

Abstract:

The goal of diploma work “The Ways of Interpreting ‘Authorial Fairy Tales’ at Secondary School“ is to present various ways how to interpret fairy tales with students of literature at secondary schools. This goal is reached by means of two endeavours. First, the role of fairy tales and frequency of their usage in teaching of literature at secondary schools are analyzed. Such analysis is important as fairy tales seem to be a rather neglected and less studied genre among those used as teaching tools at secondary schools. Second, ways and methods of interpretation suitable for secondary schools are proposed. This endeavour is motivated by the current societal need to cultivate and develop test questions that verify abilities of students to interpret texts. These two lines of research run separately through the diploma thesis at first and come together not until the final part of it.

The analysis of the role of fairy tales in teaching of literature at secondary schools forms the first part of the diploma thesis. Data for analysis have been gained from secondary school teaching manuals, from lists of books needed for final exams, and from Internet survey conducted among teachers. At the very beginning, the educational advantages of using fairy tales when teaching interpretation, such as clarity of text, possibility of having the whole tale in mind, possibility of finding symbolic meanings etc., are outlined. In order to make use of these advantages, rather heterogeneous set of fairy tales is categorized in the next chapter, and categories “innovative fairy tale” and “standard fairy tale” are suggested. The category “innovative fairy tale” is described by means of comparison with older categories of fairy tales (such as “authorial fairy tale”), by means of internal differentiation according to domain that is being innovated (genre, characters, language and more) and, finally, by means of examples of particular pieces of literature.

The second of above mentioned parts of research is introduced by definition of the term “interpretation”, by differentiating between “interpretation” and “didactic interpretation”, and by reflection on limits of interpretation. The chapter goes on with analysis and comparison of interpretations designed for secondary schools as exemplary. Academic treatises on didactic interpretation are analyzed and compared as well. This chapter culminates with a brief overview of how the approaches of major schools of interpretation are involved into analyzed treatises and recommended texts. While the approaches of Structuralism and New Criticism play a substantial role in these teaching and academic texts, approaches of Deconstruction or Feminist interpretation are scarcely mentioned or not mentioned at all. From these observations, a set of question models emerges. It can provide students with foundations of interpretation

methods and help them to “penetrate” into the text, to deepen their knowledge of the text and to construct its general meaning.

Grounded in both parts of research, the diploma thesis concludes with practical teaching aid: five worksheets and one interpretation test based on “authorial” (and at the same time “innovative”) fairy tales of different age, length and origin. Goals and evaluation of questions on these worksheets and in the test are attached.