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Introduction

It is assumed, that artistic creativity has had a healing effect for centuries. Understanding a form of art therapy is a condition to explain how the involvement in creativity can lead to changes in behavior, feeling, and a way of thinking of a person participating in this type of therapy.

In today’s busy world, adults lack the time to talk to children. A great way to make contact with them is listening and telling stories. Fairy tales, which can be found among the creative teaching tools could be used when working with children.

Fairytales therapy is a specific type of bibliotherapy that is made up of a system of instruments and procedures which aim at promoting growth and improving health. It embraces narrative methods and reading passages based on fantasy and involves a narrator and humans, animals, objects of even plants which come to life. Fairytale therapy uses the symbolic language of traditional stories aimed at children and encourages listening and reflection about the narration, as well as individual or group reconstruction of the plot, with the aim being to encourage a deep and correct assimilation of what has been read or generate personalisation, depending on the specific needs of the participants and context. Narrating made-up stories, which can include not only fairytales but also fables, myths, legends and other folklore stories, which lend themselves very well to addressing a subject, are very valuable from a pedagogic and psychological point of view. The method helps in solving personal dilemmas. It is a kind of support in the process of achieving safety. It may also be a means to meet children’s needs.

The natural way of learning for children is fun and imagination. Fairy tales deal with things and phenomenon important for a child, as they express in the words and events such things which occur in its inner life. The actual situations are often similar to heard ones. When listening to different stories, a child unconsciously assimilate them, and then uses in everyday life to fight against overwhelming anxiety. Fairy tales give him hope, they learn self-reliance and show a new perspective of the situation. The main character is important for a child presenting magical, supernatural abilities. Such a character can be found in fairy tales, in which the child finds explicit world of values, a clear division between good and evil, black and white, fair and unfair. He appreciates the kindness, diligence and courage; condemns greed, meanness, cowardly acts, laziness. And – most importantly – the good always wins. Tales teach optimism, encourage fight against adversit, provide positive role models. These values constitute the essence of the fairytale therapy process. By selection of the appropriate literature for children we familiarize them with what is good and what is bad, how to act and how do not. Who could be imitated and who rejected.

1. The similarities between pedagogy purposes and the objectives of art therapy

The analysis of the pedagogy objectives shows that there are many similarities between them and the aims of art therapy. Both sciences aspire to provide comprehensive human development, improve a quality of life, get a maximum independence and invigorate or shape a positive and adequate self-esteem and teach to establish and maintain satisfactory relations with the environment [Gładyszewska-Cylulko 2011].

According to Wita Szulc, goals in art therapy are consistent with the tasks of modern pedagogic therapy focused not only on improving disturbed function, but also on the prevention and activities affecting the personal determinants of learning. Improvement and correction schemes and re-education effects concern the justification of disturbed mental functions involved in the learning process. Affecting the child's personality includes raising motivation for learning and believing in their own capabilities, eliminating the fear of failure, inspiring positive self-esteem and self-acceptance [Knapik, Sacher 2004].

The main purpose of art therapy is that after its completion, a person who was its subject, becomes resistant to failure, gains confidence in himself and overcomes his shyness. The specific objectives are to ensure the comprehensive development of a child stimulating his interests and talents. Art therapy is to create opportunities for own expressions using a variety of artistic means. Another goal is to understand the essence of independence and responsibility for the performed task; activating and opening of a student who has problems in dealing with others [Arciszewska-Binnebesel 2003].

The areas of using art therapy still have broadened. We could distinguish the three main fields among them: mental health, family and school. Marian Kulczycki points out that art therapy could not be limited only to those therapeutic functions but it should also be turned to education activities. According to this thinking, he explains the three main functions of art therapy: recreational, education and corrective. The recreational art therapy involves the creation of conditions in which a person can relax, leave everyday problems behind. The most important function of education is to deepen and advance knowledge, news, wisdom. Thanks to the corrective function less valuable mechanisms and structures are transformed into more valuable ones [Kulczycki 1990].

Modern theorists make an assumption that art is the basis for all education activities and aesthetic and moral development of a man. Thus, art is the result of human activity, which is practised not only by artists, but also children [Popek 1985; Konieczna 2004]. The use of art for therapeutic purposes is based on the assumption that it might serve specific functions. According to Maria Gołaszewska, the following functions of art are:

- Aesthetic
- education
- personality
- social
- cognitive
- therapeutic
- cathartic
- integration
- axiological
- sublimating
- existential
- ludic
- utilitarian [Gołaszewska 1999].

The pedagogy assumes that the limitations, rooted deep inside people, are not only due to his physical, sensory or cognitive infirmities but also to the injuries in the sphere of emotional and social activity. Any activity that integrates a man with society contributes to a comprehensive development. Art could integrate people and break down barriers between them, it is extremely important that with the clash of arts we are all equal, we might receive it, but each in their own individual way [Siemień 2008].

2. The use of art therapy elements in various forms of the child's creative activities

Early child education includes the development and support of basic features, such as curiosity, self-confidence and emotional independence. Education of the

youngest children is characterized by a widely known stimulation of development in such areas as: creative and social, communication, problem-solving and reasoning skills. A preschool period is for a child a world of fantasy, imagination, symbolic play and a time when abilities of creative thinking emerge. What is more, this period includes the achievements in the development of spatial orientation, and the development of motor skills. Therefore, adults' task is to help a child to develop the skills they need to express themselves in a creative way, and also to prepare them for learning to write [Lubomirska 2008].

In the nursery school there are three main forms of pedagogic interactions: education, upbringing, social activity. Education (therapy) using art is also a process of training, that is why the theory of training should be its theoretical base. Thanks to it one could fully take care of the process of aesthetic training; it allows you to analyze various forms of artistic education, defining appropriate requirements towards a child and a possible, objective results testing of its development [Lewandowska 2003].

Imagination and expression are the basic predispositions to be shaped in children. On the one hand, expression is a spontaneous articulating of his personal experiences and feelings, and on the other, it is a reflection of the child's understanding of the real world. Expression is a natural need and necessity of providing the full development of the child. Expression in pedagogy is treated as a spontaneous way of expressing that children show in drawing, dancing, singing and drama classes [Pielasińska 1983]. There is a variety of different forms of creative activity:

- mime and movement expression – sometimes revealed through gestures, postures, spontaneous movements (jumping, waving limbs), grimaces, and at a higher level in dance; the highest form of expression is a hand-mime pantomime.
- music and movement expression – sometimes expressed under the influence of rhythm, melody – as an improvised dance; the most therapeutic is called trance music (drum rhythm, African music); music, singing and moving, playing the instrument and dancing affect the development of children greatly.
- verbal expression – revealed using voice modulation function, expressing the emotional mood by screaming, laughing, crying, and the intonation of speech, for example, in prose or poetry; this form of expression is shown during theatre workshops and drama therapy classes.
- verbal and music expression is revealed in a spontaneous, improvised humming of melody and lyrics, often followed by an interpretation of learned algorithms of melody or lyrics.
- music expression – is associated with verbal and music expression; concerning improvising when playing the instrument or pretending, for instance tapping out the rhythm that imitates the sounds of a specific instrument (trumpet

- tooting). Playing the instrument teaches children a sense of rhythm, sensitivity to colours; it also triggers activity, develops creativity and music imagination.
- visual arts expression – besides playing, the most common form of expression is an innate one; toddlers spontaneously reach for everything, which allows them to draw, paint, mold, fix etc. Music plays a very significant role in inspiring children to draw, paint etc. Activities that integrate music and visual arts stimulate the plastic and music imagination at the same time.
 - playgroup expression – combines all forms of creative expression, it is revealed in illusory, staging, design, movement, music and movement plays; it allows children to make social contacts with peers. As a form of active action it is a source of joy, a way towards fulfillment and development [Popek 1985; Kuźnik 2010].

A child's creative expression depends on the three basic conditions: an intrinsic motivation, a climate of understanding and a need for freedom. Authentic creative expression must be motivated in a natural, internal way. There must be a need to express oneself and the joy of feeling self-realization for themselves and others. The most appropriate style is being a partner with a democratic style, allowing to preserve identity of a child, full of tolerance and understanding even the opposite tendencies. It raises the confidence to adults and peers' surroundings, and at the same time creates a feeling of their own and other people's dignity [Kuźnik 2010].

In an occupational therapy, a technique is understood as concretized, practical steps performed in a specific order, allowing to produce a certain effect of therapeutic work. The components that are different in the technique are materials or tools [Wierzchowska-Konera 2000]. Depending upon the tools and techniques there are many types of therapy:

1. *art therapy* with the use of visual arts; it allows to use various techniques, including drawing, painting, sculpture, graphics etc., which cause interest in artistic creativity and affect therapeutically the entire personality of a preschooler [Napiórkowska 2010];
2. *library therapy* is characterized by the fact that the treatment is carried out by means of literature, using books and their content to change the way of thinking and give a lot of support; it is primarily used to enhance and enrich human's emotional resources so that he could better deal with difficulties. A fable – like therapy is a variant of library therapy, which is used with children. It helps to deal with fears and supports children's development. Fairy tales show patterns of behavior and compensate emotional deficiencies of children. It happens by showing children the characters they could identify with [Godawa, 2003];
3. *dance therapy* is a form of art therapy that uses dance and movement. Its purpose is to experience a sense of corporeal nature of man, to grow fond of one's body, self-acceptance. Techniques used in that type of therapy are: dance, mo-

- vement exercises, music improvisations. A child in preschool gradually improves both his posture – locomotion movements and movements conditioning efficient object activities [Makris, Umiastowska 2001];
4. *chromo therapy* is a color treatment. This technique was known four thousand years ago, when it was discovered that colors affected our lives and health. Colors operate in two directions. They can stimulate and soothe, excite or put to sleep, irritate or calm down, make one's feel cold or warm. Each color has a different effect on our minds and bodies. This means that we need to experience colors sensations. We usually look for a color that synchronizes with our current mental state [Godawa 2008];
 5. *drama therapy*, that Brian Waya defines as: '...pedagogical method that facilitates and accelerates the process of learning and thorough maturity of a child to the social and productive life' [Way 1997]. Drama as a method uses multiple motivating and therapeutic exercises. It allows children to explore the secrets of his and other people motivation. It also leads to a full understanding of another person [Łysakowska 2008];
 6. *aesthetics therapy* is characterized by the fact that it needs to experience the beauty of the landscape, nature, surrounding etc. A natural landscape is a basic therapeutic agent. It is associated with the therapeutic use of the aesthetic characteristics of the landscape that could be, to some extent, recreated in the form of art work [Knapik, Sacher 2004];
 7. *ludic therapy*, is a play treatment. The manifestations of a child's creative activities are its own stories, poems, tales. Children's products or figments are characterized by fun, games, jokes, language, creation of fictional worlds, a sense of humor. Barbara Wilgocka – Okoń advocates the view that playing is an essential part of a preschool child: 'Fun replaces the children typical forms of activity for adults: learning, work and social activity. Illusory plays are an important factor in the development of creative conduct of a child. Such plays promote the development of imagination and fantasy which affect the linguistic creativity greatly' [Wilgocka-Okoń 1985; Kleszcz 2008];
 8. *music therapy* is a form of psychotherapy using music in a methodological way for therapeutic and diagnostic purposes. Tadeusz Natanson defines music therapy as: '...a method of conducting that uses multiple music's influence on psychosomatic body of the human organism' [Natanson 1979]. During music therapy classes in kindergartens, preschool children can be offered a varied range of activities that might have a positive impact on their development in the emotional sphere [Woźniczka 2010].

During art therapy children deepen their self-awareness so that they could change or accept the elements of their own personality that were a kind of barrier in the proper functioning of a family, a kindergarten or a peer group. Artistic work done in a group, due to the use of non-verbal code, and therefore universal,

promotes a better communication. Thanks to a group work children learn how to recognize the feelings of others and how to respond appropriately. Artistic talents are not required, the process of emotional cleansing is essential and of much importance. A therapy choice depends on a problem to solve [Szulc 1993].

3. Art therapy methods used in working with children

There are many methods of teaching in art therapy, the choice depends on a group's age, its capabilities, a type of training and objects and purposes of work. Among the suggested methods of work, the ones that allow to understand the subject, imagine the end result and stimulate the expression should be mentioned. In each of the methods we have to deal with other techniques of occupational therapy [Arciszewska-Binnebesel 2003].

The best conditions for participants include: forming the same age groups and when the program and methods are subordinated to the overriding goal of therapy and the perceptual possibility of children. Children could attend the classes regardless of health status, intellectual ability and severity of emotional disorders [Konieczna 2004].

Every meeting should have a similar structure. Classes begin with an introduction to a given activity and a creation of favorable relax to create a sense of security and a conducive atmosphere. In the introductory part, therapists could talk to children about what was going on at the previous meeting, how their day was, what happened on the way to class, etc. Next, depending on the mood of a group and its energy, calming or energizing plays and games are offered. Through a physical activity, often combined with music and singing, leaders stimulate creative possibilities of children. The main principles and rules are reminded at the time of the meeting (children have no limits when expressing what they feel using the arts).

Leaders chose a theme of a course based on:

- knowledge of the needs and preferences of the participants;
- observation of behaviors and verbal expressions during previous classes;
- a detailed analysis of subsequent activities.

A theme for therapy classes should be formed smoothly, so that each participant could understand and interpret it in their own way, in accordance with their needs. Exercises should be chosen in a way that during the meeting children could:

- express their needs, emotions, conflicts;
- talk about what happened to them in different situations (at home, in the yard);
- establish a non-verbal dialogue with a therapist, peers or parents;
- cooperate and participate in group activities;
- take decisions and experiment;
- relieve emotions;
- relax [Piszczek 2002].

Artistic activities should be planned in a way so as children, who negatively evaluate their ability, would not be discouraged to perform them. Preschool children are keen on expressing themselves by art, since in art therapy such techniques and themes are used, that enable anyone to express themselves. Children are convinced that we respect not only their person, but also their ideas and creations. This also gives a picture of how is the ability to express emotions and experiences improved [Sawicka 1999].

4. Educational role of fairy tales

The most direct means of communication in interpersonal relations, however, is the word. Words forming fiction can be a tool in the most well-known variant of art therapy – bibliotherapy and its most popular in Poland in the twenty-first century form that is fairytale therapy. In theory of literature a tale is meant as one of the main kinds of teaching, a short literary work of an epic, sometimes in verse, with a moral or conclusion generalizing; in the colloquial sense the term functions as a synonym for detachment from the realities of non- ordinary reality or true falsehood that refers a reader to the world of fiction and imagination. In the Polish language the following terms are used to describe different types of fairy tales: a parable, fairy tale, novel, storyline. The literature distinguishes between different types of fairy tales: educational, literary, philosophical, folk, children's, bedtime story, therapeutic [Pilch 2003, p. 307].

The psychological needs necessary for the proper development of the child include: the need for security, the need for attitude patterns, the need for emotional contact, the need to recognize the meaning of life, entertainment, fun, and cognitive needs. The task of bibliotherapy and hence fairytale therapy is to meet these needs using books and all forms of readership. This is possible thanks to the following four features of book:

1. The compensatory function allows to compensate for the lower value by overcoming these deficiencies. For instance, children, who have shortages of different experience, have a desire to compensate it by fairy tales and fantasies. In the fictional world of fairy tales children feel safe, optimism of fairy tales shows faith in moral values which often do not exist in their family environment. Books about adventure allow to escape from the world full of dangers and difficulties.
2. The therapeutic properties allow individuals to function in the social environment by improving their well-being and alleviate the emotional and psychosomatic disorders. The book helps the child to accept their own differences, showing how others cope with it, and makes it easier to adapt to the conditions in a variety of environments.
3. The cognitive function; in the case of children characterized by poverty of concepts, vocabulary and general knowledge, the book could play an important

role in providing information about the world and life. Prevention in this field should aim to arouse interests, as many as possible, in early school age.

4. The educational function; a properly chosen book provides role models, improves perceptual skills and logical thinking. Thus, compels the reader to reflect on their behavior. Apart from the functions mentioned above, there are other features such as the need for entertainment and relaxation. The book provides unusual experiences, funny situations, and through this fun, it gives a possibility to relax and forget the troubles [Szczipał 2005, pp.154–156].

There is no denying that hundreds years ago the educational role of fairy tales was appreciated. However, the term *fairy tale* had a narrower meaning than today. It was understood as a work of fiction, verse allegorical story about animals or humans, which was used to convey certain moral knowledge on human relations. Always ended with the punch-line, which carried the message, the truth of life. It should be emphasized that not every story could be designed for children. The contents of fairy tales must be close to the child and the main character's mental states similar to the feelings of the child [Pytka 2002, pp. 38–39].

Popular myths and fairy tales, passed from generation to generation, are particularly close genre of children's stories. The literature emphasizes that they are a vital part of education. They are often the only clue to the child's life. His life seems to him incomprehensible, therefore, he needs help when it comes to sorting out emotions, providing opportunities to better understanding himself in a complex world. It should be remembered that the content of fairy tales exist in the memory and imagination of child, often used as the subject and the source of different plays [Lubczyńska, Papierz 2004, pp. 111–113].

According to Doris Brett imitation of others in play behavior is a way to assimilate the principles of social functioning. When watching it, we could learn a lot about the baby. During playing time a child assigns to dolls, toys, animals these very different aspects of their personality, which are difficult to give him a fine. This allows him to control them. Thus, he expresses in playing unconscious traits that he does not want to realize, or which are contrary to the moral standards introduced to him [Brett 2003, p. 11].

In preschool age children like to play in scaring them by famous people. At their own request they trigger anxiety. However, when this fun exceeds the limit of their control, they ask to stop. The person often playing with a child is one parent. Children's imagination works so intensively, that it loses the feeling it is still the same mother or the same father. A request is often heard to read again the same stories, which could cause tension, but the child knows that the end is optimistic and waits for his *catharsis* [Pytka 2002, p. 40].

According to Bruno Bettelheim reading the same fairy tale has also a different meaning. The child finds it difficult to find the values important for him, the similarities between him and the main character. Especially when a fairy tale

character is different than child's sex. He needs the possibility to repeat contact with the story. The child's note that he liked the fairy tale, after the first hearing, is not a sign that one could move to the next. But it is just a feeling that there was something important to the child in this story and it might be lost if the story is repeated [Bettelheim 1985, p.126].

Liking for the already known texts is characteristic for the reception of literary work at this level of age. Children become attached not only to the characters in the book, but also to playing them again, when they made an effort to understand the chain of described events. The level of speech development of older preschoolers, their mental capacity, rich experience, the ability to observe the world around them, make the works of realistic content popular, where a child could find the already known facts and situations, expand and strengthen their knowledge. Children are interested in nature, technology, as well as certain phenomena of social life.

In addition to prose texts, poems should be read to children on various occasions. Not long, easy rhymes might be accompanied by the self-service activities, playing with dolls or blocks, encourage wildlife observation. Children listening to them remember easily. Also magazines in kindergartens are a valuable tool – to work individually or in small groups – to convey short texts, talks about images, stories about various pictures, solving puzzles [Ratyńska 1988, pp. 231–255].

A good story should give a member of an audience a feeling of warmth and security. It is worth persuading young listeners to recount the content in their own word. What is more, questions should be asked about the characters and situations from the story. We should ask the children what they think about the main character and the story. A teacher or parent must read stories carefully, clearly and in as far as it is possible vivid way, so that children can easily distinguish, who we read about. We must do everything so that young learners, using their imagination, could find inside the story. It is good to prepare some tales moving the same problem. The results of these educational activities will be calming down and appreciation that lead to changes in behavior in their personal development.

5. The role of therapeutic fairy tales in the treatment and prophylaxis in the early stages of child development

Literature, building personal resources of the child, not only confers knowledge, but it also helps to get to know other ways of thinking and acting, gives patterns of behavior, supports emotionally during difficult situations, compensates for any deficiencies, relaxes releasing a good mood. Such an approach to the role of literature shows that the influence on a child using a variety of psychological mechanisms, mainly imitation and identification plays an essential role in the therapy and prophylaxis process.

Up to the twenties of the twentieth century children's literature was primarily to educate and teach. It was not until the late twenties that reading for children

had to answer important questions, convey moral values, provide many thrills and shape the aesthetic taste. Fairy-tales for therapy were discovered by B. Bettelheim. He beautifully popularized it in the classic textbook *Cudowne i pożyteczne. O znaczeniach i wartości baśni*. He presented the idea that fairy tales help children deal with various fears and internal conflicts, which become their participation in childhood. Bettelheim suggests that many fairy tale motifs overlap with children's problems. *Cinderella* tells the story of sibling rivalry and feeling that others are favored. *Hansel and Gretel* is about the eternal anxiety of children that they get lost and will be abandoned by their parents. *Tomcio Paluch* tells the story about experience of a little boy who got lost and has to face the scary big world [Brett 2003, p. 29].

Fables, fairy tales (these two concepts often use interchangeably) build a lot of bridges to the art of imagination, to other people and to each other and therefore getting to know their role is not only interesting, but also essential. According to Maria Molicka therapeutic fairy tales '*Heal, reduce tension, help children cope with anxiety. They are useful in the prophylaxis. Here, they act as a kind of vaccination. They are a good way for every day, and for a therapist, working with more disturbed child, another therapeutic method*' [Molicka 2002, p. 8].

Fairy tales are therapeutic means for independent and creative way of coping with the world. They help meet not only children's but also parents', teachers' and therapists' basic needs. They allow to enter the world of childhood dreams, understand each other and together relieving the joys and sorrows of the characters, feel contact with others. The child has the opportunity to face the problems that animals, knights and other characters experience. He identifies with the one who is somehow closest to him, he feels that he is not lonely. He often tries the same solutions in the real world. In this situation he does not realize that he imitates someone. He is convinced of its independence and strength, thinks it's his idea. In this way, builds his self-esteem and self-confidence. The child unconsciously solves the problems convinced of its own independence. He is often delighted and proud of himself. An adult frequently sees similarity in the behavior of the main character from the fairy tale. His task is, however, to highlight the courage of the child and its efficacy and not to indicate the same similarities. The materials used in fairytale therapy are chosen according to the type of activity that will be carried out. More precisely, the following items can be used: traditional fable, fairytale and other children's story books; books accompanied by scenic elements, fairytale audio-books, cartoons; animated films, puppets to use in stories.

Fairytale therapy is also an excellent way to build a unique relationship between parents and children. It allows to establish a closer contact with the toddler, understand the situation, emotions, way of looking at the world. The child feels noticed and understood. It builds his sense of security and feeling of being important and loved. When choosing a fairy tale for therapy, the child

should be presented a variety of topics related to his life and needs. He just looks for these characters that are appropriate for his situation. This allows to equalize the disturbed functions, overcome his fear or teach to control the anger or other feelings faster [Wnęk 2004, pp. 56–58].

Therapeutic tales are mainly addressed to children aged 4–9 years. This allows not only to feel comfortable with situations raising anxiety, but also find a solution for urging problems, prompting the child to look for effective ways to cope with his difficulties. Fairy tales are a source of certain images in the child's imagination and thus evoke positive emotions affecting thinking about himself. Therefore, the treatment with a fairy tale, is one of the educational methods to reach the child's understanding of its problems and provide support in difficult times. In more general terms, fairytale therapy allows patients to use their imagination in a positive way, transforming distortions of reality into instruments which are able to generate new experiences, mental images and behavior; create positive and more appropriate alternatives in relation to reality.

Fairy tales can help in prevention. Their goal is to get familiar with the fears, causing that the mysterious phenomena of extraordinary strength could change in normal life situations. The child, who listens to or reads a tale relating to his fear, experiences it again, overworks it, as therapists say gives it a corresponding meaning, understands the origins of his experience, rationalizes and after that negative emotions are discarded, no longer spread, they become conscious [Borecka 2001, pp. 21–26; Kramarczyk 2007, pp. 10–13].

When introducing therapeutic tales, the educators, parents can strengthen the inner life of the child, raise his self-confidence, thus helping him in his personal development. Besides, he is taught the joy of life and the ability to solve difficult tasks. They are a preventive tool as they show how to prepare for difficult situations of everyday life. More generally, fairytale therapy provides some educational and psychological stimuli which can be used, if necessary, for preventative and rehabilitative purposes. These come from the possibility to encourage: imagination and fantasy; expression of human problems and reflection on thoughts and emotions; development of moral values; acquisition of communication and interactional skills; acquisition of fundamental emotional skills, such as recognition and management of interior states in relation to context and events.

Thanks to therapeutic fairy tales the child learns primarily positive thinking about his problems. Fairy tales increase children's resistance to 'attackers' from the outside world, reduce their power and at the same time confront adversities, show the happy world [Jaszczyk, Kochaniak 2006, pp. 15–16].

Conclusions

Due to the popularity, manifested in the number of publications and workshops concerning writing therapeutic fairy tales Wita Szulc [Szulc 2011, pp. 149–150]

summarized the phenomenon of fairytale therapy in Poland:

1. Due to the fact that in the available literature one cannot find any descriptions of foreign fairy tales workshops with a specific therapeutic target by healthy adults, it is concluded that it is a typical Polish phenomenon. It has not been tested yet but it does deserve it. The question is which participants' needs are really met in the workshops of writing fairy tales, and whether (and possibly how) the emotions experienced by participants affect therapy they conduct. In other words, it is interesting if children go through fairy tales in the same way as adults who write them. The first step in any such research is the initiative of Katarzyna Szeliga, the author of the series of tales about *Guziołek* that collects fairy tales written simultaneously by the children, their parents and teachers working with these children [Szeliga 2009, p. 9].
2. All texts written by workshop participants or included in the guides about fairytale therapy are called fairy tales, regardless of whether they meet the requirements of the genre, which is a fairy tale. In Polish terminology of fairytale therapy it is just a term *fairy tale*, and it does not appear in the name of the literary genre as for example *story*. However, Brett Doris, the precursor of educational fairytale therapy, uses the term *the story* [Szulc 2006, pp. 5–6].
3. There is a lack of cooperation or even consultation with literary scholars, or at least taking their research into consideration because they have done research on the children's literature reception (such cooperation includes studies bibliotherapy, which were organized and carried out at the Institute of Psychology of the University of Wrocław by literary scholar Phd Wiktor Czernianin – they are rooted in tradition, where in the 80s professor Jan Trzynadlowski formulated a theoretical basis of bibliotherapy [Trzynadlowski 1985].

The success of workshops concerning writing therapeutic fairy tales allows to put forward the thesis that they meet the need for personal, verbal expression of dreams, going beyond everyday reality, creating something new and interesting. The role and importance of books have been changing in the life of modern society. On the one hand, one can treat a fairytale therapy as an 'oasis' of peace and quiet, a treasury of values. On the other hand, as a form of reading, which makes it more attractive as it is aimed at meeting the sublime needs.

Finally, it should be said once again that reading literary works for children has important implications for the development of his morality and personality. It helps the child learn, understand, and call difficult, existential problems in his life. Furthermore, reading affects the development of culturally specific value system, especially moral values, and culturally specific attitudes to life. It allows childlike lover of literature to understand who he is as a human being. According to Zbigniew Baran '...works of fiction are a special kind of child's valuable instruments to self-empowerment and discovery the laws of the universe through the prism of metaphysical wonder of a young child on the meaning of the word' [Baran 2006, p. 329].

The task of the modern educator, the teacher is to prepare the pupil for life as what it is, 'here and now'. The teacher, aware of the power of the words of the artist and his own responsibility for the upbringing of the child, should be very careful when selecting books for children – not necessarily following the fad and popularity of given books (not always valuable in the education). Valuable literary works should be chosen to allow the child to understand himself, another man and the surrounding world.

Abstract: Literature builds children's personal resources. It not only confers knowledge, but also helps to know other ways of thinking and acting. It shows patterns of behaviour that give considerable support in emotionally difficult situation; compensates for any deficiencies; relaxes releasing a good mood. Such an approach to the role of literature shows that the influence on a child using a variety of psychological mechanisms, mainly imitation and identification plays an essential role in the therapy and prophylaxis.

Fables, fairy tales (these two concepts often used interchangeably) build a lot of bridges to the art of imagination, to other people and to each other. Therefore, knowing their role is not only interesting but also necessary. Fairy tales are therapeutic means for independent and creative way to cope with the world. They are an excellent way to build relationships between parents and children. They allow to establish a closer contact with a toddler, understand its situation, emotions and a way of looking at the world. Thus, a treatment by fairy tales is one of the best methods to reach the child's understanding of its problems and provide support in difficult times.

The main purpose of the following article is to show how great and educational value of literature is in the life of children; how it can be used to help a child overcome his difficulties. It presents the fairy tale not only as a factor in developing imagination, raising an interest in reading, satisfying curiosity and transmitting moral values providing many emotions, but also as a therapeutic agent.

Keywords: art therapy, fairytale therapy, bibliotherapy, educational and therapeutic agent, prophylaxis.

Streszczenie: Literatura, budując zasoby dziecka, nie tylko przysparza wiedzy, ale pomaga poznawać inne sposoby myślenia i działania, daje wzory zachowań, wsparcie w sytuacjach emocjonalnie trudnych, kompensuje wszelkie niedostatki, relaksuje wyzwalając dobry nastrój. Takie ujęcie literatury pozwala stwierdzić, że wpływając na dziecko za pomocą różnych mechanizmów psychologicznych, głównie naśladownictwa i identyfikacji spełnia istotną rolę w terapii i profilaktyce.

Baśnie, bajki (tych dwóch pojęć często używamy zamiennie) budują wiele mostów do sztuki, wyobraźni, do innych ludzi i do siebie, i dlatego poznanie ich roli jest nie tylko interesujące, ale i niezbędne. Bajki terapeutyczne są pomocą w samodzielnym i twórczym sposobie radzenia sobie w świecie, to doskonały sposób na budowanie więzi rodzica z dzieckiem. Pozwala ona nawiązywać bliższy kontakt z maluchem, zrozumieć jego sytuację, emocje, sposób patrzenia na świat. Dlatego też leczenie bajką, to jedna z lepszych metod na dotarcie do dziecka, zrozumienia jego problemów i udzielenia mu wsparcia w trudnych chwilach.

Głównym celem poniższego artykułu było ukazanie jak ogromną wartość ma literatura w życiu dziecka; w jaki sposób można ją wykorzystać, aby pomóc dziecku w pokonaniu jego trudności

oraz przedstawienie bajki nie tylko jako czynnika rozwijającego wyobraźnię, rozbudzającego zainteresowania czytelnicze, zaspokajającego ciekawość, przekazującego wartości moralne dostarczającego wielu wzruszeń, ale również jako czynnika terapeutycznego.

Słowa kluczowe: arteterapia, bajkoterapia, biblioterapia, czynnik wychowawczy i terapeutyczny, profilaktyka.

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