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THE WORKS OF CHILDREN’S WRITERS AS A MEANS OF PEDAGOGICAL AND THERAPEUTIC INFLUENCE IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL REALITIES

Modern educational realities set teachers to master the techniques of healing injured children’s souls who live in a non-harmonious world, where there are not only good and love, but also cruelty and pain, where there is a lack of love, anger, and fear. It is important that educational institutions become a space in which all participants of the educational process feel protected from various discrimination, have and exercise the right to a happy life. It is natural for teachers, psychologists, psychotherapists to appeal to the works of children’s writers as a means of pedagogical therapy – the treatment of the inner nature of a person by artistic narratives, the improvement of his/her relationship with the world.

The possibilities of pedagogical and therapeutic use of children’s literature are very wide. The peculiarity of the pedagogical potential of children’s literature lies in the associative combination of thoughts, feelings, emotions that design fairy-tale events in the sphere of spiritual and moral, intellectual, social experience of a personality. An example of the use of children’s literature in psychological and educational practices is the *Pollyanna principle*, which was named in honor of the main character of the book by Eleanor H. Porter published in 1913 (the same

name Disney movie was created based on this story in 1960). Cheerful Pollyanna constantly plays a *game of joy*, which is that she always tries to find at least something good in any situation, no matter how depressed she is (Porter, 1996).

Using the *Game of Joy* in the educational practices will create a cognitive and active field of positive potential, which makes it possible to activate the positive emotions of all participants in pedagogical interaction, supports the atmosphere of friendship, trust, protection, promotes successful research of various problems and finding solutions to them (Leshchenko, 2003).

Scientists of positive psychology, which developed on the basis of the achievements of humanistic psychology and pedagogy, are engaged in scientific studies of the influence of positive emotions on human life. Positive psychology is aimed at improving the life of a person and revealing his/her natural inclinations. An important area of positive psychology is the scientific definition and measurement of positive human traits. Scientists distinguish creativity, curiosity, openness, love for learning, the ability to outline educational perspectives as positive traits of a person's character, which contribute to his/her successful learning in combination with such qualities as: courage, diligence, integrity, kindness, viability, citizenship, leadership, gratitude, hope, sense of humor, self-control (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Trying to increase the impact of positive emotions on various educational practices does not mean rejecting negative emotions and lacking compassion and empathy. It is important that students simultaneously feel and express all feelings – both happy and negative, uncomfortable ones. Pedagogical mastery consists in learning to direct personal experiences in a more positive direction with the help of children's literature – a miraculous means of awakening emotions and feelings, which helps to translate vital information into the sphere of spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social experience of the students' personality. The world of children's literature has a magical effect on a child, beckons with secrets, miracles, and sorcery. Children are happy to travel in an imaginary, unreal world, actively act in it, creatively transform it, gain knowledge about the environment, human relationships, problems encountered in life.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the possibilities of using the works of children's writers as a means of pedagogical and therapeutic influence in modern educational practices.

To achieve the goal, mainly theoretical research methods were used: study, analysis, and generalization of special psychological and pedagogical literature in order to identify the state of the researched problem; content analysis of the work of children's writers to reveal their pedagogical and therapeutic potential; method of transforming literary and fairy-tale content to solve problematic situations in educational practices, generalization of research results.

Foreign scientists comprehensively highlighted the pedagogical potential of fairy tales, myths, their philosophical and spiritual content. Hughes (*Myth and Education*), an outstanding British poet; Bruner (*Myth and Identity*), a famous American theorist of intellectual education; Ebbs (*The Place of Myth in Education*),

a philosopher and educator devoted their research to these problems (Hughes, 1987; Bruner, 1987; Abbs, 1989).

The central issues of Hughes' work are the role of fairy tales and myths in the upbringing of a creatively gifted child. Referring to his own experience, he expresses the opinion that *mathematical, philosophical, ethical education in the classical form is not available for children* (Hughes, 1987). The poet finds confirmation of his thoughts in the works of Plato, famous Greek philosopher, who asserted that ideal education should be based on fairy tales, myths, and legends. Since imagination is an integral characteristic of a creative personality, Hughes, first of all, emphasizes that *a fairy tale is a unique, original piece of fantasy* that is accessible to children's intelligence and stimulates its creative activity (Hughes, 1987). Hughes suggests starting work on fairy tales by studying the plot. The next stage in getting to know a fairy tale is the development of a child's fantasy. Hughes underlines that *a fairy tale, parable, legend heard in time can change a person's life* (Hughes, 1987).

Abbs, attributing various mythological forms to an integral part of universal human culture, considers the place of mythology in modern educational programs, analyzes the methods of creative development of the personality through his/her communication with the fairy-tale, fantastic world. He recommends teachers not to limit the study of an arbitrary phenomenon only to the analysis of scientific theories. In his opinion, any effective program should be based on basic principles, among which the mythological reflection of reality should become a compulsory object of study. Abbs notes that *any mythical image is a pedagogical tool of the highest quality* (Abbs, 1989). To analyze the situations that arise in the children's team, you can always pick up a suitable fairy tale, story, legend, and if the teacher does not remember one, then *he/she must invent it, because only in a fantastic structure you can safely experiment, invent bold solutions, try them on your feelings and only after testing transfer the acquired experience into reality* (Abbs, 1989). Using myths for educational purposes stimulates children's creative impulses. Inventing fantastic stories contributes to the deep work of thinking, and Abbs sees in this another advantage of myths over traditional pedagogical tools.

The study of the pedagogical possibilities of myths regarding the individualization of education, conducted by Bruner, is original. He indicates the lack of clear and sharp differences between what is logical and what is mythical, which, both complementing each other, are important elements in the development of a creative personality. Bruner refers the imaginative creation of an ideal that a person strives to achieve to the pedagogical functions of myths. He notes that the human personality realizes only part of his/her essence in practical life and emphasizes the unique properties of myths (ancient Greek and others) to create a complete harmonious image.

Bruner sees the main formative factor in the completeness of those images offered by the mythological palette for imitation. Everyone can choose the image that best suits their individual characteristics. The scientist attributes the triumph

of reason, good over ignorance and evil to the positive moments of fantastic stories, *The victories of Hercules, Odysseus, Perseus are a happy triumph of reason and supernatural help* (Bruner, 1987). Myths, according to Bruner's conviction, in an emotional form provide answers to the questions that are relevant for the young generation: *What is the world?; Why do we act this way and not otherwise?; What is a person?; What actions are typical for a person?*. A peculiar reflection of the truth in various artistic forms and plots gives the fairy tale more persuasiveness than the usual teaching and moralizing.

Campbell, author of the book entitled: *A Hero with a Thousand Faces*, underlines that a fairy tale is *a kingdom that we carry with us always... it is the magic of our childhood... If even a small part of this lost wholeness could be realized in adult life, we would feel a unique elevation of our forces, a bright renewal of existence* (Campbell, 1988). British drama therapist Grimshaw notes, *A fairy tale is a metaphor for basic human qualities, internal conflicts, which a child will definitely encounter in his own life. A positive resolution of the conflict calms the child, convinces him that hope is possible and life has meaning* (Grimshaw, 1995).

The attention of the world pedagogical community was drawn to an amazing phenomenon – the tremendous success of a series of books about modern school of English writer J.K. Rowling (Rowling, 2002). Her multi-plot and multi-problem stories about the adventures of the boy Harry Potter at the School of Witchcraft and Wizardry captivated millions of young readers, instilling in them a desire and interest in reading. The children broke away from the screens and picked up the books, and Potteriana has already been translated into dozens of languages. The reason for this unusual phenomenon is that Rowling looked at children with interest and trust, transported them to the world of fairy tales, built her books on the scheme of role-playing games, which have always been one of the main ways for children to learn about the world around them. That is why the writer's heroes always find the unusual in the ordinary, they are never bored, because their education is inseparable from the intense work of imagination. A fairy tale that has so organically entered a child's soul helps them to learn and improve, to bring a dream and such a desired miracle into reality, when any difficulties are solved, and all fears and negative impulses are overcome.

The great truth of the ideas expressed in fairy tales is not limited by spatial or temporal boundaries and is capable of manifesting itself in a wide variety of situations and perspectives. Kostenko's article *Humanitarian aura of the nation* is clear evidence of this – a conceptual look at the cultural, political, social, spiritual and historical problems of modern Ukraine. Kostenko emphatically made the ideological and figurative system of this original and topical article dependent on the idea and motif of Andersen's fairy tale *The Snow Queen* and therefore gave it the subtitle *Defect of the main mirror* (Kostenko, 2003). According to the poetess, the main mirror of a kind of telescope focuses on the achievements of culture, literature, art, humanitarian sciences, and education, which determine the image of the nation in the world, creating its aura.

Revealing the mechanics of the main mirror, Kostenko concludes her article, *Remember Andersen's magical fairy tale "The Snow Queen"*. There it all begins with the fact that one very fierce devil made a very strange mirror. This mirror had an unusual property: everything good and beautiful was reduced in it to the point of impossibility, and everything unworthy and bad stood out more clearly and seemed even worse (Kostenko, 2003). Originally read as an obligatory reading for students and professors of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Kostenko's article has a distinct educational and pedagogical orientation, which is that people in a democratic state are able to build themselves and their dignified life and a humanitarian aura of their nation (Kostenko, 2003).

Various aspects of the educational system of fairy tales, their pedagogical orientation found a deep understanding in the works of Ukrainian writers and teachers, among whom the work of Ukrainian children's writer O. Ivanenko deserves special attention. Ivanenko spoke about the miraculous power of the influence of fairy tales on the spiritual state of children in the autobiographical book *Always in Life: Memories*. During the famine thirties, difficult for Ukraine, the writer visited a rural kindergarten where there were joyless, half-starved children, *the children huddled together, there was not even a hint of any toys or entertainment. I swore to myself that I had come empty-handed, and what kind of holiday or greeting could we be talking about? However, I wanted to be with them, to somehow entertain them, and without thinking for a long time, I said, "Come closer to me, I will tell you a fairy tale" ... I did not believe my eyes, because I saw how the little eyes sparkled, how the children reached out to me, and now they are hugging and laughing so sincerely, they are stamping their feet and clapping their hands. I have never seen such a joyful direct perception... When I finished, they were already completely emboldened and shouted, "One more time!" And, it seems, I repeated the fairy tale as many as three times..., and they laughed again and again and were happy. The fairy tale replaced treats and gifts for them, they had a holiday!* (Ivanenko, 1985).

At the same time, we note that the teacher's mastership lies in the skillful selection of one or another fairy tale, their consistent use. Depending on the task the teacher sets before the students, one of the functions of the fairy tale (didactic, psychotherapeutic, psychocorrective) becomes dominant. Mediative, as a rule, manifests itself with a special aesthetic pleasure which students get from a fairy tale, playing it.

A significant psychotherapeutic effect is inherent in Ivanenko's cycle of fairy tales (*The Wonderful Flower, Three Wishes, Big Eyes*). These fairy tales are about a strange doctor who treated *liars, cowards, talkers, lazy people, envious people, and similar patients who prevent themselves and others from living* (Ivanenko, 1985).

Ivanenko underlined, *the genre of the fairy tale always served first of all to solve some moral problem, in a fairy tale there is always a struggle between good and evil, truth and wrong, and this is where characters are tested, fairy-tale*

heroes grow up as brave and just, because fairy-tale techniques – hyperbolization, movement in time and space, personification of animals, natural phenomena, give the heroes the opportunity to solve any obstacles in life, but this is not given to everyone for nothing. The hero always finds himself in conflict situations and must decide for himself and choose the right path (Ivanenko, 1985).

The plots of these fairy tales provide rich material for psychotherapeutic influence on students. It is important that the ideological and compositional elements of the work that have a special pedagogical value are in the teacher's field of vision. From that point of view, we will consider the content of the tales about the strange doctor (Ivanenko, 1985).

The Wonderful Flower is a fairy tale about a girl named Galya, who was afraid of everything (and not only mice or a dark room, but even talking loudly). The girl was scared of everything new, and that's why she stopped growing, because the bigger she grew, the more she saw and discovered, and this worried her terribly. The treatment prescribed to Galya by a strange doctor was unusual. At first, he suggested that the girl moved to the city of cowards. But Galya, imagining herself in a city where people live behind thick walls in gloomy houses with tiny windows, who don't do anything because of fear, where neither laughter nor songs can be heard, asked the doctor to cure her. And then the doctor sent the girl on a journey to find magical flowers from which medicine for fear was made. Galya visited unusual places – with a pilot in the highlands and a diver in the depths of the sea. Finally, the eagle, who was in the service of the Man who controlled the winds, took her to a high hill, where the magical mountain violets that the girl was looking for bloomed in a green, fragrant valley. Happy, with a bouquet of snow-white flowers, Galya returned home. Her heart was overflowing with joy from the fact that she felt how fun it is to live when you are not afraid of anything. On her way home, she passed by the town of cowards, in which small children live haplessly. Without a moment of hesitation, Galya gave all her flowers to the children and returned home, surrounded by a bunch of children, with happy sparkling eyes.

Three Wishes is a tale about how a strange doctor treated a girl named Zina, who was morbidly envious. Her illness manifested itself in the fact that the girl's eyes began to hurt very much when she saw the successes of other children, Zina could not guess when she should laugh and when she should cry. If everyone around was happy because Vitya wrote wonderful poems, Asya took first place at the music competition, and Nastusya grew unusual flowers, then Zina was very sad and wanted to cry. When classmates got into unpleasant situations (received unsatisfactory grades, did not achieve good results in various activities), Zina felt satisfaction and joy. After getting an appointment with a strange doctor, the girl received a magic stone that fulfilled her three wishes. After she realized that success can be achieved with hard work in the field for which a person has a knack, and felt the joy of helping a sick boy, sacrificing for this the first place in sports competitions, Zina was cured of envy.

The fairy tale *Big Eyes* is about a strange doctor who helped a formerly lazy boy named Yas to become a real musician. The strange doctor taught the boy to see and feel the beauty of the environment, inspired him to reproduce beauty through music and gave Yas a violin that once belonged to an old musician. The doctor told the boy that the violin was unusual, because the one who played it could charm people and even animals. It depended on Yas whether the violin would remain magical, because if he learnt to play it the way the trees played, the birds sang, the wind blew, its enchantment would increase, but when the violin stopped being played, its enchantment died. Yas promised the doctor to play it day and night to restore the enchantment to the instrument, and he began to work hard. When the boy returned home and played the violin, then this music filled people's hearts with joy, they wanted to work, create, change the world for the better. Other children also wanted to get magical violins from the strange doctor so that they could play as well as Yas. But it turned out that there were no such violins anymore, but the doctor revealed the secret of musical charms to the children. It turned out that the boy himself made the violin magic, because he, inspired, played it persistently.

These fairy tales have a vivid educational function, which is realized on the condition that students personally experience the sensory and emotional states of the characters and enrich their life experience with information containing the advice of a strange doctor. The work with fairy tales, which is carried out with students of grades 3-5, involves the sequential implementation of stages (entering a fairy tale, enriching with a fairy tale, playing with a fairy tale, projecting-improvisational, farewell-motivating stages). At the same time, the improvisational dramatization of life situations, which are similar to the situations in Ivanenko's fairy tales, that is, combine elements of the real and the fairy tale, acquires special importance. Note that improvisational dramatization is performed by schoolchildren without prior rehearsal but it requires specially organized work from the teacher. One should bear in mind four successive stages (preparatory, initial, main, analytical) of the pedagogical plan implementation. Let's consider the steps we take at each of the stages.

Preparatory stage:

- investigate the nature and scope of possible conflicts in the children's team;
- define a specific problem that will be the subject of dramatization;
- write an action scenario that transfers the real situation into the realm of the fantastic action of Ivanenko's fairy tales.

Initial stage:

- assign roles and appoint performers;
- make sure that all performers have understood the task and are ready for dramatization.

The main stage:

- dramatization begins without a preliminary rehearsal;
- if necessary, a stimulating influence is exerted on the performers of the action;

- the dramatization ends when the essence of the investigated problem is fully revealed or when the required effect is obtained.

Analytical stage:

- once the dramatization has stopped, the performers remain in the places where they were at the final moment of the play;
- feelings, emotions that they experienced, felt, become the subject of discussion;
- firstly, the performers describe the sensory and emotional state in which they were, and the audience comments on what they saw and assesses it;
- the causes of the conflict and the possibilities of its avoidance are clarified;
- once the causes of the conflict situation, its origin and development have been studied, the actions of the performers are moved in a positive direction and the correctness of the chosen decision is checked with the help of a stage action.

In the course of improvisational dramatization, it is advisable to solve the following problems: name-calling, inventing nicknames, lack of friends, misappropriation of other people's things, damage to school property, refusal to communicate with parents, inattentiveness, disorganization in classes, negativism to the advice of others, harassment of classmates when they work, refusal to participate in school holidays, dependence on a negative leader, etc.

So, the specificity of improvisational dramatization in the process of working with fairy tales about a strange doctor by Ivanenko is that the plot of the dramatization includes a real problem in the fairy-tale conditions of its solution. The following situations can be the subject of dramatization.

Situation 1. *Conflict.*

The boy constantly comes up with nicknames for everyone. The students' reaction to the boy's name-calling is played out. The scene ends with the boy being referred to a strange doctor.

Situation 2. *Visit to the doctor.*

A possible dialogue between the doctor and the boy is played out. Attention is drawn to the advice of the doctor, who gives the boy a prescription with a list of kind words, the use of which puts people in a good mood.

Situation 3. *Treatment.*

The boy ends up in a room of calling mirrors, where each mirror magnifies his flaws or invents them. It is necessary to heal each mirror, addressing it with soft, gentle words and thereby turning it into a helping mirror.

Situation 4. *Magic healing.*

Friendly, benevolent communication of the boy with his classmates.

Improvisational dramatization of real situations, embodied in the plot of Ivanenko's fairy tales, allows one to figuratively change a traumatic conflict situation and achieve its resolution based on the inclusion of students in artistic activity (Leshchenko, 2003).

The research conducted in 2022-2023 on the possibilities of using the pedagogical and therapeutic potential of children's literature in the process of training future social pedagogues on the basis of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Ukraine) and future teachers of primary and preschool education at the Piotrków Academy in Piotrków Trybunalski (Poland) showed a positive effect in the sphere of students' competences regarding the formation of a charitable learning atmosphere, the creation and implementation of educational situations based on the works of domestic and foreign children's writers (Lavrysh, Leshchenko, & Cherniakhovsky, 2023; Ruban, Leshchenko, & others, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The possibilities of using the pedagogical and therapeutic potential of the works of children's writers are determined by the expediency of creating an educational and cognitive imaginary reality based on artistic works, in which students feel protected during the resolution of various conflict situations, as they can safely experiment with ways to solve them, enrich personal experience without exposing themselves to real danger of injury.

The basis of any effective educational and therapeutic program should be the principles of artistic and fantastic reflection of reality. To analyze the situations that arise in the children's team, one can always choose, and if necessary, create an appropriate fairy tale, story, legend, because only within the limits of the environment created with the help of imagination and fantasy one can safely experiment, test bold decisions on your feelings and only after checking, transfer the acquired experience into reality. The use of children's literature for educational and therapeutic purposes stimulates the creativity of future teachers and students, contributes to rethinking life experience, teaches to project one's thoughts and feelings in a positive life-affirming direction.

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The works of children's writers as a means of pedagogical and therapeutic influence in modern educational realities

Summary

Aim: To analyze the possibilities of using the works of children's writers as a means of pedagogical and therapeutic influence in modern educational practices.

Methods: To achieve the goal, mainly theoretical research methods were used: study, analysis and generalization of special psychological and pedagogical literature in order to identify the state of the researched problem; *content analysis* of the work of children's writers to reveal their pedagogical and therapeutic potential; *method of transforming literary and fairy-tale content* to solve problematic situations in educational practices, generalization of research results.

Results: The article analyzes the educational and therapeutic potential of the works of children's writers based on the analysis of philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical literature. The use of children's literature as a means of pedagogical therapy consists in an associative combination of thoughts, feelings, emotions that project the events invented by the authors into the sphere of spiritual and moral, intellectual and sensual, and social experience of an individual. Approaches to the selection and use of literary and fairy-tale content for solving problem situations in educational practices have been studied. The experience of using the creative heritage of Ukrainian children's writer Oksana Ivanenko to resolve conflict situations in a society that threatens a happy childhood is presented. The use of improvisational dramatization of real situations embodied in the plot canvas of artistic works has been considered. The basis of the preparation of teachers for the creation of effective educational and therapeutic programs should be the principles of artistic and fantastic reflection of reality, which contributes to rethinking life experience, teaches to project one's thoughts and feelings in a positive life-affirming direction.

Conclusions: The basis of any effective educational and therapeutic program should be the principles of artistic and fantastic reflection of reality. The use of children's literature for educational and therapeutic purposes stimulates the creativity of future teachers and students, contributes to rethinking life experience, teaches to project one's thoughts and feelings in a positive life-affirming direction.

Keywords: modern childhood, threatening circumstances, children's literature, educational and therapeutic programs, artistic and fantastic safe environment, positive emotions and feelings, projecting a happy worldview.