

Impact of Fairy Tales on the Development of Imagination Level of Preschool Children

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Abstract – Fairy tales are crucial to the development of child's imagination. They show worldly common truths regarding men and the world around them in a simple manner. Tales and stories introduce the meaning of existence to the child, they show him aims pre-established by humans, teach proper behaviors, and what is more, familiarize children with moral norms rewarded by the society. Therefore, depicting the real world combined with fantastic phenomena in fairy tales compels the child to many reflections and conceptions. Fairy tale-inspired fantasizing gives children an ability to present the effects of their own creation by inventing new stories or transforming the already familiar literary works.

Keywords: Imagination, Preschool, Fairy Tales

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INTRODUCTION

Generally, children's knowledge about reality is objective. Nevertheless, thanks to imagination, they are able to assimilate and master it, i.e. understand it in one's own way. When listening to fairy tales, children are often deeply affected by their contents and, at the same time, their imagination develops and takes on new shapes. Thus, fairy tales affect child's emotional, physical and mental development. In particular, it is reflected in the molding of creative processes inspired by one's depictions of adventures that fairy tales' main characters have. Through listening, children modify their understanding of the literary work that is read to them and practice the ability to connect separate events. Simultaneously, they develop their concentration skills and attention span, which is especially important for further education and learning.

Imagination is an indispensable element of the life of every child as it allows him to cross the borders of the real world; hence, to find oneself at a fantastic, imaginary time, just like the child's favorite character. In addition, fiction teaches the child the difference between good and evil, truth and lie, and thanks to it, children seek a moral characteristic, i.e. justice. Therefore, children's literature is a factor comprising all kinds of child's experiences and related feelings.

Stories are important in everyone's lives and most important to children's lives. They gain a sense of who they are through narratives, the telling of stories to themselves and others about what has happened to

them. By extension, they form their identities through integrating their unique, personal family histories with the legends of the culture. Because fairy tales and myths follow the heroine or hero as they go through periods of darkness to transformation, these classic stories may be said to encode patterns that enable the restoration of vibrant functioning. This article major purpose is to provide the reader with vital information as far as the significance of fairy tales is concerned and show the impact of fairy tales through the lens of psychology.

Teaching children's literature is obviously in direct connection with its content, in other words, how it is defined. Here, we encounter two views. The first includes those definitions that converge and accept the priority of the artistic, aesthetic element in texts, therefore they have the sole objective to please the child-reader (and the adult). The second gives priority to other educational goals and accepts the pedagogical character of children's literature.

Traditional children's literature (legends, myths [and tale]) offer children a better understand the world. Each story is based on a culture and the world of the culture is unlimited. The narration or reading of legends, myths, and fairy tales is a way of nurturing the child's soul and humanism. The understanding of the world grows as children understand the early cultural traditions, learn about the culture and read a variety of myths, learn to appreciate the culture and art of other people.

This is because myths undoubtedly and briefly involve some problems that the child can understand. In addition, myths involve a moral behavior of heroes. Thus, children can learn that it is inevitable for one to fight against the difficulties of life and that these can be overcome. Traditional children's literature also includes characters that are good and bad. Simple and good characters allow the child to identify with the good and reject the bad. The child sympathizes with the deserving characters, "participates" in his fights, learning that while he/she may encounter difficulties or be rejected by someone, he/she would be helped and guided when needed.

Traditional children's literature, tales in particular, which are rapidly developed and include a dramatic plot and an easy identification with the good character, belongs to the type of literature that "speaks" more to listeners or readers and gives pleasure. They believe that the environment of this literature's heroes/heroines is similar to their own environment.

The folk or alternative fairy tale is the most preferable type of discourse in children. It is a comforting discourse intended for narrative or storytelling designed to distract someone from any concerns. Gradually, the word came to mean what we actually mean today, since all the imaginary narratives aimed at entertaining the listeners and carrying them to dark away lands were included.

IMPACT OF FAIRY TALES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMAGINATION LEVEL OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

The fairy tale is a completely imaginary narrative, whose key objective is to satisfy and to entertain. Its world is completely fictional, it lacks plausibility and neither natural laws nor human determinism apply. When the hero is in danger, he/she is saved by intervening supernatural powers: The symbolic scenography found in fairy tales is not described in detail, because there is no need for a detailed description, if, for example, someone immediately knows that something will happen in the magic forest. Space and past tense are soon outlined, with space indicating a natural stage setting and time a distant and elusive past. After the description of scenery, the heroes are immediately identified and conflicts are soon developed.

Conflicts and action abound in fairy tales. The nature of oral tradition gives them an imperative feature, while heroes are quickly transferred into action and this is present from the first lines of a fairy tale. The conflicts between characters representing the good and those representing the evil are totally classic in fairy tales. The action that is observed in fairy tales has drawn the attention of many scholars. All fairy tales have a similar end, beginning and plot.

More often than not its heroes are described by monstrous features and physical malformations and

their physical attributes reflect their inner world. These teratogenesis and malformations certainly reflect a social reality, full of anxiety, fear, prejudices and superstitions. In fairy tales, the characters are not described in a comprehensive way as compared to other respective texts (novels), because the narrator doesn't have the time to develop them in a global way. Therefore, the characters in fairy tales are virtually of a symbolic and shallow nature, i.e. they have a limited range of personal characteristics and do not show any change during the development of the fairy tale. They are quite easily standardized into good and evil. Young heroines are polite and amiable. The youngest son is honored, is gentle and not selfish at all, if not considered inept. Indeed, children easily identify the good and bad character in fairy tales.

The tales consist of universal truths and reflect the values of the time periods and societies from which they are derived. Many of these have still have a significant value, even nowadays. The characters, their actions and their reward lead to the development of moral issues. The good defeats the evil, justice triumphs, the non-arrogant is lucky in love, intelligence overcomes physical strength, while kindness, diligence and hard work leads to reward.

Without the need of rendering a moral lesson or interpretation, the child intuitively discovers the hidden meanings of the fairy tale on his/her own, which are meaningful to him/her at a given moment, depending on the stage of his/her psycho-emotional development.

In an almost magical way, we dare say, fairy tales identify the maturational processes in the individual development of each child and provide a fertile ground that allows the connection with the facilitative environment of the child. As the fairy tales deal with key issues and emotional childhood experiences, they easily stimulate the mechanisms of projection and identification.

The stories of fairy tales expressed through language by transfer and symbolic representations, facilitate the development of symbolic thought, the representative abilities and the mental processing of life events at a fantasy-level which form the basis for the development of creative thought and emotional intelligence.

The narration of fairy tales contributes highly to the development of children's creative imagination, which is fundamental to their psycho-emotional health. Having imagination means enjoying inner wealth, a relentless and spontaneous flow of images and viewing the world in its entirety [30]. In the dreamy world of the fairy tale, where everything unfolds in an intermediate space between fantasy and reality, the child's magic thought finds an appropriate way out. The structure of fairy tales allow children to move into a dreamy world without restrictions and cancellations. At the same time,

through the mechanisms of identification and projection, the child has the ability to identify, express his/her negative feelings, to give importance to personal traumatic experiences and, ultimately, to look for and find a meaning in his/her life.

DISCUSSION

The stories of fairy tales enhance the children's faith in their ability to build their own personality rather than the external adversities, inner conflicts or deadlocks experienced. The enchantment of fairy tales lies in this very potential. Among the multiple functions they perform, fairy tales offer an effective way for children to express and illustrate their existential-developmental anxieties, the inner and external conflicts and their doubts.

Fairy tales give meaning to the inner and external conflicts experienced by children in a complex, incomprehensible and hardship-filled world. With the positive outcome of their stories, fairy tales help in appeasing the fears experienced at various developmental stages, in reassuring that the unknown can become known and contribute to the establishment of a wider, positive perspective about life, while answering a child's deep need for justice.

The complexity of human nature, in which both good and evil coexist, is well identified in fairy tales. The figures in fairy tales are good and bad at the same time, as we all are in reality. But since polarization dominates the child's mind, it also dominates fairy tales. A person is either good or bad, never anything in between. For example, one sister is virtuous and industrious, the others are vile and lazy, one parent is good, the other evil. The juxtaposition of opposite characters permits the child to easily comprehend the difference between the two, which he could not do if these figures were closer to real life. Furthermore, a child's identification choices are based, not so much on right versus wrong, but mainly which person they like and which they dislike. The simpler and more straightforward a good character is, the easier it is for a child to identify with it and to reject the bad character.

Some of the children's basic desires, feelings, impulses and needs, which are often not expressed and are suppressed into the world of everyday life by the parental standards are favorite topics of fairy tale stories. In the safe space of imagination, children can come in contact with this wide range of 'banned', dark emotions-reactions and negative expressions of life, of their self and others, without having to suffer the painful consequences of everyday life or disrupting the sense of reality and the relationship of children with significant persons by the adult world.

Used as a projective tool, this response would indicate that the client needed to overcome her sense of having an inferior status. She also stated that she liked how the animals helped Cinderella in the forest.

Considering the client's response from a Jungian perspective, the forest scene is a representative of the unconscious. While, the animals are a metaphorical demonstration of the unconscious instinct to follow one's inner drive when reasoning fails. This means that the client was possibly projecting her own need to be supported and rescued through identification with Cinderella.

As part of this therapeutic process, the counselor should initiate opportunities for the client to connect parts of themselves to both the fairy tale characters and identified scenes in the fairy tale. This offers clients an opportunity to bond their sense of self, their anxieties, and their developmental fears by reflecting the story onto themselves. Transference often occurs in eating disordered clients when unresolved self-control is directed at significant others.

Transference is the redirection of feelings and desires (especially of those unconsciously retained from childhood) toward a new object or person.

In the fairy tales most often chosen by the women, the heroines like Cinderella and Snow White tend to be naive, helpless, and persecuted by an older woman like a wicked stepmother, witch, or bad fairy.

CONCLUSION

Summing up, we would say that the fairy tale is the foremost form by which the child learns to read his mind with the language of the images-symbols which is the only language that allows the understanding before mental maturity is achieved.

Understanding the dynamics occurs in the fairy tale hero/heroine's journey, which typically leads from misery to the highest development, could reveal to us as therapists and youth workers, some ways to help children but also adults, in their uphill path of their life. However, it is necessary to remember that no technique or method can fully answer the multidimensional needs of children whether these are social, educational, emotional, cognitive or biological. Hence, fairy tales are supplementary to the range of methods used in psycho-educational or therapy intervention framework. At this point, it should be mentioned that the above study is part of a research on storytelling/fairy tales and its benefits in changing unhealthy eating habits in children. In fairy tales there is rich information on food which can help parents control themselves as well as finding ways to bond positively with their children through food practices.

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