with which they explain their fun, it becomes even more clear how children's views, wishes and interpretations are ignored by adults. Regardless of the fact that the arrangements adults choose to put into place for children are for their physical and mental well-being, unless these arrangements and discourses around which childhood is based are built upon with children's participation, their role within society as active agents can only be theoretical. Differences in life-style, possessions, language use, behaviour and thinking between children and adults should be negotiated and understood by both children and adults.

Through exploring certain aspects of the relationship between children and adults, particularly as parents, I have analysed children's perceptions of adulthood and childhood. In doing so, I have questioned both the role of adults and the role of the dominant discourses that encircle the lives of children as well as adults in constructing and maintaining the social status of children within the family, the education system and society in general. In the next section I will present different representations of the relationship between adults and children put forward *by* the children who participated in this study within the context of the advertisements they produced as the last activity of the focus groups.

6.3 Children's Advertisements

Before I conclude this chapter, I will present the ways in which the children who participated in this study differentiated themselves from adults through the advertisements they produced the end of the focus groups. As mentioned in Chapter III, at the end of each focus group I provided the children with two different-sized boxes and asked them to produce a television advertisement using these boxes. It was up to them to decide which sized box would represent an item for adults. While the majority of the groups opted to choose the bigger box to represent something that an adult would want to have, a couple of the groups decided that the bigger box should belong to the children.[104] I will mainly present how the children carried out this activity without comments or analysis because I believe that their involvement in this activity, their engagements with each other and the way in which they allocated each box to represent a certain item for children and adults all represent different aspects of how they interpret adulthood through their observations within their families. This activity also reveals how children interpret their status within the family. In fact, as will become apparent shortly, the examples below speak for themselves, and especially when considered within the theoretical framework that I have established in this thesis from Chapter II onwards, they provide the grounding verification for why it is essential to deconstruct the dominant discourses that surround the lives of children in order to study childhood.

In the first focus group in Village School 1,[105] which was comprised of children between the ages of seven and eight, when I explained[106] to them what they were going to do, their first reaction was to ask me or tell me how they were going to allocate the boxes. I told them it had to be a group decision and that I was not going to participate[107] that this was their production. They eventually decided that the small box would represent D-Smart (the Digitürk channel package for

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[104] The reasons for why the children chose either option and how this played out in their advertisements are included in the scripts.

[105] The village school in the rural village where general income and education levels are low.

[106] The same can be said in general for the majority of the focus groups.

[107] It was also explained to them that if they chose to give me a role in their script that would be fine and that I would participate in that way or that I could be the camera operator.

children) and the bigger box would represent a car for adults. Mert took the small box and started shouting: 'come on people, here here', in the manner of a sales person in an open bazaar for fruit and vegetables. Ferdi on the other hand took the big box and started speaking as if he were an auctioneer, shouting: 'Going, going, it's going'. In the end, they decided that Mert was a sales person and Ferdi was out to buy D-smart. In a very realistic manner Ferdi asked for the price, Mert stated it was 150. Ferdi put his hand in his pocket and took out a few pogs,[108] handed them over to Mert as if they were money and got the box. When I reminded the boys that this was a group activity they had another go with a similar script, this time with the girls selling the product and Mert as buyer.

In the second group the children (between the ages of eight and nine) again unanimously decided that the bigger box would be something for adults and the smaller one for children. Upon Pınar's suggestion, they decided that the bigger box would represent a watch and after a discussion they decided that the small box would be a packet of crisps. At first they could not decide which advertisement to do first, so we drew straws to decide. The first advertisement to be made was for a packet of crisps and there were plenty of suggestions as to how to shoot it. Pınar suggested it could be given as a present in the advert. Berin suggested there could be a dad in the advert who has come home from work bringing crisps for his children. Mehmet thought it would be better if they were all sitting around a table with plateful of crisps on the table and they all had glasses of coke with it. Berna also thought that having one of them acting as dad would be better. They settled on a script that had elements of each idea and allocated different corners of the room we were in as kitchen and living room. Pınar, acting as mum in the advertisement, went to the kitchen corner while Berin and Berna sat down in the living room area. Mehmet, the only male child in the group, went outside the room (house). Berin and Berna started playing clapping games while Pınar pretended to cook. Mehmet knocked on the door and Pınar went to answer

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[108] A pog is a round plastic disc which has the picture of a cartoon or animation character on it. Children play with them, the rules of the games played using pogs vary according to the characteristics of the characters on the pogs and the story of each animation. They are often given away in crisps packets as promotion and children often collect these and exchange with each other to obtain their favourites.

it, greeting her pretend husband she said: 'welcome'. Mehmet walked in as the children stood up and said: 'welcome dad'. Mehmet turned to Pınar and said: 'bring in the plate'. The girls started giggling as Pınar went into the kitchen and came back with a pretend plate. Mehmet took the box he was hiding behind his back, held it over the 'plate' and started shaking it as he made the sound of crisps falling on the plate. Berin and Berna cheered: 'Oleeey' and Pınar asked: 'would you like some coke with it?' and the children answered positively, bringing their first advertisement to a close.

For the second advertisement, which was for a watch, they decided the watch would be a present for the dad. They kept the same roles in the family and decided that the two girls and the mother would be out shopping while the dad waited at home for his birthday present. Mehmet said he would rather bake the birthday cake than wait. The advertisement started with all the girls knocking on the door. Mehmet opened the door as he said: 'welcome' and the two girls shouted: 'we're home'. Pınar (the mother) asked if he had finished baking the cake. Mehmet said he was still making it, that she should be patient. Berna sat down and said: 'dad, what's the date today?' Mehmet answered: 'it's the first'. Pınar interjected with a complaining tone and said: 'where are the strawberries? There are no strawberries on here'. Mehmet, pretended to decorate the cake with strawberries and responded: 'there are strawberries and now let's put a candle in the middle'. He then asked the group how old they thought he should be and they decided that he should be thirty-eight. Then he took a pretend lighter and lit the candles at which point all the girls started singing a happy birthday song and Berna gave him the box. Mehmet took the box and said: 'let's pretend I took the watch out of the box and put it on my arm', after which they all started laughing, which marked the end of the advertisement.

In Village School 2, there were three focus groups. In the first one, with children all aged seven, they decided that the small box should represent a toy. Ayşe, being the only girl in the group, said: 'you'll all probably want it to be a car'. Berke said that it didn't have to be a car but that it should not be a doll. They decided to keep it generic. For adults they decided that the big box would represent clothing. For

the toy advertisement they agreed on a script that involved Ahmet, acting as the child, receiving the toy as gift from his parents. Ayşe was acting as the mother and Berke as the father. Upon agreeing the script, Ahmet asked: 'mum what did you get me?' Ayşe handed the box over to Ahmet and said it was a surprise. Ahmet took the box and pretended to unwrap it and said it was a toy bus. For the second advertisement Onur, who was supposed to be the elder son in the family according to their script, did not want to take part. The father, Berke, drove the family to the shops and Ahmet bought clothing for his mother. A similar conversation was acted out as in the first ad, this time with Ayşe asking Ahmet what he got for her.

The second group, with children between the ages of nine and ten, also decided that the small box would represent a toy for children and the big box would represent either shoes or clothing for adults. Metin said he did not want to participate and the girls decided among themselves that Simge would be the mother and Gamze and Nisan would be the children. According to the script, suggested by Nisan, the mother would buy them a toy and the children could not share it among themselves and would argue. So Simge took the small box, walked over towards Gamze and Nisan and said: 'kids, look I got this for you but you should decide how to share it and play with it'. The girls took the box and each one started pulling it from one side arguing and shouting: 'mine', 'no mine', 'no she bought it for me', 'no for me'. Finally Nisan pulled it out of Gamze's hands and started cheering: 'it's mine, mine' as Nisan pretended to cry. At this point, Simge got up from her seat and said: 'kids stop fighting, it's for both of you, you should agree to share and play together'. Gamze protested by crossing her arms and said: 'no, no, no we want different toys for each of us' and Nisan also crossed her arms as she agreed with Nisan, saying: 'yes'. Simge, with a grin on her face, said: 'well then, no toys for either of you from now on'.

For the second advertisement with the big box, the two girls from the earlier script pretended to buy it as a present for their mother. Simge took the box and pretended to unwrap it and said she liked it a lot and thanked the girls.

The third group, with children between the ages of ten and eleven, had a long discussion about what the big box for adults should represent. They came up with things ranging from a mobile phone to a refrigerator and finally decided that it should be a video camera. The reason for eliminating the mobile phone was that children can have them as well.[109] They eliminated the refrigerator because it would only be used by mothers, even though Merve said: 'yes but fathers pay for it and mothers use it, so we can do an advertisement for it'. Then, upon Su's suggestion that it should be an electronic item, Merve suggested it should be a video camera because adults would not let children use it. For the small box, without any discussion they all agreed that it should be a toy. After a few minutes of discussion among themselves on how to do the advertisement, they decided it was not going to be possible for them to produce a script for an advertisement on any generic toy, and so they needed to specify what the toy was. Following Sude's suggestion, they settled on a Rubik's Cube. The advertisements for both products were more like an advertorial. Su and Sude took the box, holding it with one hand and looking through one corner of it, pretending there was a view-finder on it, while Merve and Gülçin sat across from them asking questions about the item. Su explained that this particular item was only for adults and that children would not be allowed to touch it. She added that it is useful for capturing memories and saving them. Gülçin asked: 'does it not do anything else?' to which Sude answered: 'it can also take photographs'. Then Su passed the box over to Sude and said: 'would you like to market this item now?' After Sude took the box, Merve asked: 'once the memories are captured in this thing what happens, do we get to see them?' Sude's answer was: 'you can write them on a cd'. Merve asked a follow-up question: 'well we write it on a CD, now it's on a CD, how do we watch them?' Su and Sude whispered among themselves for a while and then put the box down and took the small box and handed it to Merve and Gülçin. The children changed places. Su and Sude seated themselves while Merve and Gülçin took their place as presenters. Gülçin started her explanation of the Rubik's Cube. Su sarcastically asked: 'what does it do?' Merve's answer was: 'it doesn't do

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[109] This group was under the impression that they had to find an object that could only be used by adults for one box and only by children for the other box for it to be good representation. I did not get involved with their discussions once they had started so they chose the products with this assumption in mind.

anything but it can give you a hand habit'. Gülçin added that it was a toy that helped increase our intelligence. Sude's question was: 'does it tire our intellect or does it not?' and Su added: 'or does it cause an addiction?' Merve answered: 'it doesn't tire us but it challenges us, so it generally is tiring', with which they concluded the advertisement/advertorial.[110]

In City School 1, the first group of children, between the ages of eight and nine, decided that the big box would be a glass for adults and the small box would be a Wix Club watch for children. Nehir suggested that Beran could act as the father, İlknur as the mother and Gül as their child and she herself would be the neighbour who came to visit bearing gifts for this family. They decided that Beran, as the father, should put his feet on the table and pretend to watch television while İlknur, the mother, should pretend to get on with household chores and Gül, acting as the child, would be playing. They acted out the scene with Nehir pretending to knock on the door. The mother in the scene, İlknur, answered the door and the neighbour presented the gifts to her. The mother called for Gül, who was pretending to play in her room. She took the small box from her mother and gave Nehir a hug and thanked her. İlknur took the big box to Beran who tossed it carelessly over the table, put his head back, crossed his arms and pretended to fall asleep with his feet still up on the table.

The children (aged between eight and nine) in the second group in City School 1 had a long discussion about which box should represent what but in the end decided that they could not produce an advertisement. In general, Sinem and Ekrem thought the small box should be for children because they are small (young) and allocated the box to be a moneybox, and the big box for adults to represent a bed. Fatma and Kerim on the other hand wanted the big box to represent something for children, which they decided should be a computer, and

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[110] It is worth mentioning that two of the children in this group were in the 5th grade where they have to compete for places in secondary schools with good reputations through exams. Especially in the peripheral areas around the cities, the pressure on children to pass these exams to get into city schools is immense. In addition to this they live in a village where everyone knows each other and it is common to come across parents who compete with other parents about how well their children are doing. When considered within this context, their attempts to make the others feel like they have failed makes a rather interesting point.

the small box to represent a car for adults. They claimed adults would not need to get big presents.

The children in the third group, all aged eleven, thought along the same lines as Fatma and Kerim, that children do not need to buy adults big presents. Therefore they[111] allocated the big box to represent something for children, which they decided would be a teddy bear, and the small box for adults, which represented a watch. They decided that Alp and Çise would act as children and Eylül would act as their mother. They pretended they were out shopping. Alp and Çise took the small box, placed it in the far corner of the room and Eylül placed the big box away from them. According to their script, while shopping the children spot a watch that their mother would like, at the same time as their mother spots a teddy bear for her children. Çise ran towards her mother to ask for money so she could buy her the watch while Eylül hid the box, i.e. the 'teddy bear' behind her back to surprise her children later. Eylül took pretend money out of her pocket and gave it to Çise. She ran back to the far corner towards Alp. They took the box, brought it to the front of the room and wrote a happy birthday message on it for their mother. According to the script, when they came back home, the children hid the watch they got for their mother in her bedroom and pretended to be studying in their room. Their mother came in to check up on them. Upon seeing that they were studying she gave them the box. Alp and Çise tried to pull the box away from each other, to which Eylül said: 'children you should play together not fight'. Then Alp said: 'ooh by the way mum your bed is broken again'. Eylül replied: 'you've done it again haven't you?' and walked off towards the area where the children had placed the small box earlier. She picked up the box, read the message and ran towards her the children cheering: 'oooo my lovelies I love you lots, thank you very much'. Shortly after this, Çise looked at the camera and waved her hands to signal that their advertisement was finished.

The children in the first focus group in City School 2, aged between nine and ten, did not act in quite the same way as the other groups did, however they had some

[111] In this group, Cem had to leave the focus group before it finished because of his training so there were only three children left by the time we did the advertisement production.

interesting ideas for the boxes. They allocated the small box for children to be a fairground. According to the script they had a father who would pay an architect to build a fairground for children. The big box represented white goods for adults.

The second group, with children aged between ten and eleven, also decided that the big box would represent white goods for adults and the small box should represent an Elektro Minis, which is a hand-held games console. At first Naz tried to convince the group that the small box should be for adults because she said: 'adults can be happy with the smallest of things', however the rest of the group disagreed with her. Cemre said children were smaller and therefore the small box should be for children. Cemre and Arda came up with some slogans and catchphrases to advertise Elektro Minis such as: 'are you bored? With Elektro Minis boredom is over, here is Elektro Minis, it will make your life full', and Naz acted them out with hand gestures while she shouted, repeating the slogans.

Overall, most children who took part in this study combined role-playing with different techniques that they had seen in television advertisements as well as incorporating their own observations of relationships between adults and relationships between adults and children for this activity. Their approach to describing, talking about and marketing a particular product or good through gender-specific roles that they assigned to each other, as well as the roles they assigned to adults versus the roles they assigned to children in their scripts, confirms many of the issues I have raised in this study in regard to adulthood and childhood. In addition, the way they portrayed the mother, as a reconciler between siblings, who rewards children when they are studying and who tells them they cannot get rewards if they continue to argue, and as the person who does the housework around the house, in comparison to the way they portrayed the father as watching television with his feet up or driving the car to the shops, can all be located within cultural and social practices. Neither these, nor the fact that in the small village school children chose a packet of crisps to advertise while in the city school similar-aged children chose speciality watches and computers to represent something for children, are parts of a childhood that is natural or that can be romanticised. Nor do they represent a childhood that is problematic in that the

definition of childhood is changing. In concluding this chapter, I would like to emphasise that what these examples highlight, from my point of view, is the need to interrogate the knowledge of childhood in order to uncover what children's perception and understanding of childhood are, as opposed to taking adults' unserstandings of childhood for granted.

CONCLUSION

This study began as an attempt to understand how children interpret childhood. However, I quickly realised that this could only be an overarching objective rather than the main purpose of the study since such an endeavour would be over ambitious. Childhood studies and work on the sociology of childhood are growing and expanding with each and every study. In recent years the number of studies that include children's voices to a greater extent within research has been growing exponentially. This study follows this tradition, by involving children's views and opinions and also by providing children with the incentive to participate in certain parts of the methodology. It also extends this focus on children's own voices to children as audience,[112] as past studies of childhood have rarely discussed media images with children. I achieved the inclusion of children's voices through my research design and by giving children the opportunity to choose their pseudonyms for the study, letting them lead the discussions and giving them the space to express their experiences in their own ways, as well as giving them the choice of participating in whatever stages of the research they wanted to. More importantly however, this is the first study that explores media images of children and childhood within the geographical context of North Cyprus. In fact, this is the first ever qualitative research, to my knowledge, that has been carried out in North Cyprus on childhood and with children.

In Chapter I, I introduced the social context of this study as well as provide definitions to concepts that are crucial for my theoretical framework such as power, identity and agency. I also demonstrated that theories and perspectives from to a variety of traditions can be deployed together in order to explore different dimensions of children's lives and their relationships with each other and with adults. This chapter set up children's current position within different institutions and relations where children's childhood is bound within adult institutions and by adults' judgement, nonetheless establishes that children are active agents. Therefore, I explored children as subjects within the discourse of

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[112] Buckingham's (see 2003, 2004) work in this area is important, however he does not systematically engage with recent developments in childhood studies.

childhood and also demonstrated how their subjective agency should not be overlooked..

In Chapter II, through drawing on two fields, I have not only promoted the multidisciplinary approach to childhood and childhood studies, but have also demonstrated how theories and methodologies from different disciplines can be productively combined. I have drawn media studies and childhood studies together in order to explore different aspects of childhood. A similar approach could be applied in relation to many other disciplines in order to enhance the scope of childhood studies. In the case of this study however, what has emerged is a parallel between media studies and the sociology of childhood. This parallel demonstrates the similarities that are present in the way media studies have approached the concept of audience and the way children have been considered in studies on childhood. I have shown how, in each field, audiences and children, respectively, were once considered passive, gullible and impressionable, but that there has been a shift towards considering audiences and children as active agents, capable of interpreting the world around them. This shift is suggestive of a greater emphasis on human agency, while recognising that agency is always exercised within constraints and that the meaning agents generate may derive from, as well as challenge or renegotiate dominant discourses. My aim in this chapter was not only to establish an academic context for my study but also to suggest that identifying the convergences and divergences between disciplines within the social sciences can carry them further and beyond disciplinary boundaries, encouraging debates that address multiple layers of different perspectives and approaches.

In Chapter III I demonstrated how this theoretical framework influenced my methodology. I explain how I analysed advertisements depicting children, conducted focus groups with children and drew out themes from the resulting data.

Chapter IV consisted of my analysis of the television advertisements. I not only applied discourse analysis to analyse these advertisements but also followed the

tradition of analysing media texts while at the same time incorporating the interpretations of the readers of these texts (Moores, 1990). Thornborrow (1998) argues that 'the media represent a discursive domain where children are participating very much on adult terms, both with regard to the activities they are involved in, and what they can get to say' (p.151). She further establishes in her research, which focuses on children's participation in children's television, that 'the discursive frameworks within which children can participate ... are highly circumscribed, with children taking up restricted participatory roles when interacting with adults, and reproducing an adult media genre through a largely scripted role-play when there were no adults present on screen' (p.151). The second part of her statement is precisely what my analysis of the television advertisement has also shown. In two of the advertisements I analysed, where adults were not present, Ülker Galery and Nesquik, children's scripts and roles involved an act of adulthood in both their actions and language. In the advertisements that I analysed, the role of children was in the foreground, both when they were role-playing in the Pınar sausage advert and when they were not, as in the Digitürk and Çokokrem adverts. However, this has less to do with the hoped-for active involvement of children than it has with advertising and marketing techniques, which is also a point that the children in my focus groups made in regard to these depictions of children.

These interpretations were grounded in the cultural and social context within which the children involved in this research live. Bearing in mind that childhood is socially constructed it is consequential that it is constructed differently in different places and it is temporal. Hence, context is paramount in this study, not only because childhood needs to be studied within its cultural and social context due to its construction occurring within these contexts, but also because discourses gain their meaning through and within social and cultural contexts. Thus, in chapters that followed, while analysing and interpreting children's experiences, I often referred to their (and my) cultural and social surroundings. I tried to incorporate both the broader social context and the relatively narrower social surroundings into my analysis, ranging from frameworks of national and religious discourses to dinner-table habits. While further follow-on studies can

separate these approaches and bring forward a more in-depth understanding of either the broader or the narrower contexts, my aim in adopting a combination of these approaches was to offer an overall picture of where Northern Cypriot children are and how they see themselves and their role within their family, school and society. This has enabled me to explore children's lives in relation to the media, their relations with adults in different situations and under different circumstances, and also their perceptions of and relations with their peers.

For instance, in Chapter V, I explored the issues such as age and agency that I have raised in regard to childhood which are crucial in terms of empirically locating children within the sociology of childhood in general. Furthermore, these issues need to be explored in relation to childhoods under different circumstances, within individual social and cultural backgrounds, children's role and understanding of the world around them and their relationships with adults and other children. I also emphasised these Cypriot children's perception that adults were more important than them and that their lives were, to an extent, bounded by adult rules. I suggest that in paying attention to children's agency we should also be aware that their ability to act on that agency may be limited by the adults around them and the wider social context.

I go on to consider aspects of this wider social context in Chapter VI. I discussed how the children found it difficult to talk about things that they consider belong to adult discourses without thinking that they should sound like adults. I have also shown how adult discourses and practices that underestimate children cause children to underestimate themselves and their own activities. In addition, I argued that while children are active interpreters who challenge and question the denotative meanings within television advertisements, they do not see themselves as having the power to challenge many aspects of social arrangements adults impose upon them. This is exemplified in the conversations around Children's Day activities. The fact that they also expressed how unnecessary and absurd it would be to voice their opinions on how they thought Children's Day should be celebrated, illustrates their powerlessness particularly within institutional contexts

such as education (which are established with children's needs in their core) in Northern Cyprus.

As adults, we can only understand children's childhoods as they are lived today through listening to children. We have all been children, but this does not mean that memories of our own childhoods can tell us how childhood is or how it should be. Not only does childhood change over time but memories are reconstructed 'from particular temporal locations' and are shaped by our present preoccupations (Jackson, 2010, p.125).

It should also be borne in mind that the above argument, and the content of this study in general, is highly contextual within a particular social and cultural framework. This study specifically sought to explore childhood within Northern Cyprus. Similar studies can be conducted in different and/or similar cultural and social contexts towards a comparative study. However, each individual study would be very valuable in itself, as this one is, in exploring childhood with children's involvement. In addition, I would argue that interpretations of any media text are also subject to the socio-cultural and economic backgrounds of the individuals who are reading it. Hence, the interpretations that the children involved in this study have offered are also contingent upon their cultural, social and economic backgrounds. Childhood varies across cultures (see Lancy 2008), which should encourage us to question our views of childhood. As Lancy (2008) says: 'If we step outside the dominant cultural perspective and view childhood in other contexts our ... practices seem quite strange (p.26). It is precisely because of this cultural diversity that it is important to study childhood in its social and cultural context through children's experiences. My findings could be used to enhance broader discussions regarding children's position within the family and education in Northern Cyprus. My study should also be relevant to those interested in cross-cultural perspectives on childhood, since it adds to existing research by focusing on a specific socio-cultural setting.

In many ways, this study has addressed some of the questions raised by Lange and Mierendorff (2009) since, 'childhood research starts from the assumption, first,

that children are reliable "clients" and active social persons and, second, that childhood has a worth in itself as well as being a segment of social structure' (p.91). They argue that 'thinking from the children's perspective also means children are positioned in the research focus as serious research units and informants' (Lange & Mierendoff, 2009, p.91). My methods and methodology have provided me with the opportunity not only to conduct child-centred research, but also to bring forward issues concerned with the construction of childhood . Hence, I was able to question and explore a variety of concepts from different angles, for instance, age, both in terms of the generational differences that help to shape childhood and adulthood, and also in terms of how children of different ages are perceived In addition, age and associated ideas of maturity are also bound up with the power differentials between adults and children which, I have argued, help shape children's lives.

Childhood fluctuates through time and space, and children's identities change with cultural, economic and social circumstances. The social and technological changes that are experienced in any particular society would only change children's role and the meanings childhood. Therefore, it is important for researchers of childhood, as well as being crucial for adults in general, to be receptive towards children's voices, their ideas and decisions as well as their representation and participation in life and in the construction of their meanings and their discourses. Rather than taking a reductionist viewpoint on childhood and hence children's role within the family, education system, politics, economics and society in general, adults should devise ways that allow for children to participate within life spaces without feeling alienated or the need to put on adult-like attitudes. This does not in any way equate to any loss or disappearance of childhood, it is merely that childhood changes (pace Postman, 1994).

Theoretically establishing children as active agents is a step that has now been taken. However, practical applications, institutional arrangements, policy and decision-making have been slower to come into line with theories on childhood. Empowering children though research *with* children published in journal articles and academic literature can only be considered as the first step towards increasing

their autonomy and participation in social life. Establishing the notion of children as active agents within society, who can participate in decision-making and exercise their rights as individuals, is crucial towards making childhood be about children.

Scene 1: The scene opens within a supermarket – Long Shot.

Blury at the background we see a couple of women shopping as a little girl with bunches on the sides of her head enters the scene (medium close-up) hopping and pushing a trolley. The handle of the trolley is at the same level with just under her neck. She hopping and swinging her head from side to side.

Music: The music is in harmony with her hopping and swinging moves.

She moves her gaze to her left at the same time as opening her mouth in amazement.

Music: The music from the first seen comes to an end on a high note and continues with only the soft but rhythmic percussion tones into the second scene.

Cut

Scene 2: A diagonal long shot of one of the refrigerators in the supermarket. The camera is positioned to reflect the view point of the girl from the first scene.

At the distance (blury) we see a woman shopping from one of the counters. Towards the middle of the scene is a boy waiting by a shopping trolley, holding on to the handle with both hands as if he is hanging from it. In the foreground is a woman picking up something from the refrigerator with her knees slightly bent.

Cut

Scene 3:

Music changes back to the first rhythmic melody on a loop.

Medium shot: Even though the camera is at a medium shot, in this scene the camera is positioned as the woman from scene 2 (Mother 1) at high angle. The scene includes an extreme long shot of the girl, long shot of the trolley and medium shot of two women's legs; one standing to the far right of the girl and one directly behind the girl at a distance, walking into the scene with a trolley.

The girl lets go of the trolley and starts walking towards Mother 1 swinging from one side to the other.

Girl: Oh, oh, oh...

Music: As she starts speaking the same high note moves the melody into the softer rhythm – The loop continues until the end of the advertisement.

Cut

Scene 4: Medium shot of the refrigerator shelf with sausages. A woman's hand reaches for one of the packages of sausage, picks it up and brings it forward towards the camera.

Girl: ... buying Pınar sausage...

Scene 5: Low angle, point of view (girl's) medium shot of Mother 1

She looks at the sausages in her hand, looks at the camera (the girl) with a smile.

Cut

Scene 6: High angle, point of view (Mother 1) medium shot of the girl.

She is looking up, swinging her head in big movements while she is holding the side of the trolley she was pushing earlier.

Girl:...shopping, is she? (with a ironic tone that suggests approval – the kind that adults would use towards children to show appreciation of their actions)

Cut

Scene 7: Slight low angle medium shot of Mother 1

She starts laughing looking at the girl and then turning her gaze up as she continues to laugh looking towards the top left hand side of the frame. As she returns her gaze towards the girl the scene cuts.

Cut

Scene 8: High angle medium shot of the girl.

Girl: Oh my oh my!! My sweetie...

We see her arm lift up and she brings her hands in a fist towards the camera.

Cut

Scene 9: Long shot of Mother 1 and the girl from the side in front of the refrigerated shelves. The camera is facing the refrigerator and the boy is looking towards his mother (Mother 1) and the girl in the foreground.

We see the girl giving a head gesture as she puts her arms up towards Mother 1 and nods to make her lean down towards her.

Girl: Come here you

Mother 1 continues laughing, starts leaning down towards her as she looks up passed the girl (towards Mother 2; the girl's mother).

When Mother 1 is at the girls arm reach, she puts her hands on Mother 1's cheeks and Mother 1 simultaneously puts her arm around the girl's waist, holding her. She continues with the laughter.

Cut

Scene 8: Close up of Mother 1

We see Mother 1's face, her cheeks are being squeezed by the girl. We only see the girl's hands on her cheeks.

Cut

Scene 9: Medium shot

The last scene cuts to a an angle which would be the point of view angle of the boy. The girl is still squeezing Mother 1's cheeks. We see Mother 2 at the background as well, she is smiling.

Girl: Ohhh oh! Sweetie, I could it her! Eat her!

As she turns her head toward the camera asking: How old is she?

Cut

Scene 10: Medium shot of the boy.

Boy: She is turning 32 soon

Cut

Scene 11: Close-up, changes to extreme close up as the girl moves.
The camera is positioned as Mother 1. We see the girl continuing the squeeze as she says: Masallah...

Cut

Scene 12: Close up of Mother 1 as her cheeks are still being squeezed.
Girl: ... , masallah! (God bless).

Cut back to Scene 11

Girl: If I were to take you home with me, would you come...

Cut back to Scene 12

Girl: ....would you cook Pınar sausages with my mother?
As she finishes her sentence Mother 1 looks towards the upper left corner of the frame.

Cut

Scene 13: Medium shot of Mother 2
Mother 1 nods with a smile that looks more like a laugher.
The narrator's voice begins over this scene and continues over the next two scenes.
Narrator: Mother chose ...

Cut

Scene 14: Close up of a grill pan with 5 char-grilled sausages. We see as one of them are being turned around (we only see the tip of the utensil).

Narrator: ... Pınar sausage the most...

Cut

Scene 15: Medium close up.

We see a chip-pan sieve being moved up with sausages divided into four and scored being flipped in it. (The shape that the sausages form is often referred to as rose. They are scored half way like a plus sign so that they open up when fired).

Dissolve: The scene dissolves into a close-up of these sausages in the air as they fall back to the sieve.

Narator: ....and they get the reward.

Scene 15 dissolves to a medium close up of plate on a dining table with sausage rolls and salad. We see a glass of orange juice at the background as the camera pans out and left.

Narator: In Turkey Pınar sausages are being loved most since....

The logo of the brand appears on the bottom left hand corner of the screen on a wavy thick white line. The line gets narrow as it moves to the bottom right corner where it meets a package of Pınar sausages. When the narrator says 'Pınar sausages' we see the package of sausage move down and left (like a deck of cards would be moved) to reveal a package of another variety of Pınar sausage.

Narrator: they are being eaten most, they are being eaten because they are being loved.

As the narrator speaks the words appear on the top left hand side of the screen with the suffix 'ki' sliding down to make the rhyme.

Cut.

Music that has been on loop since the beginning of the advert stops abruptly.

Scene 16: Medium close up of the girl.

The blurry peripheral around her face suggests she is in the same kitchen as the plate was in the last scene. She is looking up to the camera, it is a very slight high angle shot. The logo and the wavy white line is still present on the frame.

Girl: I could eat you! Eat you! Eat you.

END

Scene 1: Long shot of a living room

There are four children, two boys and two girls, in the room. The one (Boy 1) on the left is kneeling on the floor between a white single settee and the coffee table. Boy 2 is sitting on a chair on the side on the coffee table that is facing the camera. Girl 1 is seated next to Boy 2 on a chair and Girl 2 is standing by her chair, about to sit, opposite Boy 1.

There is a diagonal caption in black on the top left hand side of the frame. The caption reads: Feast greetings to the adults of today and tomorrow.

Music: Starts as the scene opens (rhythmic tones) and fades as Boy 2 starts speaking and stops.

Boy 2: Is everyone all right?

Girls reply 'good' one after the other as Girl 2 sits on her chair.

Boy 1: (pointing his index finger at Girl 1) How do you do? Are you all right?

At this point the caption on the left hand side corner twist around and turns into a candy and goes across the frame to the bottom right hand side.

Girl 1: I'm fine (as she lifts her white hand bag up and down).

Cut

The candy stops at the bottom right hand side corner

Scene 2: Close up of Girl 2. The camera is positioned on her left, she is facing the other children in the room.

Girl 2: Well then I will bring the sweets, so that our mouths can get sweetened.

She moves her face away from the camera as she is getting of the chair.

Cut

Scene 3: Medium shot of all the children. Boy 1 is still kneeling down so we only see the back of his head. Boy 2 is facing away from the camera and we only see half of his body.

Girl 2 has a bowl of sweets in her and she is giggling, all the children in the scene start giggling and laughing with her as the camera pans left to centre Boy 2, Girl 1 and 2.

The candy is still on the bottom right hand side of the frame in this scene.
Girl 2 offers sweets to Girl 1. Girl 1 puts her handbag on her lap and takes one candy from the bowl.
All children continue with their giggling and laughter.

Cut

Scene 4: Close up of the two girls laughing.
Boy 2: Hmmm this is very nice....

Cut.

Scene 5: The camera is placed right in front of the back of the head of Boy 1. We only see Girl 2's face from the side. Boy 2 is picking up candies that are being offered to him by Girl 2.
Boy 2: ...I should get some for my children as well.

Cut

Scene 6: Close up of bowl of sweets with Boy 2's left hand picking more and more sweets and placing them in his right hand.
Girl 1: You are talking lots!

Cut

Scene 7: Medium shot of three of the children with Boy 1's head on the left centre of the frame. The children are facing each other and the camera is in an observer's angle.
Boy 2: Excuse me, but I have 10 children, that is why.

Cut

Scene 8: Close up of Girl 1 as she laughs and rattles the wrapping of the sweet she has in her hands.

As she starts speaking the scene cuts to a long shot of the whole living room with all four of the children at the centre.

Girl 1: He doesn't have ten children. They all giggle.

Up until this point the sweet at the bottom right hand corner of the screen stays there.

Cut.

Rhythmic music starts.

A pink background that gradually dissolves into different shades from left and right hand side until it turns orange in the middle. On the top middle corner, going down one third of the frame, we see the Ülker Gallery logo with a small red ribbon underneath. Seven assorted packages of sweets are lined up like a pyramid underneath the logo. One package is in the front and has three lined up one after the other on each side.

As the male narrator voice starts speaking the packages move as if they are doing the wave and purple paddles form around them on the background.

Narrator: The new sweets of the feast, Ülker Gallery.

Disolve.

Same pink and orange background without the purple puddles with two white caption. The first caption is big and fills the whole centre of the frame in two lines. The second caption is smaller in font and is placed in the bottom third of the screen.

First caption reads, 'Meetings sweet as sweets.' with a tilted heart shape at the beginning the second line. Second caption reads, 'Happy bayrams with Ülker.' There is another heart shape tilted in the opposite direction to the first one at the end of the sentence after the full stop.

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The very bottom of the frame (one tenth of it) is a block of white line with the logo of Ülker in bold writing on top of the white line.

Music Ends.

END.

Scene 1: Close up of a man (dad/father) from the side.

Dad: Match.

The camera pans to the right. The background is blurry but we can see there is a television in the room and football is on. Pan stops we see a girl (daughter). The television has white clouds on a blue sky where the daughter is.

Daughter: Jojo

Cut.

Scene 2: Medium shot of a receiver box being held by the father on one side and by the daughter on the other. The father pulls the receiver towards himself and repeats as the scene cuts to the next one.

Dad: Match.

Cut

Scene 3: Medium over the shoulder shot (facing the dad). This cuts to an over the shoulder shot of the daughter.

Daughter: Jetix.

Cut back to scene 3 facing the dad.

Dad: Match.

Scene 4: Medium shot of the daughter.

Daughter: Disney

Throughout the pulling and pushing of the receiver box which could be described as a tug of war the father has a serious expression on his face while the daughter is enjoying herself and smiling.

Cut

Music starts: A variation of the jingle tune for Digitürk which they use for the children's channels.

Scene 5: Medium shot of the living room.
Wide screen television at the background has a football match on. We see the dad kneeling down and the daughter standing up (which makes them the same height). Each is holding on to one side of a rectangular black box (the receiver box) pulling it towards themselves.

Cut

Scene 6: Close up of the receiver box. They are still holding the box on its sides. The daughter pulls it towards her. As the father starts pulling it towards himself the box turns into a bright sparkling light source. Male narrator voice beings.
Narrator: Arguments are over in houses with Digitürk.

Cut

Scene 7: Long shot of the living room.
We see a larger portion of the living room. The image on the television switches to a scene from a cartoon. The receiver, now the bright light source bursts and splits in half as the dad pulls it and he ends up with the black receiver box in his hand. He is looking down on his hands at the receiver. The daughter is left holding a pink receiver box as she swings her body and hair from side to side in a proud posture. The sparkles from the burst scatter around the living room as the images on the television flicker from one cartoon scene to another. Eventually all the sparkles finish.

Cut

Scene 8: Close up of father as he looks across to his daughter in shock.
Narrator: There are now Digitürk receivers for children in sweet candy colours.
Narrators sentence runs over several scenes.

Medium shot of the girl, from her father's point of view, as she swings with the receiver box in her hand smiling. The colour of the receiver box switches from one colour to another with sparkles around it. First it turns green from pink, then orange, then green again. As she swings around with her smile lifting the receiver up and swinging it as it runs colours little square frames jump out of the sparkles and each has a cartoon character on it. The frames scatter around her as they enlarge. The one on the front twirls around as it enlarges and moves forward and eventually fill the screen.

Voice: We hear several children shout 'Heeeeeeeeeeey!'

The enlarged frame has the Japanese cartoon character Jaden Yuki from YUu-Gi-Oh GX. The cartoon image: zooms out as the character lifts his arm up in the air cheering with a victory punch and water splashes around him. The image cuts to a Sam, Clover and Alex, the characters in the cartoon 'Totally Spies'. The next image that comes on is of Pooh, Christopher Robin and Tigger from Winnie the Pooh, with their hands on their hips standing in front of a three with their chests out in pride. They all cheer moving their arms up and down for a victory upper-cut.

Cut

Scene 9: A white screen appears. The logo of 'Digitürk Kids Club' pop-up in the middle of the screen followed by channel logos appearing on top right, bottom, top left and bottom, gradually filing the screen. Logos include, JoJo, Jetix Play, History Channel, Nikelodeon, Disney, Baby Tv, Jetix, National Geographic Channel. As more and more logos appear on the screen the middle round and red logo of Digitürk Kids Club move as if it is pumping like a heart.
Narrator: These colourful boxes that only shows channels suitable to children are only for 7.90 a month daddy.

Cut

As the narrator says 'these colourful boxes' (these words are later in the sentence in the Turkish version) the scene changes.

The background is still white, there is a pink receiver box with its pink remote on top of it in the middle of the screen. The colour of the receiver changes to green, orange with sparkles as before. Underneath the box the telephone number for Digitürk is written in red (centralised), followed by the black caption that reads 'Call now, connect now'. The line that follows is the web address for Digitürk, followed by Digitürk's logo.

As the narrator says 'for only 7.90 a month daddy' a caption appears above the receiver in bold and black. The caption reads 'only 7.90 a month!'

Cut.

Scene 10: Medium close-up of the daughter and her father in her room facing the camera (which is where the television set is assumed to be in her room).

We see teddy bears and other toys on a bed (which they are sitting on) on the left of the screen. There are pictures painted by her at the background. The father is holding a toy dog with both of his hands on his lap and she is holding the remote.

Dad: Can I watch with you?

Daughter: (with a sarcastic tone as she looks at him with a grin on her face while turning her face towards the camera as she speaks) Oh well, I guess you can!

Dad gives a big smile and moves to get comfortable.

END

Scene 1: Long shot of a child's room.

We see the corner of a bed on the left hand side of the screen, there is a chair and table facing away from the camera on the right hand side. There are scattered toys and a yellow bike at the back of the room underneath the window. The camera is positioned where the door would be.

There are 5 children in the room, four of them are sitting on the floor. The one further away from the camera is sitting on a child's chair, next to him a girl sitting on a beanbag. Next to her is a boy sitting on a cushion and finally a girl sitting on the floor. The fifth child (Presenter Boy) is standing in front of the rest of the children, addressing them, by a small blackboard on a tripod. He is holding a gigantic pencil which he is using to point at the pictures and writings on the board. On the board we see the picture of a milk bottle followed by the word 'MILK' underlined. The second line has the picture of a glass of milk followed by an equal sign and a picture of a cow.

Presenter Boy: Friends! Did you know

Cut

Scene 2: Medium close up of the presenter boy in front of the board.

He is pointing the gigantic pencil towards the word 'MILK' on the board. When the scene starts the we only see half of the word. The camera pans right to reveal the whole of the word.

Cut

Scene 3: Close up of the girl sitting on the beanbag.

Her face is frowned, lips tight as she nods her head.

Presenter Boy: (his voice continues as scenes chance) we are obliged to benefits of milk.

Cut

Scene 4: Medium ground level shot.

We see the two girls and the boy on the cushion. The camera is positioned on the left hand side of the board (we see one of the legs of the board in the foreground which is blurry). All the children in the scene are making faces. One has her tong out, the other one makes a disgust face, the girl in the previous girl is shaking her head while she pulls her body backwards. These are all in response to what the presenter boy is saying about needing milk.

Cut.

Scene 5: Medium shot of the presenter boy.

He opens his arms wide and out as he finishes his sentence and then brings his arm together in front of him.

Cut

Scene 6: Medium close up of the boy sitting on the chair.

Boy: Of course, if it wasn't for milk how would we have Nesquik?

Cut.

Scene 7: Medium close up.

On a kitchen bench we see 4 long glasses of milk with a Nesquik box next to them. A woman's hand opens the box.

Dissolve

Extreme close up of the Nesquik box as a heap spoonful of Nesquik being taken out of it.

Female narrator: Nestle's Nesquik.

Cut.

Close up of the top of the glass as the Nesquik is being poured into the glass.

Disolve.

Extreme close up of the (middle of the) glass.
Female narrator: With its incredible chocolate taste makes milk lovable. (This sentence continues over the dissolving images and ends with the last scene). Nesquik is being mixed in, we see the half the milk turning chocolate colour gradually from bottom of the frame to the top as the milk twirls around the glass.

Dissolve

Extreme close up of the glass from the top.
A glass of Nesquik with a swirl in the middle.

Dissolve.

Kitchen counter and the background is blurry. On the left hand side of the screen we see the Nesquik mascot bunny with one hand in his pocket. He is holding a magic wand in this other hand and pointing it towards the left hand side of the screen as he winks. He waves the magic wand down and a Nesquik box starts appearing from top to bottom with sparkles underneath it.
The advert end when the Nesquik box is complete on the bench.
END

Scene 1: Long shot of a kitchen.

A family with two children (a boy and a girl) at breakfast. A bright, modern decorated kitchen with white cupboards, wooden chairs. All family members are dressed casually. On the table there are glasses of milk for the children and tea for the parents. The corner of the table is facing the camera, it is positioned diagonally giving the feeling of depth into the kitchen.

The father is reading the newspaper. The mother is standing/going in between the kitchen bench and the table (still bringing food to the table).

When the scene opens the boy starts talking.

Boy: Now look!...

Cut.

Scene 2: Camera moves in – we see dad's newspaper in the frame on the left, the mother is putting a plate of something in the middle of the table children still sitting in the same position. We can see more things on the table. There are olives and a dish with a red top in the middle (Çokokrem box) of the table, eggs in front of the children's plates, cutlery, a butter dish. Boy continues;

Boy: ...in it is a huge glass of milk.

Cut.

Close up of the middle of the table, the camera moves slightly down to centre the Çokokrem box.

Cut

Scene 3: Medium shot of the boy

He is looking towards his sister, towards the middle right side of the frame. His hands are in the front held high as he continues speaking excited.

Boy: How big do you think this glass is?
Cut

Scene 4: Medium shot of the girl from the father's position. The camera is levelled with the table, hence we see the Çokokrem box (blurry) in the left hand corner of the frame, and the other things on the table. The background is blurry as well. Only her glass of milk, egg, her plate with a slice of bread with Çokokrem on it and she is in focus.
Girl: Huge... (she is using a lot of hand gestures).

Cut.

Scene 5: Medium shot (in which we see a close-up of the girl).
She is holding a glass of milk, her hands are covering the diameter of the bottom of the glass. The glass of milk is in the middle of the low angle frame. She looks towards the camera from behind the glass, and the low angle shot gives the impression of the glass being as big as her head since they are at the same height.
Girl: ... I couldn't hold it with one hand.

Cut

Back to the medium shot of the boy.
Boy: Nice. There is also...

Cut

Medium shot of the father from the boys position.
We see the corner of the boy's head but his image is blurry. The father lifts up his glass of tea and as he is taking a sip, gives the boy a look that reads: 'let's see where he is going with this'.
Boy continues: ...a handful of hazelnuts in it.

Cut

Back to the medium shot of the boy.

Boy: Whose handful could these hazelnuts amount to?

Cut.

Scene 6: Back to the long shot of the kitchen, the mother is still doing something in the background near the bench while the father is still reading the newspaper. Boy continues, 'mine?' as he is counting with his fingers.

Cut.

Scene 7: Medium long shot - Shoulder shot of the boy.

Girl: Not yours...

Cut

Scene 8: Close up of the mother as she is sitting down she first looks at the camera where the girl is positioned and turns her gaze towards the boy.

Girl: ... Not my mother's either.

Cut.

Back to the medium shot of the girl.

Girl: My dad's handful.

She puts her arms out and holds her palms together but open facing up.

Girl: A gigantic handful.

Cut.

Scene 9: Close up of a male hand with heap full of hazelnuts as more fall on to it, some stacking up, some falling from the sides.

Cut.

Back to medium shot of the boy.

Boy: Hiih nice!

He looks down on his plate. The image dissolves into the next one, which is the same shot but a bit zoomed in. He picks up his slice of bread with Çokokrem on it and takes a bite.

Cut.

Medium shot of the girl, as she is also taking a bite and starts chewing.

Cut.

Back to medium shot of the boy.

Boy: And it has a super … (he is making the gesture of 'nice' with his hand.

Cut

Back to the medium shot of the girl.

Girl: Taste (she shouts with excitement and smile. She is still holding the slice of bread in her right hand.

Boy: Bravo.

Cut.

Back to the medium shot of the boy. Though at this angle we see two big glasses of milk (out of focus) one after the other on the right front side of the screen and the Çokokrem box is in the middle (also out of focus). He leans over the table on to his elbow that is resting on the table.

Boy: Well then why is the Çokokrems taste so super?

As he says Çokokrem he points to the box with his gaze.

Cut.

Back to the medium shot of the girl.

Girl: [still holding the slice of bread] Because my mum spreads it on bread.

Cut.

Medium long shot of the table facing the boy, the camera zooms out slowly.
The boy lifts his arm up in amusement on to his forehead and down over his head.
While the camera is still zooming out we hear the mail narrator's voice.
Narrator: Çokokrem which contains lots of milk is ...

Cut.

Scene 10: Close-up of Çokokrem pack, its lid is behind the pack facing up and next to the pack we see a part of a plate with a slice of bread on it. A butter knife is put in scraping a Çokokrem on to the knife.

Dissolve. The image slowly dissolves from middle towards the edges in a circle to reveal a female hand (close-up) spreading Çokokrem onto a slice of bread while holding the slice with the other hand. Narrator's voice continues over this scene.
Narrator: ... now in its new package.

Dissolve, this time the dissolve starts on the left hand side of the screen spreading towards the rest.

Scene 11: Table top, with a full ball of hazelnuts, a glass of milk, Çokokrem box in the middle of the screen and half of a plate with a slice of bread on it which has been spread with Çokokrem. There are also scattered hazelnuts on the table behind the box.

Music: The melodic jingle tune of Çokokrem with lyrics: The sweetest mornings begin with Çokokrem.

Narrator: The sweetest mornings begin with Çokokrem.

The camera pans over the table top while zooming in towards the middle into a close-up of the çokocrem box.

Logo of Ülker (the brand for Çokokrem) appear on the bottom right hand side of the screen on a white band that cover the bottom of the screen. A caption in white font appears on the scattered hazelnuts behind the box that are now out of focus after the zoom in. The caption reads: The sweetest mornings begin with Çokokrem. Where the caption ends in between the plate and the caption a yellow star appear with the writing 'Turkey's number 1 choice'.

Cut. Music ends.

Scene 11: Medium shot of the boy.

Boy: You mean if my dad spread it, it wouldn't have been so super? (with a sarcastic tone).

End.

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