

Reviews and short reports

Inspiration for Pedagogic Research and Practice

Martin Gregor

Vala, J. & Fic, I. (2012). *Poetry and Yyoung Readers: Researching the Acceptance of Specific Poems*. Hanex: Olomouc.

The authors Jaroslav Vala and Igor Fic have set a difficult task for themselves in this monograph focused on the research of specific poems reception by young readers. Using selected research methods they wanted to provide everyone, not just active teachers, a view into student perception and interpretation of poetry in specific poems. As the authors themselves state, the research presented in this publication was conducted with the financial support from the Grant Agency of AS CR as part of the research project called Research and Reception of Poetry by Pubescent and Adolescent Readers (P 407/11/0594). For the semantic differential research Jaroslav Vala and Igor Fic selected these poems and authors:

Emanuel Frynta – Trychtýře (Funnels), Antonín Sova – Jarní noc (Spring Night), Alexandr Sergejevič Puškin – Mračno (Cloudy), Jan Kašpar – Puberta (Puberty), Bohuslav Reynek – Dřeváky (Clogs), J. H. Krchovský – Co jsem to měl... (What did I have...), Paní Ise – Jarní déšť (Spring Rain) and Vladimír Holan – Poslední list (Last leaf)

The selection of authors and their work is targeted and it is highly suitable for further research and application directly in pedagogic practice. The authors of the monograph selected poems, which they presumed would be close and comprehensible for the children (*Puberty; Funnels*), including lyrics about nature, impressionism and romance (*Spring Rain; Spring Night; Cloudy*) as well as multilayer poems and according to our opinion ones that are more difficult to understand (*Clogs; Last Leaf*). We especially appreciate the incorporation of the poem *What did I have...* by J. H. Krachovský, a con-

temporary author, still living, whose poems have not yet appeared much in primary school reading books or other anthologies.

The objective of the semantic differential research was to discover how the students at the age of 12–15 years perceive various types of poems and how they interpret them. The author of the methodology for this research Jaroslav Vala hereby continues some of his previous works, e.g. the monograph named *Poetry in Literary Education* (2011) and continues in the research of lyrical poetry reception using the semantic differential method and the verification of own research tool. We see the contribution of this monograph to be not only in the area of pedagogic theory, pedagogic research, but also in pedagogic practice from the perspective of the literary education didactics. He offers further options on how to work with specific poems at schools and how to lead students to think about all the meanings of the texts.

The semantic differential research results are completed by essay observations and commentaries by the literary critic Igor Fic. He offers not only his personal interpretation insight, which can serve as a certain guide for everyone and not just for people from the ranks of active teachers and their students, a challenge to think, to debate, but perhaps also encouragement. Igor Fic also evaluates the resulting research – students' commentaries. His observations are direct, comprehensible and educated while providing teachers with strong support in looking for their own paths and possibilities in the didactic potential of the interpreted poems. This enriches and livens up the entire monograph, points to a possible and successful merger between pedagogic research and the needs as required by the everyday pedagogic practice.

Another undisputable benefit of this publication, even from the perspective of application options in further pedagogic research, is the decision made by the authors to use the research of the reception of certain poems and also the qualitative focus group research method. The research participants, grammar school students at the age of 15–16 years interpret three selected poems from the original collection in a group discussion (*What did I have...; Spring Rain; Last Leaf*) and thereby offer an insight into their own thinking, visions, experience in reading and life, personal interpretation of selected poetry in an effort to get closer to all its meanings without a teacher's intervention. They thus reflect the depth of their personal experience. We believe that the application of this specific research method is a tossed glove for all researchers as well as teachers in direct pedagogic practice.

The publication *Poetry and Young Readers: Researching the Reception of Specific Poems* has a clear and lucid structure. It proves that the method of quantitative pedagogic research (semantic differential) and the qualitative method (focus group) can also be successfully and effectively combined and utilized when researching the reception of specific poems. The book contains many inspirational suggestions for pedagogic researcher and literature teachers at all school levels, which lead them and their students to see that it is possible to deepen personal experience brought on by poetry text, to

understand them better and express them. We are convinced that this monograph will attract the interest of all who wish and have the courage to set out on a path of research, perception and studying the magical power of poetry.

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Educational Values in Contemporary School

Eva Nováková

BEREŽNICKA, M. (2010). *Wartości kształcenia we współczesnej szkole*. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UP.

The author of "Educational Values in Contemporary School", doctor Małgorzata Bereżnicka, works in the famous Pedagogical University of Krakow, Poland. She is an author of over thirty articles in the field of education and co-author of several textbooks on integrated teaching for primary schools as well as on mathematics for special schools. Her book "Educational Values in Contemporary School" was published in 2010. As E. Kameduła writes on its cover, for a long time both theorists and practitioners have been demanding some actions to remedy the situation in the educational system which does not meet the expectations of politicians, teachers as well as parents' and students' environment. Małgorzata Bereżnicka's work can serve as an inspiration for solving a number of problems and support the initiatives taken by the implementers of educational activities.