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FAIRY TALES IN A PROBLEM

Problem-based approach in teaching fairy tales

Introduction

The number of people who are researching Folkloristics has dropped significantly in the past years. The genre of fairy-tale, in particular, is far away from the focus of scientific disciplines that could partake in its hermeneutic and interpretative expertise and qualitative analysis. The fact that the research of fairy-tales in Literature Teaching Methodology is stagnating¹, compared to other genres of folklore literature, does not mean much. Actually, it could mean that, in this case, Literature Teaching Methodology has to take the role of the *young(er)* science, which, by nature, comes later, or is secondary compared to Literary Science and other sciences that are concerned with the text as the source and object of their study. Literature Teaching Methodology should, in theory and practice, project the accomplishments of its predecessors. If the fairy-tale is not in the focus of Literary Science, or Folkloristics, to be more precise; it does not mean that it is not close to the interests of people who teach Literary Teaching Methodology. The role of Subject Methodology in that case would be the monitoring and illuminating of the innovative theoretical and interpretative postulates of the sciences that are more relevant. Creating the conditions for the contribution to the General Literary Theory concerning fairy tales to come from the Literature Teaching Methodology through reader's and recipient's channel of communication with the text. The motive for this should be also sought in students' interest, whose modern consciousness requires *new way of reading* the traditional forms.

Programmes and domination of the structuralist approach in teaching fairy tales

In Elementary School curricula in the Republic of Serbia², the fairy tale is first time mentioned as a literary term in the second grade, where its recognition is assumed.

¹ Lj. Radenković, *Slovenska folkloristika danas – nasleđe i inovacije, Savremena srpska folkloristika II*, Beograd 2015. p. 55–69.

² Curricula and syllabuses which the analysis in this paper is based on are available at: <http://www.zuov.gov.rs/poslovi/nastavni-planovi/nastavni-planovi-os-i-ss/?lng=lat>, access 20 IX 2016.

Of course, students have already encountered with the fairy tales both in the first grade and in the preschool period, so we should expect from them to already have some reading experience in the second grade. On the same level (recognition), in the third grade, the fairy tales are divided on folk tales and tales written by a known author (literary). They are not defined as a type of prose until the fifth grade. The characteristics of this type of prose, which students should learn through the interpretation of the reading material, are not defined in the curricula. After the fifth grade, the further development and clarification of the theoretical term of fairy tale is not explicated. However, in the compulsory reading material, defined by the same curricula, the fairy tales are present in all grades of the first two cycles of education (elementary school) and in the first grade of the third cycle (high school). It tells us that the comprehension of this genre by the reader is continually being developed and deepened. Therefore, in this instance, we have to look back on the curricular approach to the prose in general, because, in accordance with the presence of the fairy tales in the reading material, there is no doubt that stipulated guidelines refer to this genre also.

In the first cycle of education, it is recommended to provide insight into chronology and links between events in the work of prose, observe the characteristic details in descriptions of characters and surroundings, create personal opinions about the acts of characters, discover and interpret the messages in the text, understand the major sections of the text and define the subheadings. It is also suggested to notice and explain the *essential features* of the written text (fabula/storyline, action, information), analyse literary characters, discover and explain the messages of the literary text, notice and demonstrate the connection/interdependence of the compositional elements of the text. Literary terms that are introduced in this period are: *fabula*, elements of fabula: *exposition, rising action, falling action, literary character* (main and supporting, look, speaking characterisation, relationships between characters), types of characterisation, basic *types, messages, direct and indirect speech*, conversation, description, *process* as a functional term, *theme and idea* in a work of prose, the narrator, narration, dialogue, monologue, description in the work of prose³. Elementary schools are organised in two cycles, each of them covering four grades.

³ „The teacher should bear in mind that the interpretation of the literary work in elementary school is pre-theoretical, especially in younger grades, and it is not conditioned with the knowledge of the terminology. However, it does not prevent the teachers from making the simple overview of the discussed text in younger grades with a great amount of inventiveness and research curiosity. It is more valuable for students to experience and materialize the literary images in their imagination, than the knowledge that the image can be formally classified as metaphor, personification or comparison. That's why the students are encouraged to express their own impressions, feelings, associations, and thoughts about the picturesque and figurative application of the poetic language”, *Teaching program of education*, p. 13, available at: <http://www.zuov.gov.rs/dokumenta/CRPU/Osnovne%20skole%20PDF/Prvi%20ciklus%20osnovnog%20obrazovanja%20i%20vaspitanja/3%20Nastavni%20program%20za%20treći%20razred%20osnovnog%20obrazovanja%20i%20vaspitanja.pdf>, access 20 IX 2016.

Curricular demands in the second four years cycle are somewhat broader. The students are introduced to the structure of prose work, with the emphasis on the literary character and forms of narration. They are systematically getting accustomed to interpretation of characters from various standpoints: prose (in action), sensual (appearance), lyrical (feelings), drama (conflicts), psychological (motivation of acts), sociological (conditions for forming and detection), ethical (estimation of attitudes and actions). They notice and interpret forms of narration (presentation) in written prose (narration, description, dialogue). They discover the composition of the work of prose by realising and explaining the important details in the structure of the work. The literary work is approached as a complex, unrepeatable organism where everything is conditioned by the connection of cause and consequence, encouraged with the life experience and shaped with the creator's imagination. The conditionality of events and situations, feelings, conflicts, acts and traits of characters are interpreted. In the in-class interpretation of the literary work unifying elements could be: artistic experience, textual passages, important structural elements (theme, motive, fabula, syuzhet /emplotment, literary characters, messages, motivational processes, and composition), types of narration, linguistic and stylistic processes, and literary problems. The terms: *narrator* (notice the difference between the folk tale-teller and writer), *types of narration (presentation)*: description, perception and explanation of forms of narration in first and third person: dialogue, *fabula and syuzhet*: elements of fabula, initiators of fabula, suspension of fabula, retrospective sequence of events, logical and aesthetic conditioning of every detail; *artistic processes* in development of action in work of prose, *characterisation*: processes, ethical, linguistic, sociological, psychological, portrait, dialogue, inner and exterior monologue, primary *theme* (thematic structure, main theme, other themes) and key *motives* (static and dynamic); *composition* (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action) and *motivation*; episode; interpretation of the *conceptual layer* of the text, *humour, irony, and satire*, are also being formed and developed.

As we can see, theoretical apparatus that supports the structuralistic approach to prose predominates in both cycles. The study of fairy-tale reached its highlight in the structuralistic studies of Vladimir Prop. Thereby, the school interpretation of fairy-tale, in spite of the modern trends in literary theory, is enclosed within limits of the genre. On the other hand, it is highlighted in the curricula that the "interpretation of the text is based on reading, experiencing and understanding". Thereby, it is determined in the curriculum to approach the literary text from the point of view of the modern readers, their own way of reading, experiencing and understanding, that characterises their inner world. The numerous questions that concern the interpretation of fairy-tales, whose origins will not be interpreted folkloristically, will appear to cast the light on those places that folkloristics, according to its goals and *conditionality*, does not deal with. In third grade curriculum it is stated that: "The interpretation of work of prose should be permeated with *problem-based questions* that are encouraged with the text and artistic experience⁴": Problem solving questions will appear exactly at those moments of class interpretation that

⁴ Tamže.

genre-based interpretation of the fairy tales is not involved in. In that way, the understanding of the fairy-tale will be relocated to the new context. Therefore, we do not ignore the folkloristic origin of the fairy-tale, its genesis, nor the described genre based groups of requirements.

Influence of the natural and dominant reader's consciousness of the contemporary/present-day reader/student is interpreted as hostile towards the teaching interpretation of fairy tales firmly established within its genre. The space for interpretative-exploratory and problem based teaching should be found in such construction of the literary work in the *act of consciousness* of the receiver.

Problem based approach in teaching

Methodological studies about teaching literature, hitherto, based the problem based teaching on the engagement and involvement of the students/readers in the process of reading, understanding and interpretation of the literary text in class⁵. This approach implies the "strategic entry" in the elaborate system of the process of teaching which defines the role of a teacher as an organizer of the problem-based situation, the operator that defines and sets up the "literary problem", leads the discussion with students who try to solve the problem individually or in groups, searching for the "getaway from the problem situation" through the critical attitude towards the text⁶.

Literary problem represents a certain difficulty, obstacle and confusion that the student faces during the process of thinking, explaining, demonstrating, interpreting a certain literary phenomenon, situation or writer's point of view, that comes from the literary work as a whole, from a certain context, or from a single expression that provides different interpretations. "It could be some hidden artistic value that reader's attention and comprehension and the student's need for interpretation usually misses. It could be the writers artistic point of view, statement, thought, image, situation and action that are ambiguous or have allegoric and symbolic meaning"⁷. However, the question is what makes a writer's point of view or statement a problem place? Literary problems refer to "communication with the work of literature"⁸. Can every place in the text be labelled as problem place and how can such a place be determined for the in- class discussion, if the teacher is the one who determines and prepares the problem place?

Does the literary problem imply the *place* that casts a new light on the meaning of the text as a whole, thus requiring the specific analytic-synthetic approach, or is

⁵ M. Nikolić, *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i književnosti*, Beograd 2006, p. 369–386, A. Bežen, *Znanstveni sustav metodike književnog odgoja i obrazovanja*, Zagreb 1989, p. 303, V. Milatović, *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i književnosti u razrednoj nastavi*, Beograd 2011, p. 322–326.

⁶ A. Bežen, *Znanstveni sustav metodike književnog odgoja i obrazovanja*. Zagreb 1989. p. 318.

⁷ V. Milatović, *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i književnosti u razrednoj nastavi*, Beograd 2011, p. 323.

⁸ Cf. M. Nikolić, *Metodika nastave srpskog jezika i književnosti*, Beograd 2006, p. 370.

it an isolated segment of the text that is interpreted analytically with no influence on the general meaning of the text. As we can see, methodological concept of the *problem in the literary work* can be found in the shifting continuum between (1) structural elements that the reader notices as a code and obstacle, (2) reception of such places, and (3) ways of communication with the literary text in the synthesized whole. As we can see, in the focus of the problem based literature teaching is the mind of students/readers: "Only in that mind can literary problems be prompted and solved"⁹. However, the question is how the teacher will prepare the material for interpretation of problem places, if they are prompted in students' minds? Is it possible to determine the more specific way of searching for problem places immanent to the work of literature? For start, it is necessary to separate the process where students notice and solve problems in class from the process in which they search (interpret) for these places during teacher's preparation for the problem based approach to the literary text (for class). Then, it is necessary to define what the problem place actually is and how to recognise it. It is important to emphasize the necessary conditionality which is the consequence of the nature of the literary work of art that finds aesthetic, compositional and conceptual solutions that cannot be classified under the term and definition of *problem place*. The definition and meaning of the problem place is reconfigured under the influence of those solutions.

We limit our search for an answer within the genre of fairy tale where regularity and conditionality of the structural elements are dominant, because of which the structuralistic approach¹⁰ is the dominant approach in the in-class interpretation. In that manner the first factor of the three-part intractable problem-based continuum is provided – elements of the structure that student/reader can notice. Other two factors (reception of some structural elements and ways of communication with the text) are independent variables that should be revealed in every new order inside the fairy tale.

Despite myriad structuralistic studies and the clear and coherent structure of the fairy tale, with firm rules of causality and meaning, the final reach of the in-class interpretation of fairy tales is not in the structuralistic approach. Poststructuralistic interpretations space the frame of the structurally conditioned causalities in a fairy tale to a certain extent (psychoanalysis, post modernistic studies and cultural studies, overinterpretation, etc.)¹¹. However, the most convincing critical and *deconstructivist* overview of the oral fairy tale comes from the answers of the literary fairy tales (prose and drama). It points out to certain *cracks in meaning* in the text, thereby, to the key defiance of the structuralistic approach to interpretation. Such cracks represent the initial space for the problem based approach to fairy tales. The abovementioned variables of the problem based continuum enable us to find such places in oral tales: the awareness of the reader that controls the way of "communication" with the fairy tale and the reception of some elements of fairy tale from the point of view of the

⁹ Tamže.

¹⁰ Cf. Filipović-Radulaški, T. *Formalističko i strukturalističko tumačenje bajke*. Beograd. 1997. Because of the crucial influence of the structuralistic stream on the study of the genre of fairy tale, its interpretation in class is dominantly structuralistic.

¹¹ Cf. Betelhajm, Flečer, Liti, Culler itd.

modern reader. The most sensible reader of the oral fairy tale is surely an author of the literary fairy tale, who is, in his creativity, primarily a reader, but also a writer. Appearing firstly as a reader, author of the literary fairy tale approaches the oral fairy tale as a literary material. He realizes that the narration is adapted for the listeners for whom the oral narration was created. However, he belongs to some other, newer mind set of his time. From that position, the author detects those places where two mind sets collide as inconsistent, and deconstructs them in the light of the new fairy tale¹². By reshaping the genre on exactly such spots, he confirms that they exist and immanently affect the conscious read¹³.

For example, Andersen's fairy tale "Princess on a pea" keeps the family background, and remodels it with ironical criticism of the stereotypic roles in the family. By degrading the fairy-tale functions and other universal social conventions and violations, it approaches the problem from another angle. Even though the fairy-tale is literary, the characters are archetypal. Their functions have almost transfused from the classic fairy-tale (king, queen, prince, princess). However, the particularity of the family reality and social stereotypes make the basis for the erosion of the genre on other levels too.

In the centre of the majority of literary fairy-tales is the internal struggle of the main character and his personality. For example, the metaphorical of the gigantic stupendous creature borrowed from the folk tale, where it had the role of one-dimensional representative of evil that should be fought against, Oscar Wilde, in his fairy-tale "Selfish Giant", decomposes and grants it the new function atypical for the genre. Wilde's Selfish Giant begins his fairy-tale adventure as a paradigm of evil whereby justifies his oral background. However, the course of his internal struggle towards his personal transformation invalidated the starting metaphorical and created a new one. The stereotypical function of giant as a demonic symbol in this fairy-tale is resolved, because it does not imply the "ethical polarity and unchanging nature of the characters"¹⁴. It gets replaced with the internal struggle of the main character with personal/invisible demons through the transformation of the character and new type of motivation which could be found in Christian rather than Pagan ethics or, as we could say, modern rather than patriarchal logic. One of the new streams is ethical redirection of main character's endeavours. Horizontal direction of folk tale hero's fight, where the cheating is valued as wisdom that takes them to success, is set up vertically in the literary fairy-tale, affirming the spiritual purity. Unlike the heroes from oral fairy-tales, that cross lands and kingdoms, Andersen's "Little Mermaid", anthropomorphic creature with no soul, from underwater world crosses into earthly, only to end her immaculate aspirations in third, fluid world as an air fairy and spiritual creature. The similar plot has the "Scabby Frog", another

¹² Cf. M. Bošković-Stulli, *Oral Literature, then and now*, Beograd 1983.

¹³ Apart from taking into consideration vicinity in time and space, as well as culturological and cognitive compatibility of the traditional narrator and his listener, author of the literary fairy-tale bears in mind his own spatial, temporal, as well as culturological and cognitive distance from the recipient whom the author's fairy tale was conditionally intended for.

¹⁴ Z. Opačić, *Poetika bajke Grozdane Olujić*, Beograd 2011, p. 27.

Andersen's fairy-tale, as well as fairy-tales written by Grozdana Olujić: "Nacre rose", "Celestial River", "Daughter of Winds", "Prince of Clouds", and others¹⁵.

Places of non-definability as the places for problem based teaching

The question is what are the *cracks in the meaning* – "Empty places" (Izer), or "places of non-definability" (Ingarden)? Ingarden says that "Places in the text based on which we cannot precisely define the represented object are the places of non-definability"¹⁶. Places of non-definability, as Ingarden defines them, dominant in every work of literature ("Every thing, every face, every scene, etc. basically everything portrayed in the work of literature, contains plethora of places of non-definability")¹⁷, are still relevant in modern theory, however, these places of non-definability concern the perception and concretization of the text as the aesthetic object. "Such places (of non-definability) could be seen in every place where we cannot say whether a certain object (or situation), possesses a certain characteristic or not, based on the sentences from the text"¹⁸. The Problem based approach to those places does not exclude the experience of the aesthetic object, neither does the interpretation do so with the experience – they are synchronous¹⁹.

Ingarden talked about that type of place of non-definability: "Nothing should be defined right away, some things should be defined indirectly, as the consequence of semantic regulations provided in the text"²⁰. Such places of non-definability are the consequence of author's intentions and are justified by the rationality in style. Places of non-definability, as we see them in a fairy tale, the oral tale teller implied, sharing his beliefs with the people, therefore there is no room for intentions in the spirit of the author²¹. It is hard to say that folk tale possesses the aspects that potentially remain on standby, by the intention of its creators. The author does not introduce said aspects on purpose, even though he puts forward the facts that require concrete observation and vivid idea. Modern reader's mind spontaneously thinks about the unsaid idea based on the imposed facts from the text.

For example, in the fairy tale "Chardak neither on Earth nor in Heaven", sister's actions are problematic in a way. She keeps her older brothers' misdoing in secret.

¹⁵ Cf. G. Olujić, *Sabrane bajke*, Beograd 2011.

¹⁶ R. Ingarden, *O saznavanju književnog umetničkog dela*, Beograd 1971, p. 46.

¹⁷ Tamže.

¹⁸ Tamže.

¹⁹ It's necessary to remind and underline that Ingarden makes the difference between work of art and artistic values on one hand, and aesthetic object and aesthetic values on the other (R. Ingarden, *Doživljaj, umetničko delo i vrednost*, Beograd 1975, p. 194–198). In that way, artistic value becomes something that appears in the work of art, while the aesthetic object is an individual concretized work of art, or the individual aesthetic concretization" (Tamže, p. 254).

²⁰ R. Ingarden, *O saznavanju književnog umetničkog dela*, Beograd 1971, p. 47.

²¹ Even though those places where the narrator mistakenly said/omitted something could be called places of non-definability we will not take them into consideration this time, but believing that they too have a certain semantic and poetic necessity for the whole fairy tale.

The question we ask is why the narrator covers up her responsibility. Is it possible that sister got more afraid from the threat that her older brothers represent than from the dragon on her lap? That is the place in text that imposes itself to modern reader as problem-based. The answers for these questions could be found in the patriarchal order that implies that the sister will listen to her brothers and not reassess the ethics of their decision. Besides, if this place of non-definability did not occur in text, if the sister complained to her father, the narrator could not avoid the conflict/rising action that would disturb the composition of the fairy-tale.

Selected examples of problem places in Serbian Folk Fairy-tales

As we all know, the beginning of the oral fairy-tale is usually harmonious: "Once there was a king who had three sons and one daughter...", And then this harmony gets somehow disturbed. One of the more stereotypical plots is the kidnapping of the princess. The dragon kidnaps the king's daughter, and then her brothers go on a quest to find her. What is the assumption they make when they start such a Quest? Let's say that one of the assumptions is that princess actually wants to be saved.

If we start the in-class interpretation of a typical oral fairy-tale with the question: Are the kidnapped princesses married to the dragon-kidnappers happy?, the students' attention would probably be much higher. Especially if we ask them to support their arguments with the facts from the text. Are there such facts in oral fairy-tales?

We will try to answer that question by analyzing three Serbian oral fairy-tales that have the kidnapping of the king's daughter in their plot: "The Chardak neither in heaven nor on earth"²², "Stoysha and Mladen", "Bash Tchelik"²³. In the fairytale: "The Chardak neither in heaven nor on earth", brother finds his sister in an idyllic scene with a dragon: "As he went up, he went from one room to the next and eventually arrived at a room where he saw his sister sitting with the dragon fast asleep, resting its head on her lap, while she picked lice from its hair". What makes this scene so idyllic? Even though the dragon is sleeping, and, as we could see afterwards, extremely insensitive to touch, the sister is picking lice from its hair attentively. The narrator thus makes us *question* the nature of their relationship.

She forces her brother to leave the house out of fear. Was she afraid for her *brother's*, *her own*, or *dragon's* life? Could this be interpreted as a trace of insecurity? Why is the girl so afraid? "When she saw her brother, she was frightened and quietly begged him to go before the dragon woke up, but he did not agree to this; instead he took his mace and waving it through the air struck the dragon on the head with it, but the dragon, in its sleep, just brushed the spot on its head where he had been hit and said to the girl: 'Something has bitten me just here'. We can see in these words that the dragon trusts the girl. The narrator calls her the *girl*, not the *sister* or the *king's daughter*. He does that in the part about the second hit too. „When he said this, the king's son struck him on the head once more and the dragon once again said to the girl: 'Something has bitten me just here again'". It wasn't until

²² The Chardak is an archaic word for a Castle.

²³ Bash-Tchelik is a Turkish word and it means Iron Head.

the third hit did the girl direct her brother to give the deathblow to the dragon. "When the son waved the mace again, preparing to hit the dragon once more, his sister pointed to the spot where he could deal a deadly blow, and the brother struck him there, and as he did so, the dragon fell down dead on the spot, and the king's daughter freed herself from the dragon's wings, ran to her brother..." Is the third hit just a characteristic of a specific genre that requires the introduction of the regular number three, or could it be interpreted as sister having second thoughts over the fate of her husband-dragon? The narrator refers to her as a sister at the third hit, confirming the already mentioned ambivalence. The narrator suggests that this girl didn't make this decision until she was *referred to* as a sister. Only after that we can say that her act meant liberation.

The question of whether the sisters are happy in their homes, after the dragons kidnapped them could also be asked when it comes to a fairy tale "Bash Tchelik", where they remain married even after their brother's visit. Contrary to that, in the fairy tale "Stoysha and Mladen", even though they are advanced in years, they return to their parental home. Fear is the main initiator of dragons' actions. „He hasn't come to visit you, but to take you away“, each of them said to his wife. The fear of losing their wives implies the possible harmonious love relationship that dragons have with their wives. In the ending of the fairy tale, the sisters return home, to their mother's joy, the son gets the treasure and the empire, and all five of them stay alone and single. This family idyll is damaged, with incestuous tendencies and incomplete happiness. Sisters' return didn't bring happiness to the community, thus failed to bring it to expected clichéd happy ending (and so they lived happily ever after). Even though the fairy tale is obviously closed for that type of clarification of spatial and temporal transposition, which can be seen in ignoring the problem of ageing and loneliness/solitude, these problems are detected as empty places, in new type of reading. It is possible that they were perceived as such by the naïve listeners, understanding it as the criticism of the patriarchal order, the highlighted role of the brother.

The folk tale "Bash Tchelik", pragmatic by its structure, function of its characters, overall thematic framework. Finding a problem spot and offering a new answer for readers was the biggest challenge in this fairy tale. It begins stereotypically: "There was once a Tsar, who had three sons and three daughters. When he grew old and felt the hour of his death drawing near, he called his sons and daughters to his death bed and told the sons to marry off their sisters to whoever first came along. „Give them away“, he said, „or a curse will come upon you“. The moment he had uttered these words, the Tsar died". Father's remark and curse, seem unjustified in the moment when the evil force came for the daughters. Since the father used rudimentary way of bequeathing, we can see that he supports the patriarchal order of the relationship between family members: sons must fulfil their oath no matter how unreasonable it sounded. Only the decision of the younger son who opened the door and gave over his sisters to the evil forces, could be valuated as retrograde. In that context, the older and middle brother affirm the individual (personal) and situational moral point of view: „We must know, at least for this our youngest sister, to whom we're giving her, and whither she is going, so we can visit her sometimes, as brothers do!“

However, if we take into consideration the customary law for the male members of the family (in this instant, brothers), to choose husbands for their female family members (sisters), with the tsar's request, this right is dethroned. Consequently, only the younger brother renounces the patriarchal principle, even though he respects it in words: „Don't you remember our father's dying words"? Maybe just the patriarchal mask of this decision affirms the progressive essence of the family law. This is the place of non-definability where we can see the logic of gradual transition of the civilizational moment from one ethic relationship to another. By respecting his father's pledge, the youngest son respects the freedom of choice for the life companion. Consequence of decision that the youngest brother made will be the further motivation for brothers' quest to find sisters married to dragons (impure forces). Only the youngest brother will be successful in his quest. Only he will be allowed to visit his sisters without any disturbance and get wonderful gifts from the dragons. „I'd kill your elder and second brother, but not the youngest. I'm fond of him and would give him all the help I could. "The youngest son formally, and from his patriarchal duty towards his father, chose the new system, unaware of its consequences and correctness. In the final chapters of the fairy-tale, implicitly, we can see that none of the three brothers have the right to make decisions instead of somebody else and that this patriarchal role is not sustainable: "The youngest brother could not stop thinking about his sisters and wanted to set off in search of them, but on the other hand he did not want to leave his new wife. At any rate, the Tsar would never consent to his leaving, and so the Tsarevich could do nothing but pine for his sister in silence". Accumulation of reasons for younger brother to stay with his wife provokes the reader's doubt in his decision and suspicion for true desire to find his sisters. Suggestively and using an empty space, the narrator questions the lack of motivation for further search for sisters. The consequence is the subordination of patriarchal principles to individual in life.

Happy ending of the fairy tale implies the wedding of the youngest brother, but also sisters' decisions to stay with their husbands, which confirms our assumption.

Conclusion

The narrator's consistent following of the genre-based matrices is an important factor that enables the creation of "cracks". The reader's (genre-based) horizon of expectations leads to the consent to the fairy-tale logic that removes the illogicality seen from the modern perspective. In the problem-based approach to understanding, the places of non-definability (empty places) will be understood more precisely as the places that are implied in the narrator's mind, but also as the places created under the influence of the genre's poetics. Interpretation of the place of non-definability is interpretation of the literary problem in the fairy tale. It influences the interpretation of characteristics, characters' behavior, work's conceptual layer, messages, and other elements.

In texts conformed to the genre, such as fairy tales, problem based places are less visible due to the automatic operation of the horizon of expectations based on the

constant crossing over the road of unchangeable, always repeatable characteristic²⁴. Reason for difficulties in visibility of the problem places in reception of the fairy tale could be found on both sides of the text. Work of prose, in accordance with the schematic of its structure hides the solution for the problem place by not introducing it explicitly, and the recipient overlooks those places when reading the story for first several times striving to overcome the more primary layers of the work. Good knowledge of the language of the work, skills in reading, stereotypical sentence structure, it all brings us to reading completely “mechanically” and absentmindedly²⁵. While searching for the characteristics of the genre we disregard the creative component of the established interpretation. That’s why the new approaches are engaged in teaching, approaches that mostly engage in class organization, but not in theoretic principles for the preparation of the material for modern ways of teaching. In that way, those modern approaches, filled with stereotypical contents, are only formally and organizationally experienced as such, while their contents remain predictable. As opposed to that, with good methodological guidance, typical reader (that easily runs across the introduction typical for the genre, constant numbers, typical characters, polarized division on good and evil, anticipated ending) can undisturbedly devote himself to something that is present but not supported, implied, or included by the genre. In that way, the thing that the text is constituted on is not let down.

In the teaching practice we are forced to approach the fairytale structuralistically because of the frequency of the compositional factors that structuralism starts from. There is a certain domination of structuralistic approach over those factors that the work is built from and that are seen as normed. In that manner, the non-definable places and other factors that became visible in the epoch of poststructuralism become neglected. Every time we read a fairy-tale we could call this process of difficult insight over places of non-definability the case of Poe’s *stolen letter*: in the detective story the letter that is sought is in front of the eyes of the characters, but because of the horizon of expectations, it is invisible for both the readers and heroes of the story. Problem based approach surely includes the interpretation of structural elements of the fairy-tale, and within that frame it puts the focus on the *places of non-definability*.

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²⁴ The relevant factors, that have an effect on formation of the horizon of expectations, defined and described by H.R. Jaus, are: known norms or immanent poetics of the literary genres and implicit relations with the known works from the literary history of the writers background (H.R. Jaus, *Književna nauka kao izazov nauci o književnosti, Teorija recepcije u nauci o književnosti*, Beograd, NOLIT, 1978, p. 46–47).

²⁵ R. Ingarden, *O saznavanju književnog umetničkog dela*, Beograd 1971, p. 34.

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Abstract

Genre based reading is a necessary basis for (every) starting interpretation of fairy tales. It is also a strong distractor from noticing the “cracks” in the text, which are labelled as problem-based places in teaching interpretation. By using the appropriate aspects of theories of interpretation, (de)construction, phenomenology, and over-interpretation) we observe and analyse such places in text. The goal of this paper is to create the frame for the new (problem-based) way to read fairy tales, to separate the levels of interpretation, and to illuminate the systematic development path of the young reader (in literature teaching).

Key words: fairy tale, problem-based approach to the literary text, over-interpretation, new way of reading, interpretation theories, reception theory, phenomenology

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