

STORIES CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVITY AND CHILDREN PERSONALITY

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Abstract: Created ever since the dawn of history, the stories were passed from generation to generation by word of mouth and then in writing, after romanticists have discovered their value, have composed and published them. The fantastic, the supernatural elements, balancing on the fine line between fantasy and reality, promoting an ideal vision that always gives the hero a chance of victory, marriage and happy life ever after is specific to stories... And maybe they are still alive today if they did not die somehow! But are they still live today? We refer, of course, to the beloved heroes of fairy tales and to the fairy tales themselves, increasingly uncertain of their influence, of their ability to overcome computers or movies or television...This narrative structure symbolizes human life itself and the meaning of existence, constantly urging us to believe in the values of good, justice, and beauty and promote them. The heroes themselves are models that can influence and develop children positively in all respects. On the other hand, the young listeners or readers of stories confront their own feelings and problems with those of their favorite heroes or fairy tales, they compensate some difficulties or reinforce some performances. From this point of view, one can trace a continuity or a rupture between the existence in the family and in school, to act accordingly. The teacher will have to get access to those psycho-pedagogical knowledge to get the utmost use of, including in the field of psychoanalysis and as such, in a specific therapy for children and parents through stories - a very current and booming area for us too, after the visible successes abroad. Their contribution to the child's personality urges us to continue studying this exciting and useful area.

Keywords: *personality, feelings, psycho-pedagogical knowledge*

Introduction

Folklore and literature historians admit that modern fairy tale science was born only upon the occurrence of the famous collection of the Brothers Grimm *Kinder und Hausmärchen* (1812-1815). Although both Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm brothers and other authors believed that stories are addressed especially to children, they actually were of a much wider target audience. In the eighteenth century, for example, fairy tales were enacted and represented a means of entertainment for cultural elites. As well as before such time. Only in the nineteenth century they became mainly children's literature. It is interesting to note that among the followers of Brothers Grimm (including in relation to their mythological theory) were the brothers Arthur and Albert Schott, a little later: they composed from the region of Banat Romanian stories and have them published in German, in 1845, in Stuttgart, thus putting them into circulation in Europe.

Theoretical approach

Generally, the fairy tale is considered a fantastic story, with many miraculous elements with themes that are found on a wide universal level. The term comes from Slavic: *basnǎ*: fiction, fabrication. Moreover, often the narrator points out, at least at the end, that everything is a "big lie", that it is a fabrication, an imaginary, unreal story. It is, as G. Calinescu said, an "assumed fantastic story". Therefore, the fairy tale is different from the rest of the fantastic writings, such as the short story, because it presents events and characters with supernatural features, without pretending they are real or that they resemble to reality. Thus, the miraculous in the fairy tales is a conventional, predictable fantastic known by the traditional connoisseurs,

unlike modern fantasy, where the epic conduct and phenomena presented are unpredictable and continue the everyday life or burst out of it.

In old ages the fairy tale had a magical function, important from the point of view of those who told the story, and of the listener. It was believed that storytelling kept away from demons and forgave sins. In the home where stories are told every night, the devil cannot enter.

Stories build models of behaviour, especially that listeners face characters and actually themselves, here being where changes that the speakers talk about occur (Burns, G, 2011). Therefore, stories transmit social values and the analysis of classic stories or successful novels based on tale style (like Harry Potter or The Fellowship of the Ring) shows that they have a series of elements that educate us, shape us, and discipline us. The theme of the fairy tale is the struggle between good and evil, ending with the triumph of good. The hero always fights to impose moral and ethical values: justice, fairness, honour, love etc. Those who don't comply with the code are punished, although sometimes they are forgiven, giving them the chance to reintegrate. Teachings are possible without the tale presenting ostentatiously and didactically such teachings, because it was found that the moralizing writings (and lessons) are disliked by the children.

Values are therefore much larger and much more important in the most famous fairy tales, even if in a psychological or educational reading, we may have different views on their significance. Myths first, then fairy tales, legends explaining the origins of the world have always had a major impact, influencing human becoming. This was also their purpose, because in primitive stages of human history, they were the only ways that certain rules of behaviour in society, of enrolment in community morality could be transmitted from generation to generation. Therefore in many fairy tales, as various researchers have shown, the key issue is exactly initiation: the hero - usually a young man, whether a son of the king, Prince-Charming or another hero - goes through various stages until the final victory.

On the other hand, researchers have referred to the content of the tale as well, namely to the role of suppressing violent impulses of human beings, the man being considered the most aggressive intelligent being of all time. From this point of view, studies conducted by Dutch psychologists at the Eindhoven University - quoted on several occasions on the Internet - revealed that most folk tales have an amazing ability to reduce the background of human aggression. PhD Annel Von Donhaell discovered that reading or listening to fairy tales, especially during winter, can produce a series of psycho-physiological changes that result in reducing up to maximum such aggressiveness. Surprisingly, this effect is noticeable both in children and in adults, regardless of their temperament and level of culture.

The forming value of fairy tales consists of the fact that they stimulate children's cognitive and affective processes, contributing thus to the formation of will and character traits. By listening or reading fairy tales, children form their representations and notions of justice, honesty, courage, bravery, perseverance, diligence. The successive and vibrant deployment of adventures develops their attention and memory, imagination and sense of observation.

The child who has listened or read a nice story changes both the way of thinking, feeling and willing, because he/she lives, often unconsciously, emotions and mental processes caused by the strife of the hero of the tale to overcome the obstacles occurred and made by others. At the imaginary level, the child will step into the shoes of the hero and will participate emotionally to its adventures, considering himself/herself involved in the conflict between the main character and its opponents. From the psychological point of view, the child's subconscious is trained and puzzled during the story, causing excitement and conquering the child as any game.

Child's personality bases are laid since preschool, because it is then when some stable traits of temperament and character are outlined. The entry into school, moving to a new form of activity and to a new way of life will influence the further development of personality, because, as psychologists rightfully claim, the status of pupil with its specific requests and increased possibilities of expression outside the family, determine increasing social importance of what the child makes at this age. New circumstances make an imprint on his/her personality both in terms of its internal organization and in terms of its external behaviour. On the inside, thanks to the development of logical thinking, of judgment and reasoning capacity the bases are laid for the view on the world and life which essentially modify the optics of pupil's personality on surrounding reality.

In terms of personality, children are distinguished by a variety of temperaments. There are active, reserved, expansive, communicative and antisocial, lazy children. The contact with the shaping influences of the educational process gives rise to certain temperamental compensations. The educator must know the diversity of children's tempers, observing carefully, meticulously, in the classroom and outside it, not only the external side of the child's actions, but rather the reason for it and to act knowingly. Reading fairy tales can help knowing and then channelling practical action in the right direction (depending on the story, the hero, the motivation, etc.).

In this difficult analysis of the tales' contribution to the formation of child's personality it is important, first of all, the idea that the tale should be studied for its values, for what can be a guide for life, not necessarily as a pretext for the analysis of nouns, pronouns, etc. In this respect, it should be reminded that the tale has always in the centre of the story a hero - a young man - who leaves the family and the familiar space to the unknown. He often receives recommendations or assistance from his parents (to succeed, the hero needs the king's horse and weapons), but during the journey to another kingdom or to the objective to be reached, many unexpected things happen which the hero must overcome. This symbolic narrative structure is essential and is revealed either directly (consciously) or indirectly (unconsciously, remaining there for a lifetime). We start life with a minimum of baggage and guidance from the family, but the most important journey and true results are obtained by our own efforts. However, the hero, however strong he is, to be able to defeat the dragon, does not succeed alone, but with the support of many friends he makes along the way, sometimes strange friends, usually representing elements of nature (a tree, a fish, etc., etc.). The symbolism of the fairy tale must be clear first of all to us and then to the children, especially in the sense of character, of the relationship with the nature, the good that should be made to everyone because it returns back when we need it. Moreover, we believe that this is the path in life for every child who enters life and who by their actions, form and develop their personality.

Research data

From the multitude of psychological and pedagogical aspects we will retain a few. Here, for example, the capacity of the fairy tale to attract and maintain the attention of children. We know that especially young children cannot focus long. But older children and adults can have a fluctuating or very low attention to abstract lessons, speeches, theatre or musical performances. But the stories that narrate exciting adventures and details open to fantasy, are successful in attracting attention. Of course, as mentioned, by this act of attention, the auditor, as the spectator of a drama, expresses solidarity or identifies itself with the hero at an imaginary level, adopting the hero's goals, so that the attention appears as a fictional participation in combat and epic action, entailing, according to circumstances, feelings of depression, regret, rebellion or pain when the hero is defeated, or opposite feelings of satisfaction if the hero wins. The epic interest is able to capture and develop attention. It is, in fact, curiosity, pleasure to watch heroes with whom usually the children identify themselves,

the ability to identify questions or problems and to solve them by participating in an imaginary story.

A therapeutic story is a story in which someone can identify himself/herself, he/she finds himself/herself in the features of a character, in the drama of life situations; it reflects the listener's reality and gives the listener the opportunity, in the secure area of the imaginary tale, to distance themselves emotionally from the situation in which he/she lives. The researches related to this topic state that the identification of a family member with certain characters provide the therapist with meaningful information to structure their intervention and the family that begins a conscious healing process.

The research was conducted to identify and exploit the role and importance of tales for the preschool age, their contribution to education, in general, and particularly the specific contribution to the development of nowadays pupil's personality.

Hypothesis of research

1. If we assume that fairy tales are a treasure of humankind and a genuine educational school, then we must consider, in the context mentioned before, what values are received and used by young people today (preferences, heroes, virtues, etc.).
2. The study of fairy tale interferes mandatorily with imagination. This hypothesis should check practically if tales foster creativity, how do they do it and at which levels, which are more approved or more effective.

The data collection method was the questionnaire, the investigation tool being a list of open questions.

All respondents answered yes to the first part of the question, and the arguments brought were the following statements:

1. contain good aspects also to be pursued in life, and their reading reduces the time children spend in front of a TV or computer;
2. contribute to the education and development of children's aesthetic sense;
3. the childhood starts with fairy tales, better said "childhood adventures" start with them;
5. if they are created to transmit to the child a noble imagination, fairy tales can influence the child positively.
6. they contain wisdom embodied in these characters who can send many messages to children.
7. help in the formation of characters
8. children learn from the fairy tales about the struggle between good and evil, justice and injustice, where the good always wins. By reading them, children can realize that through courage, will, cleverness, they can succeed in life, they can be winners as well, like the fairy tales' heroes.

Children need fairy tales. They help them develop imagination, fantasy.

Through tales children live their joy, fear, love, without being put in difficult situations.

Yes, I sincerely believe that we need fairy tales even us adults, not only the children. We need to dream.

Tales bring magic into our lives, and make our lives more beautiful.

12. they help children to escape in a better and more beautiful world

13. In fairy tales children find characters they can relate to or may enter the shoes of the characters to make justice. The children can dream, for a moment, that they are little heroes who save the world. Truth and justice always prevail, regardless of the fairy tale.

Most suggest as homework, reading a story (at least one or two per week), a day dedicated to stories, at least one day per month.

A research subject brings praises to school teachers and suggests reading some Romanian literature works in elementary school and the works of great writers from the universal literature in secondary school, among which Dostoyevsky, about whom he says, "no matter which of his works you read, it strengthens you through the author's grace " .

Another research subject makes multiple proposals: more activities in the reading room, to attract children, story reading hours in the library, discussions, and commentaries about what the children read, reading in pairs – the older pupils with the younger pupils, plays, monologues, to be presented in a school performance.

Other research subjects (4 of them) emphasize the need to increase the number of reading hours in the curriculum, but also the compulsory reading of fairy tales to be listed in the syllabus (from folk tale to the cult tale!) and to create Reading meetups / "Story meetups ", as they call them, in which children can read, recount stories, but also interpret characters of the fairy tales, creating appropriate costumes.

Findings

In most cases, the mother is the one who reads the first story to her children.

Most parents have read the first story at the age of 7. It was one of the stories of Creanga or Brothers Grimm. Parental preference for some fairy tales is influenced by either rereading these tales, along with their children, or by children's preferences. Modest heroes, needy and wise ones, but also the ones endowed with the finest qualities are preferred by parents and children. All parents stated that the tale is necessary today, bringing for this the most diverse and persuasive arguments. Cartoons seem to have managed to gain ground compared to reading.

Most parents suggested: homework having as task the reading of a fairy tale, twice a week; promote reading, hearing, dramatization of tales, duplication of reading hours in the curriculum and participation of children in reading meetups. However, no parent suggested the presence of parents in these meetups / reading of stories by parents, thus the effective involvement in these activities.

Conclusions

Research results force us to practical interventions in schools and families, but also in other institutions such as libraries, to improve several aspects: children's reading, their ability to understand and apply the set of values provided by the worldwide stories, building up personal libraries (books, CDs, etc.) and strengthening links between school and family, all to know and develop the child's personality.

Intervention in formal environment (school):

- Story of the week
- Reading meetup
- Implementation of library-therapy in the student classroom

Intervention in the informal environment, depending generally on several factors and different from case to case

- Reading monitoring graphic – daily monitoring and presented in the reading class, at the end of the week.
- Reading journal – weekly monitoring, by the parent and the teacher;
- Metaphoric expressions notebook – weekly monitoring by the parent and the teacher.
- Night-reading – read by the parent, together with the child, every day at the same hour, becomes in time a joy, but especially, a ritual.
 - develops and improves the student's self-image;
 - helps students to express their feelings and to freely communicate their problems;
 - develops a constructive plan to solve the problem;
 - helps the emotional and cognitive relief of the student;

- develops the student's ability for correct self-assessment;
- provides for the best way to exploit the interesting things surrounding him/her;
- develops the student's capacity to understand human behaviour and the underlying reasons

Beyond everything, we are left with the conclusion of beauty, importance and eternity of fairy tales. Their contribution to the child's personality, as far as we could know it and prove it, stimulates us to continue studying this exciting and useful area.

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