
A Review of Literatura infantil y lectura dialógica. La formación de educadores desde la investigación

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At a time when the relationship between ethics, literature and fictionality is an important focus of interest both in the sphere of theoretical-critical discourses and in different educational contexts, the publication of this volume is a necessary and invaluable contribution to the field of language and literature teaching, inasmuch as it addresses the essential issue of the dialogic reading of children's literature, as well as the training and requirements needed by educators in order to successfully accomplish mediated reading practices. The encounter with the text is thereby conceived of as an active and interactive process, aimed at fostering the development of critical thinking and the personal development of the child in society, and having as its basis the linguistic and literary communication inherent in the act of reading and in the dialogic sharing of responses to such reading.

This work is appropriately contextualized in the current scenario, defined by the impact of digital and emerging technologies, the confluence of different modes and media in the construction of meaning, and in the backdrop of a pandemic that has changed our way of life, our way of teaching and learning, and, in short, the manner in which we gaze upon the world. But reading also allows us to cast new gazes on the world, herein its importance. And this is the core idea underpinning the whole volume. Combining theory, practice, and research, the authors provide a thorough study aimed at catering for the need –stated at the beginning of the book–, for reflective, well-informed teachers and mediators capable of selecting appropriate texts for particular audiences, devising classroom projects, taking decisions in particular educational environments and, above all, fully aware of the importance of passing on their love of literature to their students. In this regard, and on account of its insightful exploration of the aforementioned issues, the present work should be a key reference for the initial and lifelong training of educators.

The volume is made up of nine chapters, framed between an opening and a coda. The first chapter examines the educational, recreational, and therapeutic and healing

effects of reading, together with its role as the basis of social construction, as a point of reference for the ideas, thoughts and values of humans (p. 14). Immersion in the literary universe will affect thinking, and this in turn will probably translate into actions and behaviours, the authors state, thereby engaging with the ethical dimension of literary reading. The treatment of the healing and emotional effect of reading deserves special attention, in line with the ethics of care that permeates the entire work. The chapter ends by pointing out the key role of children's literature both at school and in society, on account of its being part of cultural heritage, an issue that neatly dovetails with the content of the second chapter, which delves into the educational dimension of children's literature from a holistic perspective and introduces the question of mediation, which will be discussed throughout the whole work and specifically addressed in chapter six.

The third chapter is devoted to the cultural intersection of children's (printed) books and digital and audiovisual adaptations and productions. The current upsurge of texts combining multiple modes and media calls for an adequate preparation on the part of educators, in order to monitor the correct reception and interpretation of such texts. The authors stress the need to take into account intertextual and transtextual relationships in the treatment of children's fiction. Inasmuch as transmedia narratives allow works to expand through different formats, we cannot but investigate this phenomenon and consider its educational possibilities, with a view to enriching children's imagery.

Addressing the very essence of the literary phenomenon, namely, the act of writing and reading literature, the fourth chapter delves into the processes of creation, mediation and reception pertaining to literary communication. As explained by the authors, literature presents us with new realities, and the literary world allows entrance into a symbolic space that encourages thinking and imagination and contributes to the development of affective, social and personality skills. Literary communication continues to be addressed in chapter five, which looks into its aesthetic and educational aspects. The chapter likewise engages in the study of the training needs of educators, a study that is thoroughly expounded in chapter six. Throughout these pages, a detailed account of the training needs of mediators is provided, together with a description of the work that must be carried out as a preparation for dialogic reading sessions. Dialogic reading is addressed in chapter seven, in which the authors put forward their framework, aimed at eliciting reflection and generating shared thoughts.

In line with the importance of mediation, chapter eight explores the Disney productions, pointing out the risks of spreading a standardized way of thinking, hence the importance of fostering critical thinking through dialogic practices and establishing connections with the literary texts that inspired the Disney adaptations.

The useful contribution provided in the sixty pages that make up chapter nine deserves particular attention. We find a selection of fifty two works, categorized by educational levels: Infant, Primary, and Secondary, each accompanied by a reading guide. The guides aim to (i) familiarize educators with the book, (ii) function as starting point for classroom practice, and (iii) serve as an example for the design of similar strategies starting from other books. Furthermore, young readers can also benefit from the guides, suitable for autonomous work. A particular section is devoted to picturebooks, which are analysed considering the interaction between verbal texts and images, in accordance with the interplay of verbal and visual narration that defines the genre. The selection of books covers a great variety of genres and styles, from the classic picturebook *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) by Maurice Sendak to the epic fantasy

Donde los árboles cantan (2011) by Laura Gallego. Together with popular titles, we find works that may not be so well known by the general public, despite their great quality and their suitability for shared reading. This is the case with *El caso de Lorenzo* (2009) by Isabelle Carrier. It must be noted that all the suggestions have been successfully implemented at schools.

In short, the volume is an insightful exploration of what guiding the young generations in the process of critical reading implies, providing a dialogic model oriented towards making the most of children's literature. As stated by the authors themselves, understanding fictional texts means understanding the part of life in which they are inspired; and interpreting and discussing them may lead to imagining possible futures likely to fulfil the thoughts and the reflections of both the young and adults (p. 10). Therefore, it should be an essential reference work for teacher educators, trainee and practicing teachers and, in general, for anyone involved in reading mediation or interested in the act of reading literature itself.

References

López Valero, A., Encabo Fernández, E., Jerez Martínez, I., y Hernández Delgado, L. (2021). *Literatura infantil y lectura dialógica. La formación de educadores desde la investigación*. Barcelona: Octaedro. 140 pp. ISBN: 978-84-18819-40-7