

Abstract

In this work we deal with an analysis of roles occupied by seven animal characters chosen from Portuguese and Brazilian folk literatures. Our objective is to find out if it is possible that different animals from different places represent the same characteristics for which they are chosen to a specific story. The main part of our work is divided in two parts entitled „Shrewdness“ and „Naivety and stupidity x strength and voracity“. Within the first chapter we analyze the fox and the chick, representatives from Portugal and the turtle, the golden hare and the monkey that represent Brazil. The second chapter contains only two representatives, the wolf for the Portuguese folk literature and the jaguar for the Brazilian one. This chapter is complicated because the two representatives fill multiple functions that can form opposition to each other. In the introduction we explain the important terms like folklore, oral folk literature, animal tale, fable, myth and legend. Then we also mention the crucial points that characterize the both folk literatures. We discover that the animal tales and fables are typical for Portugal whereas in Brazil we will mostly talk about myths and legends. We also find out that the animal tales occur much more in Brazilian folk literature than in the Portuguese one. In the main part we analyze the tales in which our representatives play the lead roles. The analysis reveals that all of them were deservedly classified into the chosen characteristic groups. But even if they belong to the same categories we can't claim they are completely equivalent to each other. The thing is that every animal uses the characteristic for a different purpose and so enriches it with distinctive aspects.

Key words

animal, role, character, characteristic, equivalent, oral folk literature, tale, myth, legend, fable, shrewdness, stupidity, naivety, strength, voracity, fox, chick, turtle, monkey, gold hare, wolf, jaguar, Portugal, Brazil, description, analysis