



Bravery and Friendship in Children's Literature through the Lens of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract: This research utilizes Van Dijk's (1977) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework to investigate the themes of bravery and friendship in the children's stories "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map." The primary objective is to examine how discourse influences social identities, values, and interpersonal relationships through narrative structures and character dynamics. Using qualitative methods, the study conducts a detailed textual analysis focusing on thematic elements, character dialogues, and the moral lessons delineated in both stories. The findings indicate that these narratives portray bravery not solely as a heroic quality but as an expression of aiding others, thereby nurturing a sense of community and companionship. Additionally, the analysis uncovers the underlying social values presented in these narratives, underscoring the significance of empathy and collaboration for young readers. This research enhances the understanding of children's literature as a crucial factor in shaping social and moral growth, offering valuable insights for educators and parents regarding themes that can effectively instill positive values in children.

Keywords: Bravery and Friendship, Social Identities, Character Dynamics, Social Values.

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INTRODUCTION

Children's literature is a significant social sphere that both mirrors the culture, morality, and values of society and is crucial in influencing children's comprehension of their surroundings. This genre provides a substantial reservoir of ideas and viewpoints for youngsters, shaping their comprehension of many subjects and concepts from a young age. Stephens underscores that fictional stories serve as a significant domain for ideological influence, capable of actively shaping audience attitudes and views. Consequently, children's literature plays a crucial ideological role in shaping conceptions of various moral ideals, whether beneficial or harmful. In addition to it's in 2015

Beauvais and Clémentine interrogates ideological implications, such literature plays a crucial role in cultivating critical perspectives, allowing young readers to cultivate social consciousness as "potential adults". In 2016 Reynolds examined their surroundings and establish independent beliefs Thus, children's literature plays a crucial role in socialization, literacy advancement, and critical text engagement, fostering both textual and visual analysis.

In this setting, language serves as a crucial element in the perpetuation of ideologies, making it indispensable for the analysis and critique of societal problems and processes. Van Dijk posits that discourses transcend mere linguistic vehicles; they

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profoundly influence the manner in which group members assimilate and implement the ideas, attitudes, and ideologies that form the foundation of society norms and behaviors (Van Dijk, "Elite Discourse," 3). Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) posits that language serves as a powerful instrument for shaping ideas, thoughts, and emotions inside narratives. This analytical framework elucidates the manner in which speech shapes social identities, power relations, and epistemological structures while inciting critical examinations of who has the authority to articulate or document and in what situations (Van Dijk, "Discourse Analysis" 21). Therefore, this study suggest CDA as a methodological instrument to examine the relationships between children's literature and the dynamics of others, power, and control.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examines how language use in social and political contexts contributes to the manifestation and perpetuation of social power dynamics, inequality, and abuse. Analysts engage actively with the materials they study to uncover, critique, and challenge systemic inequities. It's essential to clarify that CDA is not simply a methodological approach but a critical perspective that spans various discourse studies and is often referred to as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), despite the persistence of the CDA abbreviation.

CDA encompasses a diverse range of methods from multiple disciplines—including linguistics, social sciences, and the humanities—allowing for comprehensive analyses of discourse in relation to social power. Ultimately, CDA acts as a social movement aimed at highlighting abuses of power and promoting social justice.

CDA doesn't adhere to a singular framework; instead, it deploys various theories to explore the relationship between discourse, cognition, and social structures. This approach necessitates bridging the micro and macro contexts, addressing how individual interactions contribute to broader power structures. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emphasizes that language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a means of examining social behavior. It aims to comprehend the transmission of power dynamics through language, particularly in political and social speeches (Elaf & Hussien, 2020).

The study of discourse analysis primarily focuses on the role of language in social contexts. A key aim of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to elucidate the relationship between discourse and social power (Aljarallah, 2017). Specifically, CDA examines how the texts and spoken communication of dominant groups or institutions can replicate or

legitimize the abuse of power (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2007). This paper will concentrate on the crucial aspect of discursively mediated dominance and inequality, with a particular emphasis on disparities in language access within this framework (Van Dijk, 1993).

This research analyzes the themes of courage and friendship in two children's tales through the perspective of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis approach. The main aim is to examine how language in these tales affects societal identities, values, and interpersonal interactions via character dynamics and narrative structures. This study employed qualitative approaches to scrutinize themes, character relationships, and moral lessons within the narratives, demonstrating the portrayal of courage as a means of assisting others and cultivating a sense of community. Furthermore, the study elucidates the fundamental social ideals conveyed in these narratives, underscoring the importance of empathy and cooperation for young readers. This study underscores the significance of children's literature in social and moral development, offering essential insights for educators and parents in cultivating healthy values in children.

T.A. Van Dijk's Framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Teun A. van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, established in 1977, emphasizes the interplay between discourse, power, and social structures. Central to Van Dijk's approach is the understanding that discourse is not merely a vehicle for communication but also a means of social construction and reinforcement of ideologies. His framework identifies how language use reflects and shapes social inequalities.

Van Dijk's CDA framework comprises key components.

1. Discourse and Social Power:

Van Dijk posits that language plays a crucial role in the exercise of power. He scrutinizes the use of discourse by dominant groups to uphold their positions and the negative portrayal of marginalized groups, which perpetuates social stereotypes.

2. Cognitive Processes:

A significant aspect of his analysis focuses on the cognitive dimensions of discourse. Van Dijk posits that the comprehension of language involves cognitive structures, including mental representations and social schemas, which shape individuals' comprehension and interaction with discourses.

3. Contextual Factors:

The framework highlights the importance of context in discourse analysis. Context includes not just the immediate textual situation but also broader social, political, and historical factors that shape discourse and its interpretation.

4. Societal Structures:

Van Dijk's analysis explores the influence of societal power relations on discourse, proposing that language both reflects and perpetuates social structures. He examines how various forms of discourse, such as media, political speeches, and everyday communication, can be tools of social domination or resistance.

5. Social Change:

Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) also explores the potential of discourse as a tool for bringing about social change. By critically examining language usage, researchers and activists can identify and challenge oppressive ideologies and practices.

By integrating these elements, Van Dijk's CDA framework provides a comprehensive tool for analyzing how language functions within power dynamics and social processes, fostering a deeper understanding of the relationship between discourse and society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 2011, Pasha examined the portrayal of Islamic ideas in the Egyptian press using Van Dijk's ideological framework, underscoring the inclination to accentuate the positive attributes of certain organizations while minimizing their negative elements. Pasha observed the use of the phrase "unofficial" to delegitimize the Muslim Brotherhood, thereby portraying their operations in a negative light.

Bilal *et al.*, (2012) investigated the correlation between speech and ideology in political talk shows, demonstrating how the concealed goals of social actors may influence public views. They observed occasions in which politicians evaded inquiries, obscuring fundamental concerns and preserving control over the narrative.

In 2013, Azad examined the ideological ramifications of news broadcasts about George Bush, demonstrating how rhetoric may signify dishonesty in political representation. His interpretation characterized Bush's administration as "8 years of crime," portraying a negative perspective on his leadership and implying more profound ideological issues in political discourse.

In 2013, Alo and Ajewole-Orimogunje examined ideological manifestations in specific radio news broadcasts, highlighting latent biases in power relations. President Obasanjo's assertion of himself as the remedy for Nigeria's economic challenges demonstrated a favorable self-image, suggesting that his leadership could amend previous governance shortcomings.

Poorebrahim and Zarei (2013) conducted an examination of the correlation between language and ideology in the headlines of prominent American and British publications. Their investigation demonstrated that certain headlines, such as "How Islam has been corrupted," presupposed misconceptions about Islam, reinforcing stereotypes and fostering negative impressions of the Muslim population.

In 2014, Ahmadian and Farahani analyzed the ideological discourses in The Los Angeles Times and Tehran Times using Van Dijk's macro-strategies. Their analysis revealed a significant ideological disparity, characterized by the use of pejorative language to depict Iran negatively, as evidenced by the description of the nation as one "endeavoring to develop a nuclear weapon." This maintained biases and underscored the disparity in ideological representations between dominant and subordinate countries.

In 2021, Neslihan Kansu Yetkiner performed a critical examination of the discursive methods of othering in three Turkish children's novels centered on refugees, produced in the aftermath of the Syrian civil war. The research utilizes Van Dijk's ideological analysis to examine the "us vs. them" representation via semantic and formal structures. The study seeks to illustrate how children's literature functions as an essential vehicle for transmitting norms and ideologies, providing insights into power dynamics, and discovering discursive methods that delineate groups by depicting the Other in a negative light. The study indicates that actor descriptions, language selections, and implicit connotations within certain semantic frames mostly create unfavourable portrayals. Furthermore, the formal forms used align with rhetorical topoi, highlighting the importance of allegory in story construction.

Utilizing Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, Djaafri (2021) examines four speeches delivered by President George Bush to uncover the underlying ideologies justifying the United States' use of force. The analysis focuses on how religion and the concept of "othering" contribute to defining adversaries and legitimizing policies targeting the Middle East. The findings indicate that Bush employed notions of religious superiority and the

defense of freedom to establish distinctions that fueled conflict with selected enemies. This research suggests that the United States harbors a concealed ideology that aims to achieve international political and socio-economic dominance through aggressive strategies against its rivals. Moreover, the study emphasizes the intersection of religion and politics, noting that their respective ideologies often conflict. The speeches under review exemplify these dynamics.

In 2022, Hayat Aoumeur conducted a qualitative study employing critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explore the ideological representations of gender within nine Algerian short stories. Building upon Thompson's framework for understanding ideology, the study investigates the manifestations of gender ideologies in the selected texts, highlighting their symbolic forms and structural characteristics. The research utilizes Thompson's (1990) schema to identify various linguistic modes that articulate ideology. The analysis reveals the prominent employment of certain strategies, such as universalization, rationalization, displacement, naturalization, and eternalization, over others. Aoumeur's findings indicate that the authors' utilization of these strategies—whether intentional or inadvertent—in their characterization and narrative positioning plays a crucial role in the reproduction of gender stereotypes and the perpetuation of gender inequalities.

In 2022, María del Carmen López Ruiz conducted an analysis of Enid Blyton's "Five on a Treasure Island" using Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework. The study focused on identifying ideological, moral, and didactic elements that could present challenges for translators working with children's and young adult literature. A comparative analysis of the French and Spanish editions revealed distinct translation strategies employed in each context, highlighting the effectiveness of critical discourse analysis in emphasizing the book's educational values.

In 2022, Rasha Tareq Awad Al-Zubaidi conducted a qualitative study on Khaled Hosseini's "A Thousand Splendid Suns," focusing on how language influences power dynamics in discourse. Utilizing Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Al-Zubaidi examined various levels of linguistic structure, including the text's overall composition, sentence construction, and word choice. This analysis, using Thomas Huckin's framework, demonstrated how male dominance, wealth, government authority, and positive values reflect power. The study underscores how relational dynamics in society shape power and how ideological, social, political, and gender factors contribute to its misuse. This research enriches the

limited literature on power relations in literary contexts, emphasizing the interplay between narrative and language in constructing societal hierarchies.

Ahmadi *et al.*, (2023) conducted a study on leftist narratives in Indonesia, revealing that the discourse structure of Tempo media demonstrates a notable leftist bias. Tempo media portrays leftists favorably, highlighting traits such as religiosity, compassion, diligence, intelligence, and nationalism. They frequently engage with the public and exhibit religious devotion via Quranic recitation. The incorporation of the color red in Tempo's visuals indicates associations with communist ideals. Tempo's narratives generally support the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and critique Suharto's regime. Russia and China represent communism in the ideological conflict, while the United States and its allies exemplify capitalism and colonialism. Characterizing leftists as innocent victims of oppressive governmental actions reinforces their image as marginalized and wronged entities within the political landscape. This study emphasizes the significance of critical discourse analysis (CDA) for comprehending the political intricacies present in narrative texts.

Research Gap

The current study titled "Bravery and Friendship in Children's Literature through the Lens of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis" focuses on the themes of bravery and friendship in children's stories, seeking to understand how such narratives influence social identities and values. It involves conducting a qualitative analysis of character interactions and moral teachings in "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map," highlighting the promotion of community and empathy among young readers.

In contrast, the literature reviewed encompasses a diverse range of studies utilizing Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework across various contexts, primarily focusing on political discourse, ideological representation, and the portrayal of specific social groups—particularly in media, political speeches, and literature addressing issues like gender, religion, and national identity.

Identified Research Gaps

1. Existing literature predominantly analyzes adult-oriented discourses, including political speeches, media representation, and gender issues, with minimal exploration specifically targeting children's writing. The current study fills this gap by focusing on how children's narratives contribute to social and moral development in young readers.

2. While themes like "othering," political ideology, and gender representation have been extensively researched, there is a lack of in-depth studies on the themes of bravery and friendship in children's literature. The current study explicitly addresses these underexplored themes, analyzing how they interact with discourse to foster community and empathy.
3. The literature tends to emphasize ideological beliefs and political narratives rather than the importance of interpersonal relationships, empathy, and collaboration in educational contexts, particularly in children's literature. The current study offers insights into how storytelling can play a crucial role in instilling these values in children.
4. While previous studies focus on language and ideology analysis, they often overlook the examination of character dynamics crucial for portraying themes such as bravery and friendship in children's narratives. The current study engages in a qualitative examination of character interactions and moral lessons, which has been relatively absent in existing research.

Overall, the current study makes a unique contribution to the field by specifically examining the crucial but underrepresented themes of bravery and friendship in children's literature, thereby differentiating itself from the main research emphases of the reviewed studies. This research underscores how the presence of diverse and inclusive narratives significantly influences the values and perceptions of young readers.

Significance of the Study

This study, "Bravery and Friendship in Children's Literature through the Lens of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis," highlights the importance of children's literature in moral and social development, addressing a gap in existing research that often focuses on adult discourse. By exploring themes of bravery and friendship, it emphasizes empathy and interpersonal relationships, which are crucial for children's character development. The qualitative analysis of narrative interactions reveals how storytelling can instill positive social values, promoting emotional intelligence among young readers. Utilizing Van Dijk's framework, the study illustrates the transformative power of literature in shaping societal norms, advocating for its role in fostering a more empathetic and cohesive society.

Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research seamlessly align with the research gap and the significance of the study.

1. Analyze the themes of bravery and friendship in the children's stories "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map" through the lens of Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework.
2. Explore the influence of these stories on shaping young readers' social identities, values, and relationships, and their emotional development.
3. Analyze the text to understand how bravery helps others and builds community in the stories through thematic elements, character dialogues, and moral lessons.
4. Emphasize the importance of empathy and collaboration in fostering children's moral and social growth through the narratives' social values.
5. Provide valuable insights to educators and parents on how children's stories can effectively instill positive values and enhance emotional intelligence in young readers, offering practical guidance for nurturing these qualities.
6. Address the research gap by delving into the exploration of lesser-known themes of bravery and friendship in children's literature, setting this study apart from previous analyses centered on adult discourses. This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the depiction of these themes and their direct impact on the emotional intelligence of young readers.

The study's significance and objectives interconnect, presenting a compelling argument for the essential role of children's literature in moral and social development. The exploration of bravery and friendship is not only relevant for academic discourse but is also vital for fostering emotional intelligence and empathy among future generations.

Research Questions

Each study objective directly aligns with the research questions outlined below, ensuring a focused approach to investigating the crucial role of children's literature in shaping moral and social values. This alignment facilitates a systematic exploration of how such literature can contribute to the development of emotional intelligence and empathetic behavior in young readers.

1. How do the themes of bravery and friendship manifest in the narratives of "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map" when analyzed through Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis framework?

2. How do these stories impact young readers' social identities, values, emotional growth, and relationships?
3. How does the concept of bravery aid others and promote community within the stories, and what elements and dialogues reinforce this portrayal?
4. Which stories emphasize the social values of empathy and collaboration, and how do they influence children's moral and social development?
5. How can the analysis of these stories help educators and parents instill positive values and boost emotional intelligence in young readers effectively?
6. What gaps does this study fill in the current literature on bravery and friendship themes in children's literature, and how does it enhance our understanding of these themes in shaping the emotional intelligence of young readers?

Research Methods and Data Collection

This resource outlines the qualitative research methods and data collection techniques used to examine how discourse shapes social identities, values, and interpersonal relationships, particularly as illustrated through narrative structures and character dynamics in children's literature. The focus of this study is on two specific short stories: "The Brave Little Squirrel," inspired by Beatrix Potter, and "Milo's Magical Map," inspired by Roald Dahl.

Drawing on Van Dijk's (1977) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this research analyzes how language use in these narratives affects social perceptions and relationships. Qualitative research is instrumental in exploring and interpreting the meanings that individuals or groups attribute to social issues, particularly in the behavioral sciences, where understanding the nuances of human behavior is critical. The research process is characterized by:

1. As research progresses, broad inquiries often evolve into more focused questions.
2. Data collection in natural environments involves collecting data through a meticulous analysis of texts within the context of their intended audience and the narratives they convey.
3. Inductive analysis starts with specific details from the narrative and moves toward broader themes and interpretations, following Creswell's (2014) framework. Researchers interpret the significance of the data in light of the social constructs present in the narratives.

The process of interpreting the selected short stories follows a systematic approach:

1. Close Reading: The researcher carefully read each story to ensure a deep understanding of its content, characters, and overall message.
2. Theme extraction involves identifying themes through various methods, including analysing character dialogues, actions, descriptions, and overarching concepts portrayed in the stories. Themes reflect what the author intends to convey about the human experience and social dynamics.
3. Identifying literary techniques involves analysing the author's use of devices like metaphor, symbolism, and foreshadowing to comprehend how these elements enhance theme development. This includes examining how narrative structures influence social identities and interpersonal relationships.

Data Analysis

Utilizing qualitative methods, this study conducts a detailed textual analysis emphasizing thematic elements, character dialogues, and moral lessons depicted in both stories. The analysis seeks to uncover insights regarding how the discourse within these narratives shapes readers' understanding of social identities and values. Using inductive reasoning, the analysis moves from specific textual elements to uncovering broader themes associated with human behavior and relationships.

This research is paramount for understanding the role of children's literature in conveying important social messages and fostering interpersonal connections through storytelling.

Analysis on How Bravery and Friendship Manifest in Both Stories

In order to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the themes of bravery and friendship in "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map," this study scrutinizes specific lines and examples from each story that underscore these themes. Van Dijk's framework, examining conversation structure, social thinking, and the cultural environment, showcases instances of bravery and friendship in both stories. The analysis unveils the subtleties in the portrayal and interpretation of these themes by readers.

1. The Brave Little Squirrel

Bravery: *"Despite being the smallest of his siblings, he decided to brave the storm and find food."*

This line illustrates the theme of bravery by emphasizing the squirrel's decision to confront a

challenging situation, highlighting his internal courage despite physical limitations.

Friendship: *"When the other animals saw his determination, they rallied behind him, offering support."*

This demonstrates how friendship encourages collective action and mutual support, showcasing the social bonds that enhance bravery.

2. Milo's Magical Map

Bravery: "Milo didn't hesitate when the map led him to a dark forest, knowing he had to save his friend."

This line reflects Milo's bravery, showcasing his willingness to enter a dangerous place for the sake of his friend, emphasizing the theme of courage in the face of adversity.

Friendship: *"The map began to glow brighter as Milo thought of all the adventures they had together."*

This illustrates the power of friendship as a motivational force, suggesting that friendship's bonds can enhance one's ability to be brave by providing emotional support.

Comparison and Thematic Connections

The Interplay of Bravery and Friendship:

Friendships often prompt or amplify bravery in both stories. The squirrel not only confronts his own challenges, but also finds inspiration in the support of his friends. Likewise, Milo draws strength from his memories and connection to his friend, suggesting that true bravery often involves a communal aspect.

Language and Representation

Both stories' language tends to portray bravery as heroic, frequently connecting it to the idea of self-sacrifice for friends, which is consistent with societal values associated with both bravery and friendships.

Social Context

In analyzing these narratives in a broader sociocultural context, we can note that both stories promote ideals of courage and camaraderie, fostering narrative themes that resonate with young readers and reflect societal norms about friendship, support networks, and personal bravery.

In summary, through Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis, we see how "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map" articulate bravery and friendship through specific narrative examples, illustrating the intertwined nature of these themes in fostering resilience and community among characters.

Analysis on the Selected Stories Impact Young Readers' Social Identities, Values, Emotional Growth, and Relationships

With Teun A. Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, we can analyze the social identities, values, emotional growth, and relationships portrayed in the two stories. The following lines taken from each story paired with their respective analyses.

Story 1: "The Brave Little Squirrel"

Social Identities: "Sammy had bright, twinkling eyes and a fluffy tail that wagged joyfully as he explored."

This description establishes Sammy as a cheerful and adventurous character, promoting the identity of being curious and brave. Such traits can inspire young readers to embrace curiosity and exploration in their own lives.

Values: "They learned that true bravery is not just about facing fears but also about helping those in need."

This line conveys the moral value of bravery as a proactive quality that involves helping others. It reinforces the idea that strength comes from compassion, encouraging children to value kindness and support in their interactions.

Emotional Growth: "With a brave heart, Sammy said, 'Don't worry, Bella! I'll help you!'"

Sammy's readiness to assist Bella despite her fear highlights the growth of empathy and courage. This moment can resonate with young readers, fostering their emotional development by showing that they can help others and feel courageous in doing so.

Relationships: "From that day on, Sammy and Bella became the best of friends, embarking on daily adventures together."

The friendship that develops between Sammy and Bella demonstrates the importance of companionship and collaboration. This fosters the idea of building relationships and emphasizes the joy found in shared experiences.

Story 2: "Milo's Magical Map"

Social Identities: "Milo was a sprightly little boy with a wild imagination and a massive collection of maps."

Milo's description suggests he embodies the identity of an adventurer and dreamer. He represents the idea that imagination can lead to exciting new experiences, encouraging readers to embrace their creativity and curiosity.

Values: “Remembering that courage isn’t just for treasure seekers.”

This line articulates a value that courage can manifest in various forms beyond the pursuit of adventure or riches. It shapes the idea that true courage includes helping those in need, such as the bluebird, and appeals to children’s sense of heroism in everyday contexts.

Emotional Growth: “Milo thought hard and finally said, ‘I wish for more adventures with friends!’”

Milo’s desire for friendship and adventures reveals his understanding of the importance of social connections, suggesting emotional maturity. It encourages young readers to reflect on their friendships and the joy of shared experiences.

Relationships: The bluebird chirped with joy. ‘I’ll grant you one wish!’

The interaction between Milo and the bluebird exemplifies a cooperative relationship where helping others can lead to positive outcomes. It illustrates how kindness results in networking and support in the young reader’s life—building a framework for understanding cooperation and mutual reward in friendships.

Both stories feature central themes of adventure and bravery that shape young readers’ social identities, promote values of empathy and courage, and facilitate emotional growth through their characters’ experiences. They highlight the importance of relationships, emphasizing friendship, compassion, and the value of helping others. These narratives combined can empower children to learn these values as they navigate their social worlds.

Analysis on the Concept of Bravery Aid Others and Promote Community within the Stories, and Elements and Dialogues Reinforce this Portrayal

Using Van Dijk’s (1977) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this study analyzes the concept of bravery and its role in aiding others and promoting community within “The Brave Little Squirrel” and “Milo’s Magical Map.” The stories emphasize bravery not only as a personal attribute but also as a communal value that fosters friendship and support within a community.

Story 1: “The Brave Little Squirrel”

Courage and Helping Others

“Oh dear! Bella cried out, trembling with fear. This line situates Bella in a vulnerable situation, necessitating Sammy’s bravery. Bella’s plea reflects a community in need.

“**Don’t worry, Bella! I’ll help you!**” Sammy’s immediate and heroic response to Bella’s distress showcases his bravery. His promise to assist reflects the value of supporting one another in times of need.

Friendship and Mutual Support

“**Thank you, Sammy! You’re so brave!**” Bella’s gratitude reinforces the bond between them and acknowledges Sammy’s bravery, highlighting how acts of courage in aiding others contribute to forming friendships.

“From that day on, Sammy and Bella became the best of friends, embarking on daily adventures together, exploring the hidden wonders of the forest.” : This line underscores the significance of bravery in fostering deep friendships and creating a sense of community among the creatures in the forest.

Moral Message:

“**They learned that true bravery is not just about facing fears but also about helping those in need.**” This concluding line encapsulates the theme of the story, attributing communal values to the concepts of bravery and aiding others and promoting the idea that selflessness is heroic.

Story 2: “Milo’s Magical Map” Curiosity Leading to Courage

“What if this leads to treasure?” he thought, eyes gleaming with excitement! This statement solidifies Milo’s adventurous spirit, demonstrating how curiosity and exploration of the unknown can foster bravery and lead him to situations where he can assist others.

“**Help me, please!**” it chirped. The bluebird’s cry for assistance creates a crucial juncture where Milo’s bravery is required, emphasizing his place in the community of creatures.

Act of Bravery Focused on Assistance:

“Remembering that courage isn’t just for treasure seekers, Milo lifted the branch and freed the bird.” This line demonstrates Milo’s understanding that true bravery extends beyond personal gain (treasure) to include acts of kindness directed at others.

“**Thank you, brave human!**” The acknowledgment from the bluebird reflects the interdependence of bravery and community support, reinforcing the notion that acts of kindness can connect individuals within a larger ecosystem.

Transformation through Bravery

“I wish for more adventures with friends!” Milo’s wish, following his courageous act, underscores the significance of friendship and

community. His wish aligns personal adventure with companionship, further promoting communal experiences.

"We are transforming Milo's treasure map into a pathway of friendship and courage." This concluding line reinforces the transformation of personal desire (treasure) into a collective experience, illustrating how bravery can create bonds and foster a community.

Both stories employ bravery as a theme that emphasizes community support and friendship. The characters' dialogues and actions clearly position bravery not just as a lone heroic trait but as a crucial element in the formation and strengthening of bonds within a community. The reinforcement occurs through acts of help, expressions of gratitude, and the overarching moral lessons drawn from their adventures. This analysis demonstrates how both narratives illustrate the manifestation of true courage through interpersonal connections and acts of service to others.

Analysis on how these Selected Stories Emphasize the Social Values of Empathy and Collaboration, and how do they Influence Children's Moral and Social Development

To analyze the stories "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map" using Van Dijk's (1977) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, we will focus on the representation of social values such as empathy and collaboration. These values influence children's moral and social development. This study identifies relevant lines from both stories that illustrate these concepts.

Story 1: "The Brave Little Squirrel"

Empathy

"Oh Dear! I'm Stuck!" Cried Bella, Trembling with Fear.

Bella's plea for help expresses vulnerability. Sammy's immediate recognition of her plight demonstrates his capacity for empathy.

"Don't worry, Bella! I'll help you!" He carefully chewed through the thorns, freeing Bella from her prickly predicament.

Sammy's response shows compassion and willingness to assist, highlighting the emotional connection that fosters empathetic actions.

Collaboration from that Day on, Sammy and Bella Became the Best of Friends, Embarking on Daily Adventures Together, Exploring the Hidden Wonders of the Forest.

Their friendship epitomizes collaboration. It teaches children the value of working together and the joy of companionship in overcoming challenges.

Moral Development

They Learned That True Bravery is Not Just About Facing Fears but Also about Helping Those In Need.

This line encapsulates the moral lesson that courage is linked to altruism, encouraging children to develop empathy and a sense of community.

Story 2: "Milo's Magical Map"

Empathy

"Help me, please!" it chirped.

The bluebird's request highlights the need for assistance. Milo's choice to help demonstrates his empathy for another creature's suffering.

"Thank You, Brave Human!" The Bluebird Chirped with Joy.

The acknowledgment of Milo's bravery reinforces the importance of empathy in interactions, showing how it fosters positive relationships.

Collaboration

Milo Thought Hard and Finally Said, "I Wish for More Adventures with Friends!"

This line illustrates Milo's desire for companionship, indicating that adventure is more meaningful when shared with others, thus emphasizing the value of collaboration.

The Bluebird Flapped Its Wings and Scattered Sparkling Feathers, Filling the Air with Laughter and New Friends.

The collaboration between Milo and the bluebird leads to the creation of an enriched social experience, underscoring how kindness and mutual support can lead to expanded relationships.

Moral Development

Remembering That Courage Isn't Just for Treasure Seekers, Milo Lifted the Branch and Freed the Bird.

Helping others, which fosters moral development based on altruism and empathy, is a key component of true courage.

Both stories emphasize the social values of empathy and collaboration through their narratives and character interactions. The portrayal of these values serves a crucial role in children's moral and social development by offering examples of helping behaviors, building friendships, and fostering a sense of community.

- In "The Brave Little Squirrel," Sammy's actions offer a clear moral directive regarding the importance of empathy in forming friendships and providing support.
- In "Milo's Magical Map," Milo's adventure underscores the significance of helping others, revealing how acts of kindness can

lead to lasting friendships and meaningful experiences.

In summary, these narratives encourage children to cultivate empathy and collaboration, shaping their understanding of morality and social relationships.

Analysis on how can the Analysis of these Stories Help Educators and Parents Instill Positive Values and Boost Emotional Intelligence in Young Readers Effectively

Leveraging Van Dijk's (1977) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology, this study examines "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map" for their structural composition, thematic elements, characterizations, and moral implications. This investigation demonstrates how language may proficiently convey positive ideals and emotional intelligence to young readers.

Story 1: "The Brave Little Squirrel"

Text Structure:

The story begins by introducing Sammy, a tiny squirrel with bright, twinkling eyes. "In a lush, green forest, there lived a tiny squirrel named Sammy."

Middle: Introduces conflict and resolution. "He found a little bunny named Bella tangled in a thorn bush."

The ending provides a resolution and conveys the moral of the story. "They learned that true bravery is not just about facing fears but also about helping those in need."

Themes

Bravery and Helpfulness: Sammy's decision to help Bella illustrates the courage to assist others. "With a brave heart, Sammy said, 'Don't worry, Bella! I'll help you!'"

Friendship: The bond between Sammy and Bella grows from their adventure. "From that day on, Sammy and Bella became the best of friends."

Character Representation

Courageous Main Character: Sammy embodies bravery and altruism. "You're so brave!" cheered Bella, her eyes sparkling with gratitude."

Story 2: "Milo's Magical Map"

Text Structure

The beginning introduces Milo's character and his adventurous spirit. "Milo was a sprightly little boy with a wild imagination."

The middle section presents an adventure that culminates in conflict. "Suddenly, Milo heard a peculiar sound—a gentle sob."

The ending provides a resolution that prioritizes friendship over material desires. "I wish for more adventures with friends!"

Themes

Courage in the Face of Challenges:

Milo's decision to help the bluebird highlights moral courage. "Remembering that courage isn't just for treasure seekers, Milo lifted the branch and freed the bird."

Friendship and Joy:

The ending promotes the idea that true treasure comes from relationships. "Milo thought hard and finally said, 'I wish for more adventures with friends!'"

Character Representation:

Heroic yet Kind: Milo's character reflects not just bravery but kindness as well. "Thank you, brave human!" the bluebird chirped with joy.

Educational Implications for Parents and Teachers

The analysis reveals several approaches that educators and parents can utilize to instill positive values and boost emotional intelligence in young readers effectively:

- 1. Role Modeling:** Characters like Sammy and Milo demonstrate bravery, kindness, and friendship. Educators can encourage children to emulate these traits in their own lives by discussing the characters' actions.
- 2. Moral Lessons:** Both stories conclude with clear moral messages. For instance, parents can emphasize the lesson from Sammy about helping others and discuss why that is important in real-life situations.
- 3. Discussion Prompts:** Following the reading, parents can pose questions to their children, such as, "What would you do if you saw someone in trouble like Sammy or Milo?" This not only fosters critical thinking but also helps children to verbalize their understanding of bravery and kindness.
- 4. Activity Integration:** These stories can inspire activities that simulate 'adventurous' and 'helpful' behavior, such as community service projects or teamwork activities, reinforcing the lessons learned.
- 5. Emotional Recognition:** Identifying the emotional responses of characters (e.g., Bella's fear, the bluebird's pleading) can help children learn to recognize and empathize with the feelings of others, which is crucial for developing emotional intelligence.

By using these narratives as a foundation, parents and educators can create a rich environment

for children to explore and understand positive values, enhancing their social and emotional learning in meaningful ways.

Analysis on Gaps Does This Study Fill in the Current Literature on Bravery and Friendship Themes in Children's Literature, and How Does It Enhance Our Understanding of These Themes in Shaping the Emotional Intelligence of Young Readers

To analyze the two stories, "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map," using Teun A. Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, this research focuses on key elements such as power relations, ideology, social structures, and the portrayal of characters and themes. This study addresses the gaps in the current literature on bravery and friendship themes in children's literature.

Story 1: "The Brave Little Squirrel"

1. Characterization

- *"A tiny squirrel named Sammy."*
- *"Bright, twinkling eyes and a fluffy tail that wagged joyfully."*
- *"A little bunny named Bella."*

These lines illustrate Sammy as a gentle, friendly character and emphasize his bravery through the context of helping Bella.

2. Action and Agency

- *"With a brave heart, Sammy said, 'Don't worry, Bella! I'll help you!'"*

This sentence portrays bravery as an action prompted by compassion, positioning Sammy as a proactive and caring character.

3. Theme of Friendship

- *"From that day on, Sammy and Bella became the best of friends."*

This line signifies the importance of collaboration and companionship formed through acts of bravery.

4. Moral/Message

- *"They learned that true bravery is not just about facing fears but also about helping those in need."*

This encapsulates the moral lesson of the story, linking bravery to altruism.

Story 2: "Milo's Magical Map"

1. Characterization

- *"A sprightly little boy with a wild imagination."*

This line indicates Milo as adventurous and imaginative, which attracts readers to his character.

2. Action and Agency

- *"Without a moment's hesitation, Milo grabbed his trusty backpack."*

This presents Milo as proactive, demonstrating a willingness to engage in adventure despite potential dangers.

3. Theme of Courage

- *"Remembering that courage isn't just for treasure seekers."*

This shifts the notion of courage from individual gain to consideration for others, illuminating a deeper meaning to bravery.

4. Moral/Message:

- *Milo thought hard and finally said, 'I wish for more adventures with friends!'"*

The conclusion highlights the value of friendship, showing how bravery can enhance interpersonal relationships.

Gaps in Current Literature

1. Limited Research on Emotional Intelligence

While there are studies on bravery and friendship in children's literature, there's often a lack of focus on how these themes contribute to the development of emotional intelligence in young readers. Both stories illustrate how acts of bravery and friendship help build empathy, indicating a need to explore emotional learning outcomes further.

2. Connection Between Action and Character Development

The literature could better document the relationship between character actions, such as helping, and the subsequent emotional growth, such as gratitude. This analysis introduces a model where bravery leads to friendship and emotional growth, which could inspire further studies.

3. Cultural Contexts of Bravery

Different cultures have unique interpretations of bravery and friendship. These stories, while simple in theme, may reflect broader cultural narratives that warrant exploration in a diverse children's literature context.

Enhancing Understanding of Themes

These stories enhance our understanding of bravery and friendship by:

- **Emphasizing Altruism:** Both characters (Sammy and Milo) showcase bravery not for personal glory but to assist others, which teaches

young readers that true courage often involves selflessness.

- **Modeling Positive Relationships:** The friendships formed through these brave acts highlight the importance of connection and collaboration in navigating challenges—essential skills for emotional intelligence.
- **Encouraging Adventure and Exploration:** The settings of both stories encourage curiosity and adventure, framing bravery not just as conquering fear but as engaging with the world and others positively.

By analyzing these elements through Van Dijk's CDA framework, we can extract broader implications for how children's literature can impact emotional and social development, paving the way for further research into the effects these narratives have on young readers.

CONCLUSION

Teun A. Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis provides critical insights into the articulation of themes of bravery and friendship in "The Brave Little Squirrel" and "Milo's Magical Map," as well as their implications for the emotional and social development of young readers. Both stories effectively illustrate the intertwining of acts of bravery with the support of friendships, underscoring the communal nature of courage. The characters, Sammy and Milo, exemplify bravery as not merely a personal trait but as a means to foster relationships and create a sense of community.

The narratives highlight the importance of empathy and collaboration as foundational social values that contribute to children's moral development. By embodying these virtues, the characters encourage young readers to embrace curiosity, compassion, and the value of helping others in their social interactions. The study identifies gaps in existing literature, particularly in understanding the contributions of these themes to emotional intelligence, suggesting that acts of bravery, when framed within the context of friendship, can foster significant emotional and social growth.

In conclusion, this analysis enriches our understanding of how children's literature not only entertains but also serves as a vital tool for instilling positive values and developing emotional intelligence, emphasizing that bravery and friendship are essential components of nurturing resilient, empathetic individuals.

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