Intentions of English children's nonfiction discourse: Communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives

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Abstract. English children's nonfiction discourse is aimed at introducing scientific knowledge, developing critical thinking, and shaping children's worldview. This type of discourse combines educational, scientific, and entertaining functions and relies on communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions that ensure different forms of interaction with young readers. Contemporary children's nonfiction is characterized by multimodality, interactivity, emotional involvement, and adaptation of scientific information to children's cognitive abilities. This article examines the intentions of English children's nonfiction discourse from communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives and identifies the linguistic means of their realization at lexical, syntactic, and stylistic levels. The study is based on a corpus of English children's nonfiction books, including encyclopedias and biographies represented by covers, blurbs, and main texts. The research applies pragmalinguistic, descriptive, cognitive, and quantitative methods grounded in speech act theory and discourse studies. The communicative perspective includes representative, directive, commissive, expressive, declarative, and quesitive intentions, whereas the cognitive-pragmatic perspective is represented by informing, influencing, and engaging intentions. The results demonstrate that communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions, together with their linguistic means of representation, form an interconnected system in children's nonfiction discourse. Representative and informing intentions are predominantly realized through scientific terminology, declarative constructions, and descriptive statements, while directive and influencing intentions are expressed through imperative constructions, modal verbs, and direct address. Engaging and expressive intentions are represented through emotionally marked vocabulary, rhetorical questions, intensifiers, and exclamatory constructions aimed at maintaining readers' interest and stimulating curiosity. The findings provide new insights into the intentional organization of children's nonfiction discourse and its role in shaping children's perception of scientific knowledge and interaction with the surrounding world.

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Черник Марина, Приходько Ганна, Куліш Владислава, Приходченко Олександра. **Інтенції англійськомовного дитячого науково-популярного дискурсу: комунікативний і когнітивно-прагматичний виміри.**

Анотація. Англійськомовний дитячий науково-популярний дискурс спрямований на репрезентацію наукових знань, розвиток критичного мислення та формування світогляду у дітей. Цей тип дискурсу поєднує освітню, наукову та розважальну функції й ґрунтується на комунікативних і когнітивно-прагматичних інтенціях, що забезпечують різні форми взаємодії з молодшими читачами. Сучасний дитячий науково-популярний дискурс характеризується мультимодальністю, інтерактивністю, емоційною залученістю та адаптацією наукової інформації до когнітивних можливостей дітей. У статті досліджуються інтенції англійськомовного дитячого науково-популярного дискурсу за комунікативним і прагматичним аспектами й визначаються мовні засоби їх реалізації на лексичному, синтаксичному та стилістичному рівнях. Матеріалом дослідження слугує корпус англійськомовних дитячих науково-популярних видань, зокрема енциклопедій і біографій, представлений обкладинками, анотаціями та основними текстами. У дослідженні застосовано прагмалінгвістичний, описовий, когнітивний і кількісний методи, що ґрунтуються на теорії мовленнєвих актів і дискурс-аналізі. Комунікативний аспект охоплює репрезентативні, директивні, комісивні, експресивні, декларативні та квеситивні інтенції, тоді як прагматичний аспект представлений інтенціями інформування, впливу та залучення. Результати дослідження демонструють, що комунікативні та прагматичні інтенції разом із мовними засобами їх репрезентації формують взаємопов'язану систему в дитячому науково-популярному дискурсі. Репрезентативи та інтенції інформування переважно реалізуються через наукову термінологію, розповідні конструкції та описові висловлення, тоді як директиви та інтенції впливу виражаються за допомогою імперативних конструкцій, модальних дієслів і прямого звертання. Експресиви та інтенції залучення реалізуються через емоційно марковану лексику, риторичні запитання, інтенсифікатори та окличні конструкції, спрямовані на підтримання читацького інтересу й стимулювання допитливості. Отримані результати поглиблюють розуміння інтенційної організації дитячого науково-популярного дискурсу та його ролі у формуванні дитячого сприйняття наукових знань і взаємодії з навколишнім світом.

Ключові слова: *дитячий науково-популярний дискурс, інтенції, комунікативні інтенції, прагматичні інтенції, теорія комунікації, прагмалінгвістика*.

Introduction

Contemporary English children's nonfiction discourse is characterized by emphasis on authors' intentions aimed at developing key competencies in children-integrated knowledge, skills, and personal qualities that enable them to successfully interact with the world and solve life's challenges. The development of key competencies in children involves acquiring skills such as critical thinking, analytical thinking, creativity, teamwork, communication, decision-making, self-regulation, resilience, empathy, and respect for diversity. The

purpose of children's nonfiction discourse is to establish communication with the reader in order to disseminate scientific knowledge among children in an accessible form and to motivate them to learn and broaden their scientific worldview.

Intentions are the subject of study in such fields as philosophy, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, political science, law, and linguistics. In linguistics, intentions are the subject of study in pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics, and are defined as speakers' purposeful communicative orientations aimed at achieving particular effects in interaction. A distinctive feature of children's nonfiction discourse is that it functions at the intersection of scientific, educational, and mass discourse, ensuring that complex scientific information is adapted to children's level of understanding in accordance with their age, cognitive, and psychological abilities.

In linguistics, the intentions theory is explored across fields such as pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, communication, psycholinguistics, and discursive studies. The early research on intentions theory includes foundational contributions by Austin (1962), Grice (1975), Searle (1969), and Pocheptsov (1980), whose work in pragmatics and speech act theory established the basis for analyzing communicative intentions. Further research highlighted the role of communicative intention in text comprehension and the importance of recipient-oriented meaning construction, as developed in the work of van Dijk (1980) and Kintsch (1988), who emphasized how discourse structures and cognitive models guide the recipient's interpretation of intended meaning. Rao & Georgeff (1997) treated intentions in the context of agents' actualization. The authors state that intentions are "first class citizens" along with beliefs and goals, define different strategies of commitment with respect to an agent's intentions and model a wide variety of agents. The choice of an agent determines different outcomes of an action.

In the theory of communicative linguistics, intention are viewed as the recipient's conscious or intuitive intent, which determines the internal program of speech and the manner of its realization, and identifies the following factors in its actualization: motivation as a system of motives with a dominant motive; circumstances, conditions of communication, environment, etc.; probabilistic experience related to a model of the future, the possibility of prediction; the task (the goal for which the action is performed), i.e., the correlation of the model of the future with the immediate and prospective or current action (Batsevych, 2004). Within cognitive narratology, intentional guidelines organize the presentation of textual material and shape readers' perception, interpretation, and engagement with the narrative, while the configuration of a narrative is directly related to the author's intention (Babelyuk et al., 2021). Shabat-Savka (2018) defines intentionality as a property of all mental phenomena that

characterizes human thought or purposeful activity, and intentions as a concept that has a specific manifestation projected onto clearly defined linguistic activity; it also reflects a deep mental process concerning the speakers, their intellect, and cognition (Shabat-Savka, 2014, p. 17). The author also addresses psycholinguistic aspects of intentions actualizing in the scope of speaker's substance and syntaxing.

In psycholinguistics, intentions are generally understood as the mental states and communicative goals that speakers express, and listeners perceive during language use (Papafragou & Grigoroglou, 2025; Rubio-Fernández, 2020). Rubio-Fernández (2020) argues that linguistic meaning alone usually underdetermines intended meaning; therefore, successful communication depends on pragmatic inference, contextual information, and mental-state attribution. Papafragou and Grigoroglou (2025) describe intentions as the bridge between language, context, and social cognition, emphasizing that speakers encode communicative goals in utterances and listeners infer them using contextual, epistemic, and pragmatic cues. While they maintain that theory of mind remains central to pragmatic communication, they also acknowledge ongoing debate regarding its role across different pragmatic tasks. Alternative perspectives emphasize that communicative intentions may be co-constructed through interaction, discourse practices, and cultural routines rather than being fully specified as private mental states (Cuffari & Figueiredo, 2025; Taumoepeau, 2025).

Recent studies of children's nonfiction increasingly emphasize the importance of reader engagement, affective response, and interaction with factual information. In particular, Kuzmičová and Supa (2024) argue that contemporary children's nonfiction cannot be reduced to the transmission of "hard facts" only, since children's engagement with nonfiction is shaped by curiosity, emotional involvement, aesthetic perception, and personal relevance. The authors demonstrate that nonfiction texts encourage "moments of wonder" and holistic interaction with information, in which facts "creatively blend with emotion, questions of beauty, and social appeal." According to Tsapiv (2021), different authorial intentions in children's literature, such as to address a child, to teach a moral lesson, to make a child believe in themselves, and to make a child think and be curious, are realized through specific narrative strategies aimed at achieving a desired perlocutionary effect and ensuring successful literary communication.

Despite extensive studies on communicative intentions in frames of speech acts theory, the intentional organization of English children's nonfiction discourse has not been systematically examined from the perspective of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intention types and their linguistic realization. Thus, the paper aims to examine the intentions of English children's

nonfiction discourse regarding communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives and to identify the linguistic means of their realization at lexical, syntactic, and stylistic levels. The study is based on a corpus of English children's nonfiction books aimed at different age groups and applies cognitive, pragmalinguistic, discourse, and descriptive methods to identify communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intention types as well as the linguistic means of their realization.

The novelty of the study lies in its systematic integration of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives within a unified analytical framework applied to a structured dataset. This combined approach provides a comprehensive description of intention types and their functional distribution across textual components, offering a consolidated view of patterns that have often been treated separately in previous research.

The study is supported by the theoretical framework and empirical findings, and accordingly states the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the intentions of English children's nonfiction discourse?

Research Question 2: How are these intentions represented regarding communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives?

Methods

Procedure

The analysis includes the study of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives of intentions actualization in English children's nonfiction discourse, focusing on their meaning and linguistic means of representation according to their types.

To achieve the aim of this study, we begin with a content analysis of children's nonfiction discourse and a sampling of the corpus from book covers, blurbs, and main body texts. This is followed by the identification and analysis of intentions from communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives. The analysis at this stage included the detection of the intentions' meanings from communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives, as well as their linguistic means of representation. Quantitative analysis enabled us to track the frequency of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intention types, as well as their combinations, across book covers, blurbs, and main body texts. The quantitative procedure included manual identification, annotation, and frequency calculation of intention-bearing units. The unit of analysis varied by textual component. For book covers and blurbs, each cover and each blurb was treated

as a separate unit of analysis. For the main body texts, the unit of analysis was an individual sentence, treated as a semantically complete communicative unit. Each unit was coded according to the proposed taxonomy of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions. Where a single unit could simultaneously realize more than one intention, each intention was recorded independently, allowing overlapping intentions to be reflected in the overall frequency counts. The frequencies were first calculated manually in annotation tables and then converted into percentages relative to the total number of identified intention occurrences within each textual component (book covers, blurbs, and main body texts). To ensure consistency in annotation, all coding decisions were repeatedly reviewed against the predefined classification criteria. The final stage of the research included comparative analysis, which permitted us to identify the common features of these two perspectives in our research and to delineate their intersection on the basis of their linguistic means of representation.

As mentioned above, in this study we differentiate the intentions of children's nonfiction discourse into two perspectives: communicative and cognitive-pragmatic. We analyze the communicative aspect of intention differentiation using Searle's and Grice's classifications of intentions complemented by one type from Zahnitko's (2001) classification. This perspective focuses on predicative means of expressing meaning. According to this classification, intentions are divided into the following types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declaratives, and quesitives. The cognitive-pragmatic perspective of distinguishing intentions is determined by the thematic and cognitive-pragmatic vectors of children's nonfiction editions, which are represented by informing, influencing, and engaging intentions.

Research Material

Children's nonfiction literature has been acquiring more popularity among young readers recently. The scope of its topics and forms is continually expanding, including new ways of introducing scientific knowledge into children's worldviews. English children's nonfiction discourse is marked by simplified representation, expressiveness, interactivity, and multimodality. The intention's actualization is reflected in all structural elements of children's nonfiction books—from the cover to the afterword—as well as beyond the book itself, in the space that embodies the book's existence and encourages its purchase and further engagement with it. This study mainly focuses on the book covers, blurbs, and main body text of children's nonfiction books, as these elements are highly marked by intentionality and representation and have distinct functions and mechanisms for achieving the author's intentions.

To ensure an accurate and objective analysis, the scope of the selected material included both encyclopedias and biographies. The corpus of the book covers and blurbs included 200 editions, with 4179 examples and 16,934 words, respectively. The encyclopedic corpus of the main body texts in our study is represented by the universal encyclopedia *Eyewitness Encyclopedia of Everything* by Dorling Kindersley and monothematic encyclopedias *Earth is Big: A Book of Comparisons* by Steve Tomecek (on our planet), *All you need to know about Your Body by age 7* by Alice James (on the human body), and *See Inside How Things Work* by Conrad Mason (on different mechanisms). The biographical corpus of the main text included the books *WildLives: 50 Extraordinary Animals that Made History* by Ben Lerwill and *YouthQuake: 50 Children and Young People Who Shook the World* by Tom Adams. The volume of the examples from the main body texts is 38,887 words. Overall, the study analysis included a corpus of examples consisting of 60,000 words. Thus, the corpus was selected according to four criteria: (1) representation of the different age groups of children's readers (early childhood, middle childhood, and early adolescence); (2) inclusion of different thematic domains (science, nature, history, technology, and everyday knowledge); (3) diversity of non-fiction formats, including picture books, multimodal books, encyclopedias, and biographies; and (4) publication by popular publishers specializing in children's books. These criteria ensured that the corpus represented the diversity of contemporary English children's non-fiction and allowed to analyze intentions across different genres and age groups.

Results

The intentions of English children's nonfiction discourse are represented by communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives that shape the interaction between the author and the young reader. Despite different mechanisms of classification, the communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives on intention realization are closely interconnected, and their analysis is based on the correlation among the type of intention, its meaning, communicative or cognitive-pragmatic effect, and the linguistic means of their representation in children's nonfiction discourse.

Communicative Perspective of Intention Representation

The notion of communicative intentions plays a central role in pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, discourse analysis, and communication studies. The

present study adopts an integrated approach to intention, combining the theories of Searle and Pocheptsov. Grounded in Searle's taxonomy of five major types of illocutionary acts (representatives/assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives), this study argues that the classical model does not fully account for the illocutionary force of interrogative utterances, which are treated in the Ukrainian linguistic tradition as a separate category of quesitives. An important contribution to this perspective was made by Pocheptsov (1980), who conceptualized speech acts as pragmatic sentence types and distinguished constatives, injunctives, requestives, performatives, and quesitives.

Unlike Searle's taxonomy, in which questions are generally interpreted as a subtype of directives aimed at eliciting information, Pocheptsov treated quesitives as an autonomous class of communicative acts realized through interrogative constructions. Building on this functional-pragmatic tradition, Zahnitko (2001) further developed a communicative-intentional framework that recognizes interrogative intentions as an independent category of communication. Together, these approaches support the distinction of quesitives as a separate type of communicative intention with specific discourse functions (Searle, 1969; Pocheptsov, 1980; Zahnitko, 2001).

Accordingly, the present study distinguishes the following communicative types of intentions: representative, directive, commissive, expressive, declarative, and quesitive. Table 1 presents the communicative perspective on the representation of intentions in children's nonfiction discourse, along with their meanings, linguistic means, and examples.

Table 1

Communicative Perspective on the Representation of Intentions in Children's Nonfiction Discourse

Type of Intention	**Meaning**	**Linguistic Means**	**Example**
Representative	Relates the speaker to something being the case; includes suggesting, stating, concluding	Scientific and neutral vocabulary, terminology, declarative sentences, present and past tenses, descriptive and analytical statements, precise information	*The earliest bikes had no gears* (Mason, 2009).

Directive	Attempts to make the addressee perform an action; includes asking, ordering, requesting, advising	Modal verbs, imperative constructions, direct address	*Lift the flaps to see inside how things work* (Mason, 2009).
Commissive	Commits the speaker to future actions; includes promising, planning, vowing	Verbs of promise and intention, future tense constructions, positively marked statements	*THIS BOOK WILL MAKE YOU AN ARTIST* (Millington, 2024).
Expressive	Expresses the speaker's feelings or attitudes; includes thanking, apologising, welcoming	Evaluative and emotive vocabulary, exclamatory constructions, intensifiers, metaphors, onomatopoeia, exclamations, emotionally charged expressions	*EXTRAORDINARY, TRUE TALES OF WILD AND WONDERFUL LIVES!* (Lerwill, 2020)
Declarative	Changes the state of the world immediately; includes institutional acts (e.g., rulings, declarations)	Performative verbs, official expressions	*Britain and France declare war on Germany two days later* (DK (2023))
Quesitive	Elicits information and stimulates cognitive activity; includes asking, inquiring, probing, wondering	Question words, interrogative constructions; rhetorical questions	*What happens when I eat?* (James, 2023)

The quantitative analysis of communicative intentions in 200 children's nonfiction covers demonstrated the predominance of representative intentions (77.0 %), followed by expressive intentions (18.5 %). Directive intentions constitute 7.5 % of the corpus, while quesitive intentions account for 6.5 %.

Commissive intentions (1.5 %) occur considerably less frequently, whereas declarative intentions were not identified in the analyzed corpus (see Fig. 1.a). The analysis demonstrates that communicative intentions in children's nonfiction covers are often combined. The most common combination includes representative and expressive intentions (41.5 %), followed by isolated representative intentions (27.5 %), representative and directive intentions (9.0 %), and representative, expressive, and directive intentions (7.5 %). Less frequent patterns involve combination of representative, expressive, and quesitive intentions (5.0 %), representative and quesitive intentions (4.0 %), and representative, expressive, directive, and quesitive intentions (1.5 %). Isolated directive intentions were identified only in two cases (1.0 %), whereas purely expressive and representative, expressive, and commissive realizations occur only exceptionally (0.5 % each). These findings indicate that children's nonfiction covers are represented by combinatory intentions aimed at informing and engaging young readers.

The quantitative analysis of 200 blurbs demonstrated the predominance of expressive (28.8 %) and representative intentions (28.3 %), followed by directive intentions (23.1 %). Quesitive intentions constitute 11.9 % of the corpus, while commissive (7.1 %) and declarative intentions (0.8 %) occur considerably less frequently (see Fig. 1.b). The most frequent combination of communicative intentions in children's nonfiction discourse includes representative, directive, and expressive intentions (30.7 %), followed by combination of representative, directive, expressive, and quesitive intentions (19.1 %), as well as representative and expressive intentions (12.6 %). Less frequent patterns involve representative, directive, commissive, and expressive intentions (6.0 %), representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and quesitive intentions (6.0 %), and representative, expressive, and quesitive intentions (4.5 %). Isolated intentions occur only exceptionally: only representative and only directive intentions were identified in two cases each, whereas purely expressive, quesitive, commissive, or declarative realizations were absent.

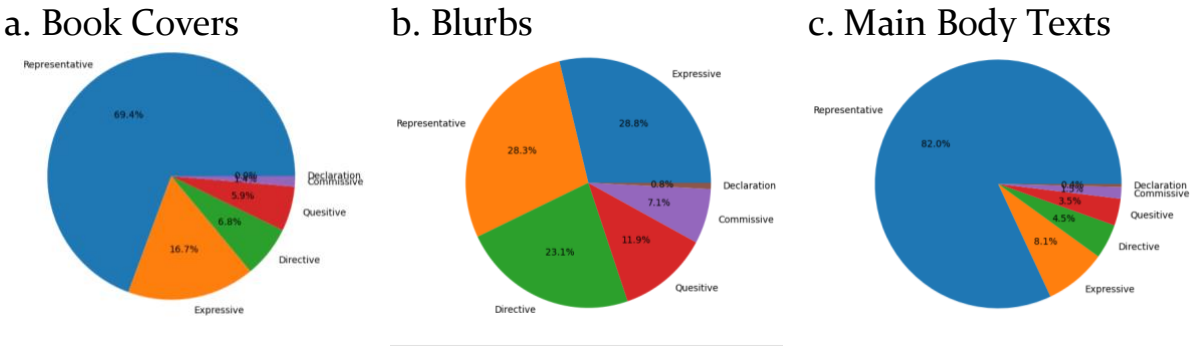
The quantitative analysis of communicative intentions in the main body texts demonstrated the predominance of representative intentions (81.9 %), confirming the primarily informative and explanatory nature of children's nonfiction discourse. Expressive intentions constitute 8.1 % of the corpus, followed by directive (4.5 %) and quesitive intentions (3.5 %). Commissive (1.5 %) and declarative intentions (0.4 %) occur considerably less frequently (see Fig. 1.c). Communicative intentions in the main body texts are mainly combined. The most frequent combination includes representative and expressive intentions (52.9 %), followed by representative and directive intentions (22.1 %), representative and quesitive intentions (17.1 %), and representative and commissive intentions (10.0 %). Less frequent combinations involve expressive

and directive intentions (6.4 %), expressive and quesitive intentions (5.7 %), directive and quesitive intentions (5.0 %), directive and commissive intentions (2.9 %), as well as representative and declarative intentions (2.1 %).

The distribution of communicative intention types in the book covers, blurbs, and main body texts is presented in Figure 1 as pie charts, illustrating their proportions within the dataset.

Figure 1

Distribution of Communicative Intentions in Book Covers, Blurbs, and Main Body Texts



Cognitive-Pragmatic Perspective of Intention Representation

The cognitive-pragmatic perspective of the intentions typology in children's nonfiction discourse is marked by the cognitive-pragmatic and thematic vectors of the editions. Unlike the communicative perspective, which focuses on the illocutionary orientation of utterances, the cognitive-pragmatic perspective concentrates on the broader functional aspects of the discourse under analysis.

Recent studies of children's nonfiction emphasize that interaction with factual information is shaped not only by knowledge acquisition but also by curiosity, emotional involvement, and reader engagement (Kuzmičová & Supa, 2024). Similarly, educational approaches to children's nonfiction stress its role in supporting learning, motivating cognitive activity, and maintaining readers' interest (Stewart & Young, 2019). Children's nonfiction engagement is most effectively supported when informational content aligns with children's prior interests, is presented through strong multimodal design, and is mediated through reading, talk, and task-based interaction rather than solitary decoding (Kuhn, 2017; Leal, 1999). Recent research further shows that such engagement is not uniform but combines epistemic (learning-oriented) and affective (emotion- and wonder-oriented) dimensions, depending on how children interact with informational texts and how these texts connect to reading, viewing, and playing activities (Kuzmičová, 2024; Muela-Bermejo, 2025). From this perspective, intentions may be classified according to their dominant cognitive-pragmatic function.

Based on the literature on children's nonfiction engagement, the present study introduces *engaging intention* as an analytical category referring to discourse strategies aimed at sustaining children's attention, curiosity, emotional involvement, and active interaction with the text. Accordingly, three cognitive-pragmatic intention types are distinguished in this study: informing, influencing, and engaging. Table 2 presents the cognitive-pragmatic perspective of intentions representation in children's nonfiction discourse accompanied by their meaning, linguistic means, and examples.

Table 2
Cognitive-Pragmatic Perspective on the Representation of Intentions in Children's Nonfiction Discourse

Type of Intention	**Meaning**	**Linguistic Means**	**Example**
Informing	Presents factual and scientific information	Scientific and neutral vocabulary, terminology, declarative sentences, present, past and future tenses, descriptive and analytical statements, precise information	*Greta Thunberg was born in Sweden in 2003* (Adams, 2019).
Influencing	Encourages action, cognition, or change of attitude	Modal verbs, future tense, imperative constructions, direct address	*To halt climate change, we must reduce emissions of greenhouse gases* (DK, 2023).
Engaging	Attracts attention and maintains readers' interest	Evaluative and emotive vocabulary, exclamatory constructions, intensifiers, metaphors, onomatopoeias, exclamations, rhetorical questions	*You are unique. There's no one exactly like you! (James, 2023)*

The quantitative analysis of cognitive-pragmatic intentions in 200 children's nonfiction covers demonstrated the predominance of informing intentions (54.0 %), followed by engaging intentions (34.4 %). Influencing intentions constitute 11.6 % of the corpus (see Fig. 2.a). The analysis demonstrates that cognitive-pragmatic intentions in children's nonfiction covers are frequently combined. The most common combination includes informing and engaging intentions (51.0 %), followed by isolated informing intentions (27.5 %), informing, engaging, and influencing intentions (10.5 %), as well as informing

and influencing intentions (9.0 %). Isolated influencing intentions were identified only in two cases (1.0 %), whereas purely engaging and engaging, influencing realizations occur only exceptionally (0.5 % each).

The quantitative analysis of cognitive-pragmatic intentions in 200 children's nonfiction blurbs demonstrated the predominance of engaging intentions (34.3 %), closely followed by influencing intentions (33.4 %) and informing intentions (32.2 %) (see Fig. 2.b). The most frequent combination of cognitive-pragmatic intentions includes informing, influencing, and engaging intentions (76.0 %). Less frequent patterns involve combination of influencing and engaging intentions (8.0 %), informing and engaging intentions (6.4 %), and informing and influencing intentions (4.0 %). Isolated influencing and engaging intentions account for 2.4% each, whereas isolated informing intentions occur only exceptionally (0.8 %).

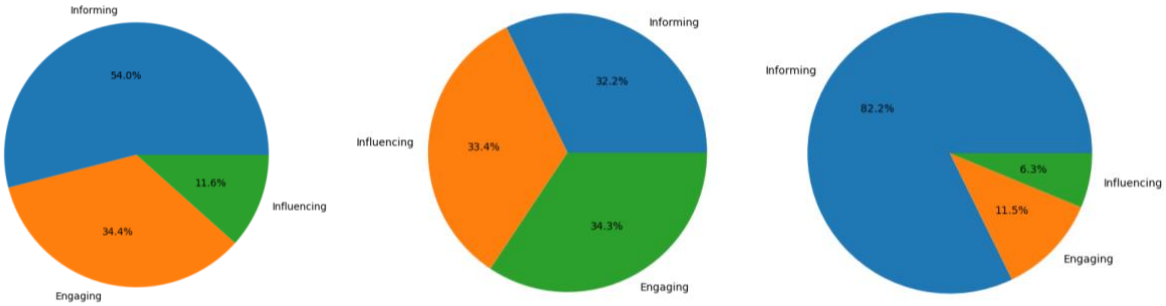
The quantitative analysis of cognitive-pragmatic intentions in the main body texts demonstrated the predominance of informing intentions (82.2 %), followed by engaging intentions (11.5 %) and influencing intentions (6.3 %) (see Fig. 2.c). The most frequent combination includes informing and engaging intentions (4.1 %), followed by informing and influencing intentions (1.6 %). Less frequent combinations involve engaging and influencing intentions (0.2 %), while the simultaneous realization of informing, engaging, and influencing intentions occurs only exceptionally (0.1 %). Isolated informing intentions remain predominant (81.9 %), whereas isolated engaging (7.3 %) and influencing intentions (4.3 %) occur considerably less frequently.

The distribution of cognitive-pragmatic intention types in book covers, blurbs, and main body texts is presented in Figure 2 as pie charts, illustrating their proportions within the dataset.

Figure 2

Distribution of Cognitive-Pragmatic Intentions in Book Covers, Blurbs, and Main Body Texts

a. Book Covers b. Blurbs c. Main Body Texts



Intersection of Communicative and Cognitive-Pragmatic Perspectives

The analysis of the dataset revealed points of intersection between communicative and their cognitive-pragmatic perspectives of intentions' representation. While communicative intentions determine the illocutionary orientation of utterances, cognitive-pragmatic intentions reflect their broader functional impact on the readers. Thus, representatives primarily correlate with informing intentions, directives are associated with influencing intentions, whereas expressives and quesitives frequently coincide with engaging intentions by maintaining attention and stimulating curiosity.

The intersection of these perspectives demonstrates that children's nonfiction discourse combines informational, interactive, and affective dimensions to ensure effective communication with the younger reader.

Discussion

The findings of this research demonstrate that English children's nonfiction discourse is characterized by frequent actualization of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions – their distribution varies depending on the structural elements of the book. The predominance of informing intentions, which are most frequently associated with representatives in book covers, blurbs, and main body texts, confirms the educational and knowledge-oriented nature of children's nonfiction discourse. At the same time, the high frequency of engaging and influencing intentions, mainly conveyed through expressives, directives, and quesitives, indicates that factual information is rarely presented in a neutral form alone. Instead, scientific knowledge is integrated with emotionally marked, interactive, and motivational strategies aimed at maintaining children's attention and stimulating curiosity.

These findings support Kuzmičová and Supa's (2024) view that children's nonfiction combines factual information with emotional and cognitive engagement. The results also confirm Tsapiv's (2021) argument that authorial intentions are realized through specific strategies aimed at maintaining children's interest and guiding their interpretation.

Regarding the intersection of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions, given their similar means of linguistic representation, we will consider the linguistic peculiarities of cognitive-pragmatic intentions, focusing also on their most frequent communicative equivalents.

Informing intentions realized by representatives are aimed at introducing neutral information based on the actualisation of facts actualization. The main goals of this type of intention are achieved mainly through the use of neutral

lexics, terminology, term definitions, and declarative sentences in present and past tenses. The informing intentions actualizing depends on the elements of the children's nonfiction editions. Thus, in the book covers, they are mainly actualized by titles with nominative constructions (e.g., *Space, Human Body, Science*). Book titles often convey informing intentions in complementary elements like subtitles including such lexemes as *book, guide, answers* (e.g., *THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE WORLD AROUND YOU* (DK, 2023), neutral introduction of the facts (e.g., *NO ONE KNOWS HOW COLOSSAL A COLOSSAL SQUID CAN BE / THE SEARCH FOR LIFE IN SPACE STARTS WITH PLANETS JUST LIKE OURS / THE GREAT SPHINX MAY NOT BE A SPHINX AT ALL / ONE SNAIL WAS DISCOVERED 113 TIMES* (Frith, 2023), and illustrations' captions (e.g., *PICTUREPEDIA* features different images on its cover with captions like *Jungle Nymph Stick Insect / Fire Engine / Bengal Tiger / Hyacinth / Cattle Heart Swallowtail / Cocker Spaniel / Raspberry / Tutankhamun's Mask*, etc. (DK, 2020)). Blurbs use informшtп intentions to represent the main points of the edition in constructions starting with phrases like *This book + verb,* e.g., *This book introduces the world of infographics and the skills you need to get the most out of them* (Martineau, 2016). Rather often, blurbs use constructions *from… to* in order to show the thematic scope of the edition, e.g., *From incredible insects and meat-eating dinosaurs to ancient Rome, PICTUREPEDIA gives you a world of information on every page* (DK, 2020). The main body texts are primarily represented by constructions that serve informative intentions. Such constructions convey information about the surrounding reality in a neutral tone, e.g., "*A xylophone is one of the simplest instruments*" (Mason, 2009).

Influencing intentions represented by directives find their actualization in motivation for action or cognition, and are expressed through the use of modal verbs, future tense, imperative constructions, and direct address. On book covers, influencing intentions are represented both in titles and in complementary elements. Influencing intentions in the titles of English children's nonfiction are actualized by imperative mood (e.g., *Look Inside the World of Bees* (Bone, 2021), *Name That Thing!* (Moore, 2024)) and phrases representing some actions like *I can…, How to…, You need…* (e.g. *All you need to know about your body by age 7* (James, 2023)). Complementary elements on the covers that facilitate influencing intentions are related to cognitive activity (e.g., *learn how to…, discover…, explore,* etc.) and the peculiarities of physical interaction with the book, e.g., *press the button, press to hear/listen, lift the flaps*. Blurbs are a powerful means for influencing intentions actualizing in children's nonfiction, as the authors of this structural element employ the imperative mood to establish a connection. They are verbalized through direct and indirect nominations. Direct nominations of intentions influencing cognition in the

blurbs of children's nonfiction are represented by lexemes *discover, explore, learn, find out, think about*, e.g., *• LEARN TO READ AN INFOGRAPHIC. / • FIND OUT AMAZING FACTS ABOUT LOTS OF TOPICS. / • THINK ABOUT HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN INFOGRAPHIC* (Martineau, 2016). Indirect expressions of the intentions influencing cognition to encourage learning are represented by metaphorical predicates related to the thematic focus of the publication. Thus, in the book *The Fascinating Ocean Book for Kids*, the influencing intentions are verbalized by the expression *dive into* associated with the conceptual field representing water-related themes, stimulating cognition: *DIVE INTO FACTS AND PHOTOS FROM BENEATH THE OCEAN*(Hestermann, 2021). In the book *Eyewonder Rocks and Minerals*, following a similar principle, the author uses the phrase *dig down* in the blurb, which belongs to the conceptual field of geology: *Dig down deep to uncover the treasures that lie beneath your feet* (DK, 2025). In the main body texts, influencing intentions provide interaction with readers, encouraging them to engage in cognitive and investigative activity (e.g., *Lift the flap to find out how a car gets going…* (Mason, 2009)), and inspiring them to make positive changes for themselves and for our world (e.g., *Your body belongs to YOU. It's your job to look after it, and be kind to it, throughout your life* (James, 2023); *But there's still time to protect the planet, and there's lots you can do to help – from using less energy, to getting on your bike instead of hopping in the car* (Tomecek, 2020).

Engaging intentions in English children's nonfiction discourse are achieved through strategies of emotional appeal and entertainment, and are realized through the use of expressive lexical units. When selecting expressive nouns, authors resort to lexemes that describe large-scale concepts (*a world of bugs, lots of things*) or are associated with concepts that evoke encouragement, wonder, and interest (*journey, secrets, treasures*). Adjectives aimed at achieving an emotional impact in publication titles are represented primarily by lexemes such as *fantastic, brilliant, incredible, extraordinary*(e.g., *WildLives: 50 extraordinary animals that made history* (Lerwill, 2020)). However, the analysis of the dataset reveals the use not only of positive expressions but also of negatively connoted lexemes intended to surprise, create an effect of unexpectedness (*weird…*), and sometimes even shock (*the deadliest…*). For example, *THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL WORLD OF BUGS* (Manderino, 2020). At the syntactic level, the engaging intentions are achieved through the use of imperative and interrogative constructions. Questions in the titles of children's nonfiction are highly effective at engaging young readers in interaction with the edition. They encourage cognitive activity aimed at reasoning and finding answers. For example: *ARE there Rainbows in SPACE?* (Kanani, 2025). Questions are also actualized as complementary elements of book covers representing the thematic scope of the edition and

engaging young readers in communication with it. Thus, the book *All you need to know about your body by age 7* contains such questions on its cover, such as *What happens when I eat? Why is exercise good for me? What are muscles? What are germs? How does your body move?* (James, 2023).

In complementary elements on the covers, such as subtitles and illustration captions, questions play a background role in sparking interest in reading and indirectly clarifying the publication's subject matter. The same principle of introducing questions is observed in the blurbs: *HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW flamingos BECOME PINK? WHY octopuses HAVE BLUE BLOOD? OR WHY SOME flames BURN GREEN?* (Kanani, 2025). In the main body texts, questions often fulfil an introductory function, and they are followed by answers: *WHAT'S INSIDE? / The Sun is a giant ball of hydrogen and helium gas. Inside its dense core nuclear reactions produce huge amounts of energy, and generate temperatures of up to 15 million °C (27 million °F)*(DK, 2023).

Limitations of the Study

The study is based on well-established frameworks in discourse analysis and pragmatics, which shape the scope of interpretation. While the integration of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives provides a coherent analytical framework, the findings mainly confirm expected patterns rather than producing unexpected or theory-extending results. At the same time, the study offers a systematic application of these approaches and contributes to future research in related directions.

Conclusions

The study has demonstrated that English children's nonfiction discourse is organized through a complex system of communicative and cognitive-pragmatic intentions that ensure effective interaction between authors and young readers. The quantitative analysis revealed a predominance of representatives that primarily correspond to informing intentions, particularly in book covers and main body texts, which confirms the educational and knowledge-oriented nature of children's nonfiction. At the same time, directives, expressives, and quesitives that frequently correspond to influencing and engaging intentions play a significant role in attracting attention, stimulating curiosity, and encouraging active participation in the process of cooperating with nonfiction books. The findings indicate that different structural elements of children's nonfiction books serve distinct communicative and cognitive-pragmatic

functions: covers primarily attract attention and foster emotional engagement, blurbs combine informative, persuasive, and engaging functions, whereas main body texts focus on presenting and explaining factual knowledge.

The research also revealed a close relationship between communicative and cognitive-pragmatic perspectives of intention realization. Representative intentions primarily correlate with informing functions, directives with influencing functions, while expressive and quesitive intentions contribute mainly to engaging readers and maintaining their cognitive interest. The analysis of linguistic means demonstrated that these intentions are realized through scientific terminology, declarative and imperative constructions, modal verbs, direct address, emotionally marked vocabulary, rhetorical questions, intensifiers, and exclamatory structures. Consequently, contemporary children's nonfiction discourse cannot be regarded solely as a medium for transmitting factual information, since it simultaneously fulfils educational, motivational, emotional, and interactive functions. The results contribute to pragma-linguistic and discourse studies by systematizing intention types in children's nonfiction discourse and identifying the linguistic means that support effective communication with young readers.

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Maryna Chernyk: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Investigation, Resources, Data curation, Writing – Original Draft, Visualization, Project Administration; **Hanna Prihodko:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Resources, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Data Curation, Project Administration; **Vladyslava Kulish:** Methodology, Validation, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft; **Oleksandra Prykhodchenko:** Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing.

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During the preparation of this work, Maryna Chernyk used Grammarly, an AI-assisted writing tool, to improve the grammar, spelling, and stylistic clarity of

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