

EFFECTS OF MOTHERHOOD CONCEPTUALIZATION AND GENDER ROLE  
OF MOTHERS ON GENDER STEREOTYPED KNOWLEDGE IN THEIR  
PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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## ABSTRACT

### EFFECTS OF MOTHERHOOD CONCEPTUALIZATION AND GENDER ROLE OF MOTHERS ON GENDER STEREOTYPE KNOWLEDGE IN THEIR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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In the current study, we aimed to investigate mothers' and their 4-5 year old children's attitudes toward gender roles in a semi-structured gender-tuned mother-child conversation. Participants were 65 Turkish mother-child pairs ( $N_{children} = 65$ ;  $N_{mothers} = 65$ ) and the age range was 45 to 69 months for children, and mothers' age range was 25 to 44. Mothers filled out the *Bem Sex Role Inventory* and *Mothering Role Praise* scale. *Mothering Role Praise Scale* developed in scope of the current study to reveal how mothers conceptualize their mothering experience and integrate their maternal identity. Femininity and masculinity levels of mothers and how they conceptualize their mothering experiences were examined in order to explore the stereotypical gender knowledge and conventionality in their sentences during a semi-structured gender-tuned conversation with their children. Our findings showed that there were converging patterns of maternal and children's outcomes. Both mothers, who showed high mothering role praise about their motherhood, and their

children, used more *conventional statements* during conversation about child's gender. In addition, young mothers and these mothers' children used more *unconventional statements*. Finally, younger mothers used more question repetitions, more negative evaluations; and mothers who scored lower on mothering role praise and were younger, and whose children were younger, used more neutral questions. The findings of the study and interpretations of results, and suggestions for further studies are presented.

Key words: Gender roles, Mothering, Gender stereotypes, Conversation, Conventuality

## ÖZ

### ANNENİN ANNELİK KONSEPTİNİN VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET ROLÜNÜN OKUL ÖNCESİ ÇOCUKLARDA CİNSİYET ŞEMALARI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİLERİ

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Bu çalışmada, 4-5 yaş grubu çocukların ve onların annelerinin toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine yaklaşımı, çocuğun cinsiyeti üzerine gerçekleşen yarı-yapılandırılmış bir anne-çocuk sohbeti ile incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Katılımcılar 65 Türk, anne-çocuk çiftidir ( $N_{çocuk} = 65$ ;  $N_{anne} = 65$ ). Çocukların yaş aralığı 45-65 aylık; annelerin yaş aralığı 25 ile 44 yaş arasındadır. Anneler Bem Cinsiyet Rolü Envanteri'ni ve Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeğini dolmuşlardır. Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeği bu çalışma kapsamında geliştirilmiş olup, annelerin annelik deneyimlerini nasıl kavramsallaştırdıkları ve bunu annelik kimliğiyle nasıl içselleştirdiklerini ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Annelerin feminenlik ve maskülenlik seviyeleri ve annelik konseptini oluşturma şekilleri, çocuklarıyla yaptıkları çocuklarının cinsiyeti üzerine sohbette, çocuk ve annenin cinsiyet rolleri şemalarını ve geleneksel tutumlarıyla ilişkisini incelemek için bakılmıştır. Çalışmamız, anne ve çocuk sonuçları arasında

uyumlu bir model bulmuştur. Cinsiyet üzerine sohbet esnasında, hem annelik övgüsü yüksek olan anne hem de bu annenin çocuğu daha çok geleneksel ifade kullanmıştır. Buna ek olarak, genç anneler ve onların çocukları da daha çok geleneksel olmayan ifadelerle çocuğun kendi cinsiyeti hakkında konuşmuşlardır. Bu yazında çalışmanın sonuçları, sonuçların yorumları ve sonraki araştırmalar için önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Cinsiyet rolleri, Annelik, Toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri, Sohbet, Geleneksel tutumlar.

TO MY FAMILY & MY GRANDMOTHER NAZİFE...

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Overview

Mothering has been widely studied in various fields of social sciences, especially within the framework of parenting. (Barclay, Everitt, Rogan, Schmeid, & Wyllie, 1997; Bassin, Honey, & Kaplan, 1994; Miller, 2005). A common definition of mothering is the “practices of nurturing and caring for dependent children” (p. 1192) (Arandell, 2000). *Mothering* is specifically considered as childrearing related activities and practices. As it could be derived from the name of the concept, it is practiced by mothers; accepted as a feminine thing. Motherhood is widely accepted as a fully formed gender identity-related characteristic of a woman across different cultures (McMahon, 1995). Although, mothers do not uniformly practice the same style of mothering; factors such as cultural context, individual differences, self-related beliefs and attributes would affect the way women perceive themselves as a mother and practice mothering.

Mothering is not independent from external factors, either. Barclay and her colleagues (1997) found that new experience of being a mother is affected by baby’s nature –such as, temperament-, and a mother’s attitude towards baby’s behaviors, related experiences with other babies, and availability of social support. This experience also includes socially constructed and culturally specific features (Forcey, 1994). Taken together, mothering is not a predetermined or universal practice; it is a multidirectional relationship that takes place among the mother, the child, and the culture they live in (Phoenix, Woollett, & Lloyd, 1991). In other words, practicing of mothering changes as a factor of individual differences and broader cultural effects. In the current study, we aim to a) develop a scale that would

capture mothers' conceptualization of motherhood by the *Mothering Role Praise Scale* that has been developed in scope of the current study, which aims to reveal how mothers conceptualize mothering experience, and how they associate mothering to their self-concepts; and b) examine the effect of socially constructed features of *mothering* –measured by the *Mothering Role Praise Scale*- both on mothers' and their children's daily conversational characteristics about gender.

As stated above, one of the main goals of the current study is to explore how these mothering experiences might affect the way mothers converse with their children, especially in tune with their children's gender. In gender stereotyping studies, researchers found that adults stereotypically categorize neutrally dressed infants' gender according to their physical and personality traits (e.g. *Boys are harsh, and alert; girls are softy and not that much alert*) (Stern & Karraker, 1989; Vogel, Lake, Evans, & Karraker, 1991). As children grow up, parents expect their preschool children to play with gender-specific toys and want them to behave and express their emotions in a gender appropriate way (Turner & Gervai, 1995; Brody, 1999). Parents also find it less acceptable when preschooler boy acts like a girl compared to the case when preschooler girl acts like a boy (Sandnabba & Ahlberg, 1999). In other words, parents come with a set of gender-related expectations and they implicitly or explicitly expose these onto their childrearing practices. There is a mass body of literature on how men and women conceptualize gender roles. One of the famous theorists, Sandra Bem (1971), conceptualized two main gender role characteristics, namely as *femininity* and *masculinity*. Femininity refers to the set of behaviors including affection, cheerfulness, nurturing, and alike. Masculinity, on the other hand, includes risk taking, being competitive, dominant, and alike. Bem proposed that all individuals are both feminine and masculine in varying degrees, and developed a scale to measure femininity and masculinity, that is called Bem Sex Roles Inventory (1971). Many other researchers followed Bem's lead, and examined how femininity and masculinity of mothers affect family structure and atmosphere. For instance, egalitarian families generally want to raise their children in a non-gendered way (Weisner & Wilson-Mitchell, 1990). If mother acts differently than expected gender roles -in another words, in a more masculine way-, their children

also tend to adopt less traditional gender roles and tend to behave in tune with those compared to more feminine mothers' children (Weinraub, Jaeger, & Hoffman, 1988). *Gender neutral* family atmosphere contributes and expands children's gender knowledge, and they learn that their choices in life are not restricted due to common gender roles in that cultural context (Davies & Banks, 1992). Children's conceptualization of masculinity and femininity generally depends on the person that child considers as a role model (Emmerich, Goldman & Shore, 1971). They also use cues to understand the world around them, such as visual cues (e.g. *physical appearances*), verbal cues (e.g. *girls are nice*), and they observe the characteristics of close environment (Zosuls, Ruble, Tamis-LeMonda, Shrout, Bornstein, & Greulich, 2009). In the study of Urberg (1982), researchers ask children to categorize attributes as masculine, feminine or neutral. Girls attributed less stereotypical gender roles to the concepts, if their mothers are working. The more recent studies focused on how children define gender stereotypes across different domains. For instance, physical appearances are mostly used for defining girls as having more feminine traits (e.g. *having long hair, wearing dress*), whereas physical activities (e.g. *liking football*) and traits (e.g. *being harsh*) are used for boys to describe their masculinity (Miller, Lurye, Zosuls, and Ruble, 2009). This kind of difference could arise from the parents' attitudes towards gender roles. In one of the parent-child conversation study conducted with Latino families, showed that topic of conversations change across gender of child; parents generally prefer to talk with their sons about *action-based activities*, whereas the conversation with daughters generally contains content about physical appearance (Cristofaro and Tamis-LeMonda 2008).

Gender socialization literature show that individuals adopt these feminine and masculine gender roles, but when does this learning specifically begin? Children learn the world and internalize gender-related schemas and information from the very beginning of their lives by referencing their parents' behaviors and cues about socialization patterns. For instance, awareness of stereotypical gender roles can be observed in two year olds (Witt, 1997), and the time that children learn gender related physical characteristics is mostly around preschool years (Martin & Ruble,

2004). In one of the mother-child conversation studies, researchers asked mothers to engage in conversation with their children (two to six year olds) about a picture book, which includes images of activities that are appropriate to the gender stereotypes, and neutral ones. The total number of “generic utterances” (in another words, gender stereotyping) while reading the picture book dramatically increased from two years of age to six, both for children and for their mothers (Gelman, Taylor, & Nguyen, 2004). In short, children typically develop a good sense of gender knowledge during the preschool years.

In the current study, we aim to examine 4-5 year old Turkish children’s stereotypical gender knowledge, in relation to their mothers’ self-perception about mothering experience, and mother’s femininity and masculinity features. In other words, up to what extent mothers praise their mothering role, and their level of femininity and masculinity, would predict how mothers and children converse about gender roles. Next section examines gender developmental theories.

## **1.2. Gender Development Theories**

Gender has been studied as a cross-cutting topic both in psychological and other social science research. Piaget (1952) argued that, like any other cognitive schema, we all develop gender schemas from very early on, deriving from the values of our culture. In other words, from very early ages, human beings develop gender schemas, and a prevalent way for this development in children is through their socialization with their parents and other significant adults. Adults are prone to evaluate children in a gender-biased perspective. In the study of Powlishta (2000), researchers asked adult participants to rate photos for the level of masculinity, femininity, and neutrality that they perceive in the adult and child photos. They found that adults have a tendency to report more distinctive details for boys and girls than they do for men and women (Powlishta, 2000). In light of those results, one may conclude that adults’ perspective may lead children to catch messages easily about gender stereotypes from the very beginning of their lives (Berk, 2009).

In the early times of developmental psychology literature, gender identity was explained as a feeling, practice and knowledge of stereotypical social roles of being a masculine and feminine (Kagan, 1964; DeLucia, 1963; Bem, 1974, 1981; Lurye, Zosuls & Ruble, 2008). According to the dominant view at that time, there should be a consistent match between feeling of feminine/masculine and sex to conform social standards of gender (Kagan, 1964; Bem, 1974). This process of acquiring awareness of one's own gender and acting according to the sex-appropriate way, which is learnt from others, is called *gender typing* (Shaffer, 2009). *Gender identity* is the way of identification with one's own self as a man or woman (Berk, 2009); whereas *gender role* is the expression of gender identity according to the norms of culture (Hawkesworth, 1997). All these gender development related concepts are used in different theories, yet only *gender role* is the main concept in the current study. There are many theories about gender development in psychology literature, and the most salient theories are presented below.

### **1.2.1. Social Learning Theory**

Gender is a socially constructed concept, and gender roles develop in tune with the cultural context that individuals live in. Social learning theory is based on the idea that gender roles are learnt through reinforcement and modeling, like other behaviors are learnt (Fagot, 1978; Bem, 1983). Adults reinforce their children for demonstrating appropriate gender roles, and encourage them behave in a gender-appropriate way. This way, they can direct their children to fit into the norms of the society they live in, and encourage them to present behaviors that are socially acceptable (Mischel, 1970; Huston, 1983; Bem, 1983; O'Brien & Huston, 1985; Bigler & Liben, 1992).

In an observational study of Fagot (1978), she observed children at 2 years of age in the home environment with their parents. Results of Fagot's study showed that parents reinforce or punish behaviors based on child's gender. The expected behaviors -*gender appropriate behaviors*- are reinforced; for instance, "playing with dolls" is reinforced for girls; whereas boys might have got punishment for the same behavior. Fagot (1978) suggested that gender roles are learnt from the environment

around children by using reinforcement and punishment. Social learning theory puts more emphasis on the active role of adults in directing and shaping children's gender schemas. In other words, social learning theory approaches to the gender typing as a passive process for children.

Parents' role in children's gender socialization is one of the core factors on gender development, and its function cannot be underestimated. Early studies found that children's performance in a daily activity was based on how parents labeled it. If a game was labeled as *gender appropriate*, children's performance was its best; their performance began to decrease when the activity was labeled as *gender-neutral*; and the lowest performance was observed when it was labeled as *gender inappropriate* (Montemayor, 1974). Previous studies even claim that the gender acceptable behaviors were more limited for boys; girls did not face that much rigid restrictions or punishments due to their gender inappropriate behaviors in the family environment (Pollak, 1998; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). More recent research that were grounded on social learning theory, generally focused on how these different treatments towards girls and boys change among different contexts with regard to gender development. For instance, in the study of Leaper (2000), the type of toy – feminine (e.g. *kitchen set*) or masculine (e.g. *tracks*)- determined the parents' attitudes toward their girls and boys in a playing setting. Overall, mothers showed more *affiliation*, and fathers were more *assertive* towards their children, but both parents showed high affiliation if their daughter played with a feminine toy. Leaper (2000) stated that when we took contextual factors (e.g. *playing settings, cultural factors*) into account, we could explicitly see the influence of parents in gender typing.

Children's ideas, stereotypes and beliefs about gender-related knowledge are not stable throughout their development. Children, who are younger than 5-7 years old, accept gender stereotypes as more rigid facts. For example, they can believe that if someone does something that belongs to a cross gender stereotype (e.g. *a boy wearing a skirt*), this person's sex may change (Ruble, Lurye & Zosuls, 2010), and that boy has become a girl. Beginning of the preschool years, children start to

consider that most of the activities can be done by both sexes, and their gender schemas become more flexible (Trautner, Ruble, et al., 2005). One of the possible reasons for this change could be because of children's increased cognitive ability across different ages.

### **1.2.2. Cognitive Developmental Theory**

Social learning theory suggests that children acquire gender roles through exposure to stereotypical behaviors and culturally specific norms (Bem, 1989). Unlike social learning theory, cognitive developmental theorists indicate that children are active agents in their own development (Kohlberg, 1966; Martin, Wood, & Little, 1990; Bigler & Liben, 1992).

According to the Kohlberg (1966), there are three stages to pass for constructing gender appropriate behavior and attitudes: *gender labeling*, *gender stability*, and *gender constancy*. For instance, preschool age children, who reach the gender labeling stage earlier tend to act and play in gender-appropriate ways more frequently, compared to their peers. In addition, they have more knowledge about gender stereotypes than their peers do, who are later in terms of development of gender labeling (Fagot, Leinbach, & O'Boyle, 1992). Similar studies showed that when children comprehend gender stability, their gender stereotyping behaviors and same sex playmate preferences increase; and consequently, they try to meet gender appropriate expectations (Ruble, et al., 2007). In the gender constancy stage, children organize and categorize their gender knowledge (Kohlberg 1966; Kohlberg & Ullian, 1974). They attribute positive values to their own sex and become more gender stereotyped. For example, one of the early studies showed that 2-3 years old children labeled their own sex with more positive traits, and they attributed negative traits to the cross-sex (Kuhn, Nash, & Brucken, 1978). Another classic research found that the importance of choosing the same sex model. Children who reached the gender constancy stage prefer to attend more often to the same sex models and the time that they spent to watch them in the video changed according to their level

of constancy (e.g. *the high constancy boys watched the male character more than the female character, compared to low constancy boys*) (Slaby and Frey, 1975).

These studies point that children initially catch the basics of gender knowledge, than they develop this knowledge with interactions and integrate their knowledge to the social world.

As shown before, social learning theory emphasizes the role of social environment and takes gender development as a life-long process. In general, according to cognitive development perspective, children can cognitively judge their own gender identity. Gradually, their situation evolves from being receivers to being active agents. This shift refers to the fact that they initially rely upon their main caregivers' judgments regarding gender, but as they develop in terms of understanding gender schemas, they begin to understand their environment by reflecting their existing schemas, they apply their own understanding, and become more active in interpreting the outer world (Martin & Ruble, 2004). The relationship between a child and social environment -especially with parents- has a dialectical nature, in which both parties influence each others relationship between a child and schema theory promotes this idea that children are not passive; they actively form their gender identity under the effects of social environment (Martin, Ruble, & Szkrybalo, 2002).

### **1.2.3. Gender Schema Theory**

One of the most known cognitive theories regarding gender development is *gender schema theory*, which approaches gender as a multi-directional construct (Bem, 1982; Martin & Halverson, 1987; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998). Gender schemas are dynamic structures, which vary across different cultures and experiences (Martin & Dinella, 2001; Barbera, 2003). They are learnt at very early times in life by direct and indirect observations (Martin and Halverson, 1981). Children's behavior and the way of thinking are both affected by these cognitive *schemas*; so children construct their gender related knowledge in light of them (Liben & Bigler, 2002; Martin, Ruble, & Szkrybalo, 2002). Later in life, these schemas are reinforced and

maintained by the social environment around them (e.g. *peers, teachers, family members, and visual media*) (Taylor, 1996, Ruble & Martin, 1998).

Stereotypical cues of gender, such as “*pink for girls; blue for boys*” are the culturally learnt cues for children to categorize gender related information (Picariello, Greenberg, & Pillemer, 1990; Martin and Ruble, 2004). During the toddler and preschool years, children develop gender knowledge by using gender related physical characteristics (Martin & Ruble, 2004, Tenenbaum et al., 2010). As they get older, children do not only use simple and obvious features to understand someone’s gender; but they also use behaviors of others and their social and daily activities as clues to identify other people’s gender (Berndt and Heller, 1986; Barbera, 2003).

Stereotypes are gained at very early ages and these are resistant to change for the most part (Wilson, Lindsey and Schooler, 2000). Children easily distinguish females and males, and can make connection between the certain objects and one’s gender after three years in life (eg. *Trucks for boys, dolls for girls*) (Banse et al., 2010). As children get older, their gender stereotypes become more flexible compared to their younger ages (Serbin & Sprafkin, 1986). However, it is important when a certain gender stereotype had been learnt initially, and this timing of these learnt stereotypes can affect the type of behaviors that children automatically present without much thinking -spontaneous behaviors (Strack and Deutsch, 2004; Banse et al., 2010). In other words, even if these children are cognitively capable of understanding the flexible nature of gender roles and stereotypes, they still hang on to their early constructed schemas –stereotypes- and this mostly happens as a spontaneous process (Greenwald & Nosek, 2008).

Children construct gender schemas according to their observations and the verbal cues that they catch from adults. They are generally more rigid and more inductive in their schemas compared to adults. What happens when children encounter something that does not match their existing schemas? In one of the studies, researchers showed pictures to the 5 to 6 years old children (Martin and Halverson, 1983). In these pictures, there were some activities that were gender

stereotyped (e.g. a *girl sewing*) and non-stereotyped (e.g. a *girl sawing wood*). A week later, researchers asked questions about pictures to the children in the study. Most of the children misremembered the sex of the actor, who is doing non-gender stereotyped activity. In another words, they “corrected” the sex of actors in their memories according to their existing gender schemas. In another study, researchers labeled novel toys as gender-appropriate and non-gender appropriate. Children preferred to play and spent more time to explore the novel toys that were labeled as gender appropriate (Bradbard, Endsley, & Halverson, 1986).

There are also differences that can be seen in flexibility of gender schemas among children of different ages. Previous studies showed that 7-9 years old children are less rigid in their gender stereotypes than the younger ones are (Carter & Patterson, 1982; Marantz & Mansfield, 1977). Martin (1989) conducted research with 4 to 10 years old children, they rated the pictures that belong to a particular story according to the questions of researcher; e.g. *Which toy does the “target child” would like to play with?* Descriptions of target child were introduced beforehand by researcher, as gender consistent (e.g. *Tommy’s best friend is a boy*) or gender inconsistent (e.g. *Tommy is a sissy*,). The result of this study showed that regardless of children’s age, children liked the same sex targets more, and didn’t like the targets that were labeled as sissies and tomboys. Unlike the older children, younger ones did not consider interests and descriptions of targets, when guessing the toy preferences of the targets. For instance, they chose masculine toys (e.g. *trucks*) for boys and feminine ones (e.g. *dolls*) for girls. However, older children made their judgments by considering the characteristics and also the sex of the target child; instead of identifying the target child with themselves.

Gender schemas are not directly transferred from one generation to another. A person constructs gender schemas across childhood into adolescence by using the information that gathered from family and non-family environment (Martin and Ruble, 2004; Serbin, Powlishtak, & Gulko, 1993). Children actively seek information from different contexts; nevertheless parents’ has a key role in gender socialization of their children (Lytton & Romney, 1991). They inform children by

guiding their gender socialization, and direct communication about gender roles (Marks, Bun, and Hale, 2009; Collins & Russell, 1991; Eccles, 1994). The next section involves the literature regarding parents' role in gender development of their children.

### **1.3. Parents' Roles in Learning Gender Knowledge**

Previous research investigated the role of parents, especially mothers, in early childhood on important issues, such as attachment, reminiscing and conversational styles, and general social and emotional development (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1979; Wang, 2001). Parents' mostly function as the main caregivers, who provide both physical and psychological needs of their children. In addition, they also represent a role model for their children. With daily practices, children learn what is socially acceptable and what is not in a specific cultural context that they live in. Gender roles are also learned through observing significant others such as parents; and since the main caregiver is considered as the mother in most cultures; mothers are influential in children's learning of socially constructed values (Bandura, 1982; Ex & Janssens, 1998).

Mothering practices and self-beliefs vary across cultures and individual differences. In those terms, it is important for researchers to consider and explore what mothers think about their own mothering, and its effects on how they practice mothering (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). The next section focuses on motherhood and mothering practices.

#### **1.3.1. Motherhood & Mothering Practices**

Mothering is used as a description of an ideal image of mother-child interaction in an emotional way, as well as the way of practicing good child-rearing, including meeting the physical needs, cleaning, feeding and keeping them steady (Phoenix, Woollett, & Lloyd, 1991; Barnard & Martell, 1995; Arandell, 1999). There are some expectations from "good mothering" in a dominant *Motherhood Ideology* (Berry, 1993; Arandell, 1999). These expectations include having a child-centered life, intensive emotions that mothers feel for their children, being self-

sacrificing, and allocating more time for her child for a woman than she would do for herself (Hays, 1996; Kaplan, 1994; Bassin, Honey & Kaplan, 1994). These expectations may change as a factor of culture; in some cultural contexts the intensity of these expectations may be higher, whereas in other cultures they may not be as much. Consequently, self-beliefs and practices about mothering vary as a function of societal expectations regarding mothering, and relatedly predominant gender roles.

Mothering experiences of women, and their self-beliefs about mothering, differ across cultures, and also individually (Ruddick, 1994; Phoenix, Woollett, & Lloyd, 1991). For instance, there is a large body of research focusing on the emotional bond between mother-child pairs, or the temperament of the child, which may all in turn affect the mothering practices. When we examine the attachment literature, it has been theorized that from the birth of the child, mother and child are starting to establish an emotional bond, which lays a foundation of their further relationship throughout life. Bowlby (1969) named this relationship between main caregiver—generally with mother— as *attachment*, that starts very early on and continues into adulthood. Ainsworth expanded the attachment theory by her mostly known research, “*strange situation*”. She classified attachment types of children as *secure*, *anxious-resistant (insecure)*, and *disorganized* (Bretherton & Ainsworth, 1974; Ainsworth, 1990). Ainsworth and her colleagues also observed mothers and their children in a home environment to examine mothers’ responsiveness, such as feeding, soothing, eye contact (Ainsworth, Blehar, and Wall, 1978). Characteristics of responsive mothers were determined as reading the child’s signals right, respond their needs on time, and being affectionate. These are also essentials to bond healthy relationship. Responsive and sensitive mothers’ children are more likely to become securely attached (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Egeland & Farber, 1984; Ward & Carlson, 1995). Conversely, maternal insensitivity generally related with insecure attachment, behavioral problems, and aggression in children (Shaw, Keenan, & Vondra, 1994). Yet, most of the contemporary studies regarding attachment tap onto the effect of cultural context. For example, in Turkish cultural context, maternal anxiety seems to be functional whereas maternal avoidance is

associated with negative child outcomes (Sumer & Kagitcibasi, 2007). In other words, mothering practices are highly bound to the cultural context and what it offers for mothering concept.

Another important factor that is theorized to define the nature of mother-child relationship is child's temperament. Temperament has been used as an important predictor of mother-child interaction in a mass body of research, since mother-child relationship has a reciprocal nature. This relationship is not only shaped by mother's attitudes and behaviors towards her child, also by child's temperament (Campos, Barrett, Lamb, Goldsmith & Sternberg, 1983). Children with difficult temperament, who show intense negativity and hard to soothe, generally evoke anger, and negativity in their mothers (Scaramella and Leve, 2004). In addition to this, negative emotionality of a child was found related with authoritarian parenting, harsh discipline, and parental psychological control (Lerner 1993; Porter, Hart, Yang, Robinson, Olsen, and Zeng, 2005; Van der Bruggen, Stams, Bogels & Paulussen-Hoogeboom, 2010). Yet, not all research indicate the same direction in terms of the effects of temperament. For instance, in some studies, researchers found the association between difficult temperament and high maternal involvement (Belsky and Jaffee 2006; Sanson and Rothbart 1995). The reason for this contradictory results could arise from different definitions and understandings of concepts across different cultures, such as difficult temperament, strict discipline, and high/low activity. For example, children's activity level was positively related with authoritarian parenting for Finnish sample (Katainen, Raikkonen, & Keltikangas-Jarvinen, 1997), but negatively related with Chinese sample, and no relation was found in American families (Porter et al., 2005). In light of existing literature, cultural context and related social schemas seem to have a salient effect on how mother-child relationships is related with temperament, as well. In those terms, what is functional and predominant in a cultural context seems to have an important role on this intimate relationship and maternal practices and identity.

Mothering is shaped by how a woman, who has become a mother, approaches to the concept of family, herself, her relationship with her children and

her partner within the light of broader cultural context. When women become mothers, it is likely for them to feel distressed for many different reasons, including possible discrepancy between own and societal norms about motherhood. Mothers, especially the new ones, experience really stressful times with their children, and at times mothering may become a burden (Östberg, Hagekull & Hagelin, 2007). Mothers who suffer from mothering practices may have problems like exhaustion, stability of mood, sexual desires, social support, anxiety, and even depression (Bayer, Hiscock, Hampton, & Wake, 2007; Marshall and Thompson, 2012). These issues are generally investigated by clinical psychologists to help mothers with their practices and self-image as a mother. In addition, mostly observable mothering behaviors are measured in the literature, for example, the support that she receives about the relationship with her child, and experience of breastfeeding (Brown, et al., 1994; Nicolson, 1999).

Research studies about identity of mothering indicated that mothering identity is perceived as a more meaningful part of women's identity compared to their marital status and job status (Rogers & White, 1998). Social scientist Susan Walzer (1998) indicated that both socially and psychologically preparing one's self for motherhood and the newly constructed mothering identity make women feel themselves more important compared to their old selves.

One of the main goals of the current study were to have developed a scale that aimed to measure mothers' perceptions about how they conceptualize motherhood. To the best of our knowledge, neither in psychological research nor in sociology, there is a scale that solely aims to measure mothers' perception and attitudes toward their own mothering roles, without taking caregiving or parental practices into consideration. For this reason, a *Mothering Role Praise Scale* has been developed for the current study. It mainly aims to provide answers about unique experiences that belong to upper-middle class Turkish mothers, since they are the ones who are more modernized and in transition about their values about mothering, therefore displaying variance in terms of individual differences in mothering (Sahin-Acar &

Leichtman, 2014). Their degree to adaptation of “mother” role and in what degree they praise their “mother” identity will be measured.

#### **1.4. Mother-Child Conversations**

One of the best ways of examining the role of parents’ on children’s gender socialization is observing them in their daily context (Maccoby, 1998). As stated before, mothers constitute important source of information about the world for children, including gender roles in cultural context. Maccoby specifically points out the importance of parent-child conversations with regard to gender development. One of the meta-analysis study showed that fathers and mothers are differed in an aspect of conversational style and content of conversation (Leaper, Anderson, & Sanders, 1998). According to the results of 25 studies, mothers are more supportive while conversing with their children, and spend more time to talk compared to the time that fathers usually allocate. During conversing with their children, fathers are more direct and informative than mothers are.

Maternal and paternal tasks, which are in tune with the traditional gender roles, in a family environment are not as rigid and sex based as it used to be in the past, because of the social transformations in Turkey, along with the global one (Ersoz, 1999). Despite the educational empowerment of women and their participation in business life, Turkish society mostly maintains male-dominant cultural traits. Child care and child related responsibilities are generally on the women’s shoulders (Çopur, Erkal, Doğan, & Şafak, 2010). In the study of Çopur and her colleagues (2010), they found that Turkish mothers are more involved in child care and spend more time with their children ( e.g. *by talking, playing*) compared to fathers. For Turkish sample, specifically taking mother-child interaction into account can shed more light onto children’s gender socialization.

There are many studies examining the nature of mother-child conversations. One of the important characteristics that change the nature of this conversation is the gender of the child. Starting from very early years in life, parents talk with their daughters and sons differently. Different socialization styles take place within

family context, depending on the gender of children (Lefkowitz et al., 2002). In the early stages of communication, mothers interact differently with boys and girls (Cervantes & Callanan, 1998). For example, in overall, mothers talk longer with their daughters and engage in more supportive and emotion-based conversations than they do with their sons (Leaper, Anderson, & Sanders, 1998; Fivush, Brotman, Buckner, & Goodman, 2000). Topic of conversation also changes according to the age and gender of a child (Martin and Ruble, 2010). According to the reports of adolescents, mothers engage in more conversation about issues concerning sexuality with their daughters, than they do with their sons (Feldman, and Rosenthal, 2000; Lefkowitz et al., 2002).

The role of parents on gender socialization has been widely studied (McHale, Crouter, & Tucker, 1999; Bussey and Bandura, 1999). Previous research suggested that parents sometimes indirectly express their beliefs about stereotypical gender roles when they converse with their children through daily activities (Maccoby, 1998; Gelman, Taylor, & Nguyen, 2004). In the study of Gelman et al. (2004), mothers not only give explicit messages about gender roles, but also use implicit messages to imply gender stereotypes in the mother-child conversations by using gender labels, or reinforcing children's stereotypical expressions about gender. Moreover, researchers suggest that mothers have more time to transfer gender stereotype knowledge to their daughters compared to their sons; because mothers generally play together with their daughters more frequently (Clearfield and Nelson, 2006). Also, mothers' gender-based conversational styles change across children's gender. Endendijk and her colleagues (2013) found that gender stereotype knowledge of mothers and daughters are interrelated with each other, whereas boys' knowledge does not show such a relation with their mothers'.

During maternal speech, mothers generally encourage their daughters' affiliative remarks (Leaper, Anderson, & Sanders, 1998; Bussey & Bandura, 1989); whereas they mostly encourage and support their sons' autonomy (Pomerantz & Ruble, 1998). One of the early studies showed that 18 to 24 month olds and their mothers can express their variety of feelings in different contexts regardless of

gender. However, after 24 months, mothers start to talk more with their daughters about feelings compared to their sons and the girls become more open about feelings compared to boys (Dunn, Bretherton, & Munn, 1987). Although, mothers prefer to talk with their daughters about feelings, they hardly discuss anger with their daughters. They more often discuss anger with their sons (Fivush, 1989). Generally, negative emotions such as anger, rage are not gender acceptable feelings for girls. Overall, mother usually chooses the topics according to the gender of their children while they are conversing with them.

Children's stereotyped gender knowledge gradually increases after the age of 3 (Ruble et al., 2006; Miller et al., 2009). A typically developed 5-year-old child constructs and reinforces stereotypical gender knowledge until age of 7 (Trautner et al., 2005; Miller et al., 2009). In the current study, we would focus on 48 to 66 months old preschool children in order to observe the development of these stereotypes. Within this age range, we examined gender-related variables as well as elaborativeness and repetitiveness of mothers while they were conversing with their children.

#### **1.4.1 Maternal Elaboration**

Mothers converse with their children differently around the globe. Previous literature showed that mothers from more collectivist and eastern cultures talk with their children with providing fewer details, asking less open-ended questions, using more repetitions. Their conversations are more skeletal, trying to convey a certain answer from children rather than encouraging them to provide their personal view. On the other hand, mothers from more individualist and western cultures talk with their children in a more elaborative way, asking more questions without repetitions, evaluating their children's answers and attaching the child an active role in those conversations (Wang, 2007; Wang & Fivush, 2005; Leichtman et al., 2000; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015). For instance, according to the cross-cultural studies, American mothers generally use elaborative style while talking with their children. This means that they encourage their children to speak, support their responses with further information and give feedback. Therefore, European American mothers help

their children to construct and organize their own stories. On the contrary, Chinese mothers are generally low in elaborativeness, and try to elicit information that they want to hear. These conversational styles of mothers across different cultures are positively associated with mothers' autonomous, individual self-view (Wang, 2007).

Mothers' elaborativeness while interacting with their child (eg. Open-ended questions, giving evaluative comments, detailed descriptions) also encourages the child's for an active participation, and strengthens the coherence of personal memories that helps the child to develop a sense of self-representation (Fivush, Haden & Reese, 2006; Zaman and Fivush, 2013). Therefore, mothers' conversational styles do not only have an impact on children's autobiographical memories; but it can also affect children's self-concepts. For instance, mothers from Western culture, which give importance on independent self-construal, have put more emphasis on internal states of their children during conversation than Chinese mothers do. These Western children can have a more proper self-view and able to talk more about their own internal states, feelings and thoughts, compared to Chinese children.

The only factor, which affects conversational styles of mothers, is not just the social context. According to the results of Sahin-Acar and Leichtman's (2015) study, regardless of culture, elaborativeness and repetitiveness of mothers changes as a factor of their self-construals. In those terms, mothers who are emotionally related with significant others, and uniquely individuated as a person, converse with their children in a more elaborative fashion. Furthermore, maternal reminiscing styles may also change as a factor of child's gender (Brody and Hall, 1993). Both mothers and fathers are more elaborative while talking with their daughters than they are with their sons (Reese and Fivush, 1993). Therefore, especially in a negative emotional context, maternal elaborative reminiscing intensifies the stereotypical idea that emotional reminiscing is the "women thing" (Fischer, 2000).

Overall, there are individual differences that play an important role on how mothers converse with their children. More individuated and western mothers are

more elaborative, and less repetitive. In the current study, we aimed to explore how maternal elaborativeness and repetitiveness are also affected by different individual characteristics of mothers. The next section introduces one of these individual differences that we are interested in exploring in mother-child conversation.

#### **1.4.2 Mothers' Femininity and Masculinity Traits**

As mentioned above in the part of gender schema theory, our perception and understanding of the world shapes around the schemas that we use (Bem, 1983). According the gender schema theory, organizing information, giving and interpreting the meaning of our interactions with other people and also the way of how we see ourselves are based on these schemas. For instance, when we think about the concept of *mother*, previously organized information comes to our minds, which includes femininity, caring, and being affectionate. We almost automatically approach mothers in light of our existing schemas, the characteristics that we coded in our schema about mothers in the cultural context we grew up in.

Gender roles are generally accepted as functionally essential categories to maintain societies' harmony. Bem (1974) developed the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), which is used for measuring people's femininity and masculinity scores. Masculinity and femininity features have an important role in people's gender related attitudes and behaviors in daily life. Also, organizing gender related information into categories serves the purpose of realization of one's own feminine and masculine traits (Archer & Lloyd, 2002); and these traits exist both for women and men, in different proportions depending on individual differences, which we are interested to measure in the current study.

Gender roles intertwine with cultural and social norms. Women who have high femininity scores show higher tendency to conform with the traditional female roles (Bem, 1974; Isik & Sahin-Acar, 2015). According to the study of Isik & Sahin-Acar (2015), mothers of eight year olds, who are high in femininity score, show little tolerance to gender inconsistent situations; whereas these mothers positively evaluate and support gender consistent situations. On the other hand,

mothers with high score in masculinity positively evaluate gender inconsistent situations and show support towards these situations.

Overall, sex role perceptions of mother play an important role on both herself and her child's perception of gender. Consequently, we expect to find the effect of femininity and masculinity, along with *Mothering Role Praise Scale* that we explained in the previous sections, on mother-child conversation about gender of the child.

### **1.5. Hypotheses of the Study**

In the current study, we examined mothers' and their 4-5 year old children's attitudes toward gender roles in a semi-structured mother-child conversation. As stated in previous literature, women who have children mostly label themselves as a *mother* and define all aspects of their identities in accordance with their self-view about mothering. The psychological requirements of traditional role of mothering go hand in hand with mothers' femininity traits. According to the literature, highly feminine mothers show more tendencies to conform to the traditional gender roles than the mothers with high masculinity score (Fagot, Leinbach and O'Boyle, 1992; Işık, 2014). However, sex role perceptions -femininity and masculinity- may not totally explain the variance that is directly related to mothering, thus we felt the need to develop a new scale regarding mothering roles.

Children's construction of gender roles is related with the socialization process and this process mostly starts in family context, mostly through parent-child interactions (Oliveri & Reiss, 1987). In one of the studies, researchers found that children, whose mothers have *conventional attitudes* toward gender roles, achieve gender label tasks earlier compared to children with *unconventional* mothers (Fagot, Leinbach and O'Boyle, 1992). Also, in the study of Fagot and Leinbach's (1995), egalitarian families' four-year-old children showed less stereotypical gender knowledge than the children of traditional families did. In tune with the existing literature, we would expect that mothers who put more emphasis and praise their role as a mother would use more conventional and less unconventional claims.

After reviewing the related literature and developing the Mothering Role Praise Scale, we created our hypotheses, as presented below:

- 1) It is expected that mothers whose score were higher on Mothering Role Praise scale would use more conventional statements and less unconventional statements compared to mothers whose scores are lower on mothering role praise. Children with mothers who had higher score in mothering role praise scale would use more conventional statements and less unconventional statements compared to children whose mothers' scores lower on mothering role praise.
- 2) It is expected that mothers scoring higher on femininity would use more conventional statements and less unconventional statements compared to the mothers scoring higher on masculinity during gender-conversation with their children. We expect the same direction of results for these mothers' children, as well. Children with mothers who scoring higher on femininity would use more conventional statements compared to children whose mothers scoring higher on masculinity.
- 3) It is expected that mothers scoring higher on femininity would have high scores in the mothering role praise scale; whereas mothers with high masculinity levels would have low scores in the mothering role praise scale.
- 4) It is also expected that mothers' low scores in mothering role praise scale would predict higher number of positive evaluation sentences in gender-conversation task. This hypothesis is only valid for mothers, since children's evaluation statements are usually not coded in previous literature, as stated above.
- 5) We expect to find that mothers who score higher on mothering role praise would use more repetitive and gender-charged questions compared to mothers, who score lower on mothering role praise. This hypothesis is again only valid for mothers, for the same reason as stated above.

- 6) Finally, we planed to code for *girl* words and *boy* words both for mothers and their children separately, while they are conversing, yet we did not have a specific hypothesis about these coding schemes and use these for exploratory reasons.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### 2.1 Participants

In this study, 65 Turkish mother-child pairs ( $N_{children} = 65$ ;  $N_{mothers} = 65$ ) were used as participants. Originally, one thousand handouts were delivered to local preschools promoting the current study. 95 mother-child pairs came to the lab, although only 65 pairs' data was complete and could be used in scope of the current study. There were 32 female and 33 male children who participated. The age range was 45 to 69 months ( $M = 56.02$ ,  $SD = 6.23$ ) for children, and mothers' age range was 25 to 44 years ( $M = 34.97$ ,  $SD = 3.88$ ). Participants were recruited via the help of preschools and in tune with the demographics of Çankaya region in Ankara. They were mostly from middle and upper-middle socio-economic status. We also recruited participants via the help of students who attended a Workshop Course that was offered in Psychology Department at METU. Before the study was conducted, ethical permission was taken from the Ethical Committee in Middle East Technical University (METU) (see Appendix A). In addition, all mothers signed the parental and informed consent forms before participation (see Appendix B).

#### 2.2. Measures

##### 2.2.1. Demographics

After mothers provide the parental and informed consents, they filled out the *Demographic Information Form*. It includes questions about mother's and child's age, the number of siblings and children, and mothers' final educational degree (see Appendix B).

### 2.2.2. Mothering Role Praise Scale

*Mothering Role Praise Scale* is a Likert type scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). This scale consists of 12 items. (see Appendix D). Mothering Role Praise Scale mainly focuses on how mothers perceive and internalize the culturally constructed features of motherhood (e.g. *When I became a mother, I see myself as an important person in the society; I think that “being a mother” is sacred, I am responsible for the success and failure of my kid.*)

Items of the Mothering Role Praise scale were generated by the main author. The wording and the conceptual modification for several items and judging items for intelligibility and representativeness were done by professors from Women Studies departments (Prof. Dr. Feride Acar from METU and Asst. Prof. Dr. Aksu Bora from Hacettepe University). Before data collection, we also discussed about the content and wording of the items with six different faculty members from psychology and sociology departments at METU. After consulting with specialists in the area, the first set of data for the Mothering Role Praise scale has been collected via an online survey (since June, 2014). A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted, with the data of 180 mothers, who filled out this online survey. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .87, and Bartlett Test of Sphericity was 522, 53 ( $p=0$ ), which showed the availability of data to conduct factor analysis.

After Principal Component Analysis was run, one factor solution explained 34.75% of the item variance. The reliability for Mothering Role Praise scale was .82 (Cronbach’s  $\alpha=.82$ ). The loadings of the items range from .33. to .74. Factor loadings and the items within a factor were presented in Table 1. In order to evaluate one-factor model, we continued collecting data via another online survey and recruited 180 more mothers. In total, there were 360 mothers, who filled out our first and second online survey. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted with the second set of data, that was collected from 180 mothers.

*Table 1*  
*One Factor Solution for Mothering Role Praise Scale*

		Factor Loadings	h2
1)	Tanıdığım diğer annelere göre daha iyi bir anne olduğumu düşünüyorum.	0,33	0,11
2)	Çocuk sahibi olmayan arkadaşlarımın beni anlayabildiğini sanmıyorum.	0,55	0,30
3)	Anneliğin en önemli özelliklerimden biri olduğunu düşünüyorum.	0,71	0,51
4)	Çocuğumuzun başarısından da başarısızlığından da ben sorumluyum.	0,43	0,18
5)	Anne olduktan sonra hayatımın anlam kazandığını düşünüyorum.	0,73	0,54
6)	Anne olduktan sonra insan ilişkilerinde daha başarılı hale geldim.	0,55	0,30
7)	Anne olduktan sonra annemle ilgili düşünce ve duygularım değişti.	0,34	0,11
8)	Anneliğin kutsal olduğunu düşünüyorum.	0,73	0,54
9)	Anneliğin kadınlara itibar sağladığını düşünüyorum.	0,44	0,20
10)	Anne olduktan sonra evim yuva gibi oldu.	0,66	0,43
11)	Çocuğumuzu ayrılmaz bir parçam gibi görürüm.	0,64	0,41
12)	Anne olduktan sonra kendimi toplumda daha önemli bir birey olarak görmeye başladım .	0,74	0,55

*Note.* N=180

After CFA was conducted in SPSS 18.0, the LISREL 9.2 Student edition (Jöreskog, K. G., & Sörbom, D, 2006) was used to perform CFA (Thompson, 2004; Matsunaga, 2010). Goodness of fit statistics indicated that one factor model of the Mothering Role Praise scale fits well; GFIs:  $\chi^2 (54) = 93.51$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.73$ ; GFI = 0.92; AGFI = 0.88; RMSEA = 0.06 and CFI = 0.93. In Table 2, the CFA results showed the factor loadings and the items within a factor.

Table 2

Confirmatory Factor Analyses for Mothering Role Praise Scale

	Factor Loading	Error Variance
1) Tanıdığım diğer annelere göre daha iyi bir anne olduğumu düşünüyorum.	0,22	0,85
2) Çocuk sahibi olmayan arkadaşlarımın beni anlayabildiğini sanmıyorum.	0,41	1,08
3) Anneliğin en önemli özelliklerimden biri olduğunu düşünüyorum.	0,80	0,82
4) Çocuğumuzun başarısından da başarısızlığından da ben sorumluyum.	0,40	0,81
5) Anne olduktan sonra hayatımın anlam kazandığını düşünüyorum.	0,70	0,50
6) Anne olduktan sonra insan ilişkilerinde daha başarılı hale geldim.	0,68	0,86
7) Anne olduktan sonra annemle ilgili düşünce ve duygularım değişti.	0,50	1,04
8) Anneliğin kutsal olduğunu düşünüyorum.	0,86	0,52
9) Anneliğin kadınlara itibar sağladığını düşünüyorum.	0,68	0,86
10) Anne olduktan sonra evim yuva gibi oldu	0,74	0,62
11) Çocuğumuzu ayrılmaz bir parçam gibi görürüm.	0,74	1,00
12) Anne olduktan sonra kendimi toplumda daha önemli bir birey olarak görmeye başladım.	0,76	0,82
	$\chi^2$ (54)	93,51
	GFI	0,92
	Adjusted GFI	0,88
	RMSEA	0,06
	CFI	0,93

Note. N=180; df= 54.

In order to examine convergent validity of Mothering Role Praise scale, the Idealization of Parenthood scale (Eibach & Mock, 2011), which mainly aims to measure the degree of idealization of emotional satisfaction from parenting, was administered to the participant mothers. Idealization of Parenthood scale was developed Eibach and Mock (2010; see Appendix E). It is a 5-point Likert type scale with eight statements about idealizing parenting ( $\alpha = .89$ ). The reason why the Idealization of Parenthood scale was chosen in the first place was because there was not any other scale that was conceptually similar to our scale. The results showed there were significant correlations between the Mothering Role Praise scale items and items of Idealization of Parenthood scale; it was ranging from .48 to -.26. The overall reliability score was .46.

### **2.1.3. Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI)**

Bem Sex Role Inventory is used for measuring stereotypical gender roles (Bem, 1974). It is a Likert type scale ranging from 1 (*almost never true*) to 7 (*almost always true*). The reliability coefficient values were found between 0.75-0.90 in the original study (Bem, 1974). The aim of the BSRI is to measure gender stereotyped features with 60 items according to self-descriptions. Scores indicate “femininity”, “masculinity”, and “neutral” classifications (*20 for masculinity, 20 for femininity and 20 for neutral characteristics*) as one’s gender role.

In the current study, the short-version of the BSRI (Bem, 1981) was used to measure stereotypical gender roles of mothers. The short version of the BSRI includes 30 items (*10 masculine, 10 feminine, 10 neutral*), only femininity and masculinity subscales were used in the current study though, in tune with our hypotheses. Adaptation of short-version of BSRI into Turkish sample was done by Özkan and Lajunen (2005; see Appendix F). In the previous studies, for Turkish men, the reliability coefficient for masculinity and the femininity scales were found as 0.80 and 0.73; for Turkish women, reliability coefficients were found for femininity and masculinity subscales 0.80 and 0.66, respectively.

## 2.2. Procedure

Two graduate and fifteen undergraduate students contacted the local preschools for recruiting participants. Parents who came to drop out or pick up their kids from the daycare were given handouts promoting the current study. Once mothers who volunteered to participate in our study contacted us, they were given an appointment to come to the Child and Adolescent Development Lab at METU, and instructed to be present at the assigned time in the lab with their four year-old children.

As mothers arrive and signed the informed consent forms, they were instructed about the nature of the tasks that they would engage in. The researcher asked mother and her child to engage in a gender-charged conversation exactly for two minutes. The scope of conversation was about the gender of the child; the researcher administered the mother specifically the following instruction: “*We want you to engage in a conversation with your child approximately for two minutes and talk with her/him about child’s gender.*” If mothers ask for further assistance about what to talk about, the researcher adds “*For instance, what do girls do, and what do boys do?*” We examined 65 mother-child pairs and found that only four mothers asked for further instructions about what to talk with their children. Since Turkish language does not involve gender markers; there are no specific pronouns (such as “he/his” or “she/her”) to indicate the sex or gender, and especially in the first part of the instruction, the researcher did not prime mothers about what to talk.

This conversation took approximately two minutes. The coding schema for conventionality is based on the original study of Kessler and McKenna (1978). Psychological features and stereotypical physical traits, (e.g. Girls are calm; Boys are strong) were coded as conventional; whereas non-stereotypical physical traits and features of appearance (e.g. Girls wear trousers; Boys have baby-face) were coded as unconventional both for mothers and children. In addition, mothers’ positive and negative evaluation sentences, number of unique questions, neutral and repetitive questions were coded. Also, the number of “girl” and “boy” words that

they used during conversation, were counted both for mothers and children. All these coding schemes are presented in the section below.

### **2.2.1. Transcription and Coding Schemes of Gender-Charged Mother-Child Conversation**

All mother-child conversations were recorded by a Sony digital voice-recorder. Every utterance of both mothers and children was transcribed as verbatim. Utterances were transcribed by considering the structure of the sentence, intonation, and content.

Our coded variables were derived from the utterances offered by mother and child pairs, separately, in this two-minute conversation. These utterances were evaluated in two categories: conventional and unconventional. Conventional and unconventional answers from mother-child conversations were coded, both for mothers and children.

*a. Conventional statements:* Conventional statements were determined according to the definition of Kessler and McKenna (1978). In the study of Tenenbaum et al. (2010), conventional gender beliefs were the general and culturally constructed ideas about what makes a human female or male. For instance, “*Girls don’t have moustaches*” was accepted as a conventional reason in the study of Tenenbaum et al. (2010). This coding scheme was adopted for this study. Also, in this study, we captured statements about stereotypical psychological features, which are culturally expected in Turkish cultural context, (e.g. “*Girls are calm*”; “*Boys are mischievous*”).

*b. Unconventional Statements:* Unconventional statements were determined based on the definition of Kessler and McKenna (1978). In the study of Tenenbaum et al. (2010), unconventional gender beliefs were categorized according to the answers of children in three categories: “*idiosyncratic*”, “*reversal*”, “*storytelling reasons*”. In the current study, we adopted their logic to classify unconventional statements, which is the non-stereotypical reasons for categorizing someone as a female or male. For instance, “*Girls have big eyes*”, “*Boys have glasses*” are good examples of

unconventional statements. Yet, we did not specifically categorize each unconventional statement as in any of those three categories.

*c. Neutral Questions:* Neutral questions are the questions that do not involve any gender related value or message (Dovidio, Brown, Heltman, Ellyson, & Keating, 1988). An exemplar question would be “*Do you like painting?*” Neutral questions usually do not carry any gender bias. For instance, mothers who use more neutral questions would be expected to let their children to express their own views. This was only coded for mothers.

*d. Repetitive Questions:* Questions that ask the same questions, either with the same or similar wording, over and over (Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1993). An exemplar question would be “*What makes you a girl, what honey, what makes you a girl?*” This was also only coded for mothers.

*e. Unique Questions:* The question, which is asked to elicit further or new information; rather than repeating the same questions, or repeating same questions with different wording (Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1993). An exemplar sentence would be “*What do you want to do? Do you want to go to fishing or to the zoo? Or would you like to have some ice-cream?*” This coding scheme was also only used for the mothers.

*f. Positive Evaluation Sentences:* Positive evaluation sentences were also coded. These are indicators of internal states and intensifiers of comments (Haden and Fivush, 1997). For instance, “*Yes honey, girls have beautiful skirts!*” is an example for positive evaluation. These were coded only for the mothers.

*g. Negative Evaluation Sentences:* Negative evaluation sentences, which are the utterances that is used for negated the previous utterance in the conversation flow, were coded only for mothers (Fivush, 1991; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1993). “*You are wrong about that!*” is an example of negative evaluation.

*h. Number of Girl Words:* These words were counted both for child and the mother, separately. Every word regarding being a female or about femaleness is counted as a

girl word. For example, in a sentence like “*This girl is like a mother and she wears her mother’s beautiful skirt*”, *girl*, *she*, *mother*, and *her* were all counted as girl words.

*i. Number of Boy words:* These words were counted both for child and the mother, separately. Every word regarding being a male or about maleness is counted as a boy word. For example, in a sentence like “*This boy is nasty, and he does not wash his hands*”, *boy*, *he*, and *his* were all counted as boy words.

### **2.3 Data Analysis**

We calculated femininity and masculinity scores and the mothering role praise score for mothers, all as continuous variables. Conventional and unconventional statements and number of boy/girl words from mother-child conversation were coded from the transcripts, both for mothers and children, again all as continuous variables.

In order to reveal the relationship between stereotyping variables (conventional and unconventional statements, femininity and masculinity scores, mothering role praise, number of boy words/girl words), and mothers’ elaborativeness (number of unique questions, number of neutral questions, number of repetitive questions, positive and negative evaluation sentences) nine hierarchical linear regression analyses were conducted for maternal outcomes; and four hierarchical linear regression were performed for children’s outcomes. All of these statistical analyses were conducted via using SPSS.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

The aim of the current study is to examine the possible predictors of conventionality in mother-child gender tuned conversations. Mothers' femininity and masculinity scores and how they conceptualize their mothering experiences via role-praise scale were examined to reveal mothers' and children's gender role conceptualization. In addition, children's conventionality in gender-tuned conversations with their mothers was also considered.

The results were presented in three sections. In the first section, data screening was done by examining the univariate outliers, multivariate outliers and the normality testing. In the next section, descriptive statistics of data were displayed. The last section was the part that results of main analyses were presented. Separate hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted, as explained before. Nine of them conducted with maternal variables as dependent variables (conventional and unconventional statements; neutral, repetitive, unique questions, positive evaluation and negative evaluation sentences, number of "boy" words and "girl" words). Four hierarchical linear regressions were conducted for children's outcomes with conventional statements, unconventional statements, and "boy" and "girl" words as dependent variables. In all linear regression analyses, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered at the first step in order to control stereotypical gender roles of mothers; as control variables, child's sex was entered at the second step; and mothers' and child's age at the third step; and finally as the main predictor, mothering role praise scale was entered at the fourth and final step into the model.

### **3. 1 Data Screening & Descriptive Analyses**

There were 66 ( $N = 66$ ) participants, 33 girls and 33 boys and their mothers, who came to our lab and complete the tasks, but a total of 65 ( $N = 65$ ) mother-child pairs had complete audio records and completed all scales. We counter-balanced the gender of the child, as it could be observed by the case numbers. There was one missing audio record of mother-child conversation due to technical problems. For the remaining data, there were 32 girls and 33 boys ( $N = 65$ ) in total. The median based imputation was applied for missing values.

Correlations between independent variables were checked for multicollinearity assumption. Tolerance and VIF values were all within the accepted range, which eliminated the risk for multicollinearity (Coakes, 2005; Hair et al., 1998). Two univariate outliers were found for femininity scores of mothers. No multivariate outliers were found through Mahalanobis distance. Normality, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were all checked by Histograms, P-P plots, skewness and kurtosis values. All assumptions were met the necessary criteria.

In order to decide whether univariate outliers would be omitted or not, regression analyses were conducted both with and without these outliers regarding femininity scores. According to the new analyses, there was no significant change in the results. Skewness and kurtosis values were examined for normality and linearity assumptions. Since normality, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were satisfied, and outliers did not create drastic changes, outliers were kept in the current data set due to the concern of keeping the sample size as large as possible.

Descriptive statistics were examined after the data screening was completed. The age range was 45 to 69 months for children and for mothers their age range was 25 to 44 years; because of wide age ranges both in mothers and children, both ages were used as control variables in all analyses. Mothers who had a high school degree were 11 (16.7%) in total; 37 mothers had a university degree (56.1%) and the remaining mothers had master's (13) and doctoral (4) degrees (25.8%). Minimum, maximum values, mean and standard deviations of all variables were presented in

Table 3. The mean of the *Mothering Role Praise* scale was found as 3.53 ( $SD = .53$ ), while the *femininity* subscale was found as 5.78 ( $SD = .75$ ). The mean of *masculinity* subscale score was lower ( $M = 4.56, SD = .80$ ) than the mean of *femininity* score, which was an expected result due to collecting data from mothers. For both mothers and children, mean scores of *unconventional statements* and *conventional statements* were found ( $M = 22.58, SD = 9.93, M = 5.40, SD = 5.00; M = 13.21, SD = 4.71, M = 4.77, SD = 4.56$ , respectively). As the task was conversing about their own child's gender, we counted number of boy and girl words that both children and mothers used while conversing with each other. The mean scores of number of *boy words* and *girl words* were 13.01 ( $SD = 8.65$ ) and 14.38 ( $SD = 9.74$ ) for mothers; 8.00 ( $SD = 5.90$ ) and 8.41 ( $SD = 6.39$ ) for children, respectively. Mothers' mean score for *positive evaluation sentences* was 8.42, ( $SD = 4.31$ ) and for *negative evaluation sentences*, mean was 3 ( $SD = 3$ ). Mothers' mean scores of *repetitive questions*, *unique questions*, and *neutral questions* were found,  $M = 4.23, SD = 3.47; M = 13.30, SD = 6.23; M = 14.80, SD = 6.66$ , respectively. We also checked whether there was an age difference across gender or not. There were no significant age difference between boys ( $M = 54.85, SD = 6.44$ ) and girls ( $M = 57.18, SD = 5.88$ ),  $t(64)=1.54, p>.05$ .

*Table 3*  
*Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables*

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Role praise	2,08	4,62	3,53	0,53
masculinity	2,8	6,4	4,56	0,80
femininity	2,6	6,8	5,78	0,75
M_conven_sent	0	21	5,40	5,00
M_unconven_sent	0	52	22,58	9,93
C_conven_sent.	0	18	4,77	4,56
C_unconven_sent	4	24	13,21	4,71
Num_neutral_ques	1	36	14,80	6,66
Num_repetitive_ques	0	20	4,23	3,47
Num_unique_ques	2	34	13,30	6,03
Pos_eva_senten	1	18	8,42	4,31
Neg_eva_senten	0	19	3,00	3,00
M_num_boy_words	0	34	13,01	8,65
M_num_girl_words	0	37	14,38	9,74
C_num_boy_words	0	22	8,00	5,90
C_num_girl_words	0	23	8,41	6,39

*Note:* N = 65, “M\_conven\_sent”, “M\_unconven\_sent”, “M\_num\_boy\_words”, “M\_num\_girl words” represent mothers’ conventional and unconventional statements, and the number of gender words that they used respectively. “C\_conven\_sent”, “C\_unconven\_sent”, “C\_num\_boy\_words”, “C\_num\_girl words” represents children’s usage on same domains, respectively. “Num\_neutral\_ques”, “Num\_repetitive\_ques”, “Num\_unique\_ques”, “Pos\_eva\_senten”, and “Neg\_eva\_senten” represents how many sentences that they mothers were used as gender neutral, repetitive, unique questions, and positive and negative evaluation sentences, respectively.

The correlation matrix of data is given in Table 4. There were positive correlations between mothering role praise and femininity ( $r = .22, p = .07$ ), mothering role praise and number of repetitive questions ( $r = .33, p < .001$ ), and mothering role praise and conventional statements of mothers ( $r = .32, p = .01$ ).

Mothers who used more unconventional statements in mother-child conversation also used less conventional statements ( $r = -.49, p < .001$ ). According to the results, the relationship exists in the usage of conventional statements between mothers and children. Conventional statements of mothers had positive correlation between children's conventional statements ( $r = .52, p < .001$ ); whereas negative correlation between children's unconventional statements ( $r = -.29, p < .001$ ). Mothers who used more conventional statements have also used more neutral questions in conversations ( $r = -.41, p < .001$ ).

Mothers' unconventional statements had a positive relationship with children's unconventional statements ( $r = -.64, p < .001$ ), whereas it was negatively related with children's conventional statements ( $r = -.25, p < .05$ ). Also, number of mothers' conventional statements was negatively correlated with the number of neutral questions ( $r = -.41, p < .001$ ), and was positively correlated with repetitive questions ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ), unique questions ( $r = .37, p < .001$ ), in addition to negative evaluation sentences ( $r = .49, p < .001$ ), and the number of boy words ( $r = .36, p < .001$ ) that they used in mother-child conversation.

Children who used more number of conventional statements had a tendency to use less unconventional statements ( $r = -.26, p < .05$ ). There was a correlation between child's sex (dummy coded, 0 for girls; 1 for boys) and usage of "boy" or "girl" words. Girls were more likely to use "girl" words ( $r = -.69, p < .001$ ); while boys were more likely to use "boy" words ( $r = .50, p < .001$ ). As it could be observed in the results regarding correlations, almost all correlations are systemically in the same direction with our hypotheses.

Table 4

Correlations between Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1.Role praise	-																
2.masculinity	.14	-															
3.femininity	.22	.28	-														
4.M_conven_sent	.33*	.05	.00	-													
5.M_unconven_sent	.00	-.01	.06	-.49*	-												
6.C_conven_sent.	.15	.08	-.17	.52**	-.25*	-											
7.C_unconven_sent	-.01	.03	-.02	-.29*	.64**	-.26*	-										
8.Num_neutral_ques	-.14	-.05	-.13	-.41*	.75**	-.11	.63**	-									
9.Num_repetitive_ques	.32*	.00	-.01	-.24	.46**	-.15	.29*	.51**	-								
10.Num_unique_ques	-.13	-.05	-.24	.11	.37**	.32**	.40**	.69**	0	-							
11. Pos_eva_senten	.05	.07	.03	.11	.16	.32*	.26*	.09	-.11	.14	-						

*Table 4*  
*Correlations between Study Variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
12.Neg_eva_senten	.19	.07	.10	-.22	.49**	-.07	.25*	.28*	.51**	.00	-.02	-					
13.M_num_boy_words	.00	-.08	.13	-.16	.36**	-.07	.27*	.42**	.07	.41**	.04	.10	-				
14.M_num_girl_words	.11	-.02	-.23	.16	.19	.20	.18	.17	.19	.12	.10	.36	-.65*	-			
15.C_num_boy_words	.07	-.01	.12	-.06	.19	.17	.30*	.28*	-.03	.39**	.19	.02	.81*	-.57**	-		
16.C_num_girl_words	-.03	.03	-.22	.19	.00	.48**	.14	.09	.11	.13	.27*	-.11	-.061	.79**	-.40	-	
17.Child sex	.07	-.20	.18	-.17	.13	-.24	-.10	.12	-.01	.11	-.10	.08	.70*	-.69**	.50	-.74	-

*Note:* N = 65, “M\_conven\_sent”, “M\_unconven\_sent”, “M\_num\_boy\_words”, “M\_num\_girl words” represent mothers’ conventional and unconventional statements, and the number of gender words that they used respectively. “C\_conven\_sent”, “C\_unconven\_sent”, “C\_num\_boy\_words”, “C\_num\_girl words” represents children’s usage on same domains, respectively. “Num\_neutral\_ques”, “Num\_repetitive\_ques”, “Num\_unique\_ques”, “Pos\_eva\_senten”, and “Neg\_eva\_senten” represent how many sentences that they mothers were used as gender neutral, repetitive, unique questions, and positive and negative evaluation sentences, respectively. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .005$ .

## 3.2 Main Analyses

Conventional and gender related content in mother-child conversations were examined both for mothers and children by using mothers' femininity, masculinity, mothering role praise scores, and age of participants and children's gender. Mothers' repetitive, unique, neutral questions, positive and negative evaluation sentences were analyzed by using same predictors and control variables in the same order. In addition, both for mothers and children, number of "boy" and "girl" words were also analyzed by using the same variables. A series of hierarchical linear regressions was conducted to see the predictor value of mothers' femininity, masculinity, mothering role praise scores, after controlling the age of participants and children's gender. Femininity and masculinity scores were entered in the first step of regression. Then, children's sex was entered as a dummy coded variable as a control variable. In the third step, age of mother and children were also entered as control variables. Finally, mothering role praise scale of mothers was entered in the last step of the hierarchical linear regression model. Hierarchical linear regression analyses were performed for each dependent variable (conventional and unconventional statements, boy and girl words, and mothers' repetitive, unique, neutral questions, positive, negative evaluation sentences) separately.

### 3.2.1 Maternal Outcomes

First of all, a hierarchical linear regression was run for mothers' conventional statements. As seen in the Table 5, in the first step, femininity and masculinity did not predict conventional content in mothers' gender tuned conversation with their children. In the second step, gender of children was entered in order to control gender difference; and in the third step age of mothers and children were entered to control age differences, and neither of them predicted mothers' conventional statements. In the final and the fourth step, the main predictor, mothering role praise score of mothers was entered. Mothering role praise contributed significantly to the regression model, and uniquely explained 14 % of the total variation,  $R^2 = .22$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .14$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .17$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 57) = 13.023$ ,  $p = .001$ . Mothers, who had higher scores on mothering role praise scale, used more conventional statements in

gender-based conversation ( $\beta = .476, p = .001$ ). Also, in the final step, children's ( $\beta = .206, p = .075$ ) age became marginally significant predictors; showing that older children's mothers use more conventional statements while talking; but since it is at the marginal significance level, we did not consider them as significant predictors.

*Table 5*  
*Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Conventional Statements*

	$\beta$	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	<i>F</i>
Step 1				0,003	0,003	0,091
Femininity	-0,018	-0,140	0,889			
Masculinity	0,056	0,427	0,671			
Step 2				0,031	0,028	1,754
Femininity	0,015	0,112	0,911			
Masculinity	0,041	0,314	0,755			
Child's Sex	-0,170	-1,324	0,190			
Step 3				0,048	0,017	0,520
Femininity	0,004	0,032	0,974			
Masculinity	0,066	0,492	0,624			
Child's Sex	-0,149	-1,123	0,266			
Age of M.	0,070	0,548	0,586			
Age of C.	0,110	0,836	0,407			
Step 4				0,222	0,175	13,023**
Femininity	-0,117	-0,912	0,366			
Masculinity	0,070	0,567	0,573			
Child's Sex	-0,151	-1,253	0,215			
Age of M.	0,227	1,679	0,099			
Age of C.	0,206	1,815	0,075			
Role praise	0,476	3,609	0,001			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Conventional Statements in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. "Age of M." indicates age of mothers; "Age of C." indicates age of children \*\*  $p < .001$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for another hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the unconventional statements of mothers. Results were presented in the Table 6. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered to the model and they did not significantly predict unconventional content in mothers' statements. In the second step, child's sex was entered and no significant change occurred in the model. Mothers' and children's age were included and they significantly increased the  $R^2$  in the third step,  $R^2 = .131$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .058$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .112$ ,  $F_{\text{inc}}(2, 58) = 3.861$ ,  $p = .026$ . Mothers' age significantly predicted unconventional content in mothers' statements ( $\beta = -.327$ ,  $p = .009$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise score was added to the model, yet it did not make a significant contribution to the model. Mothers' age still significantly predicted unconventionality in the statements of mothers, after controlling femininity, masculinity, children's sex and mothering role praise, ( $\beta = -.383$ ,  $p = .005$ ). This set of results showed that younger mothers used more unconventional statements in gender-tuned conversation.

Table 6

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Unconventional Statements

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,005	0,005	0,164
Femininity	0,073	0,562	0,576			
Masculinity	-0,034	-0,261	0,795			
Step 2				0,019	0,014	0,876
Femininity	0,050	0,374	0,709			
Masculinity	-0,025	-0,193	0,848			
Child's Sex	0,120	0,936	0,353			
Step 3				0,131	0,112	3,861*
Femininity	0,038	0,294	0,769			
Masculinity	-0,077	-0,604	0,548			
Child's Sex	0,107	0,852	0,398			
Mothers' age	-0,327	-2,683	0,009			
Children age	-0,075	-0,597	0,553			
Step 4				0,152	0,021	1,452
Femininity	0,079	0,597	0,553			
Masculinity	-0,076	-0,599	0,551			
Child's Sex	0,110	0,881	0,382			
Mothers' age	-0,383	-2,946	0,005			
Children age	-0,108	-0,850	0,399			
Role praise	-0,166	-1,205	0,233			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Unconventional Statements in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*  $p < .05$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the third hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the factors in repetitive questions of mothers. Results were presented in the Table 7. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered to the model and they did not significantly predict repetitiveness in mothers' questions. In the second step, child's sex was entered and no significant change occurred in the model. Mothers' and children's age were included and they significantly increased the  $R^2$  in the third step,  $R^2 = .200$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .133$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .200$ ,  $F_{inc}(2, 58) = 7.496$ ,  $p = .001$ . Mothers' age significantly predicted repetitiveness in mothers' questions ( $\beta = -.430$ ,  $p = .001$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise scores was added to the model and the overall model was not significant. Mothers' age continued to predict repetitive question use ( $\beta = -.358$ ,  $p = .005$ ) significantly. This result showed that younger mothers used more repetitive questions in gender-tuned conversation.

Table 7

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Repetitive Questions

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,000	0,000	0,002
Femininity	-0,006	-0,048	0,962			
Masculinity	-0,005	-0,035	0,972			
Step 2				0,000	0,000	0,011
Femininity	-0,004	-0,027	0,979			
Masculinity	-0,006	-0,042	0,966			
Child's Sex	-0,014	-0,107	0,915			
Step 3				0,200	0,300	7,496**
Femininity	-0,015	-0,123	0,902			
Masculinity	-0,079	-0,640	0,525			
Child's Sex	-0,037	-0,307	0,760			
Children's age	-0,126	-1,052	0,297			
Mothers' age	-0,430	-3,672	0,001			
Step 4				0,234	0,034	2,579
Femininity	-0,068	-0,536	0,594			
Masculinity	-0,080	-0,658	0,513			
Child's Sex	-0,041	-0,345	0,731			
Children's age	-0,083	-0,687	0,495			
Mothers' age	-0,358	-2,898	0,005			
Role praise	0,210	1,606	0,114			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Repetitive Questions in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\*  $p \leq 001$

The same set and order of independent variables were used for another hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the positive evaluation sentences of mothers. None of the steps significantly predicted mothers' positive evaluation sentences.

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the fifth hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the negative evaluation sentences of mothers. Results were presented in the Table 8. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered and we found that they did not significantly predict negative evaluation sentences of mothers. In the second step child's sex was entered to the model and no significant change occurred in the model. Mothers' and children's age were included and they significantly increased the  $R^2$  in the third step,  $R^2 = .195$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .128$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .179$ ,  $F_{inc}(2, 58) = 6.679$ ,  $p = .002$ . Mothers' age significantly predicted negative evaluation sentences ( $\beta = -.429$ ,  $p = .001$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise scale was included. Although, overall model was not significant, mothers' age still significantly predicted negative evaluation sentences of mothers ( $\beta = -.417$ ,  $p = .002$ ). This result showed that younger mothers used more negative evaluation sentences in conversation.

Table 8

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Negative Evaluation Sentences

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,012	0,012	0,372
Femininity	0,089	0,685	0,496			
Masculinity	0,041	0,315	0,754			
Step 2				0,016	0,005	0,296
Femininity	0,076	0,567	0,573			
Masculinity	0,046	0,351	0,727			
Child's Sex	0,070	0,544	0,588			
Step 3				0,195	0,179	6,679**
Femininity	0,041	0,330	0,742			
Masculinity	0,000	0,004	0,997			
Child's Sex	0,082	0,679	0,500			
Children's age	0,037	0,310	0,758			
Mothers' age	-0,429	-3,652	0,001			
Step 4				0,196	0,001	0,059
Femininity	0,033	0,254	0,801			
Masculinity	0,000	0,002	0,998			
Child's Sex	0,081	0,668	0,507			
Children's age	0,044	0,353	0,725			
Mothers' age	-0,417	-3,295	0,002			
Role praise	0,033	0,243	0,809			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Negative Evaluation Sentences in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\*  $p < .001$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the sixth hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of unique questions that were asked by mothers. Results were presented in the Table 9. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered to the model and the overall model was not significant. Femininity scores predicted number of unique questions at a marginal significance level ( $\beta = -.245, p = .059$ ). In the second step child's sex was entered and no significant change occurred in the model. However, femininity scores' predictive value increased after gender of the child was controlled in this step ( $\beta = -.276, p = .036$ ). In the third step, mothers' and children's age were included and no significant change occurred in the model. In the final step, mothering role praise scores was entered to the model. In this step, femininity lost its predictive value. Overall model was not significant, but only children's age significantly predicted the number of unique questions of mothers, ( $\beta = -.258, p = .048$ ). This result showed that after controlling for mothers' femininity, masculinity, mothering role praise and age, children's age is the only factor that predicted the number of unique questions that mothers asked. Mothers of younger children used more unique questions during mother-child gender tuned conversation.

Table 9.

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Number of Unique Questions

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,058	0,058	1,929
Femininity	-0,245	-1,923	0,059			
Masculinity	0,019	0,146	0,884			
Step 2				0,082	0,024	1,625
Femininity	-0,276	-2,138	0,036			
Masculinity	0,030	0,238	0,813			
Child's Sex	0,158	1,275	0,207			
Step 3				0,131	0,049	1,702
Femininity	-0,248	-1,920	0,060			
Masculinity	-0,013	-0,099	0,922			
Child's Sex	0,110	0,879	0,383			
Children's age	-0,222	-1,779	0,080			
Mothers' age	-0,049	-0,403	0,688			
Step 4				0,154	0,023	1,594
Femininity	-0,204	-1,538	0,129			
Masculinity	-0,012	-0,092	0,927			
Child's Sex	0,114	0,910	0,366			
Children's age	-0,258	-2,022	0,048			
Mothers' age	-0,108	-0,831	0,409			
Role praise	-0,174	-1,262	0,212			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Number of Unique Questions in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers.

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the seventh hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of neutral questions that were asked by mothers. Results were presented in Table the 10. In the first step,

femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered to the model and the model was not significant. In the second step child's sex was entered and no significant change occurred in the model. In the third step, mothers' and children's age were included. Adding mothers' and children's age created a significant increase in the explained variance in the model,  $R^2 = .133$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .061$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .095$ ,  $F_{\text{inc}}(2, 58) = 3.272$ ,  $p = .045$ . Mothers' and children's age explained 9% of the total variance in the model. Children's age ( $\beta = -.256$ ,  $p = .044$ ) significantly predicted mothers' number of neutral questions. In the fourth step, mothering role praise scale was included and it explained a significant variance in the overall model,  $R^2 = .187$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .104$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .054$ ,  $F_{\text{inc}}(1, 57) = 3.918$ ,  $p = .052$ . Mothering role praise by itself explained 2% variance in the overall model. Mothers' age ( $\beta = -.264$ ,  $p = .043$ ), children's age ( $\beta = -.311$ ,  $p = .016$ ) and mothering role praise scores ( $\beta = -.267$ ,  $p = .052$ ) significantly predicted the number of neutral questions that were asked by mothers in gender-tuned conversation.

Table 10

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Number of Neutral Questions

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,017	0,017	0,547
Femininity	-0,123	-0,950	0,346			
Masculinity	-0,021	-0,160	0,873			
Step 2				0,039	0,022	1,387
Femininity	-0,153	-1,158	0,251			
Masculinity	-0,010	-0,076	0,940			
Child's Sex	0,149	1,178	0,243			
Step 3				0,133	0,095	3,272*
Femininity	-0,128	-0,997	0,323			
Masculinity	-0,073	-0,575	0,568			
Child's Sex	0,095	0,761	0,449			
Children's age	-0,256	-2,056	0,044			
Mothers' age	-0,173	-1,423	0,160			
Step 4				0,187	0,054	3,918*
Femininity	-0,062	-0,474	0,637			
Masculinity	-0,072	-0,577	0,566			
Child's Sex	0,101	0,822	0,414			
Children's age	-0,311	-2,489	0,016			
Mothers' age	-0,264	-2,070	0,043			
Role praise	-0,267	-1,979	0,052			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Number of Neutral Questions in Mother-Child Conversation.

Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*  $p < .05$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the eighth hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of “boy” words that were used by mothers during mother-child gender tuned conversation. Results were presented in Table 11. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered and the model was not significant. In the second step child’s sex was entered and a significant increase occurred in the explained variance of the model,  $R^2 = .484$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .459$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .452$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 60) = 54.274$ ,  $p = .000$ . Mothers used more “boy” label while talking with their boys ( $\beta = .685$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the third step, mothers’ and children’s age were included and the overall model was not significant. After controlling mothers’ and children’s age, child’s sex was still a significant predictor of number of “boy” words that mother used ( $\beta = .655$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise scale was included and no significant change occurred in the model. In the overall model, child sex was the only significant predictor after controlling all possible predictors ( $\beta = .654$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

Table 11

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Number of "Boy" Words

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,031	0,031	1,024
Femininity	0,164	1,271	0,208			
Masculinity	-0,127	-0,983	0,329			
Step 2				0,484	0,452	54,274**
Femininity	0,030	0,306	0,760			
Masculinity	-0,077	-0,805	0,424			
Child's Sex	0,685	7,367	0,000			
Step 3				0,501	0,018	1,061
Femininity	0,051	0,518	0,606			
Masculinity	-0,096	-0,991	0,326			
Child's Sex	0,655	6,887	0,000			
Children's age	-0,136	-1,441	0,155			
Mothers' age	0,026	0,284	0,777			
Step 4				0,503	0,002	0,231
Femininity	0,038	0,373	0,711			
Masculinity	-0,096	-0,987	0,327			
Child's Sex	0,654	6,831	0,000			
Children's age	-0,126	-1,291	0,202			
Mothers' age	0,043	0,436	0,665			
Role praise	0,051	0,480	0,633			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Number of "Boy" Words in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\*  $p < .001$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for the ninth hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of "girl" words that

were used by mothers during mother-child gender tuned conversation. Results were presented in the Table 12. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered and the model was not significant. Femininity scores predicted number of unique questions at a marginal significance level ( $\beta = -.25, p = .06$ ). Child's sex was entered and it significantly increased the  $R^2$  in the second step,  $R^2 = .49$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .47$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .44$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 60) = 52.27, p = .00$ . Mothers used more "girl" label while conversing with their girls ( $\beta = -.67, p = .00$ ). In the third step, mothers' and children's age were entered to the model and the overall model was not significant. Child's sex was still significantly predicted number of "girl" words that mother used, after controlling mothers' and children's age ( $\beta = -.66, p = .00$ ). In the fourth step, mothering role praise scores were added to the model, yet it did not make a significant contribution to the model. In the overall model, child sex was the only significant predictor after controlling all possible predictors ( $\beta = -.66, p = .00$ ).

Table 12

Results of the Analysis for Mothers' Number of "Girl" Words

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,031	0,053	1,752
Femininity	-0,238	-1,863	0,067			
Masculinity	0,043	0,337	0,737			
Step 2				0,484	0,419	49,138
Femininity	-0,108	-1,108	0,272			
Masculinity	-0,005	-0,055	0,956			
Child's Sex	-0,659	-7,010	0,000			
Step 3				0,501	0,015	0,890
Femininity	-0,125	-1,262	0,212			
Masculinity	-0,008	-0,078	0,938			
Child's Sex	-0,644	-6,673	0,000			
Children's age	0,066	0,687	0,495			
Mothers' age	-0,110	-1,175	0,245			
Step 4				0,503	0,000	0,057
Femininity	-0,119	-1,148	0,255			
Masculinity	-0,008	-0,076	0,939			
Child's Sex	-0,643	-6,613	0,000			
Children's age	0,061	0,612	0,543			
Mothers' age	-0,119	-1,173	0,245			
Role praise	-0,026	-0,238	0,812			

Note: Dependent Variable is Mothers' Number of "Girl" Words in Mother-Child Conversation.

Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\* p<.001.

### 3.2.2 Child Outcomes

One of the important dependent variables in the current study was the extent to which children use conventional statements while conversing with their mothers about their own gender. A hierarchical linear regression was conducted with the same set and order of predictive variables, as used in the previous regression analyses presented above. Results were presented in the Table 13. In the first step, femininity and masculinity did not significantly predict conventional statements of children. In the second step, child's sex was entered, and in the third step, mothers' and children's age were entered to the overall model; the model did not reach a statistically significant level for both steps. In the fourth step, mothering role praise scale was entered to the model, and it contributed significantly to the regression model, and uniquely explained 9% of the variation,  $R^2 = .180$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .096$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .078$ ,  $F_{\text{inc}}(1, 57) = 5.598$ ,  $p = .021$ . After including mothering role praise score into the model, femininity scores of mothers became a marginally significant predictor of children's conventional statements. Children of mothers, who had low femininity ( $\beta = -.270$ ,  $p = .060$ ) and high mothering role praise ( $\beta = .32$ ,  $p = .021$ ) used more conventional statements conversing with their mothers about their own gender.

Table 13

Results of the Analysis for Children's Conventional Statements

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,050	0,050	1,661
Femininity	-0,215	-1,680	0,098			
Masculinity	0,146	1,143	0,257			
Step 2				0,091	0,041	2,783
Femininity	-0,174	-1,358	0,179			
Masculinity	0,131	1,037	0,304			
Child's Sex	-0,206	-1,668	0,100			
Step 3				0,102	0,011	0,362
Femininity	-0,190	-1,447	0,153			
Masculinity	0,148	1,140	0,259			
Child's Sex	-0,182	-1,428	0,158			
Children's age	0,108	0,851	0,398			
Mothers' age	-0,004	-0,036	0,972			
Step 4				0,180	0,078	5,598*
Femininity	-0,270	-2,062	0,060			
Masculinity	0,147	1,169	0,247			
Child's Sex	-0,189	-1,532	0,131			
Children's age	0,173	1,382	0,172			
Mothers' age	0,104	0,814	0,419			
Role praise	0,321	2,366	0,021			

Note: Dependent Variable is Children's Conventional Statements in Mother-Child Conversation.

Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*  $p < .05$

The second hierarchical linear regression was run for children's unconventional statements. The same set and order of independent variables were used. Results were presented in the Table 14. According to the analyses, none of the predictors yielded significant change in the model for children's unconventional statements. Unique contribution of mothers' age was marginally significant in the third step ( $\beta = -.215, p = .061$ ). After adding mothering role praise scores to the model in the fourth step, mothers' age significantly predicted children's unconventional statements ( $\beta = -.259, p = .037$ ). Younger mothers' children used more unconventional statements during mother-child gender tuned conversations.

Table 14

Results of the Analysis for Children's Unconventional Statements

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,050	0,002	0,059
Femininity	-0,029	-0,221	0,826			
Masculinity	0,041	0,315	0,754			
Step 2				0,091	0,008	0,484
Femininity	-0,011	-0,085	0,932			
Masculinity	0,035	0,263	0,793			
Child's Sex	-0,090	-0,695	0,489			
Step 3				0,102	0,055	1,755
Femininity	-0,013	-0,099	0,922			
Masculinity	-0,007	-0,050	0,961			
Child's Sex	-0,107	-0,824	0,413			
Children's age	-0,092	-0,709	0,481			
Mothers' age	-0,215	-1,699	0,061			
Step 4				0,180	0,013	0,814
Femininity	0,019	0,138	0,891			
Masculinity	-0,006	-0,044	0,965			
Child's Sex	-0,105	-0,803	0,425			
Children's age	-0,118	-0,889	0,378			
Mothers' age	-0,259	-1,907	0,037			
Role praise	-0,130	-0,902	0,371			

Note: Dependent Variable is Children's Unconventional Statements in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers.

The same set and order of independent variables were used for another hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of "boy" words that were used by children during mother-child gender-tuned conversation. Results

were presented in the Table 15. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered and the overall model was not significant. In the second step child's sex was entered to the model and it contributed significantly to the regression model,  $R^2 = .252$ , (adjusted  $R^2 = .215$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .236$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 60) = 19.512$ ,  $p = .000$ . Boys used "boy" words more often while conversing with their mothers about their own gender ( $\beta = .494$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the third step, mothers' and children's age were added to the model and the overall model was not significant. After controlling mothers' and children age, child's sex still significantly predicted number of "boy" words that children used ( $\beta = .509$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise score was entered to the model and no significant change occurred in the model. In the overall model, child's sex was the only significant predictor after controlling all possible predictors ( $\beta = .508$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

Table 15

Results of the Analysis for Children's Number of "Boy" Words

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,050	0,016	0,515
Femininity	0,131	1,011	0,316			
Masculinity	-0,048	-0,371	0,712			
Step 2				0,091	0,236	19,512**
Femininity	0,034	0,296	0,768			
Masculinity	-0,012	-0,105	0,917			
Child's Sex	0,494	4,417	0,000			
Step 3				0,102	0,015	0,598
Femininity	0,030	0,257	0,798			
Masculinity	0,012	0,100	0,920			
Child's Sex	0,509	4,416	0,000			
Children's age	0,074	0,647	0,520			
Mothers' age	0,095	0,850	0,399			
Step 4				0,180	0,007	0,565
Femininity	0,007	0,053	0,958			
Masculinity	0,011	0,096	0,924			
Child's Sex	0,508	4,383	0,000			
Children's age	0,094	0,794	0,430			
Mothers' age	0,128	1,060	0,293			
Role praise	0,096	0,752	0,455			

Note: Dependent Variable is Children's Number of "Boy" Words in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\*  $p < .001$ .

The same set and order of independent variables were used for another hierarchical linear regression in order to predict the number of "girl" words that were used by children during mother-child gender-tuned conversation. Results were presented in the Table 16. In the first step, femininity and masculinity scores of mothers were entered to the model and they didn't significantly predict the number of "girl" words that were used by children. Child's sex was added to the model and it significantly increased the  $R^2$  in the second step  $R^2 = .552$  (adjusted  $R^2 = .530$ ),  $\Delta R^2 = .494$ ,  $F_{inc}(1, 60) = 68.314$ ,  $p = .000$ . Girls used more "girl" words while conversing with their mothers about their own gender ( $\beta = -.716$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the third step, mothers' and children's age were added and the overall model was not significant. After controlling mothers' and children age, child's gender was still significant predictor of number of "girl" words that children used during conversation with their mother's about their own gender ( $\beta = -.713$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the final step, mothering role praise score was entered to the model and no significant change occurred in the model. In the overall model, child's sex was the only significant predictor after controlling all possible predictors ( $\beta = -.714$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

Table 16

Results of the Analysis for Children's Number of "Girl" Words

	$\beta$	$T$	$Sig.$	$R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
Step 1				0,057	0,057	1,917
Femininity	-0,248	-1,947	0,056			
Masculinity	0,094	0,737	0,464			
Step 2				0,552	0,494	68,314**
Femininity	-0,107	-1,191	0,238			
Masculinity	0,041	0,466	0,643			
Child's Sex	-0,716	-8,265	0,000			
Step 3				0,562	0,011	0,727
Femininity	-0,116	-1,261	0,212			
Masculinity	0,030	0,330	0,743			
Child's Sex	-0,713	-8,004	0,000			
Children's age	0,008	0,086	0,932			
Mothers' age	-0,104	-1,206	0,233			
Step 4				0,565	0,002	0,334
Femininity	-0,130	-1,361	0,179			
Masculinity	0,030	0,325	0,747			
Child's Sex	-0,714	-7,970	0,000			
Children's age	0,019	0,211	0,834			
Mothers' age	-0,085	-0,912	0,365			
Role praise	0,057	0,578	0,565			

Note: Dependent Variable is Children's Number of "Girl" Words in Mother-Child Conversation. Femininity, Masculinity, and Mothering Role Praise scores belong to mothers. \*\* p<.001.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

In the current study, we aimed to investigate mothers' and their 4-5 year old children's attitudes toward gender roles in a structured mother-child conversation. Femininity and masculinity levels of mothers and how they conceptualize their mothering experiences were examined in order to explore the stereotypical gender knowledge and conventionality in their sentences during gender-tuned conversation with their children. This study both served to develop and use the *Mothering Role Praise Scale* in order to examine how Turkish mothers conceptualize their mothering experiences in accordance with the traditional gender roles.

Our findings showed that there were converging patterns of maternal and children's outcomes. Both mothers who showed high mothering role praise about their motherhood, and their children, used more *conventional statements* during conversation about child's gender. In addition, young mothers and these mothers' children used more *unconventional statements*. In tune with the literature, we found similar results indicating that maternal gender schemas have a role on children's gender related knowledge (Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002; Endendijk et al., 2013). In those terms, this study made a unique contribution to the existing literature via the predictive power of *Mothering Role Praise Scale*. Results also showed that after controlling mothers' femininity and masculinity, mothers' and children's age and gender; mothering role praise still predicted the conventional statements in mothers' conversational style.

According to the existing literature, mothers who have higher femininity scores show higher tendencies to conform to traditional gender roles than

mothers with high masculinity scores (Fagot, Leinbach and O'Boyle, 1992; Isik & Sahin-Acar, 2015). Some of our results contradicted with the previous literature, showing that femininity and masculinity scores of mothers did not predict mothers' or children's conventional or unconventional statements. In light of the existing literature, we expected that higher mothering role praise score would predict higher number of *conventional statements* (e.g. "girls wear skirt; boys drive cars"), and our analyses revealed that mothering role praise was the only significant predictor after controlling for other predictors. Bem's Sex Role Inventory –including femininity and masculinity dimensions- have been widely used, and there are many studies showing theoretical and empirical support, especially for research aiming to measure gender related activities and socialization (Holt & Ellis, 1998; Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Wong, McCreary, & Duffy, 1990). However, in the current study, which is novel in measuring conversational characteristics regarding gender, neither femininity nor masculinity did work. We may speculate that, mothers' femininity and masculinity levels aim to measure their own orientations rather than how they converse about gender with their children. However, mothering role praise seems to capture and explain this variance that mothers and their children share in gender-tuned conversations, since mothers' mothering roles are directly related how they conceptualize gender roles in that cultural context, and in turn, it has predicted how both they and their children use conventional statements in a gender-tuned conversation. Supporting our hypothesis, mothers with high mothering role praise and their children use more conventional statements during gender-tuned conversation. In other words, mothers and children showed a convergent pattern in this set of results. High mothering role praise score indicates traditional mothering in the current study, and the existing literature show that traditional mothers mostly use gendered speech and expect gender stereotypical behaviors and attitudes from their children (McHale, Crouter, & Whiteman, 2003).

Along with our hypothesis about conventional statements, we also expected that mothers, whose mothering role praise scores are lower, would use

more *unconventional statements* (eg. *Girls are strong; boys are considerate*). Yet, unconventional statements of mothers were only predicted by mothers' age. We did not expect this finding in our hypothesis, yet one may speculate that younger mothers are more unconventional and this finding might have been expected in the first place; since young mothers used more unconventional statements about gender of their children. Traditional approaches toward gender roles are a part of cultural beliefs; in other words they are a part of the social structure. This social structure is not independent from social interactions (Ridgeway 2000). Therefore, this dynamic structure reshapes and recreates hegemonic ideas about traditional beliefs in relation to gender (Ridgeway & Correll, 2000; 2004). Especially from late 80's, women's movement has transformed many women's roles and brought forward gender equality issues (Sancar, 2011). We can speculate that these young mothers have more egalitarian ideas about gender roles, because they evaluate gender schemes under the conditions of contemporary world. In addition, we found the same pattern of results between mothers and their children; younger mothers and their children both use higher number of unconventional statements.

We did not find the same pattern of results for the unconventional statements, as we found for the conventional ones. Moreover, when we compared the mean scores for conventional and unconventional statements, we observe that mothers in overall used almost four times more unconventional statements compared to conventional ones. We assigned mothers only two minutes to talk about their children's gender with their children. This time limit might have led them to use higher number of ordinary and not well-thought sentences that might have been counted as unconventional ones. In addition, we coded only specific statements as conventional ones (e.g. *girls play with dolls*), whereas we coded various different statements as unconventional, like comparison sentences (e.g. *would you rather to be a girl, or a boy?*), specific sentences that show gender non-stereotypic statements (e.g. *boys are soft and cuddly*), undefined subject use in the sentences (e.g. *you had played with a child the other day, what was its name?*). In other words, the criterion to be coded as

conventional statements was stricter, whereas the unconventional one included various types of sentences, which might have led to the current results. Further studies might focus on coding for all different type of statements included in the coding scheme of unconventional statements, separately. As for mothers, we did not find mothering role praise as a significant predictor for children's unconventional statements, either; which taps onto the convergent pattern between mothers and children's results, one more time.

According to the outcomes of this study, young mothers' children also used more unconventional statements. As stated in the study of Gelman and her colleagues (2004), the correspondence between mother and child could be the result of the nature of conversation. In addition to this outcome, *repetitive questions*, which were asked by mothers, were only predicted by mothers' age after controlling all predictors. Younger mothers used more repetitive questions and also used more *negative evaluation sentences* during gender-tuned conversation with their children. Reese and Newcombe (2007) stated that high rates of using repetitive questions could reduce the child's desire to participate. Also, repetitive questions and negative evaluations were the indicators of low elaborative styles of maternal speech in the previous studies (Reese and Newcombe, 2007; Haden, Haine, & Fivush, 1997). Therefore, as a part of conversation's nature, young mothers might have repeated their questions in order to elicit the answer that they want to hear, and younger mothers might have negated their children's statements in order to change their mind. Moreover, younger mothers used more negative evaluations (e.g. "no, it's not like that"; "no, you can't do that") including not confirming their children's statements. The related literature on mother-child conversations revealed that mothers who are less elaborative, and more repetitive, use higher number of negative evaluations (Reese & Newcombe, 2007). Taken together, younger mothers seem to be more repetitive, and use more negative evaluations in this study; which are in tune with the existing literature. We did not confirm our hypothesis about the role of mothering role praise on mothers' evaluations (neither negative, nor positive ones); yet, we again found that the age of mother has been a significant predictor

for negative evaluations. We did not code for repetitive questions or evaluations in children's lines, since these coding schemes usually do not exist in child speech and thus have not been coded in previous literature, either. Further studies should focus on the effect of mothers' age on elaborativeness and repetitiveness.

One of the striking findings of the current study has been the indication of a converging pattern between mothers and their children. In some studies, which examined the role of mothers' direct guidance in relation to children's gender stereotyping, researchers did not find any relation between comments of mothers and gender-stereotypical knowledge of their children (Gelman et al., 2004; Friedman, Leaper, and Bigler, 2007). Highly egalitarian mothers rarely argue with their children about their gender-stereotypes, and mostly confirm what their children think (Gelman et al., 2004). Researchers speculated that gender related attitudes of mothers might not be seen explicitly in their comments towards their children (Gelman et al., 2004; Friedman, Leaper, and Bigler, 2007). Unlike these studies, we did not use any tools to initiate conversation, such as a storybook; on the contrary, we assigned them a very specific and to-the-point topic about gender to talk about. May be the semi-structured conversation, which was only limited by topic, is the reason for why we can observe explicit messages in maternal speech. Moreover, this convergence, as hypothesized in the current study, might exist because of the adoption of reminiscing and conversational style by children. For instance, a new study compared daughters, mothers, and grandmothers in terms of their narratives for earliest childhood memories, and intra-class correlations showed all significant results for within-family resemblance in narrative style (Sahin-Acar, Bakir, & Kus, 2015). As in the literature, in the current study this convergence between mother-child pairs might have shown transference of conversational style.

Maternal elaborative and repetitive style generally has been studied in the area of memory development (Leichtman, Pillemer, Wang, Koreishi, & Han, 2000; Sahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015). To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first study that examines the relation between mothering and maternal elaborativeness in mother-child gender-tuned conversation, although we did not

create a composite variable, but examined the coding schemes, such as positive and negative evaluations, number of unique questions, as indicating maternal elaborativeness. Maternal elaborativeness specifically addressed in the most of the studies as asking open-ended questions, confirmations and evaluations (Haden, Haine, & Fivush, 1997; Hedrick, Souci, Haden, & Ornstein, 2009). Whereas repetitiveness includes repetitive statements and questions in the literature, but we only examined repetitive questions. Mothers' number of unique questions was only predicted by children's age after controlled for all predictors. Younger children's mothers used more unique questions with their children. We speculate that this might be a strategy of mothers to bring out information from young ones. While counting the number of unique questions, we did not consider the original number of meaning units, but just different worded questions as unique ones. Younger children sometimes do not understand the question in the first place, so mothers need to ask the same question with different wording or in a different way but still keeping the same meaning in order to elicit information from their children. We did not have a specific hypothesis regarding this finding, yet it is in tune with the previous literature, as well.

Another set of results showed that younger mothers with low mothering role praise who have younger children used more *neutral questions* (e.g. *What does a child play with?*). This result was partially hypothesized. We expected that low mothering role praise scores of mothers would predict the number of neutral question that mothers asked. It may be due to the assumption that these younger mothers who were low in mothering role praise, seem to be more egalitarian than the older ones, as supported by our results. Social transformation in the society comes along with changes in gender roles. Parents who are more egalitarian, less gender-stereotyped in their views about gender roles, mostly don't encourage their children's gender typed behaviors (Barry, 1980). This could be the reason for why they ask more gender-neutral questions, which did not include any gender-charged unit and more general questions. In the study of Katz-Wise and her colleagues (2010), first time mothers' (with first child) traditional views usually turn into egalitarian views than experienced mothers.

They became more egalitarian in time, whereas experienced parents maintained their traditional attitudes. Maybe the young mothers, who have low mothering role praise score with younger children are more prone to be gender-egalitarian, or gender-neutral, and use more gender neutral questions to avoid construction of gender stereotypes in their children's mind. This coding scheme was not used for children, for reasons indicated above.

We also coded for *boy words* and *girl words*, both for mothers and their children. Sex of children predicted the number of both boy and girl words that were used both in children's and mothers' sentences, after controlling for other predictors. Mothers used more "boy" words while conversing if they had a male child; and they used more "girl" words while conversing if they had a female child. The pattern is also the same for children's results; female children used more "girl" words, whereas males used more "boy" words during gender-tuned conversation with their mothers. In those terms, again there is a convergence between mothers and their children.

Generics (boy and girl words) refer to more universal meanings; they do not specify particular situation or time; so mothers are less likely to confirm children's generic statements that imply gender-stereotypes (e.g. *Boys play with trucks*) than non-generic gender-stereotyped ones (e.g. *Mothers can cook*) (Bohan, 1993; Gelman et al., 2004). However, in the current study, we did not aim to distinguish generics and non-generics. Every word regarding being a male or female, or about maleness/femaleness was counted either as a boy or girl word, fitting into that coding scheme. Our aim was to see whether mothers defined their children's gender using analogies and contrasts between males and females, or just defining the child's own gender characteristics. Both mothers and children prefer to use "child's gender characteristics" to define and describe child's own gender.

#### **4.1. Limitations**

In the current study, we chose mothers from middle and upper-middle socio economic status; but we did not consider their social backgrounds, such as where the mother grew up, what was her relationship with her own parents, or

whether she spent most of her life in urban areas or not. Knowledge about maternal practices generally transfers from one generation to another. Mothers' experiences with their own mothers could have indicated significant relationships and have an effect on their mothering practices. In addition, paternal involvement in gender socialization can be considered for further research. We did not collect data from fathers. Generally, fathers are not involved in child rearing and take domestic tasks' responsibilities as mothers do. However, father's distance from home tasks have an influence about gender roles on a child.

Finally, the limited amount of time for conversation (2 minutes) and the controlled setting (laboratory environment) eliminated the risk of confoundings; however it might have led to other methodological problems. For instance, it could be hard to focus on the topic of conversation in a novel environment for pre-school children, and also for their mothers. Since mothers were completely aware of the fact that their every move and interaction with their child had been recorded, they might have talked or acted in a more socially desirable way; although, this would be similar even if they were recorded at their own home.

#### **4.2. Contributions**

There are a number of contributions that the current study made. First of all, developing a new scale (*Mothering Role Praise Scale*) is one of the most important contributions of this study. It touches both culture-specific (e.g. *My child is an integral part of me*) and universal aspects (e.g. *I suppose that my friends, who do not have a child, cannot understand me.*) of maternal identity. This scale gives us some explanation about why some mothers are more egalitarian, and some of them are more into conventional ways. In the current study, we found that mothering role praise scores predict conventional statements of mothers during mother-child conversation. Obviously, this scale cannot measure every aspects of motherhood conceptualization, but it gives us an idea about how mothers' integrate mothering experiences with their own identity, and how in turn its affects their children's gender stereotypical knowledge development.

Another important contribution of this study is revealing a systematic converging pattern for the conversational characteristics of mother and child gender-tuned conversation. Mothers with high mothering role praise used more conventional statements and their children also used more conventional statements. In addition to this, young mothers and their children use more unconventional statements. Mothers used more “boy” words while conversing with their sons; and they used more “girl” words while conversing with their daughters. The pattern is also the same for children’s results; female children used more “girl” words, whereas males used more “boy” words. All these findings showed converging pattern in findings regarding both mothers and their children, which may constitute a good example for social modeling (Bandura, 1986). Children observe and catch cues from their mothers with respect to gender stereotypes.

Finally, the current study is the first attempt that involved a novel methodology of assigning a specific task of *talking with the child about her/his own gender*, which should be replicated by future studies. Moreover, it is also the first study –to the best of our knowledge- that explored the effect of mothers’ femininity and masculinity in such a semi-structured conversation. Taken together, the current study made a unique contribution to the existing literature about the effect of mother-child conversations on children’s gender development. Future research should replicate our results and continue to explore new techniques that would elicit more information about how children talk with their mothers about gender.

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## APPENDICES A: Ethical Permission

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
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01.12.2014

Gönderilen : Y.Doç.Dr. Başak Şahin Acar  
Psikoloji

Gönderen : Prof. Dr. Canan Sümer  
IAK Başkanı Vekili

İlgili : Etik Onayı

Danışmanlığını yapmış olduğunuz Psikoloji Bölümü öğrencisi Didem Türe'nin "Annelik Konsepti ve Çocuğun Cinsiyet Kimliği Gelişimi" isimli araştırması "İnsan Araştırmaları Komitesi" tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

Etik Komite Onayı

Uygundur

01/12/2014

Prof.Dr. Canan Sümer  
Uygulamalı Etik Araştırma Merkezi  
( UEAM ) Başkanı Vekili  
ODTÜ 06531 ANKARA

## APPENDICES B: Informed Consent Form for Parents



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY  
06531 ANKARA-TURKEY

**Psikoloji Bölümü**

**Tel: 90 (312) 210 31 82**

**Department of Psychology**

**Faks:90 (312) 210 79 75**

Bu tez çalışması Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Psikoloji Bölümü Gelişim Psikolojisi Yüksek Lisans programı öğrencisi Didem Türe tarafından Psikoloji Bölümü Öğretim Görevlisi Yrd.Doç.Dr. Başak Şahin süpervizörlüğünde yürütülmektedir. Çalışmanın genel amacı 48-66 aylık çocukların cinsiyete yönelik algılarını anne-çocuk sohbetleri üzerinden incelemektir. Bu amacı gerçekleştirebilmek için sizin ve çocuğunuzun çalışmamıza katılımına ihtiyaç duymaktayız.

Sizin ve çocuğunuzun çalışma içersinde verdiğiniz cevaplar kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve bu cevaplar sadece bilimsel araştırma amacıyla kullanılacaktır. Bu formu imzaladıktan sonra hem siz hem de çocuğunuz katılımcılıktan ayrılma hakkına sahipsiniz. Araştırma sonuçlarının özeti istediğiniz üzerine tarafımızdan size ulaştırılacaktır.

Araştırmaya çocuğunuzun katılmasına izin vermeniz ve sizin katılımınız amaçlarımızı gerçekleştirmemiz açısından oldukça önemlidir. Araştırmayla ilgili sorularınızı aşağıdaki e-posta adreslerini veya telefon numaralarını kullanarak bize yöneltebilirsiniz.

Saygılarımızla,

Didem Türe

Psikoloji Bölümü/ Gelişim Psikolojisi Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi

didem.ture@metu.edu.tr- 0530 777 45 87

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Başak Şahin

Psikoloji Bölümü/ Öğretim Üyesi

basaks@metu.edu.tr – 0312-210-5968

*Lütfen bu araştırmaya katılmak konusundaki tercihinizi aşağıdaki seçeneklerden size en uygun gelenin altına imzanızı atarak belirtiniz.*

**A)** Bu araştırmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve çocuğum .....'nın da katılımcı olmasına izin veriyorum. Çalışmayı istediğim zaman yarıda kesip bırakabileceğimi biliyorum ve verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı olarak kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Veli Adı-Soyadı.....

İmza .....

**B)** Bu çalışmaya katılmayı kabul etmiyorum ve çocuğumun

.....'nın da katılımcı olmasına izin vermiyorum.

Veli Adı-Soyadı.....

İmza .....

## APPENDICES C: Demographic Information Sheet

- 1) Çocuğun doğum tarihi: .....
- 2) Şu an yaşadığınız il ve ilçe:.....
- 3) Çocuğunuzun bedensel, görme, işitme yetersizliği ya da gelişim geriliği gibi tanısı var mı?  
Evet..... Hayır.....  
Cevabınız evet ise hangi tanının konduğunu yazınız:.....
- 4) Çocuğunuz, önemli bir kaza, zehirlenme ağır ateşli bir hastalık geçirdi mi? :  
Evet..... Hayır.....  
Cevabınız evet ise hastalığını yazınız:.....
- 5) Çocuğun herhangi bir süreğen (kronik) hastalığı var mı?  
Evet..... Hayır.....  
Cevabınız evet ise hastalığını yazınız:.....
- 6) Çocuğun bakımını birincil olarak üstlenen kişi:
- 7) Çocuk bakımını üstlenen birincil kişinin çocuk ile yakınlık derecesi:
- 8) Ailedeki kişi sayısı:.....
- 9) Çocuk sayısı ve cinsiyetleri:.....
- 10) Annenin doğum tarihi:.....
- 11) Babanın doğum tarihi:.....
- 12) Annenin en son bitirdiği okulu belirtiniz:  
Okur-yazar İlkokul Ortaokul Lise Üniversite
- 13) Babanın en son bitirdiği okulu belirtiniz:  
Okur yazar İlkokul Ortaokul Lise Üniversite
- 14) Annenin çalışma durumu: Çalışmıyor /Çalışıyor  
Mesleği:.....
- 15)Anne ve baba:  
Evlili..... Boşanmış..... Ayrı yaşıyor..... Dul..... Diğer .....

## APPENDICES D: Mothering Role Praise Scale

Aşağıda ANNE OLMAKLA ilgili cümleler verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadeye ne oranda katıldığınızı 5 aralıklı cetvel üzerinde ilgili rakamı yuvarlak içine alarak belirtiniz.						
	1	2	3	4	5	
	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Ne katılıyorum ne katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılmıyorum
1	Tanıdığım annelere göre daha iyi bir anne olduğumu düşünüyorum.					1 2 3 4 5
2	Çocuğumuzu ayrılmaz bir parçam gibi görürüm.					1 2 3 4 5
3	Anne olduktan sonra evim yuva gibi oldu.					1 2 3 4 5
4	Anne olduktan sonra, annemle ilgili düşüncelerim ve duygularım değişti.					1 2 3 4 5
5	Anne olduktan sonra kendimi toplumda daha önemli bir birey olarak görmeye başladım.					1 2 3 4 5
6	Çocuk sahibi olmayan arkadaşlarımla beni anlayabildiğini sanmıyorum.					1 2 3 4 5
7	Anneliğin benim en önemli özelliklerimden biri olduğunu düşünüyorum					1 2 3 4 5
8	Çocuğumuzun başarısından da başarısızlığından da ben sorumluyum.					1 2 3 4 5
9	Anneliğin kutsal olduğunu düşünüyorum.					1 2 3 4 5
10	Anne olduktan sonra insan ilişkilerinde daha başarılı hale geldim.					1 2 3 4 5
11	Anneliğin kadınlara itibar sağladığını düşünüyorum.					1 2 3 4 5
12	Anne olduktan sonra hayatımın anlam kazandığını düşünüyorum.					1 2 3 4 5

## APPENDICES E:Ebeveynlik Ölçeği

Aşağıda <b>EBEVEYN OLMAKLA</b> ilgili cümleler verilmiştir. Lütfen her bir ifadeye ne oranda katıldığınızı 5 aralıklı cetvel üzerinde ilgili rakamı yuvarlak içine alarak belirtiniz.		Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum ne Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum		
1	2				3	4
		Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne katılıyorum ne Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	Ebeveynler, hayatlarında çocuk sahibi olmamış insanlara kıyasla daha mutlu ve tatmin olmuş hisseder.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Ebeveyn olmayan kişiler ebeveynlere kıyasla daha depresiftir.	1	2	3	4	5
3	İnsan, ebeveyn olmadan da hayatında gerçekten mutlu olabilir.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Hayatta hiçbir şey çocuk yetiştirmekten daha tatmin edici değildir.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Çocuğu olmayan bir yetişkin için tamamen tatmin edici bir yaşamak sürmek zor değildir.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Genelde ebeveynler, ebeveyn olmayan kişilere kıyasla daha az mutludur.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Genelde, ebeveyn olmayan kişiler hayatlarında boşluk hissi yaşar.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Ne kadar başarılı olursa olsun insan çocuk sahibi olmadıkça hayatta tamamen tatmin olamaz.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDICES F: BEM Sex Role Inventory-Short Version

Sevgili anneler; lütfen aşağıdaki ifadelerin, sizin için ne oranda doğru ya da yanlış olduğunu ve sizi ne oranda tanımladığını göz önüne alıp ilgili rakamı daire içine alarak belirtiniz.

		1. Tamamen yanlış	2. Çoğunlukla yanlış	3. Biraz yanlış	4. Ne doğru ne	5. Biraz doğru	6. Çoğunlukla doğru	7. Tamamen doğru
1.	Düşünce ve inançlarını savunan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	Duygusal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Vicdan sahibi / Bilinçli	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	Bağımsız / Dilediğini yapan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Sempatik	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	Ne yapacağı belli olmayan / Başına buyruk / Sağı solu belli olmayan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	İddialı / Tuttuğunu koparan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	Diğer insanların duygularını önemseyen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	Güvenilir / İtimat edilir	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	Sağlam karakterli / Güçlü kişilikli	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11.	Anlayışlı	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	Kıskanç	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	İşe yarar ve becerikli	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	Şefkatli / Merhametli	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	İçten / Samimi	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	Lider / Liderlik özelliklerine sahip	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	Duyularına hakim olabilen / Teskin edici	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	Sır saklayabilen / tutabilen / Ketum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	Risk alabilen / Risk almayı seven	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	Sıcak kanlı	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	Uyumlu	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	Baskın / Üstün / Hakim	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	Sevecen / Sevgi dolu	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	Kendini beğenmiş / Kibirli	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	Muhalif / Muhalefet eden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	Çocukları seven	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	Kaba / Patavatsız / Nezaketsiz	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	Saldırgan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	Kibar / Nazik	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	Toplumsal kurallara uyan / Geleneklerine bağlı	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## APPENDICES G: Turkish Summary

Annelik sosyal bilimlerde genelde ebeveynlik çerçevesinde çalışılmıştır (Barclay, Everitt, Rogan, Schmeid, & Wyllie, 1997; Bassin, Honey, & Kaplan, 1994; Miller, 2005). Annelik, tek başına kendin idare ettiremeyecek olan çocuğun bakımını karşılayan kişi olarak görülürken; esasında tüm çocukla ilgili aktivite, bakım ve sorumlulukları kapsamaktadır. Annelik, toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinde, kadınlık rolüne entegre bir kimlik gibi kabul edilir. Fakat, her “kadın”lık deneyimi aynı olmadığı gibi anneliğinde bir standardı ve genel geçer bir tanımı yoktur. Annelik, kültüre, kişinin kendisine, çocuğuna ve kişinin kendi annesiyle olan geçmiş deneyimine göre şekil değiştirebilir, ve farklılık gösterebilir.

Annelik dış faktörlerden bağımsız şekillenen bir konsept değildir. Biz bu çalışmada a) geliştirdiğimiz Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeği ile annelerin rollerini “annelik” konseptinde nasıl şekillendirdiklerini, ve b) Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeğini kullanarak da geleneksel annelik tanımının etkilerini hem annenin hem de çocuğun, çocuğun cinsiyeti üzerine gerçekleştirdikleri sohbetteki geleneksel ya da eşitlikçi ifadelerini kullanarak cinsiyet normlarını incelemeyi hedefliyoruz.

Cinsiyet normları ile ilgili çalışmalarda, araştırmacılar, kreş öncesi çocukların ebeveynlerinin, çocuklarının cinsiyetlerine özgü oyuncaklarla oynamalarını istediklerini ve cinsiyetlerine uygun şekilde duygularını ifade etmelerini ve buna göre davranmalarını istediklerini gözlemlemiştir (Turner & Gervai, 1995; Broady, 1999). Genellikle, ebeveynlerin, çocuklarına cinsiyet rollerini geliştirirken yaklaşımları, onların toplumsal cinsiyet normları içerisinde davranmasını beklemek, bu tür davranışlarını desteklemek ve teşvik etmek üzerine.

Sosyal Öğrenme Teorisi'ne göre çocuklar cinsiyet rollerini ebeveynlerinin hangi davranışlarını pekiştirip, hangilerini cezalandırdıklarına göre şekillendirirler. Örneğin, kızlar bebekle oynamaları teşvik edilirken erkek çocuğun bebekle oynaması ceza alabileceği bir davranış olabilmektedir (Fagot, 1978). Bir diğer çalışma da göstermektedir ki ebeveynlerin tutumları çocuklarıyla oynadıkları oyuncağın çocuğun cinsiyetine uygun olup olmamasına göre değişebilmektedir. Kız çocuklarıyla feminen oyuncaklar oynarken (ör. Mutfak seti), erkek çocuklarla da maskülen oyuncaklarla (ör. Kamyon) oynarken daha uzun zaman geçiriyor ve daha fazla yakınlık gösteriyorlar (Leaper, 2000).

Sosyal Öğrenme Teorisi bu süreçte esas rolü ve aktif katılımı ebeveynlere verirken, Bilişsel Gelişim Teorisi çocukların pasif olarak bu süreci geçirdiği fikrinin aksine, kendi gelişimlerinde çocukların oldukça aktif olduklarını belirtmektedir (Kohlberg, 1966; Martin, Wood, & Little, 1990; Bigler & Liben, 1992). Kohlberg'e (1966) göre çocuklar cinsiyet normlarına uygun davranmayı 3 aşamada öğrenmektedirler: cinsiyeti etiketlendirme, cinsiyetin değişmezliği, ve cinsiyetin sürekliliği. Örneğin, okul öncesi çocuklar eğer cinsiyeti etiketlendirme aşamasındalarsa, yaşlarına göre daha fazla cinsiyet normlarına göre oyunları tercih eder ve toplumsal cinsiyet normları üzerine göre daha fazla bilgili hale gelir (Fagot, Leinbach, & O'Boyle, 1992). Cinsiyetin sabitliğini anlama aşamasındaki çocuklar ise daha fazla rol model olarak kendi cinsiyetlerinden olan kişileri gözlemlerler (Slaby & Frey, 1975). Yani çocuklar önce cinsiyete dair basit bir bilgiyle yola çıkar sonra onu dış dünyadaki gözlemleri ve etkileşimleri ile kendi sosyal dünyalarına entegre ederler.

Çocukların hem geçtiği bilişsel süreç hem de dışarıdan aldıkları cinsiyet normları onların cinsiyet rolleri üzerinde etkilidir. Bilişsel teoriler içerisinde cinsiyet gelişimi üzerine en çok bilinenlerden biri de Cinsiyet Şemaları Teorisi'dir. Cinsiyet şemaları dinamik yapılardır; kültüre ve deneyimlere göre değişiklik gösterir (Martin & Dinella, 2001; Barbera, 2003). Bu şemalar nasıl hareket edecekleri, nasıl giyinecekleri, hatta hangi rengi sevecekleri gibi bir çok cinsiyetle özdeşleştirilmiş karakteristiklerden oluşur, örneğin, *kızlar pembe*

*giyer; erkekler mavi.*

Çocuklar cinsiyet şemalarını yetişkinleri gözlemleyerek, onların fiziksel ve sözel olarak verdikleri ipuçlarını yakalayıp şekillendirirler. Yetişkinlere göre çocuklar için şemaları daha tüme varan ve değişmez olarak görülür. Çocukların yaşları büyüdükçe esnekleşen bu şemalar, yine de çok erken oluştuklarından otomatikleşir, ve toplumsal cinsiyet normlarıyla tutarlı spontane davranışa ya da yargıya neden olurlar (Strack and Deutsch, 2004; Banse et al., 2010). Çocukların cinsiyet şemaları üzerinde ebeveynlerin tutumlarının etkisi oldukça büyüktür. Evde en çok çocukla vakit geçiren ve esas bakımı üstlenen anne olduğu için onun çocuğun cinsiyet rolü gelişimde etkisinin ebeveyn olarak daha fazla olduğu öngörülmektedir.

Annelerden çoğu toplumda beklenen “iyi anne” olmasıdır ki bunu tanımlayan şeyler, çocuk merkezli bir hayat, aşırı yoğun duyguyla çocuğuna bağlılık, fedakarlık, ve kendine ayırdığı zamandan fazlasını çocuğuna ayırması (Hays, 1996; Kaplan, 1994; Bassin, Honey & Kaplan, 1994). Bu beklentiler kültürlere göre değişiklik gösterebilir. “Annelik”e dair kadının kendi inançları ve pratikleri kültürel konseptlere göre şekillenir ve bu çoğu zaman dominant cinsiyet rollerinin etkisinde gerçekleşir.

Bu çalışmanın amaçlarından biri de annelik ile ilgili kadınların algıladıkları ve deneyimlediklerini, toplumsal olarak organize edilmiş annelik konsepti ve kendi kimlikleriyle nasıl içselleştirdikleri. Bizim araştırmalarımıza göre ne psikoloji araştırmaları ne de sosyoloji araştırmaları, çocuktan bağımsız bu “annelik” rolünün kadının algıladıkları ve onun annelik deneyimini göz önünde bulundurarak araştırmamış. Bu sebeple bu çalışma kapsamında *Annelik Rolü Övgüsü* ölçeği geliştirilmiştir.

Annenin çocuğun gelişimi üzerindeki etkisini görmek için uygulanan yöntemlerden biri de birlikte sohbetlerini incelemektir. Sohbetin doğası çocuğun cinsiyetine göre şekillenirken, annenin çocuğuyla konuşurken seçtiği konular, tutumlar ve değerlendirmeleri çocuğun cinsiyet rollerini öğrenmesinde etkilidir.

Örneğin, kızların duygularını açık etmesi ve bunlardan bahsetmesi beklenirken, erkek çocuklarla daha çok aksiyon temalı sohbetler edilir. Her ne kadar kız çocuk için beklenen duyguların baskın olduğu ifadeler kullanmasıyken, öfke gibi negatif duygularından kızların değil erkeklerin bahsetmesi beklenir ve cinsiyet normları açısından daha çok kabul görür (Fivush, 1989).

Çocuklarda cinsiyet rolleri gelişimi 3 yaştan sonra artarken, 5 yaşında tipik gelişimi olan bir çocuk cinsiyet stereotipilerini oluşturmaya ve pekiştirmeye 7 yaşına kadar devam eder (Trautner ve diğ., 2005; Miller ve diğ., 2009). Dolayısıyla bu çalışma 48-66 aylık çocuklara odaklanmıştır. Bu yaş aralığında cinsiyet sosyalizasyonu ile ilgili değişkenlerin yanı sıra annelerin çocuklarıyla cinsiyet üzerine sohbette detaycılığına ve tekrarlamalarına da bakılmıştır.

Annelerin detaycılığı, sordukları ucu açık sorularla, değerlendirmeleri ve detaylı tarifleriyle ölçülen, esas olarak annenin ne kadar çocuğun kendi düşüncelerini aktarmaya, ve sohbete katılımına teşvik ettiğine odaklanan bir kodlama şemasıdır. Sohbetin stili de bu açıdan çocuğun cinsiyetine göre değişiklik gösterebilir. Mesela, hem anneler hem de babalar kızlarıyla konuşurken oğullarıyla sohbetlerine kıyasla daha fazla detay kullanırlar (Reese & Fivush, 1993). Annenin detaycılığını etkileyen bir diğer faktörde kültürel etkenlerdir. Mesela daha bireysel, batı kültürlerinde anneler, çocuklarının kendi hikayelerini anlatmasına teşvik edip, pozitif olarak konuşmaya yorumlarıyla katkı sağlarken; daha kolektivist ve doğu kültürlerinde konuşmalar daha az detay içerir, daha az ucu açık sorular sorulur ve daha fazla tekrara düşülür (Wang, 2007; Wang & Fivush, 2005; Şahin-Acar & Leichtman, 2015).

Tüm bunları göz önünde bulundurunca, diyebiliriz ki, anne-çocuk sohbetlerinde hem bireysel faktörler hem de kültürel faktörler sohbetin stilinde rol oynar. Biz bu çalışmada annelerin detaycılığını ve tekrarlarını, annelerin Annelik Övgüsü Rollerine göre çıkan bireysel farklılıkları ışığında değerlendireceğiz.

Toplumsal cinsiyet normları, toplumun harmonisini sürdürmesinde

işlevsel olarak kabul edilir. Bem (1974), Bem Cinsiyet Rollerini Envanteri ile kişilerin feminenlik ve maskülenlik derecelerini ölçerek onların cinsiyetle alakalı tutum ve davranışlarını incelemeyi hedeflemiştir. Literatürdeki araştırmalara göre, feminenliği yüksek olan kadınlar düşük olan kadınlara kıyasla, geleneksel olarak biçilmiş kadın rolüne daha fazla girerken, çocuklarının da toplumsal cinsiyet normlarıyla tutarsız davranışlarına karşı daha az toleranslılar (Bem, 1974; Isık & Sahin-Acar, 2015). Her bireyin, kadın ve erkek gözetmeksizin, bir feminenlik ve maskülenlik skoru vardır; bu oranlar bireysel farklılıklara dayanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada annelere odaklanarak bu bireysel farklılıkları açıklamayı amaçlıyoruz.

Bu çalışmada, anneler ve onların 4-5 yaşındaki çocuklarının cinsiyet rollerine karşı tutumları yarı-yapılandırılmış bir anne çocuk-sohbetiyle incelenmiştir. Annenin, geleneksel “annelik” konsepti rolüne yakınlığı Annelik Rolüne Övgü ölçeğiyle ölçülürken ve bu geleneksel annelik rolünün yordaması beklenen annenin feminenlik-maskülenlik seviyesi Bem Cinsiyet Rolü envanteriyle, annenin ve çocuğun birlikte sohbet esnasında kullandıkları geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler, ve soru tekrarları, pozitif ve negatif değerlendirmeleri ve cinsiyet normlarına yönlendirmeyen nötr soruları, anne-çocuk sohbeti kodlanarak mevcut literatüre göre aşağıdaki gibi hipotez edilmiştir:

1) Annelik rolü övgüsü yüksek olan annelerin annelik rolü övgüsü düşük annelere göre daha fazla geleneksel ve daha az geleneksel olmayan ifade kullanması beklenmiştir. Çocuklarının da geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler açısından annelerle tutarlı örüntüde sonuçları olacağı öngörülmüştür.

2) Feminenliği yüksek olan annelerin, daha maskülen annelere göre daha fazla geleneksel ifade ve daha az geleneksel olmayan ifade kullanması beklenmiştir. Bu annelerin çocukları içinde aynı yönde bir örüntü beklenmiştir.

3) Feminenliği yüksek annelerin annelik rolü övgüsü ölçeğinde daha yüksek skorlar alacağı, maskülenliği yüksek annelerin ise daha düşük skoru olacağı beklenmiştir.

4) Düşük annelik övgüsü olan annelerin, çocuğun cinsiyeti hakkındaki anne-çocuk sohbeti esnasında, daha fazla pozitif değerlendirmede bulunacağı öngörülmüştür. Bu hipotez sadece annenin konuşmaları için geçerlidir; çünkü çocuklar için değerlendirme cümleleri literatürde genelde kodlanmaz.

5) Çocuğun cinsiyeti hakkında gerçekleşen anne –çocuk sohbeti esnasında, annelik rolü övgüsü yüksek olan annelerin, düşük olan annelere kıyasla daha fazla soru tekrarı yapması ve daha fazla cinsiyet normlarına dönük sorular sorması beklenmiştir.

6) Son olarak, cümle içinde kullanılan “kız” ve “erkek” kelimeleri hem anne hem çocuk için kodlanmıştır; fakat spesifik bir hipotez oluşturulmamıştır, araştırma maksatlı bakılmıştır.

Bu çalışmada, 65 Türk anne-çocuk çifti yer almıştır. Çocukların 32’si kız 33 tanesi erkek çocuğudur ve yaş aralığı 45-69 ay arasındadır. Annelerin yaş aralığı ise 25 ile 44 arasındadır. Çalışmada kapsamında, bu anne-çocuk çiftleri ODTÜ’de bulunan laboratuvarımıza gelmişlerdir. Çalışmanın gerekli etik izni ODTÜ’nün Etik Kurulu’ndan alınmıştır. Katılımcı annelerden de hem çocukları hem de kendileri için gönüllü katılım formunu imzalamaları istenmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında annelerden çocuklarıyla, çocuklarının cinsiyeti hakkında, 2 dakikalık bir sohbet etmeleri istenmiş ardından da araştırmacı çocukla oynarken, annelerden kendilerine verilen anketleri doldurmaları istenmiştir.

Çalışmada kullanılan ölçekler, demografik form, Annelik Rolüne Övgü ölçeği, ve Bem Cinsiyet Roller Envanteri’dir. Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeği bu çalışma kapsamında geliştirilmiş olup 12 maddeden oluşmaktadır. Maddelerin faktör yükleri .33 ile .74 arasındadır. Açıklayıcı ve doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri yapılmış ve bir faktörlü Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeğinin uyum indekslerine göre elde edilen modelin iyi bir uyum gösterdiği görülmüştür, GFIs:  $\chi^2(54) = 93.51$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.73$ ; GFI = 0.92; AGFI = 0.88; RMSEA = 0.06 and CFI = 0.93. Bem Cinsiyet Rolü Envanteri’nin ise 30 soruluk kısa versiyonu sadece feminenlik ve maskülenlik domainlerini ölçmesi maksatlı kullanılmıştır.

Çalışma kapsamında Annelerin geleneksel ifadeleri Kessler ve McKenna’nın (1978) *geleneksel ifade* tanımı göz önünde bulundurularak

kodlanmıştır.. Geleneksel cinsiyet rolleri genelde bir kimsenin kadın ya da erkek diye tanımlanırken toplumsal olarak belirlenen normlar sınırında kalmasıdır. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada, *kızlar sakindir* ya da *erkekler yaramaz* olur gibi ifadeler *geleneksel ifade* olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

*Geleneksel olmayan ifadeler* ise toplumsal normlarla birebir örtüşmeyen ya da herhangi bir şekilde stereo-tipik anlam barındırmayan cümleler için kodlanmıştır, *kızlar büyük gözlü olur, erkekler ip atlar*.

Geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler hem anne hem çocuk için kodlanmıştır.

*Nötr sorular*, herhangi bir toplumsal cinsiyet normuna gönderme yapmayan içeriği stereotipik olmayan sorular olarak kodlanmıştır (Dovidio ve diğ., 1988). *Tekrar soruları* da, cümle yapısı aynı olan, veya aynı anlama gelen (Reese, Hade & Fivush, 1993) belli bir cevabı almak için yinelenen sorular olarak kodlanmıştır. *Özgün soru* ise tekrar edilen soruların aksine çocuğu konuşturmak için sorulan, önceki sorudan farklı anlamı olan, yeni konular açan sorular için kodlanmıştır. *Pozitif değerlendirme cümleleri*, annelerin çocuklarının söylediği desteklediği, takdir ettiği ya da dediğini onayladığı cümleler için kodlanmıştır (Haden & Fivush, 1997). *Olumsuz değerlendirme cümleleri* çocuklarının dediklerini onaylamadıkları ya da tersledikleri cümleler için kodlanmıştır. Tüm bu paragrafta listelenen kodlama şemaları annelerin cümleleri için kodlanmıştır.

Kullanılan *kız* ve *erkek* kelimeleri ise, erkek ve kız anlamına gelen, onu karşılayan her isim ve kelime için hem annenin hem de çocuğun cümlelerinde kodlanmıştır.

Annelerin feminenlik ve maskülenlik skorları ve annelik rolü övgüsü skorları sürekli değişken olarak hesaplanmıştır. Geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler, ve kullanılan kız ve erkek kelime sayısı, hem anneler hem çocukları için kodlanıp sürekli değişken olarak hesaplanmıştır. Stereotipik değişkenler (geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler, feminenlik ve maskülenlik skorları, annelik rolüne övgü ve kullanılan kız/erkek kelimeleri) ve annelerin detaycılığı (kullandıkları özgün soru sayısı, nötr soruların sayısı,

tekrara düşen soru sayısı, ve pozitif ve negatif değerlendirmeleri) arasındaki ilişki 9 hiyerarşik regresyon analizi ile annelerin sonuçları, 4 hiyerarşik regresyon analizi yapılarak da çocukları için incelenmiştir.

Hiyerarşik regresyon analizinde ilk olarak annelerin feminenlik ve maskülenlik skorları, daha sonra çocuklarının cinsiyeti, ardından çocuklarının ve kendilerinin yaşı en sonda annelik övgüsü skorları girilmiştir. Regresyon analizleri, bazı hipotezleri desteklemektedir. Bu çalışmanın en önemli sonucu ise, anne ve çocuk arasında öngörüldüğü üzere, sohbetleri esnasında toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine yaklaşımları ve geleneksellikleri açısından tutarlı bir örüntü bulunmasıdır.

Hipotez ettiğimiz üzere, çocuğun cinsiyeti hakkında yapılan anne-çocuk sohbeti esnasında, tüm değişkenler kontrol edildiğinde, annelik rolü övgüsü yüksek olan anneler çocuklarıyla daha çok *geleneksel* toplumsal cinsiyet rolü içeren ifade kullanırken, bu annelerin çocukları da aynı doğrultuda *geleneksel olmayan ifadeleri* daha çok kullanmışlardır. Ayrıca daha genç anneler daha fazla *geleneksel olmayan ifade* kullanırken onların çocukları da daha az sayıda geleneksel ifade kullanmıştır. *Geleneksel ifadeler* için daha katı bir kodlama şeması oluştururken, bunun dışındaki ifadeleri geleneksel olmayan olarak aldığımızdan 2 dakikalık sohbette Annelik Rolüne Övgü skoruyla bir ilişki bulamamış olabiliriz. Fakat, daha genç annelerin daha fazla geleneksel olmayan ifade kullanması da değişen sosyal rollerle kadına biçilen toplumsal cinsiyet rollerinin genç anneler için daha yaşlı annelere göre modernize olduğunu söyleyebiliriz.

Annelerin *feminenlik ve maskülenlik* skorlarıyla kullandıkları geleneksel ve geleneksel olmayan ifadeler arasında bir ilişki bulunamamıştır. Annelerin Bem Cinsiyet Rollerini Envanteri'ne göre feminenlik ve maskülenlik derecelerini ölçmenin, annelerin cinsiyet rolleri açısından oryantasyonlarını görmemizi sağlaması dışında çocuklarıyla cinsiyet hakkında nasıl sohbet ettikleri ile ilgili bir bilgi vermediğini; bunun yerine Annelik Övgüsü ölçeğinin anneler arasındaki bu varyansı açıkladığı şeklinde yorumlayabiliriz.

Annelerin yaşı aynı zaman kullandıkları *tekrara düşen soru sayısını* ve

*negatif deęerlendirmelerini* de yordamaktadır. Sık tekrar etmek ve negatif deęerlendirmeler annelerin konuşma stilinde detaylandırmasının düşük olduğunu gösterir (Reese & Newcombe, 2007). Bu sonuçlar literatürle tutarlılık gösteriyor. Fakat hipotez ettiğimiz gibi annelik rolü övgüsü ne negatif deęerlendirme cümlelerini ne de pozitif deęerlendirme cümlelerinin yordadı. İleri çalışmalar annenin yaşı ile detaycılığı ve tekrara düşmesi arasındaki ilişkiye odaklanmalı.

Tüm dięer prediktörleri kontrol ettiğimizde, annenin kullandığı özgün soru cümlesini sadece çocuğun yaşı yorduyor. Daha küçük çocukların anneleri, daha büyük çocukların annelerine kıyasla daha fazla *özgün soru cümlesi* kullanıyor. Bu annelerin daha küçük çocuklarının kolay anlaması için başka yollardan cevap alıp onları konuşturmaya çalışması için kullandığı bir yöntem olarak deęerlendirilebilir. Bir dięer sonuç ise annelerin kullandıkları nötr sorularla ilgili. Regresyon sonuçları gösteriyor ki sonuçların bir kısmı hipotez ettiğimiz gibi çıkmış. Daha genç ve daha küçük çocuk sahibi, ve annelik övgüsü düşük anneler çocuklarıyla onların kendi cinsiyetleri hakkında sohbet ederken, daha fazla *nötr soru* soruyor. Daha eşitlikçi olan ebeveynler çocuklarının stereotipik düşüncelerini pekiştirmekten onları daha toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri açısından nötr yetiştirmek istiyorlar (Barry, 1980). Bu çalışmanın sonucu da geçmiş çalışmalarla uyumlu sonuçlara işaret ediyor. Örneğin, İlk defa çocuk sahibi olmuş anneler geleneksel tutumlarını zamanla bırakıp daha eşitlikçi tutumlar takınırken, deneyimli anneler geleneksel tutum ve davranışlarını sürdürüyorlar (Katz-Wise ve dię., 2010). Annelik rolü övgüsü ile ölçmeyi amaçladığımız bir açı da annelerin geleneksel annelik rolüyle kendilerini ne kadar ifade ettikleriydi Genç annelerin düşük annelik rolü övgüsü daha yaşlı annelere kıyasla daha eşitlikçi olduklarını da işaret ediyor olabilir. Genç ve daha geleneksel olmayan annelerin, çocuklarını toplumsal cinsiyet rollerini pekiştirecek biçimde yetiştirmekten kaçındıklarından *nötr soruları* daha fazla kullandıklarını söyleyebiliriz.

Hem anne hem çocuğun konuşmalarında kullandıkları *kız* ve *erkek* kelimeleri ve o anlama gelen kelimeler (ör. Baba, anne, onun (bahsettiği kişinin cinsiyetine göre-) kodlanmıştır. Önceden bir hipotez oluşturulmamıştı;

karşılaştırma yoluna mı gidiyorlar yoksa çocuğun kendi cinsiyeti üzerinden, onun özelliklerini anlatarak mı konuşmayı yürütüyorlar onu araştırmak istedik. Hem anneler hem de çocuklar için tüm diğer prediktörler kontrol edildiğinde çocuğun cinsiyeti, kullanılan kelimenin fazlalığını yordadı: kızlar daha çok *kız* kelimesini; erkekler daha çok *erkek* kelimesini kullandı. Kız çocuk anneleri de daha çok *kız* kelimesini kullanırken erkek çocuk anneleri de *erkek* kelimesini kullandı.

Tüm analizler göz önünde bulundurulduğunda annenin çocuğun cinsiyet sosyalizasyonunda açısından önemi görülmektedir. Annelik övgüsü yüksek yani daha geleneksel daha annelik kalıplarını toplumsal normlar içerisinde yaşayan anne geleneksel ifadelerle çocuğuyla onun cinsiyeti hakkında sohbet ederken; onun çocuğu da karşılıklı olarak daha geleneksel ifadelerle kendi cinsiyetinden bahsediyor. Genç anneler ve onların çocukları ise çocuğun kendi cinsiyeti hakkında geleneksel olmayan ifadelerle cinsiyet üzerine sohbet ediyor. Son olarak hem anneler hem de çocukları, en çok çocuğun kendi cinsiyetini tanımlayarak konuşmayı sürdürüyor, çok fazla karşılaştırmalar ya da benzerlikler üzerine durmuyor.

Bu çalışmanın literatüre katkısı annelerin, geleneksel annelik rolünü ne kadar annelik kimliğine entegre ettiklerinin, cinsiyet normları açısından ne kadar eşitlikçi ya da geleneksel olduklarının, Annelik Rolü Övgüsü ölçeğinin, daha kültüre özgü maddeleri (ör. *Çocuğumu ayrılmaz bir parçam gibi görürüm*) ve daha evrensel sayılabilecek annelik özelliklerini yansıtan maddeleri (ör. *Çocuk sahibi olmayan arkadaşlarımla beni anlayabildiğini sanmıyorum*) ile ölçülebilmiş olmasıdır. Ayrıca, anneler ve çocukları arasındaki geleneksel ve geleneksel ifade kullanımının aynı örüntüde olması, annelerin çocuklarının cinsiyet sosyalizasyonundaki önemini ortaya koymaktadır.

## APPENDICES H: TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

### **ENSTİTÜ**

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

### **YAZARIN**

Soyadı : Türe  
Adı : Didem  
Bölümü : Gelişim Psikolojisi

**TEZİN ADI** (İngilizce) : EFFECTS OF MOTHERHOOD  
CONCEPTUALIZATION AND GENDER ROLE OF MOTHERS ON GENDER  
STEREOTYPE KNOWLDEGE IN THEIR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

**TEZİN TÜRÜ** : Yüksek Lisans  Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**