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Rozprávka a jej využitie v kontexte ranej starostlivosti

A Fairy Tale in the Context of Early Care

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to present three collectors of folk tales of the 19th and 20th centuries, who not only collected, edited, but also wrote fairy tales themselves. The first one is the most important Slovak fairy tale collector of the 19th century, Pavel Dobšinský. The second one, also of the 19th century, is an Italian collector predominantly of Sicilian fairy tales, Luigi Capuana. The last one is the Slovak writer Anton Habovštiak, active in the 20th century. The research scope is narrowed down to one fairy tale from each author, the selection of the fairy tales resulting from the presence of an educational problem in the family environment. The short analysis of the fairy tales is followed by a specific recommendation for practice.

Keywords: Fairy tale. Pavol Dobšinský. Anton Habovštiak. Luigi Capuana.

Introduction

Fairy tales can wonderfully help a family build the internal standards of action in their early stages, as well as assist the renaissance of ethical principles necessary for the revival of humanity and renovation of the culture in which the family lives. At the praxeological level, fairy tales intensify moral status of the child related to the understanding of the basic principle of faith in good, as well as the fact that evil will be punished (Rusnák, 2005).

In this article we present three authors, collectors of fairy tales, who based their work on folk literature. We selected two authors of literature for children of the 19th century and one author of the 20th century. The selection was based on the similarity of the time of their literary activity and the genre. The work of each of these authors creates a wide range of research. Our analysis, based on biographical, as well as, bibliographic background, is focused on a chosen educational problem. We selected one fairy tale from each author and provided recommendations for early care.

Authors of fairy tales

One of the first authors to deal with fairy tales, or more precisely, with their collection and editing in Slovakia and Italy were Pavol Dobšínský in Slovakia and Luigi Capuana in Italy. Almost a century later, a prominent Slovak linguist and writer Anton Habovštiak appeared on the fairy tales' scene. Table 1 presents the basic biographical data of these authors.

Table 1. Overview of the fairy tale authors

Pavol Dobšínský (1825 - 1885)	Luigi Capuana (1839 – 1915)	Anton Habovštiak (1924 - 2004)
Born in Slovakia, he has been extraordinarily gifted since childhood;	He was born in Sicily, Italy.	He was born in Slovakia and studied Slovak and French.
published and edited a magazine focused on fine arts and literature (1860-1861, Sliacky, 2005)	focused on poetry, literary reflection (Ghidetti 1976), literary criticism related with the onset of realism and hope for a new life (Bosco 2017).	worked all his life at the Ludovít Štúr Institute of Linguistics of the Slovak Academy of Sciences in Bratislava (Sliacky et al., 2005).
wrote and edited folk tales, songs, and sayings (Švihran 2001).	literary active during a period of growing interest in children literature (as well as C. Collodi), in times of vivid social and economic differences (Good 2001).	collected, organized and literary finalized many records of folk tales in the Atlas of the Slovak Language (Uramová 1984).
published 64 fairy tales from peer records with Škultéty (1861) (Bartko 1998) - fantastic, humorous, more realistic fairy tales with moral lessons (Kopál et al. 1987).	worked with the collected fairy tales by G. Pitra, which he published in a book <i>Fiabe novelle e racconti popolari siciliani, raccolti ed illustrati (Collected and illustrated fairy tales of the Sicilian people)</i> (1875).	his linguistic research of fairy-tale and legend folklore was focused mainly on the Orava and Liptov regions (Stanislavová 1998).
published the book on the mission of folk tales - <i>Reflections on Slovak Legends</i> (1872), "held the view that simple national legends are a proof of the artistic	besides collecting, he was also writing the fairy tales himself (Capuana, 1992), "There was a wedding that evening ... And our teeth chattered empty" (Carapezza 2008, p. 74).	he depicted customs and Christian traditions in fairy tales. "Respect for the peculiarities of the child addressee is manifested in his work by eliminating drastic

<p>abilities of the national community, but also a testimony to its moral nature" (Sliacky 2015, p. 83).</p>		<p>motives, emphasizing the contrast of good and bad and the tendency to resolve conflicts ..." (Sliacky et al., 2005).</p>
<p>his most important work is <i>Prostonárodné slovenské povesti</i> (Martin, 1880 - 1883) with 90 animal, wizardly and humorous tales; "They represent a basic work of the Slovak folklore" (Kopál et al. 1987, p. 41).</p>	<p>in 1882 he published the first collection of fairy tales, full of rich Sicilian folklore, country lifestyle and naturalism, called <i>C'era una volta</i> (Once upon a time).</p>	<p>The titles of the fairy tales in the book <i>Poklad nad všetky poklady (Treasure above all treasures)</i> (Habovštiak 1991) confirm that his spiritual message is inscribed in his writings, e.g., <i>Kde je láska, tam sa aj slniečko rado pozerá. (Where love dwells, the sun comes gladly as well.)</i></p>
<p>He himself said about the fairy tales: "the victory of good, truth and justice over evil, wrongdoing and injustice is reflected in folk tales" (Dobšinský, 2016, p. 5).</p>	<p>started writing fairy tales because, as he himself explains, one night he met a good fairy and she gave him three things: a ring, a black egg, and a small snake. Thanks to this, fairy tales began to come out of his mouth, and since then he's been calling out to the children: "fairy tales, children, fairy tales! Who wants to hear stories?" (Capuana 2010).</p>	<p>wrote about the Orava people who radiated the beauty of the spirit; about a working and praying man, in the line of the Benedictine credo <i>Ora et labora (Pray and work)</i> (Habovštiak 2003).</p>

Fairy tale analysis

We have chosen one fairy tale from each of the authors with a following common feature: the convex depiction of the consequences of incorrect educational practices. From among Dobšinský's works we have chosen *Ďuro-truľo*, from Habovštiak's *Once upon a time there was a flower* and from Capuan's the *Golden feather*.

The fairy tale *Ďuro - trulo*

Even though the majority of Dobšinský's fairy tales deal with magic, we chose the humorous one *Ďuro - trulo* (1976), depicting the relationship between a parent and a child. It is a story of a young man whose mother wanted to get him married. The fairy tale presents a protective mother who had an only son. "*Because she loved him very much, she would always caress him, never letting him go into the world*" (Dobšinský 1976, p. 195). Fearing that she will no longer be able to care for him, she sends her son out to look for a bride. Since she would always protect him, he was only able to do what she told him. Searching for a bride thus looks very comical. The whole course of courting brings about several misunderstandings and humorous, even tragicomic situations (Chanasová, 2020a). The mother realizes that the son cannot act for himself and merely carries out her orders without proper application. For example, after taking home his bride, he ties her up in the stable. "*And dear mother, tormented by helplessness, just sat down on the bench in front of the fireplace, and there in the dark she wondered what to do with him*" (Dobšinský 1976, p. 200).

Even if the story ends with *Ďuro* getting married, his fate remains blurred. "*Ďuro-trulo lived, and who knows if he is still not living and mingling somewhere among the people today*" (Dobšinský 1976, p. 201).

The fairy tale *The Golden Feather*

Capuan's collection of fairy tales was published in Slovakia in 2009 under the title *Dumb For Seven Years* (Milčák). The main character in our chosen fairy tale, *The Golden Feather*, is a beautiful, but pampered princess. Her parents would just watch and laugh at her whims. "*Once upon a time there was a king and a queen who had a daughter as beautiful as the sun and the moon. However, she was so restless that when she was misbehaving, she turned the whole royal palace upside down. And why wouldn't she be capricious and wayward, when her parents never disciplined her. The bigger mischief she did, the more they laughed*" (Capuana 2009, p. 74).

Once one fairy disguised as an old woman and came to the palace. The princess just laughed, poured salt and black pepper into her food, and burned her walking stick. The old woman was sad, angry, and cursed the princess. "*When she turned 18, she was a pretty girl with white skin and thick golden hair, but she weighed less than a feather, and even a slight breeze would carry her away*" (Capuana 2009, p. 74). Since then, the princess was called *The Golden Feather*. Fearing that she would fly away, her parents closed the princess at home, and her only amusement was floating under the ceiling while her parents were strongly blowing with their mouths. For the princess not to get bored, the parents had to blow a lot, which lengthened their faces and they wanted the princess to be normal again. After a while, she

begged her parents to let her fly away, find the old woman, and ask her for forgiveness (Chanasová-Libertini, 2021). The wind blew the princess to the castle, where everything was made of salt and black pepper. That was all the cursed princess could eat there. One Portuguese prince learned of her misfortune and decided to save her. He acquired a magic bell from an old man, which helped him save her. In the end, they both happily return home, and the princess never wants to eat salt and pepper again (Capuana 2009).

Fairy tale Once upon a time there was a flower

From among Habovštiak's fairy tales, we chose the *Once upon a time, there was a flower* in which, like in the Capuan's fairy tale, the main protagonist is a beautiful princess. "*But as beautiful as she was, she was also bad, and people and animals feared her*" (Habovštiak 1991, p. 27). She shouted at the servants and mocked the guests who came to her. The only thing she liked were the flowers. One prince from a distant land learned about the princess, and, assuming that a person who loved flowers could not be so bad, decided to visit her, despite the warnings of his parents. He dressed as a gardener with a mysterious flower and entered the service in the castle (Chanasová, 2020)

The princess behaved badly towards him, too. At first, she ordered him to collect roses without gloves, causing him a lot of wounds, and then she told him to pick water lilies in the cold lake, where he got a cold and had to be treated. When she went angrily looking for him why he had not come to work, she found the mysterious flower in his room and it enchanted her (Chanasová, 2021b). She wanted it right away, but he said, "*It's not a flower like others. It blooms only at midnight and only when a good person is next to it. It is afraid to bloom in front of mean people*" (Habovštiak 1991, p. 28). The princess' desire for the flower forced her to become better. She has changed, and the flower rewarded her with beautiful music. The prince explained to her: "*It is your soul that sings and plays ... Everyone has such an instrument in himself, and out of joy it plays the most beautiful song*" (Habovštiak 1991, p. 29). After the princess' transformation they got married.

Family environment and comparison of fairy tales

In a family environment, the child gets an idea of what it means to live a good and fulfilled life. Although the child does not understand everything that the parents ask for, with the trust he/she has in them, he/she perceives that it is good for him/her. Love can "magnetize" our feelings and desires, and the actions of those we see living in love become a model for us. In early education, whether using theoretical-methodological starting points or early bibliotherapy, parent is the one who accompanies the child on the path of knowledge, inspires and helps him/her to understand the meaning (Kaščáková, Kováčová 2020).

In a relationship of friendship and intimacy built by the family, the child can adopt and internalize the moral law. He/she gradually achieves control of his/her own emotionality; becomes able to navigate his/her desires and subordinate them to the good of the family. Gradually, he/she realizes that his/her actions within the family are reciprocal with the actions of others. If a father gets angry, it impacts other family members too, and they often have to bear the consequences. The child begins to understand the term *we* and is in a way provoked to come out of his/her interests and desires. If until now he/she was closed in his/her comfort zone, from now he/she gradually starts to recognize the good in the wider context – as the good of the family (Chanasová, Kováčová, Libertini 2020). Storytelling, revealing the story little by little, helps to understand the meaning, place, and role of emotions. Manifestations of fear, love, courage, and anger are related to human behavior and through them a person is able to plan a life (Kaščáková 2020; Kaščáková, Kováčová, 2020).

These fairy tales help us to point to following educational problems: protective style of education, negative attitude towards the elderly and disrespect for others. Table No. 2 presents a comparison of the basic features of the selected fairy tales. Unfortunately, in the first fairy tale, the main character remains unchanged. In the second fairy tale, the prince comes to the aid of the princess with his love and sacrifice, thanks to which she is freed. But the most significant change can be seen in the third fairy tale, where we see the prince not only freeing the princess, but also helping her transform internally, which results in her joy and happiness.

Table 2: Comparison of fairy tales

Ďuro Trufo	Golden Feather	Once upon a time there was one such flower
a humorous tale from the life of the people	magic fairy tale	magic fairy tale
unhealthy protective upbringing - tragically points to an unhealthy overprotective relationship between a mother and a son and its consequences	unhealthy protective education - points to the negative impact of overprotective upbringing; the princess had no respect for the elderly and other people	unhealthy protective education - points to the absence of borders in upbringing and to the deification of the child, which led to disrespectful behavior towards others
without help and change, the child cannot liberate him/herself	with help, the child cannot free him/herself; help comes in the person of a prince	with help, the child cannot free him/herself; help comes in the person of a prince who corrects a parental mistake with <i>further education</i>
-	rescue, acceptance, love	corrective educational process - acceptance, love

No moral lesson.	With a moral lesson - you pay for your mistakes.	With a moral lesson - being good brings reward and a good life.
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Recommendations

In early care, we suggest following options for working with a child of preschool and younger school age:

Dobšinský experienced a lot of suffering, illness and death of his loved ones, so his life itself makes him a model of sincere self-giving. In his work we find virtuous behavior of the characters, as well as the ideal of the good life and the victory of good over evil. His heroes are often abounding in virtues or lacking them, as we see in *Ďuro-truľo*. In this humorous-style fairy tale he points to the borderless protection of the mother, which leads to deformation, even to damage of the child. We recommend using the fairy tale in a discussion with children when the child blames the parents for not taking good care of him/her, or when he/she claims that a parent acts on his/her behalf even when he/she is mature in the given activities or discuss whether it is not the ripe time to grow and become independent. This painful transformation can seem unjust to a child, so it is appropriate to prepare him/her for this through dialogues and discussions.

Capuana, although not a model figure of morality in his personal life himself, with his fairy tales keeps awakening in children a desire for good. We suggest using a puppet. “*In a dramatic action with an animated object, the client can uncover his own conflicts and their course. Acting out life events related to conflicts is becoming a real part of puppet scenes*” (Kováčová 2020, p.73). The fairy tale *Zlaté pierko (The Golden Feather)* accentuates the child's disrespect for the elderly, as well as the impact of the liberal style of parental upbringing, resulting in the child's indisposition to prosocial behavior or in interventions affecting the freedom and value of another person. Simple work with a puppet or finger puppets can help the parent define the problem of disrespect and point out inappropriate behavior. We propose a discussion using an animated object, aimed at verbalizing the behavior as a consequence of action.

The heroes of *Habovštiak's* tales bring clarification of their own traditions or understanding of life in the past. In the fairy tale *Once Upon a Time there was a flower*, the main character dehumanizes man again, using him only to his advantage. The author offers a remedy in a very nice way, set in the loving relationship of a virtuous hero. For a parent, the fairy tale can be a resource in two ways. First - when the child knows that he/she does not treat others with a sufficient degree of respect, but does not know how to deal with it; and second - if he/she does not know about it, and so far he/she has not paid attention to the consequences of his/her behavior. “*We propose to work*

with movement, because it is movement that enters the space that serves to support experimentation and discovery" (Zentko 2020, p. 35). If for some reason the child is unable to verbalize things, movement may be a suitable form. We suggest to parents that when their child has a problem with disrespect, they ask him to (try to) show the other person's emotions using his body. For example, how the gardener could have felt when the princess was mean to him. Subsequently, it is appropriate to gradually help the child to verbalize the movement.

Conclusion

While the protagonist of the first fairy tale remains unchanged, the protagonists of the next two undergo a transformation, thanks to someone who likes and trusts them. We realize that this is the real role of parents: to love their children, to give them time, to help them decode and apply the ethical message of literature in their lives. To conclude, we uphold A. Habovštiak's statement that fairy tale is "an attractive metaphor and symbol of life. Its creators portrayed a harmonious life, an idealized world seen with their own eyes; simply, the world as it should be. It presents the social and ethical values and norms that people have believed and still believe today" (Habovštiak 2003, p. 75).

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