

THE ROLE OF STORIES IN THE STUDENTS' PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

From a theoretical perspective, the research is meant to provide a synthesis of the main aspects concerning the students' psychosocial development by means of stories: definition and analysis of psychosocial development; highlighting the correlation between cognitive development and psychosocial development; illustrating the stages of psychological and psychosocial development; the formative-educational functions of stories in the students' socio-moral development. An applicative research was designed and developed on these theoretical bases. The research has the following objectives: collecting data on the impact of stories upon the psychosocial development of the students' personality; selection and presentation of methods and instruments concerning the importance given to the formative function of stories; establishing the progress made from a cognitive, socio-affective and moral point of view, achieved through the value of stories, in the instructional-educational activity; bibliographical recommendations according to the students' age levels (including Romanian and foreign stories for pupils from 6 to 12 years of age). The main method of research was the psycho-pedagogical experiment, the collected data being merged with the information provided by psychological observation and conversation. The analysis of the data obtained during the research confirms the general hypothesis and the specific hypotheses regarding the efficiency of the experimental programme focused on the use and value of stories in the instructive - educational activity related to the students' cognitive, socio-affective and moral development.

Key words: formative training, heuristic didactic strategies, personality, psychosocial development, students

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1. Introduction

At any age, man is a being who feeds on stories. Therefore, the richness of stories, which people all over the world have gathered from home to home, from century to century, either orally or in writing, has surpassed the other human riches.

(R. Tagore)

Under the pressure exerted by the media, the information boom and the (exponential) progress of technology, the children of the third millennium are more and more influenced by the low contribution of the traditional way of reading, with major implications, both for their general knowledge and their psycho-moral development. From this perspective, moral concepts are not highlighted and supported by an affective experience, which should ensure their internalization and transformation into deep convictions. On the contrary, they become simple definitions of good and bad, which a child may give, without identifying with or relating to them.

Stories are suitable for and accessible to preschoolers and the younger students, enriching their emotional life, shaping their character traits and highlighting the good ones, depicting situations, relations and social attitudes, qualitatively and quantitatively enriching their general knowledge (about the world and life).

Helped by illustrative characters in the stories, the child discriminates easily between good and evil, according to his psychic structure, so that the acceptance or rejection of a certain reaction or behaviour is an act based on their will, with an intrinsic motivation. The enhanced educational effectiveness is given by the fabulous, artistic element, which stimulates the child's interest and imagination, as well as their curiosity about the surrounding world.

Historically, stories have been, since ancient times, a way of educating children and, as society has evolved, this priceless cultural treasure has been enriched and transformed, according to the generally accepted principles and rules, keeping their essence of fundamental values: good, beauty, humaneness and righteousness. Exploiting the experience of past generations, generating ideas and beliefs, emotional feelings which will crystallize into strong beliefs, stories facilitate the students' process of socio – moral formation and development.

Explorer of the world of stories, *keeper* of the treasures discovered into stories, the child will become a sower of values, a potential hero or a simple man whose life will be governed by the principle of goodness.

2. Theoretical premises

Generally, human development implies the correlation and influence among physical, cognitive and psychosocial development. The evolution is different both vertically, according to the different moments in the individual's life and horizontally, according to each individual, and the progress of psychosocial development is slow and extensive. Based on the continuous formation and restructuring of the processes, functions and psychic traits, psychosocial development implies the assimilation and gradual internalization of socio – moral values, principles and rules, of the socio – cultural models and the conduct's regulation according to these.

Various approaches and models have existed throughout time, mainly focused on two directions, respectively a genetic one, based on longitudinal research and a psycho – dynamic one, based on transversal research. The considerable difference between these two approaches consists in the delimitation of time and in the fact that the genetic stages have as a mark the level of maturity, while the dynamic stages are related to the individual's chronological age. Different theories have been outlined, from a psychoanalytic (Freud, Erikson), cognitive (Piaget, Kohlberg), interactive perspective (Riegel), the perspective of social learning (Bandura), each of these making its contribution to the knowledge of the specific elements of human development (cf. Dumitriu, 2010).

The studies and research conducted in the last decades have focused on approaching and deepening the following aspects:

- the development of emotional intelligence (Mayer and Solovey, 1997; Reuven Bar-On, 1997, 2006; Goleman, 1995, 1998; Saarni, 1999);
- the role of attachment in childhood, the role of family interrelationships, the role of parent-child communication, the role of educational studies, of the guidance provided by parents in the process of transmitting and internalizing cultural models, the role of behavioural rules and values (Giblin, 2000; Moisin, 2001; Stănciulescu, 2002; Turliuc, 2004; Dumitriu and Schifirneț, 2011; Van Pelt, 2002);
- moral development and violent conduct, as well as conduct disorders; the role of the school climate, empathy, the relation between the guidance styles, school success and social integration (Gasser & Keller, 2009; Blair et al., 2004).

Psychosocial development is achieved during several *stages*, organised according to age categories in relation to relative similarities among individuals. An individual is educated and achieves progress in a correct way only in relation with other individuals; the perspective upon the world and social relationships is constantly enhanced, starting with the family and continuing

with the group of preschoolers, the group of students and some other groups with which the child comes into contact. Throughout the child's development, his emotional dynamics stabilizes and his personal awareness rises gradually. The expansion of the child's horizon of representations and notions constantly influences his adaptation to social life, his knowledge of the world around becoming complete only together with self-knowledge, leading to the occurrence of motivation and interests, upon which strong beliefs, as principles of action, would be later built.

Erikson (1959) synthesized a representation of the psychosocial development an individual throughout his life, in eight stages, each one marked by a moment of crisis, a conflict which speeds up his psychic evolution and impacts upon his interpersonal relationships. Thus, the human being evolves from uncertainty or certainty (0-18 months) to autonomy or doubt (until the age of 3), initiative/ guilt (between 3-6 years of age), diligence/ inferiority (between 6-12 years of age), identity awareness/ confusion of roles (the 1st crisis – between 12-18 years of age), to intimacy/ isolation (18-35 years old), generosity and selfishness/ egocentric character (35-65 years old), to the crisis of the sense of accomplishment/ despair (after the end of the active period in the social sector).

Significant research on *socio – moral development* has been conducted by Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg, both of them underlining the correlation between psychosocial development, cognitive development and its stages. For children aged between 5 and 13, Jean Piaget identifies two stages of socio – moral development:

- The stage of heteronomous morality, which is under some external laws: the period in which rules are perceived as absolute and rigid, the adult being the one who imposes them. Judgement is achieved only according to results, more exactly, according to the consequences of actions, without taking into consideration intentions and without relating to some moral values.
- The stage of autonomous morality appears around the age of 7-8, when the child passes from unconditioned obedience to collaboration, learning to negotiate rules and norms, building a system of values in relation to which he acts. Helped by the interaction with adult and elderly people, he gradually achieves life experience and outlines his socio – moral profile according to the values of the group he is part of and with which he comes into contact.

Kohlberg continues Piaget's studies on social – development and identifies three other stages, each of them having, in their turn, two sub-stages:

- *The pre-moral level*, the stage during which the child believes that a thing is good or bad according to the adult's suggestions. This level is subdivided into two stages: *the stage of*

listening/ obedience and submission, of heteronomous morality of children until the age of 6, and *the stage of naive hedonism* of instrumental morality, from 6 to 10 years of age.

- *The level of conventional morality*, which is characteristic of pre-adolescents (10-13 years old), is divided into two stages: *the stage of good manners*, characterised by agreement with the expectations of the important persons in a child's life. Another element characteristic of the stage of good manners is the child's recognition by the adult. The second stage is the stage of order and duty, characterized by the understanding of the importance of laws and social order.
- *The post - conventional level* gets crystallized by the end of adolescence or throughout youth and integrates *the stage of contract morality*, marked by the individual's personal decision of conforming to norms or not, respecting the laws or not. The child understands that all these may be changed, in agreement with the democratic principles; *the stage of the principles of moral conduct* in which a person guides himself according to his own moral principles, crystallized throughout his development.

Analyzing the stages elaborated by Piaget and Kohlberg, it is observed that the age of primary school students makes the connection between an objective morality, in which the adult's solicitation and opinions are prevailing, and a subjective one, which implies adaptation, capacity to internalize the norms and formation of moral judgement. Socialization is achieved by means of amplification, bringing the child into contact with an increasing number of persons and groups. The structuring and transmission of certain models, selected according to a well-defined set of values, the shaping of the emotional, motivational psychic structures, the endowment with cognitive and learning tools which enable the accessing of the system of codes used in communication and social relationships are just a few elements contributing to the child's socio-moral development.

The specific character of social-moral development has a double determination, respectively: the moral as a social phenomenon, and the psycho - social conditions, followed, in essence, by the formation of moral conscience and conduct. The way from the first representations to the structuring of the moral judgements implies the objectification of actions, leading to the formation of skills and moral habits and, consequently, to the crystallization of the will and character traits.

Stories hold an immense potential, contributing to the familiarization with the socio-moral values, educating the civic spirit and making people feel humanitarianism, the desire of being good and helpful. Social cohesion cannot be achieved without the conscious and responsible assumption of social roles, by participation and active involvement in social issues. Stories inform children about their needs and hopes, they answer their problems and personal preoccupations,

presenting a model which functions according to the world and the child himself. Identification with one of the positive protagonists has a beneficial psychological effect, fostering confidence in their capacities, stimulating personal diligence and assuring an optimal level of their development necessary for the transition from one stage to another.

3. The research design

3.1. The research objective and hypotheses

The main objective of the research consists in determining the progress made by the participants in the cognitive, socio-emotional and moral areas through the exploitation of stories in formal and non-formal educational activities.

The general hypothesis: the exploitation of stories in formal and non-formal educational activities contributes to the pupils' psycho-social development, taking into consideration the structure of the main character skills.

Specific hypothesis number 1: Significant differences exist between the scores obtained by the participants at the initial and final evaluation concerning the attitude towards the self.

Specific hypothesis number 2: Significant differences exist between the scores obtained by the participants at the initial and final evaluation concerning the attitude towards their fellows.

Specific hypothesis number 3: Significant differences exist between the scores obtained by the participants at the initial and final evaluation concerning the attitude towards the adults.

Specific hypothesis number 4: Significant differences exist between the scores obtained by the participants at the initial and final evaluation concerning the attitude towards learning.

3.2. Variables and their operationalization

The *dependent variable* is represented by the students' psychosocial development level and was operationalized into different sub-categories: the attitude towards the self, the attitude towards fellows, the attitude towards adults, the attitude towards learning. The *independent variable* is represented by the temporal moment, with its two levels: before the intervention (the pre-test) and after the intervention (the post-test).

3.3. Participants

The research was conducted in 2013, on a sample of 50 participants, 2nd grade students. In terms of the gender variable, 25 of them are boys and 25 of them are girls. According to the age variable, 25 students are 7 years old and 25 students are 8 years old.

3.4. Methodology

In order to check the impact of stories upon the students' psychosocial development, a psycho-educational programme was designed and conducted throughout the first semester of the 2012-2013 school year. The data obtained at the end of the experiment was put together with the data collected by means of observation, conversation, analysis of the activities' products. The evaluation was structured so that it would measure the level of the development concerning the four dimensions of the psychosocial development, between the two temporal limits: before and after the formative programme's application.

3.5. Procedure

The participants were asked to achieve the following evaluation items:

- to indicate, by means of correspondence, the lesson which can be learnt from each story;
- to establish the negative and the positive characters from the stories they know, according to their dominant feature;
- to choose, from a given list, the suitable features of an well-known character;
- to appreciate the degree of morality of the facts presented in the stories;
- to choose a positive character as a model for themselves;
- to justify, by means of attitudes or personal actions, the resemblance to one character from the stories.

The score obtained by each participant represents the average of the scores obtained for the 5 items, with values situated between 5 and 10.

We briefly exemplify some of the strategies centred on students, which were used in the training programme (Cutur, 2013).

a. The *P.R.E.S method – The Fox's Judgement* by Petre Ispirescu. The method stimulates the students to express their point of view on a certain issue, developing, at the same time, their argumentation capacity. It can be accomplished in four stages:

- *Point of view*: Express yourself!
- *Reasoning*: Bring arguments for your point of view!
- *Example*: Give an example to support your point of view!
- *Summary*: Formulate, in one idea, your point of view!

The method helps students to get involved in the topic's understanding, raise questions, interpret and reflect upon facts. Based on exploration, research, and action, it encourages thinking and promotes cooperation both among students and among the teacher and his students, in a democratic relationship.

b. *Guided reading – Two friends* by Anton Pann

This strategy is meant to stimulate silent reading, based on a question or task formulated by the teacher, and students must give the answer after reading the text. It aims at the text's comprehension and is a stimulus for critical thinking, including the following steps:

- *a brief reading of the text* – the title and the plot are discussed;
- *word-based anticipation* – some words from the text are given as examples and represent the basis for assumptions referring to the content;
- *verbal organizer* – a short composition which must stimulate students and make them raise questions and find their answer by reading the text;
- *text segmentation* – structuring the text into fragments;
- *questions formulation*;

Examples:

- *Read the fragment and identify the place where the action takes place and the characters.*
- *Read and identify the motif determining the event presented in the text.*
- *Read and discover the characters.*

The students silently read the text and express their answers, supporting their opinions with excerpts from the story. By exploring the meaning of events and by looking for arguments in the text they have read, they train their thinking operations, becoming increasingly aware and accepting more easily the meanings generated by the reading.

c. *The review frame – The father and his ten sons* by Alexandru Mitru

The review frame is the technique of summarizing the content of the story based on an algorithm formed of a set of pattern-tasks:

- *express in a sentence what this story is about;*
- *propose an expression or a significant proverb for the text's message;*
- *choose a word which would express the text's essence;*
- *which is the text's emotional colour?*

- *continue: Reading this text, I've learnt ...*
- *find a symbol (drawing) for this text;*

d. *Thinking hats – Thumbelina by Hans Christian Andersen*

This method stimulates critical thinking, in the form of a game raising the students' interest and enthusiasm in the activity. It implies assuming a role and expressing a point of view from this perspective, as follows:

- *the white hat* expresses the story's content, being neutral and objective;
- *the blue hat*, preoccupied with control and organization, will *label* the characters, according to their deeds; its role is to supervise and lead the activity;
- *the green hat* finds solutions which must help the emperor's daughter in order for her not to be obliged to put the pig's skin into the fire;
- *the black hat* criticizes the solutions offered by the others altogether with the facts presented in the text;
- *the red hat*, from an emotional perspective, will express sympathy, compassion, regret or sadness towards the other characters;
- *the yellow hat* finds another end for the story, expressing a positive, optimistic perspective.

e. *Argument in four steps – The swans by Hans Christian Andersen*

The aim of this activity is to form *opinion expressing skills* and is achieved in four steps

- *the statement*: after the end of the story, the students are asked to formulate various statements regarding the text / with reference to the text;
- *the explanation*: in two or three sentences, the student must justify his statement, by bringing arguments in its favour;
- *the proof*: a sentence or a fragment from the text which must support the statements expressed previously;
- *the conclusion*: the initial statement's value of truth is established.

Example:

- *the statement*: Else is a kind-hearted princess which is ready to sacrifice herself in order to save her eleven brothers, transforming them into swans;

- *the explanation:* Although she risked to be burnt on the pyre, as she was accused of witchcraft, Elsa keeps the secret about the magic under which her ten brothers were kept, knowing that this will influence their salvation;
- *the proof:* Elsa gathered the nettles with her hands and stepped on them with her heels and she turned them into hemp. With this material, she wove twelve tunics and freed her brothers from the magic, which had turned them into swans. Then, everyone could see Elsa's kind-heartedness and innocence.
- *the conclusion:* the main character is a positive character, her main feature being the spirit of sacrifice.

f. *The chameleon diary – Matilda* by Dahl Roald

It is a method used in Romanian Language lessons in which an event is presented from different perspectives. The presentation can be made by the same student or by different students, taking into consideration all the positions reflected by them. In the 2nd grade, this presentation may be built on the skeleton of some incomplete sentences:

I am sad that people around did not understand Matilda.

I am happy that Matilda registered with the library.

I am indignant at the fact that the little girl's father believes that you do not need books if you have a TV.

I am glad about the appreciation given by Miss Jenny Honey.

I am scared of the father's illegal business.

I am amazed at the girl's capacity of reading at the age of three.

I am angry with Mrs. Trunchbull's malevolence.

I have fun with the magic Matilda uses to punish the headmistress.

I am discontent with the way in which both parents treat the little girl.

I am pleased with the fact that Matilda remained with Miss Honey.

The different perspectives from which the student may approach the text trains both cognitive processes and affective-emotional ones, as he has to take the proper attitude towards the different parts of the events.

g. *The literary trial – Hansel and Gretel* by the Brothers Grimm

The literary trial represents a debate on two contrary opinions: one of accusation and one of defence, using the judicial specific language. A role is attributed to each student: accuser, defender, witness, judge, juryman. The procedure aims at respecting the following moments:

- explanatory reading of the text;
- establishing the accusation: the children's abandonment in the forest by their parents;
- examining the witnesses: any student who has read the text can present his version and perspective upon the events; total freedom of expression is given;
- deliberation: the jurymen, who wrote the ideas expressed by the witnesses will vote on the guilty;
- sentence communication: the deserved punishment will be communicated, altogether with preventive measures or adjustments in what concerns the incriminating evidence.

h. *RAFT – The Chicken* by Ioan Alexandru Bratescu Voinesti

The RAFT method took its name from four roles, which the students must assume in the process of reading:

- *The assumed role* is, usually, the one of the main character, creating, first of all, a written form of communication regarding his qualities and faults;
- *The audience* is the one who must analyze this communication, asking the one who assumed this role about his or her deeds and about the motives which made him or her act this way;
- The communication *forms* are: first of all, written and then, the dialogue;
- The *theme* is represented by listening to the parents' advice;

Analyzing the chicken's sufferance and its death, the students will find examples from their own experience of these kinds of situations. The conclusion is obvious: a child should always listen to his parents' pieces of advice because, otherwise, they risk being exposed to some dangers which, quite often, may affect them irremediably.

i. *Multiprocessual interrogation – The Snow Queen* by Hans Christian Andersen

It is a process which allows text examination as a technique following the reading, using a set of seven types of questions, *as follows*:

- literary questions which require exact information about the text

What are the girl and the boy's names in the story?

Who kidnapped Kai?

- transposition questions, which require new representations for the elucidation of the signification, the meaning of certain words;

How would you have acted if you had been the girl?

- interpretative questions, aiming at discovering definitions and values

How would you call the chips of evil from the mirror dropped by the wizard?

- applicative questions used in problem solving and in text exploitation

What do the grandmother's words mean? (she says that only the ones having a soul resembling a child's can enter Heaven)

- analytical questions, which helps the identification of the technical characteristics of the text

What is a story? Which are the elements by means of which we recognize a story?

- *synthetic* questions, meant to determine reflection

What did Gerda prove throughout the entire story?

- evaluative questions on the basis of which marks are given;

j. *The readers' theatre – The Earned Money* by Alexandru Mitru

It is a way of promoting fluency in reading, helping the students to be more confident in their capacities of speaking in public and to easily understand the story's content. In order for the activity to be as challenging as possible, the teacher may modify the text by changing indirect speech into direct speech or even adding some replies, so that the speaker's intervention would be as frequent as possible. The following steps are involved: model reading, characters identification, establishing the lines of each character, role distribution, the designated students read the parts of the text related to the chosen character.

A certain atmosphere may be created using costumes or elements of scenery. The students will be encouraged to use mimics and gestures when they read their lines, altogether with elements of paraverbal communication: intonation, intensity, accent. Reading the text by roles repeatedly will lead to fluency and awareness of the act of reading, will help students to externalize themselves by means of words and body language. The more expressive this communication is, the more profound the text's understanding will be, and the content's exploitation more easily achieved.

4. Results and discussions

The data was processed with the SPSS program, version 16.0 for Windows. The research hypothesis has been confirmed. The scores obtained by the participants in the evaluation, at the

end of the psychosocial development, by means of the stories programme, are superior to those obtained in the initial evaluation. There are significant differences between the results obtained before and after the implementation of the training program with regard to:

- the attitude towards the self [t (49) = 5.50, p= 0.000];
- the attitude towards fellows [t (49) =10.84, p= 0.000];
- the attitude towards adults [t (49) =13.45, p= 0.000];
- the attitude towards learning [t (49) =11.43, p= 0.000].

Table 1. Results of paired-sampled test (pre-test and post-test) with 95% CI

Variables	M_initial	SD_initial	M_final	SD_final	t (49)	p	LL	UL
the attitude towards the self (initial)								
the attitude towards the self (final)	7.06	1.25	7.92	1.00	5.50	.000	-1.17	-0.54
the attitude towards fellows (initial)								
the attitude towards fellows (final)	7.10	1.24	7.94	0.93	10.84	.000	-1.00	-0.68
the attitude towards adults (initial)								
the attitude towards adults (final)	7.04	1.21	7.90	0.97	13.45	.000	-0.99	-0.73
the attitude towards learning (initial)								
the attitude towards learning (final)	7.00	1.14	7.80	0.95	11.43	.000	-0.94	-0.66

The progress factor is represented by the methodical approach focused on the use of stories, grouped in a set of 12 activities, developed throughout the first semester of the academic year 2012-2013. Each activity was organized around one story, exploiting the formative functions (valences) by means of active-participatory methods.

4. Conclusions

The results obtained by the students at the end of the training programme experimented upon confirms our research hypothesis and underlines the efficiency of this process, focused on the students' psycho-social development by means of stories.

Knowing more and more stories, the students became able to identify, based on a meaningful element, the moral message, by associating proverbs to the given titles. The difference between positive and negative characters is now more easily drawn, the notions being fixed and well-established. Most of the students choose to identify themselves with the positive characters, supporting the characters' positive traits.

Regarding *the attitude towards the self*, the stories had a positive influence upon the building of self-confidence, stimulating the students' desire of being remarked, an attitude which, as we know, is specific to their age. They can help shy students to overcome their fears, they can sensitize the indifferent ones in order to give importance to their own position and behaviour, they offer a mark of the main moral qualities.

The attitude towards the fellows of the same age gradually goes under the sign of competition in primary school students, different sub-groups and preferences being formed according to different criteria: the group having very good results, the group of the ones with sports skills, the peripheral zone of the isolated ones. The stories are meant to act as links between students, determine the group's cohesion and an adequate behaviour towards the other fellows.

The attitude towards adults shifts from *fear of punishment* to *the desire of being rewarded*. The stories' heroes, rewarded in the end, according to their deeds, support these ideas and help children trust the power of good and the benefits, which the good deeds bring.

The attitude towards learning becomes favourable, because the pleasure and interest in stories become a stable preoccupation determined by the desire to know, enrich the students' knowledge, skills and abilities. The act of reading improves the power of concentration and the cognitive processes, totally captivates the reader and makes him more sensitive. The gathered information is then processed and transposed into behaviour, consciousness and verbal conduct.

The attitude towards society and the perception upon the environment are also changed, according to the experience accumulated by the student and interactions with the exterior world. The primary school student's universe is mainly limited to his family and school, but he may be put into contact with some other contexts, during extra-curricular activities, by means of visits to the library, trips, watching or performing plays / shows.

Building *moral consciousness* involves: a cognitive component, which refers to the act of knowing the content, respectively the norms and moral rules, an affective component, whose target is the voluntary consent of values and moral obligations, and a volitional component, which concerns the attitudes, the way in which the person integrates in society and makes use of the assimilated moral content. In stories, both characters and events are built in antithesis, they are presented in an accessible and attractive manner at the same time, constantly contributing to the

building of moral representations. Because of the net distinction it makes between moral and immoral, correct and incorrect, good and bad, the imaginative material stimulates the child's way of thinking, incites him to create analogies with his own experiences and helps him synthesize the essence of the lessons which he must assume. Consistency, spirit of initiative, independence or courage are traits whose internalization is achieved after a sustained and long-lasting educational effort. Stimulated by the qualities of the heroes in the stories, observing the variety of models and situations in the world around and guided through a qualitative educational act, the child will mobilize his will, first of all in order to search the appreciation of the ones around him and, finally, to exploit the strong beliefs which he has created throughout his school process.

The objectives of building moral conduct aim at three important directions, structured as follows: the formation of moral habits, their internalization in customs and the formation of moral traits. The stories constitute, for the age of primary school students, a valuable way of achieving moral education desiderata, in relation with which students are very receptive. The plasticity of the nervous system and the curiosity characteristic of their age enable stories to find an echo at their emotional level, so that the message of the literary text should be received by children and lead to the structuring of a moral consciousness and its representation in a positive behaviour, favourable to the individual's harmonization with the world and with himself. The long process of building positive character features implies an entire series of steps: motivation, learning, repetition, stimulation/ constraint, checking. The character's edifice should be founded on a favourable emotional disposition.

The building and shaping of moral traits shaping is a long-term action, facilitated by the collaboration between family and school, for which the primary school teacher is called upon to lay the foundation. The stories contribute to broadening the students' horizon, giving them the possibility to differentiate good from evil, beauty from ugliness, answering the needs of knowing, understanding and assimilating different values. The age of primary school students is the one at which the child manifests a high degree of psychic flexibility, enabling the intervention of education. Fiction achieves the value of experience; what is impossible becomes real in the child's imagination, the affective echo having a strong resonance. The way in which events develop involves attention, memory, spirit of observation, develops the investigative spirit, logical and flexible thinking and cultivates imagination.

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