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What Would a Man Really Want to Be Like? – Values in the Book *Asiunia* by Joanna Papuzińska

KEYWORDS ABSTRACT

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The article raises the issue of values in children's literature, based on the example of the book by Joanna Papuzińska entitled *Asiunia*. Papuzińska's story includes a taboo subject, i. e. the war, and it discusses issues that are important for contemporary young readers. In today's political situation of the Eastern Europe, the book may turn out to be significant for the Polish children. The author of the article emphasizes the educational potential of the text resulting from the values it promotes. Thus, the essence of the article is the analysis of the contents in order to search for the values. The researcher emphasizes the meaning of the contents and form of the book, as well as the necessity for reaching to a child, taking into account his/her reception abilities. She attempts to answer the question determined by the function of literature read in childhood: How would a man like to live? In the research she uses a phenomenological method, allowing the reader for individual approach towards the analysed contents, and, in the undertaken analysis, she focuses on the dichotomous approach to the presented phenomena. The text presents specific values of the literary work, which, while reading and didactic elaboration, influence the formation of the readers' attitude towards life, surroundings and themselves. This, in turn, influences the internalization of the desired attitude.

Introduction

The changing perspectives of human life usually result in the need to search for values and make new attempts to prioritize. This is not an easy task, especially due to the fact that “reaching the world of values determining the right way to live is one of the most complex educational problems” (Skrzypniak 2000: 31). Moreover, most theorists emphasize the difficulty in a definite specification of the concept of values. Władysław Tatarkiewicz (1978: 60–63), Stanisław Kamiński (1986: 14–21) and Jadwiga Puzynina (1992, 1994) emphasize unsteadiness, ambiguity and diversity in the possibility of ordering values. The attempts to provide general definitions were also made by Polish theoreticians such as Zdzisław Najder (1971), Janusz Sztumski (1992), Władysław Stróżewski (1981), Janusz Gajda (2004), Waldemar Furmanek (2005), and Grzegorz Żuk (2016). Given the subject matter of the journal, I am most interested in the axiological context in humanities and elementary education, which can be found in the work of Beata Wołosiuk (2010), Magdalena Marzec-Jóźwicka (2013) and Alicja Żywcok (2016).

The child’s education requires constant presence of axiological factors. The choice and manner of learning about values depends on the attitude of the adult caregiver. The caregiver is a guide (mentor) who opens valuable goals (that are desirable for the child’s development) in front of the student/pupil. In this process, both the child and the mentor should be the subjects of the relationship; each of them constitutes a value for the other (Wołosiuk 2010: 120–125; 2019: 38–41). Particularly in the case of literary education, although the texts implemented at school are set by the educational curriculum, the way in which literature is developed and talked about remains the task of the “responsible teacher” (Olbrycht 1995: 11–18). The idea is, on the one hand, to undertake an individualized influence that builds up the child’s value system and, on the other hand, to show different concepts of man and the world “together with the consequences that their conscious choice has for the hierarchy of values” (Puzynina 1994: 18).

Although pedagogy currently belongs to social sciences, it is difficult to separate some of its components from the field of the humanities, especially since the content of the didactic and educational process usually grows out of philosophical thought. The specific place where these areas meet is education, and – within its scope – upbringing. The planned educational process is “a conscious introduction into the world of values and their choice; a process of co-creating the reality in the name of ideals and challenges of the future, especially difficult in periods of rapid social and political changes and the global crisis of civilization” (Gajda 2004: 102). It is believed that literature is an important point of reference in the educational process. As Stefan Sawicki writes, “the values revealed by literature are the immanent world of the

work's value: the axiological characteristics of individual structural elements and values evoked by the work" (Sawicki 1992: 96). Thanks to the specifically composed content, linguistic means and creation of characters, a young reader can learn about problem solutions that are compliant with humanistic ethics. Discovering the fates of literary characters, the reader confronts his/her own with them. He/she has the opportunity to reflect on morality, the mystery of being, transcendence. As a result of the processes of specification, identification and projection that take place during the reception of a literary work, the world presented in the work becomes, for the duration of the reading, the world of the recipient. Thus, the theme and message of the work, the way the characters act, the creation of the protagonist and the vision of the world suggested by the author are extremely important. In the case of younger children, it seems that the most important thing is the educational context contained in the content, the clear presentation of the victory of good over evil, and the positive personal model of the protagonist. Educational message, among others, is most often picked up by pedagogues (in this case, the preschool teacher and the early education teacher), and emphasized in the teaching process.

Nowadays, when discussing a literary work with a child, it is worth considering the trends emerging from new philosophical currents, such as ecocriticism or somaesthetics. The idea is to introduce the child, through learning to read, to the world in which he or she will live for the next few decades; a future world in which values are still being born. As Anna Błasiak (2009: 21) argues, "it is impossible [...] to deal with education in isolation from values". In particular, literary education, due to the use of specially constructed texts, always carries some kind of meaning that is transformed into a value for the reader. The choice of values in upbringing is usually dictated by the good of the person (Muszyński 1974: 51–58), and upbringing in accordance with values influences the person's attitude towards himself, other people and the environment, shaping his attitudes and defining him as a human being (Nowak 1996: 241–259). This anthropocentric nature of education has no longer been so obvious in recent years. A man is no longer the centre, and the interest of philosophers has shifted to what is around him. Reflection has, therefore, been extended to reality which is subject to transformation or abandonment by the human community. Taking this new arrangement as a basis entails a change in the system of values that determines the direction of human action in the world (Żurkowski 1997: 19).

Children's literature, by definition, draws on phenomena considered positive for the formation of the individual¹. This is not always the case because values connected with education often represent an ideology (Kotłowski 1976: 17) which is sometimes wrong (fascism, Stalinism). That is why, a teacher, because of his/her influence on the

¹ This refers to three basic values mentioned by Plato: truth, goodness and beauty.

personality of the pupil, should make use of universal and humanistic values that support living beings. In addition, in working with a literary work, cognitive, educational and aesthetic values are important, which usually complement each other and provide the foundation for the fulfillment of goals related to broadly understood humanities.

The twentieth-century understanding of the educational process boils down to inducing changes in the personality of the pupil, which are developmental in nature (Okoń 1998: 444) and affect the functioning of the personality: they determine attitudes towards various objects, define the “cognitive grid” of the individual, activate emotions, foster the emergence of motivation and channel it into a specific direction (Świda 1979: 48–49). This is a long-term task and many different factors are involved, among which contact with valuable, interesting literature seems to be a priceless experience, fulfilling the conditions of a long-term experience when initiated already in infancy (Baluch 2005; Ungeheuer-Gołąb 2011). When considering upbringing and education towards values with the use of literature texts, it is necessary to adopt the most contemporary approach to the process of education, which takes into account the subjectivity not only of the pupil, but also of the surrounding beings.

Pedagogy speaks of the need to introduce the child into the world of values from an early developmental period through “dialogue and actions based on prohibitions and orders, and on a system of (...) punishments and rewards” (Błasiak 2009: 111). Emphasizing the value of dialogue (Buber 1992; Tischner 1978; Bukowski 1987) in education, it should be noted that the role of the story and the role model of the literary character are important. Obviously, in the assimilation and representation of a given value system, the interaction of the teacher and the student in the real world is essential. However, literature plays an important supporting role in this relationship. It provides a huge number of situations that can be experienced in the mental world, seen with the “inner eye” and discussed. Also, it poses important questions and often provides some answers.

Justification of the subject in the context of teaching practice

This academic year (2021/2022), due to illness, I was not able to be present for the last classes, so I wrote a message to my students on the *Teams* platform, and my last sentences sounded more or less like this: “Don’t forget about literature; you will find a reflection of your dreams and longings in it. Also, read stories for children sometimes, because they show what a person really wants to be like. Have a nice trip!”. In my professional practice, I am trying to combine the approach of a pedagogue – a teacher of children, with a didactician – a teacher of adults, and I am trying to be

“truly involved” in the common process of learning (Janus-Sitarz 2013: 31). These paths intersect precisely because of the object of my research and didactic interest: children’s literature and pedagogy. I believe that books for children are works that have a lot to offer to people of all ages, and that talking about them opens up new perspectives of looking at a child.

The short personal paragraph I have included into these reflections reveals the circumstances of formulating the thesis of this text, which emerged in a moment of reflection on my farewell message to the students: “Literature for children shows what people really want to be like”. I am referring to the reader’s inner idea of themselves, determined by the attitude of the protagonist, the events, the course of the plot and, above all, the values conveyed to the recipient. What is also important is the fact that reading literature is a valuing process because of the pleasure it gives or fails to give. Indeed, reading can support various personality constructs, providing for many different needs: from those associated with popular literature to those catering for sophisticated reading tastes. Importantly, it is not just a phenomenon linked to sensitivity to a particular type of literature, the nature of the narrative or the creation of a protagonist, but it is inseparably integrated with shaping character traits, sensitivity to humans and animals, nature, human frailties, culture, etc. Such a redefinition of the modern human being is represented by current trends that turn to the defence of nature (e.g. ecocriticism), the postulate of which is building harmony among living beings (Böhme 2002). Living with respect for human rights and for what people use is slowly becoming the highest value of the Western culture in the early 21st century. One of the areas of culture that can affirm this ideal of existence is contact with literature during childhood. A valuable book for a child always has aesthetic, educational and cognitive qualities. It fills in the gaps in the areas not covered in relationships with parents, teachers and peers. It rules the imagination and influences a creative attitude to the reality. And, above all, as a result of empathic perception and experiencing the fate of a character, it makes it possible for the reader to discover his/her own “self”. This is a key moment in the encounter with art, when the recipient becomes aware of themselves in the fate of a literary character. The social dimension of children’s literary texts is so important because the message they contain always seeks to affirm the valuable side of human nature. It tells the reader how one should act in a difficult situation, choosing what is good. It indicates the character traits that lead to overcoming opposites and it finds a solution guided by humanistic values. It seeks goodness, truth and beauty. The time when a child learns about such stories is a period when the foundations of his or her identity are being formed, a worldview is being built, and the period of safe childhood is coming to an end. It is an important time when the young reader’s cognitive abilities are just being shaped, and moral development is taking place (Piaget 1967). The creators of children’s literature convey in it ways

of changing the world for the better; they create the figure of a human being who is a representative of humanistic values.

Later in life, reading – although it gives one much satisfaction – no longer has such a strong impact on the way the recipient thinks and builds up his/her attitudes. This is why, among other things, I point to children's literature as one that shows the way towards the right values. I tell about it to students of pedagogy who discover the value of books for children, sometimes reading them for the first time during their studies.

As we know, in order to learn about the plot, a young child needs a reading intermediary; someone to narrate or read the story to them. Around the age of seven, adults are no longer so eager to read to children, and by the time a child is nine or ten, he or she is usually required to read on their own. However, in the rich repertoire of books for early school-age children, there are works that are worth exploring with an adult. In doing so, children and adults can talk and ask/answer questions concerning a given story. Children also like making story plots specific through play and various forms of expression (Papuzińska 1988: 21). Such activities are typical of childhood and it seems that the child intuitively chooses a specific activity in the reading process that helps him or her to recognise the meaning. In addition, the paidial values of the text make it possible to satisfy needs and relieve tensions “through the potential for: compensation, identity, model, desensitisation” (Krasoń 2005: 45).

While, at first, we are inclined to believe that children remain outside the realm of trauma, the recent unsettling times of pandemics, war in Ukraine and economic hardship seem to have weakened this belief. Trauma also affects children. It is not without reason, therefore, that works dealing with difficult (taboo) subjects are addressed to them, and that the reading process needs the support of adult intermediaries.

Interpretation and analysis of the subject on the basis of literary material

As an example of a text that integrates values into the process of upbringing and education, I chose a book dedicated to children from classes I-III entitled *Asiunia* (by Joanna Papuzińska). The choice is dictated by the current political situation: it allows for a conscious reference to wars which accompany human history. This book belongs to the group of works on the subject of war that have been published in recent years as part of the series by the Warsaw Rising Museum and the series by Wydawnictwo Literatura in Łódź entitled “Wars of Adults. Stories of Children”. These undertakings serve to refresh or introduce the theme of war into the reception of contemporary children².

² Such works include stories by, e. g. Beręsewicz 2010, Papuzińska 2015, 2019, Ryrych 2018.

It falls within the scope of a very important area, as “life is the most important value for human beings in each society” (Adamczyk, Kaleta-Witusiak 2021: 13). I assume that the book in question helps to shape an attitude that is open to values such as peace, family, one’s own life, place and objects, play, and intellect. The considerations are theoretical and fall within the field of phenomenological research allowing for the researcher’s self-perceptions determined by the reception of a literary text treated as a source of experience (Henry 2012). The following question seems to be interesting: what values does J. Papuzińska’s book about *Asiunia* promote as a reading for younger children related to war?

The values of the selected work can be embedded in Tatarkiewicz’s typology as a category of literature which I qualify in the area of thought values (Tatarkiewicz 1978: 69). In the general assessment, they are positive and universal values and, as components of the literary plot, they are spiritual in nature and refer to the intellectual and emotional sphere of the psyche of a young reader. They are also values with a moral dimension, as they indicate attitudes that are desirable in social life, and aesthetic values, as they are derived from the literary text (Puzynina 2004: 181–182). In order to show and emphasize the desired values that the book in question affirms, I used the category of dichotomy. I view the components of the plot depicted in the content as valuable elements in opposition to the related pejorative factors (death – life, good – evil, hunger – satiety, etc.). The main aim of this discussion is, therefore, to find and present the value of J. Papuzińska’s work in the context of a young child’s education.

The intended audience for the story is a child from the age of six. It might seem that such a young reader is not concerned with the problems of war, but the reading turns out to be valuable. The life of a child immersed in the history of the world is always influenced by this history. Even if a child does not speak out about it, he or she is subjected to all historical events; he/she is thinking about them and experiencing them, thus shaping his or her relationship to the society, culture and self.

The author presented a fragment of Polish (and her own) history from the Second World War in a way that is understandable for children. The autobiographical thread is important, as Papuzińska is the prototype of the main character. A six-year-old girl named Asiunia is the protagonist of the book. She is as old as the readers, and she experiences her childhood in the times of the war. As the young reader identifies with Joasia, he/she experiences his/her own events which are not necessarily related to war, but may be equally negative. The war functions in the work as a depicted world, being the basis for the cognitive function, but the real value is carried by the attitude and emotional life of the girl who has to live in a difficult wartime situation.

In the case of this reading, upbringing towards values is undeniable. The axiological context of the story can be divided into several categories, such as:

- the value of things,

- the value of a place,
- the value of one's own life,
- the value of peace,
- the value of family,
- the value of play,
- the value of thoughts.

This set of values has an objective meaning for the child: they are always important. Such effect is achieved through the war subject, against the background of which the writer narrates the events of Asiunia's life. The story shows the existence of important, valuable phenomena through their disappearance, taking away and demolition. The dichotomous arrangement has a stronger impact than if values were emphasized directly, through instructions or judgments. At the moment of destruction, the characters are always trying to establish their relationship to the good, which is timeless. Such attitudes influence the reader's consciousness. The binary world of values which is based on oppositions and derived from the poetics of the fairy tale (Sawicki 1992: 100) is an appropriate depiction in the reading of a young child.

The value of things. Despite the difficult conditions in which the characters in the story live, they are surrounded by a variety of objects that are valuable to them. In the very first paragraph, we learn that the family had a flat in a small block of flats in which they had a great number of books: fairy tales and songs. There was a weeping willow growing in the yard, under which the children liked to play. Everything was managed by the mother. The indicated "things" broadly define the value system set by: a place to live that provides security, the family with the primary role of the mother, literature and nature. This is all that represents the greatest value for a six-year-old girl. On the occasion of her birthday, Asiunia received from her relatives "a pencil, an eraser, a sketch book, and a magic crayon which wrote red at one end and blue at the other" (Papuzińska 2011: 3). These are typical items that can be found in a child's pencil case: little treasures needed for action. At aunt Tiger's, already during the war, the little girl gets sandals and a dress. During the displacement, the family did not carry any big luggage, but the aunt carried little Tom in her arms. In this image, the most important value is the child. The family lost everything: their flat, books, clothes, equipment, but they saved their love for each other. In their new place, a battered kettle and a few pots give them joy. Old things turn into new things when aunt Lunia makes a jumper for Asia from wool obtained from an old waistcoat. A simple mug is an object one may miss.

The value of one's own life. One of the important memories of the protagonist is the moment when her older brother asks her what she would do if she got lost in the city. The girl repeats the learnt address of where she lives, her name, her age. The situation described makes it clear how important it is to be able to survive, to protect

one's own existence. When aunt Tiger visits the family with a bundle that is hiding goats, Asiunia learns how little a child's life means:

- “– And the baby? – I kept on asking.
- What: the baby? – Granny was clearly losing patience.
- Can't they take the baby?”

The girls gets to know that people need food more than they need babies, and human life is worthless for enemy soldiers; that having a baby is a problem because a baby needs care, food, clothes, and these things are hard to get during the war.

The value of a place. During the war, an address is extremely important. In such circumstances people sometimes have several addresses, but one should always remember the one to which one can return, especially if one is six years old. The important role of the place to live is also evidenced by the protagonist's numerous moves resulting from the war. From her family flat in Mątwicka Street, where Asiunia spent her birthday, she moved to her neighbours, and then to Filtrowa Street where “three ladies, like three grey fairies, and one little girl, lived” (Papuzińska 2011: 10). Then the girl was moved to Albert Street, to her aunt Ola whom she called Tiger. Finally, she went to her own grandmother who “lived in a small wooden house rented for the summer” (Papuzińska 2011: 16). There she finds her siblings and she is happy, although still without her mum and dad with them. Unfortunately, they were thrown out of the cottage by German soldiers and, like many other people, they became homeless. They spent some time living in someone's cellar. When they returned to the cottage in Anin, they found it dilapidated and sad. In winter it was cold and they did not have warm clothes: “We could not go to the wardrobe and take a warm jacket because the wardrobe was in the house which did not exist” (Papuzińska 2011: 29). Finally, they all went to Stoczek, to aunt Tiger, who gave a house not only to Asiunia but also to other children who lost their parents.

The value of peace. We can say that every story about war emphasises how important peace is. When we meet Joasia, she is in a place of safety (Ungeheuer-Gołąb 2009: 242–252) and she is celebrating her birthday. Such a place is identified with the presence of a loving family, mainly her mother, her favourite animals and objects. It is also a place where peace, love and harmony are felt. Surrounded by loved ones: parents, brothers, grandmother, she seems to be a happy girl, but the very next page of the story tells us that the war came and took away a part of her childhood. The juxtaposition of the two contrasting contents: peace in the family house and the chaos of war, increases the feeling of anxiety. As the characters, mainly Asiunia, face more and more unpleasant experiences, the reader feels the ever increasing need for peace. The reader realises that the value of a peaceful, happy, ordinary life is universal and precious irrespective of time and place.

The value of family. Children's literature often depicts the child in the midst of his or her family, but is just as keen to show the child's fate when the loved ones are missing. Both possibilities indicate the important place of family in the period of childhood. Papuzińska's story shows both situations, but most of the action takes place when the girl has to cope without her parents and brothers. She is very brave, she does not despair, she does not grieve, she does not argue, and she does not complain about the sad wartime challenges she had to face. For this is not a story about sadness. All the aunts who look after Asiunia become close to her and, although they are not her parents, they are like family, and the girl tries to feel comfortable with them. The protagonist's attitude shows the youngest readers that it is worth waiting, being patient, humble and full of hope, and then a miracle can happen. That miracle turns out to be the return of Dad, in the final scenes of the story. In one moment, the bad turned into good: the war ended and parents returned to their lonely children.

The value of play. The life of a six-year-old child should be full of fun and play. It is an activity that introduces them into the rules of the society, shapes basic skills, develops imagination, but also helps them to survive in the world. Playful activity is an inalienable component of any childhood and it is "the most important line of child's development" (Wygotsky 1995: 67). The story of Asiunia begins with the memory of her birthday. The presents she received, although not typical toys, bring joy to the girl and indicate her area of interest. Unfortunately, this is not a story about a day full of fun. Asiunia has more important things to do, like memorizing information about her home address or surname. The girl plays in the kindergarten when children sing songs, or at aunt Ola's who pretends to be a tiger. Such playful activity, however, is not permanent. As soon as it appears, it immediately disappears. War is mainly the lack of play. The juxtaposition in the story of a young child's wartime experiences with her inner need to play and her constant lack of fulfilment in this regard emphasises the dichotomous arrangement of the values contained therein.

The value of thoughts. Towards the end of the book, there is a mention of the hardships of life, the lack of food, clothes or pleasure. Then the grandmother appears. It is she who says: "instead of worrying, it is necessary to have an 'idea'" (Papuzińska 2011: 31). Thanks to her ability to 'think cleverly', grandma would conjure up coffee by brewing acorns; she would cook soup from beans she found growing wild. Similarly, it was possible to make a warm sweater from an old waistcoat, and to smuggle groats in a bundle pretending to be a baby. Thinking made it possible to find a way to survive hunger, cold and fear. It did not give access to despair.

Pointing out specific values to the child recipient in a literary work leads to sensitising him or her to important life goals. From the psychological point of view, this kind of positive reinforcement builds the conviction that the values in question make us oriented towards the right behaviour (Wołoskiuk 2010: 23). Literary education at

the elementary level is closely linked to the goals of upbringing and education, i.e. shaping the student's personality. If we assume that values are the source of the goals of school education, it becomes clear how important they are and how important it is for teachers to know them. Literature provides supportive material for the development of proper moral attitudes, suggests models of behaviour and prepares children for playing social roles, and, as a result of education through art, develops an aesthetic attitude. Beata Wołoskiuk points out that, in view of such an important role of values in human life, "appropriate programmes of axiological education (value-oriented education) are necessary" (Wołoskiuk 2010: 44). I believe that an inalienable component is content drawn from literary works which give direction to children's needs and dreams, helping them to establish and fulfil their objectives.

Conclusion

Does the text about Asiunia tell us how a man would like to live, i. e. what does he want to be like? I believe it does. There are axiological aspects hidden in its content and form. How would Asiunia want to live? Who would she want to be? The story does not tell us this explicitly, but she would certainly like to be a happy six-year-old girl. Whatever we might say about Asiunia, we can't help but notice how brave, and simply kind and good, she is. She is better than us and, as such, teaches us what people should be like. The motifs of home, things, identity, peace, and family, emphasized in the story, are developed into specific details related to one's own place, objects, life, harmony, belonging to a family, and the ability to overcome problems. These phenomena can be used in the child's education as essential values that refer to human existence. As qualities that are typical of a man, they also define his value because of his attitude towards them; they set goals. In addition, they are comprehensible to young male and female readers who are eager to learn about the fate of their peer.

Although the story ends with the return of the father, and the reader does not get to know the further fate of the protagonist, taking into account the biographical thread in the story we know who Asiunia became and how she lived. We get to know the writer, poet and researcher Joanna Papuzińska from her fiction, biographical and scientific books. For a wise intermediary, such a confrontation can provide another source of axiological interpretation.

The use of literature in the didactic and educational process allows pupils to recognise values in the area of their own experiences. In this way, the pupil internalises the values in question and accepts them. As a result of this process, the child's personality is enriched and his or her attitude towards the phenomena of the reality is formed. The values that guide the teacher are determined by educational goals

(Kwiatkowska-Ratajczak 1994; Zabawa 2017). Their fulfilment on the basis of a literary text takes place indirectly, as opposed to experiences lived in real life. In order for the experience and internal integration to occur, the pupil should independently discover the meanings of the work, confront them with the opinions of others, get to know the protagonist, and empathize with his or her fate. Properly prepared literary activities foster the formation of attitudes towards people, animals and objects, and these are linked to the recognition of certain values. This is important because upbringing should lead to making good choices compliant with the culture in which one lives, one's own beliefs and humanist ethics, especially since "true humanity is not simply genetic information but an educational achievement..." (Grodecka, Podemska-Kałuża 2012: 104).

Contrary to other media, literature provides the opportunity to address several important types of values, such as intellectual, social, emotional, and aesthetic values (Świda 1979: 68). Especially the latter, occurring in connection with a work of art, are associated with a work of literature. However, following Bogusław Żurkowski, it should be emphasised that "if a work of art is to be evaluated positively by the child, and if the child is to have an aesthetic experience, a condition must be fulfilled which we call paidiality" (Żurkowski 1984: 221). Thus, on the one hand, children's literature must meet the demands placed on it as a social art – aimed at a wide child audience living in a specific social situation; on the other hand, it should respond to the child and his or her needs arising from the stage of psychological development. Moreover, in the case of the youngest children, it should shape these needs. Illustrations (in this case, by Maciej Szymanowicz), colours, the typeface, the format of the book, or the type of paper, play important roles in this initiation. It is because a work for children is not only about content, language and literary devices, but also about the whole set of other qualities that a well-published book can offer. Thus, both the verbal and pictorial codes play an important role in conveying valuable content to the child. Especially in modern literature for children

[...] creative devices cause that the theme (problem) introduced into the literary text, with its content of various information about the real world, relates directly to the natural possibilities of reading generated in the child's mind, focused on spontaneous ideas and reflections, and not on imposed norms and rules to be strictly observed (Łuc 2019: 69).

Strict didactic formulas have been replaced by artistic messages understandable to a child recipient, thus making the book for children, as well as the child, participants and co-creators of a universal discourse on the human condition in the world.

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