

Contemporary Children Literature: Its Growth Today

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Abstract

Introducing picture story books to children may be a normal and very natural thing for adults to do. Picture story books are meant to introduce the learning process through a fun way of phenomenal children's tales, one of which is contemporary children literature. Through Bayer's contemporary children literature theory analysis, there are several core aspects that become points of analysis in every contemporary story; social justice and crime, writing back history, and postmodern and genre. Children's stories within the scope of the contemporary genre provide more learning in the social, historical and cultural spheres for the little ones starting from an early age which will help them grow and develop to become individuals with a good social sense in society. Apart from that, there are also moral messages that can be a lesson for parents and adults who guide the course of the story so that contemporary children's literature in the form of a picture book becomes a good place for learning and interpretation for all people to learn lessons from it.

Keywords: children literature, picture book, contemporary, social, culture, history.

Introduction

The notion of multicultural and the pluralism of the world have brought up and changed the contemporary issues in children literature as the important notion since the world becoming "borderless". I believe the post-modern perspective has led the children literature's themes shifted as the dynamic activities of the people that have led the changing of the world becoming multi ethnic order. The contemporary issues such as ethnic and identity clearly affects the paradigm in children literature such as the children stories, children poems, children picturebooks, and children nursery. The multiculturalism context in children literature emerges from the cross relation boundaries of the people, race and color, nation state and cross cultured as well. Verdell (2013) in her research dealing with multi- ethnic American Children poems stated the diverse viewpoints reflected in the poetry of parallel cultures enable us to show children firsthand both the sameness

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and the differences that make the human landscape so dynamic and fascinating. The power of multicultural children literature covers the social background and history of the works so that the children literature works have their own cultural image, typical tradition, personal and social experiences. At the very beginning the folktales and the fairy tales as well according to Jack Zipes (2012) intertwine the culture, tradition and social values. The multiculturalism and cross boundaries in children literature leads to the actual issues in line with the contemporary issues in children literature. Nikolajeva (1995) argues contemporary writers for children are revolting, introducing new, daring themes and new narrative devices, bringing children's literature closer to the modern, or if one so wishes, the postmodern novel.

The notion of the picturebooks views the children book as the integration between the text and the illustration. Hence, the illustration functions as the reflection of the story and could give more additional meaning to the text. The contemporary children picturebooks usually are against the traditional rules of the narrative structure of the classic picturebooks and fairy tales/folktales. The post – modern perspectives of children picturebooks cover the intertextuality and attempt to parody the traditional fairy tales/folktales. It is not merely about narrative structure but it is more about the metafiction. Such the stories from Italo Calvino and Philip Pullman could be as the examples of how the metafictional elements are applied in the contemporary works.

Further, the sociocultural perspective in children literature today tends to revalidate the history, values, tradition, and culture. The recreating of the children literature works is as a result of the post colonialism and the wave of postmodernism as well. It is post - industrial phenomena that is contributing to such changing of the narrative construction particularly in children stories. I, then combines the Anglo – European/ western literary folk/fairytales context and the oral tradition as the typical of their own and original tradition. The issue of identity consequently becomes the actual issue due to the case of this context. The conveying of values, culture, tradition as well as the identity of one nation in the contemporary context could carry out through the picture books for the children. Kummerling-Meibauer (2018) states some picturebooks convey a universal message, which contributes to their virtual longevity, even when they have vanished from bookshops. The picture book is not only the media of literacy for the children but also it is the media to learn the literature as the text such as the metaphorical aspects. Purcell (2016) educators

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use picture books as a medium through which to provide children with a grounding in aesthetic, social, moral or political issues, whilst also improving their critical literacies and confidence as readers. Through the picture book, the values and ideology are transmitted (Stephens, 1992). Further, today some picture books have the different issues and phenomena with the moral standard in the society and they follow the updating issues developing across nation. More of picture books dismantle the tradition and they are part of the contemporary picture books. According to Backett (2012) Picture books repeatedly challenge the conventions, codes, and norms that traditionally governed the genre. Further (Anstey and Bull, 2004) a picture book can contain more meanings and be able to be read in more ways than the novel, by virtue of the presence of both the illustrative and written texts. The multiculturalism, tradition, socio- cultural, and the literary history are the main and essential factors in the contemporary picturebooks research. The contemporary perspectives in the folk/fairy tales absolutely could not neglect all elements above due to their substances. The diverse of the folk/fairy tales across the nation enables the researcher gaining the new perspectives in research, methodology and approach in children literature realm. The Slavic tradition in Slovenia and the other traditional folktales as the basic inspiration for the literary fairy tales and the contemporary picturebooks contributes to the way of the research conducted and carried out. There will be two ways transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host. The researcher with his competence in multicultural and contemporary research in children literature give the new viewpoints in children methodology research on the other hand, I could expand my knowledge in children literature discourse from the different theories and methodologies. Then, the dissemination of the research project outcomes imparts through the scientific publication of the journals, the participation in some International conferences and through some of the public stakeholders such as the Institute of Ethnography.

The contemporary picture books later on gives the different perspective dealing with the form and genre. It challenges the traditional values and narrative construction of the classical illustrated children's stories. They evolve together with the changing of the social context and redefine themselves through the forms and the content of the story. The narrative construction in contemporary children picturebooks usually begins with the destruction. Setting, characters, plot, somehow are modified against the traditional form of the classic children literature. The Movie of *Hard Candy* (2015) is one of the examples of contemporary notion based on the classical children

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story, Little Red Riding Hood. The Zipes (2000) categorizes the feminists into two main notions, primary text and feminist theory. The notion of the primary text is dealing with the fairy tales' woman writers and their themes. The fairy tales' woman writers criticize the woman exploitation, man domination or patriarchy system toward the inheritance system, marital system, education, and gender relationship.

Then, in 1960's till today, the postmodern and the wave of feminism in Europe and North America address to the redefinition of the feminism and it implies to the way of fairy tales are written. The fairy tales later on rewrite, retell, and recreate by rejecting the older gender perspectives such as traditional gender roles and their identity. Somehow it is not really easy to define the identity of the woman in the context of feminism in the fairy tales though it has been become the long discourse since 17th century. The story of Little Red Riding Hood for an instance, in Perrault's story is still an enigma whether it is the fairy tales or not due to lack of magical elements such as the absence of the fairy and other magical tools. Little Red Riding Hood was much telling the moral values particularly for the woman. The story does not conclude with the happy ending like other fairy tales, but this story ends with the tragic ending when the girl (Little Red Riding Hood eat the wolf up). Perrault's version of Little Red Riding Hood interpreted as the perspective of the gender problem in 17th century that the woman should keep themselves and not allow to hang out alone because there will be a lot of the wolves (danger) in the outside. Thus, the gender issue including the feminism in picturebooks notion has their socio – cultural viewpoint and perspective then it will also have the particular characteristics in the different era. Further, it has the correlation with the tradition of the society where the tales were growing up.

2.1 Contemporary Children Literature

Literature is not only a material that adults can enjoy, literature also has one of the longest and most distinguished traditions of creating books for children perhaps the longest and most distinguished in the world. But still, a lot of us often take them for granted and we don't pay enough attention to what a remarkable cultural resource they are for adults and the kind of cultural work they do for children, and the way that they've served writers and illustrators as a cultural space for creativity subversion and opportunities to experiment with new ideas. So, what kind of cultural work the children's books do well at the level of an individual child? This is one of the places

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where children learn the vocabularies get vicarious experiences and see the images of the world that help them think about how the world works and where they fit into it. by encouraging the child to understand the relationship between nature and society, these texts also appear to ask that the child use his or her position in society—and it is clearly implied in these texts that the child does have one—to preserve nature (Wagner-Lawlor, 1996).

The evolution of academic criticism on children's and young adult literature can be traced from the early work developed in the 1960s when teacher education institutions began to use children's literature as part of their pedagogical instruction (Bradford, 2009). Because children's books are one of the first places that children encounter, these things they're often very direct as a source of information about what a particular period thinks including what a child needs to know and what childhood looks like. Sometimes when we were looking at children's books from the past that's very important to notice the kinds of children who aren't there for instance. So that's one of the things that we have in children's books the great repository of stories that have been shaped for children in the past that tell us about the values of the past and the kinds of struggle sometimes for children's mind that have gone on at decisive moments in history.

Due to this matter of children literature period that actually quite wide and having long history to explain, leads us in focusing our discussion on contemporary era. According to Bayer (2021), the term “contemporary children literature” that she is having in her book, defined as published in the period from the mid-twentieth century up to the first twenty-first century. Steve Padley, in his book *Key Concepts in Contemporary Literature* (2006) defines the contemporary period as commencing at the end of the Second World War. Moser & West (2015) state in their book *Contemporary Literature, 1970-present* that literary works published from 1970 onward represent many styles, themes, forms, and modes of delivery which make contemporary literature is characterized by diversity, proliferation, and fluidity. The origin of this genre is based on the shift of view at the world at domestic and foreign of multicultural environment that grows along with the rapid development of technology progress, philosophy and science, and social change. For short, contemporary children literature also imply a society's social and political viewpoints in certain period in order to teach our children the “reality” of our society's lessons in our surroundings. This body of literature engages with oppression and social justice themes and

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constructs alternative historical narratives through an imaginative and creative lens (Bayer, 2021, p. 1). Bayer continues her statement that the contemporary era, as this time period offers a wide range of multifaceted novels and textual and literary diversity. These issues also formed some of the most significant concerns of writers; discussions of them can be found in Part II of this volume in the essays “Feminism and Women’s Writing,” “Multiculturalism and Globalization,” “Literature and the Environment,” “African American Literature,” and “The Native American Renaissance.” (Moser & West, 2010). Contemporary children literature born as the new period writing style due to the World War II and the events after it, thus it contains meaning from children stories living through and after those events, including the injustices, civil rights, gender and race discrimination, etc.

A lot of people don't realize the most rising movements whether in the term of political, religious or ideological that children's literature has a particular value to them not only gives those ideas to children but it also takes them into the home and introduces them to parents or reinforces ideas that are there. Since then, the scholarly study of fiction for children and young adults has encompassed a number of different academic disciplines, and involves students and academics investigating critical and theoretical as well as political dimensions of children’s and young adult fiction and the politics of its production (Reynolds, 2011). For example, in Britain the rise of the middle class was very associated and documented in the books for children so we know what middle class films look like or what kind of toys middle class children played with in the recent century very much through the books that were created for children. However, we cannot deny that it is also a place where cultural work takes place because each generation of children is being introduced and inducted into culture through the literary culture through children's books and so many of the traditional forms the fairy tales the folk tales different kinds of genres are first encountered in children's books and this is can be very potent as a way of keeping those forms and genres alive and passing them on including to the next generation of writers and artists and it's quite astonishing the number of writers and artists who will say that they based their own style on the children's authors they read from.

Aspects in contemporary children literature

Contemporary children literature characterized by the stories rooted in reality (could actually happen) but the characters usually are fictionalized. Contemporary literature may be said not to reproduce 'reality' but rather to reflect on the relation between reality, fiction and history, often alluding to the ways in which realism and modernism have implicitly represented and thus conceived this relation (Christine & Angeliki, 2015). The stories can imply moral messages related to multiculturalism, socio-history, and social issues values that can teach basic social sciences to children from any early age. Sourced from its characteristics and definitions, contemporary children literature has several important aspects in relation to children's daily readings.

According to Bayer in her book *Contemporary Children and Young Adult Literature* (2021), contemporary children literature is having three distinct and specific areas of concern in children's and young adult fiction; 1.) social justice and crime, 2.) writing back to history, also 3.) postcolonialism and gender. In these distinctive aspects the function to organize this study into three specific but linked areas is taking place. Each aspect areas is focusing in different features or issues related to children literature. This breadth of material fosters inclusivity, demonstrating both the diversity of contemporary children's and young adult literature as well as supporting the wide-ranging scope of this study (Bayer, 2021, p. 2). Through Bayer's aspects of contemporary children literature, the global range academic study of contemporary children literature, its vital themes, the ways to reading and also delivering a crucial critical perspective on the works and its author can be analyzed distinguished precisely.

Through social justice and crime part we can investigate which part of the social justice and crime are represented in the story. The result can be varying such as orphanhood, child crime, human trafficking, modern slavery, and other controversial crime themes. This means to interrogate the connection between children literature and the representation of social justice and inequality crime perspectives in contemporary works. This discussion includes a consideration of how current inequalities causing exploitation of the Global South are depicted in fiction for children and young adults, profoundly affecting children and the literary representations of their lives, experiences, and social/cultural contexts (Bayer, 2021, p. 8).

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Next, in the writing the history Bayer (2021) is highlighting the ways in which contemporary children from postcolonial and multicultural contexts use the genre and its narrative possibilities in order to challenge dominant historical narratives and write back to history. For example, how children literature can be linked with the silenced voice of neglected and marginalised community like Black British. Discussions include representations of migration and children's experience of transnational mobility, the processes of national and cultural identifications, the complexities and inequalities of race and ethnicity, and the impact of racism, xenophobia, religious conflict and persecution (Bayer, 2021, pp. 9–10).

Lastly, Postcolonialism and Gender part serves as the examiner of the intersection between postcolonial oppression and resistance, and issues around gender and identity, presented through the lens of selected contemporary children text. Bayer (2021) states that feminist debates and ideas is needed in this part due to the representation of gender and identity in contemporary children literature, elaborating further on themes such as gender inequality, forms of oppression, the family and its hierarchies and roles.

About Picture Book

Picture book is a children book formed with the sequence of visual illustrations. Usually, the content including visual images and sometimes some text narratives that aimed specifically for early aged children. According to Restanto (2016) a great of visual and textual story that picture books contains valuable literary experience for children. This illustration can be made in various types of form in over period, such as the traditional handmade paint with oils, watercolours, pencils and acrylics. In more modern days, most picture books that published are printed with special ink that is not harmful to the skin, especially for children. The illustrations are also made as varied as possible in order to help build the impression and message of the story, for example black and white illustrations are made to give a simple impression and emphasize messages through words rather than images, or colourful illustrations are made to attract younger children's attention more and help them learning many shapes and colours that make up the story. The purpose of illustrations that formed the picture book is as important as—or more important than—the textual words in telling the story since the target audiences is ranging from 0-10 years old. According to Walsh (2006), by visual images, interaction among reader and text is dissimilar because of the use of images and how images cooperate with words.

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Primarily the visual image is to help conveying the story and life lessons related to emotional intelligence (empathy, forgiveness, kindness), relationships, social connections, and morals that beneficial the children as the early study lesson. Picture book can become the easiest children's books to read because it perceives simplicity art in form but has a meaningful story (Northrup, 2012). Children are expected to be able to understand the images in the book and create their own imagination, dialogue, and visualization in the story. According to Matulka (2008), a good picture series in a story links the reader to the pictures and generates the implication of the pictures. They also can form their opinion through the language when they try to express themselves in summarizing the plot or characters of the picture books. The purpose of reading visual images is to engage a reader in the story at an amount of diverse levels (Restanto, 2016). Picture book is a good trigger for children for understanding the relation between the context in real world with their imagination through picture book. The reader would be searching and visualizing a plot while portraying on background information of the world, and information about narrative genre whether it is provided through pictures or words (Restanto, 2016). For example, a child wouldn't know the images of a chair if he didn't know the real chair as the thing to sit on. In this term, even if a child doesn't know the name of some illustrations, his curiosity will lead him to know more by keep searching or asking to his parents or teachers, enable his active learning skill to on. Thus, picture book is really a good stimulation for children to learn about their surroundings.

Picture book as a contemporary literary work in nowadays era brings so much advantages for children. As time goes by, children can still learn about the importance of understanding the context of socio-cultural, socio-historical and political issues that are represented in a picture book. Through children picture book, of course not a serious social issues reading as is usually consumed by adults, but more on the moral values and lessons that can be taken for the little ones' general knowledge. This intelligence will later become a benchmark of children's development in the society since the children already meet their socio-values while comprehending on the picture book. Children will become more aware to their surrounding environment, more responsive in understanding and responding to social issues, and have a broader perspective so that they have high tolerance and sympathy in society. Later on, children can easily know their role in society and provide solutions to existing social problems. Contemporary children literature which is represented in the form of picture book in reality has a great benefit for children in both academic

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and social matters. According to Ma and DeLoache (2011) Picture books provide verbal and nonverbal scaffoldings via texts and illustrations to young children and how young readers transfer the knowledge gained in picture books into real life takes place is the focus of researcher observations to young children.

Socio-Cultural Analysis of Little Red Riding Hood

When we are talking about children literature around the world, French literature can be proud of one of their world-renowned works, *Little Red Riding Hood*. Who has never read or heard of a story about a little girl in a red robe who wants to visit her grandmother's house across a deep forest but encounters an obstacle when dealing with the Mr. Wolf who wants to eat her up? Even as we grow, some of us are also spoiled by the existence of several adaptations and variations stories of this one European fairy tale in many forms along with the development pace of the times. This prominent work has apparently been written in several versions by several authors. A French author, Charles Perrault is the first writer of this children fairy tale who introduced the authentic version of Little Red Riding Hood in 1690s. Followed by some minor different versions from other authors such as Victorian Dinah Mulock Craik, who let the main character to be eaten up and the well-known Brothers Grimm that have written their work in the version where the poor little girl still alive after being eaten because of the help of a huntsman who happened to pass by. Although there are several versions from different authors, the core story of Little Red Riding Hood as children's reading has not changed much and has more or less the same plot, setting and characters.

Meanwhile the picture book version of Little Red Riding Hood in the context of contemporary analysis provides several advantages that can be obtained by children from an early age even from they haven't be able to recognize letters. Using Bayer's contemporary children literature analysis theory, Little Red Riding Hood is having some aspects that Bayer comes up with.

In social justice and crime, the messages of the story get a lot of highlights. We cannot argue that the main value of this story is to be careful with people that we haven't known well, but what are the social justice and crime in this story is really taking place? In the story, the mother character of Little Red Riding Hood gives her an assignment to visit and bring some food for her

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grandmother who lives in the opposite village. To reach her grandmother's village, Little Red Riding Hood needs to go through a dense forest where there are many dangers for minors like her to walk through the forest alone. From this we can assume in terms of reflection on the real world that parents cannot yet order their children to do dangerous things alone without supervision. Because safety is one of the rights of children to be fulfilled by parents and those around them. In some countries there are also criminal laws and sanctions that can ensnare parents for negligence in supervising children.

In the climax part, it is also shown when Little Red Riding Hood travels to her grandmother's house across the forest, she is intercepted by Mr. Wolf who intends to eat her up. Mr. Wolf put out various tricks so that the little girl would come with him and become his meal. In short, Mr. Wolf managed to eat the grandmother as well as the little girl. In here, we all can interpret that Mr. Wolf as the real people character who are dangerous for a child, such as kidnappers, sex offenders, or fraudsters who have bad intentions to take advantage of the innocence of children.

In historical aspect we can conclude that Little Red Riding Hood is a universal contability. Much like a number of other fairy tales, which seem to have grown up around older oral tales 'Little Red Riding Hood' can be traced back to the 10th century when it was circulating as a French oral tale, and also existed as a fourteenth-century Italian story named 'The False Grandmother', though it only became popular under this name in the 1690s, when it appeared in the work of the French author, Charles Perrault. It rapidly established itself as one of the best-loved and familiar fairy stories in the western world. Later on, because of its simplicity in storyline yet having powerful message for children, Little Red Riding Hood then spread into Middle East and Asia. Since then, many versions from different countries are produced such as Lon Po Po from China, Pretty Salma from Africa, and Petit Rouge from Cajun ethnicity. Seeing the many versions and adaptations from various countries and different families gives us an understanding that story from Little Red Riding Hood can be enjoyed by various groups and provide moral values and good learning for children around the world.

In gender aspect, Little Red Riding Hood is told as female which gives two different perspectives. The first, as a girl, Little Red Riding Hood is reflected as having feminine traits such as being innocent and gentle, yet careless about the threats surrounding her. This is proven from

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her trait when Little Red Riding Hood got into trouble when she was followed by the wolf who would later harm herself and other innocent people (her grandmother). This reflects, in the real world, that as women we must be able to overcome our lack of awareness and become more courageous in making decisions. Apart from that, as one of the minority groups, women should be more careful of strange men who approach them. Just like Mr. Wolf, an irresponsible man can do various tricks and ways so that the 'little girl' can fall into his trap. Second, even though Little Red Riding Hood is said to be a girl, but she also has the courage to carry out her mother's duties. Even though she had to go through a lonely and horrific forest route, this did not dampen the spirit and courage of the little girl to walk alone to her grandmother's house. This is also inseparable from the red hood which she is wearing that being also the main characteristic in this story. The red color itself is a symbol and meaning of courage and burning passion. From this we can get an understanding that the character of being brave, never giving up, focused on goals is not only owned by men but also women.

In general socio-cultural perspective, the story of Little Red Riding Hood as contemporary children literature provides moral messages that are in accordance with life in the real world. The precautionary attitude from children, parents, and even women as a vulnerable community is highly prioritized. Even though it has the impression of a crucial value, the storyline and visual picture book of this story are written in an interesting way so that it can be enjoyed by various groups from all over the world.

Socio-Cultural Analysis of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Still from the same European continent, Brother Grimm's Snow White and the Seven Dwarf is a worldwide phenomenal work of children's literature. Published initially in 1812, this German literature first appeared under the original title Sneewittchen. Later on, this work was revised and refined by its author until the 19th century in their book Grimm's Fairy Tales. After succeed and become famous in its own country, even this fairy tale spread to other European continents such as Italy, France, British, Netherlands, and even to the Eastern Europe. Doesn't stop just from there, this children's fairy tale is later known throughout the world, introduced from generation to generation until now. Because of its legendaryness until today's ages, the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarf has been adapted into many other literary works such as theatrical plays, novels, animations and even live action films in the modern era. Many interpretations and analyzes are

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given from various points of view of this story to keep up with the times, but in this study Bayer's analysis theory is used to accommodate the storyline in the lens of socio-cultural perspective of contemporary children literature.

Starting from the social justice and crime aspect, Snow White's story emphasizes the value of "good and evil" on the main character Snow White, the most beautiful girl in the whole world and her stepmother who is a woman with magical powers. The antagonistic nature of the stepmother is shown when the mother is jealous and annoyed when she knows from her magic mirror that the most beautiful girl in the whole kingdom is Snow White, her stepdaughter, not her. Obsessed with beauty, Snow White's stepmother wants to be the most beautiful woman and has a plan to kill her stepdaughter. By using an apple that has been enchanted, the stepmother manages to make Snow White die with one condition: the spell can only be canceled if Snow White is kissed by her true love.

In the real world, of course, the stepmother represents the character of a mother who is not good, where the mother can feel angry and irritated with her child and these feelings actually lead to the desire to kill is grow within her. Even if it's just a stepmother, jealousy shouldn't bring criminal feelings such as wanting to injure or kill, either physically or mentally, any other human being.

Still the same as the Little Red Riding Hood story, this section can be a lesson for parents and any adult. Child safety is a fundamental child's life, so that their health and their lives as individuals must be protected. The role of adults is also important in supervising children's activities, and parents are also expected to be smarter in maintaining moods, thoughts, and moods so they don't get carried away by momentary emotions that can harm the parents themselves and their children.

Next, Snow White and the Seven Dwarf is having the correlation between the aspects of its history along with postmodern and gender. In this story, the representation of women is highlighted by the presence of the main character Snow White and her stepmother, the Evil Queen. Considering this, the approach from the perspective of feminism in the realm of contemporary literature is suitable to be applied in analyzing this children's literature which is popular among girls.

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One thing that's being the emphasizing in this story is the beauty standard for women in the society. The term beauty is always voiced in the story that represents the fake standard in patriarchal society. A woman seems to have it in order to be accepted in society. as implied by the evil queen character who has the heart to kill Snow White as her own stepson, just because she wants to be the only and most beautiful woman in the entire kingdom. This turned out to be intended to be if the Evil Queen becomes the most beautiful queen then she can use it to get a lot of power to always be in young and pretty shapes forever. As if maintaining good appearance for her is a life or date matter. As a woman, she doesn't feel confident with her other abilities, like using magic and having the privilege as the new queen but rather she uses them to be obsessed with appearance and ended up harm another woman because of jealousy. Through protagonist character of Snow White

The marginalized gender roles between men and women on the working field is also shown in this fairy tale when Snow White lives with the seven dwarfs on the condition that she agrees to cook and clean the house while the dwarfs work to find food outside. The character of Snow White also becomes a symbol of a submissive housewife who is only allowed to work in the house and the dwarfs are also stereotyped as the head of the family. In the real patriarchal perspective, Snow White as a woman would not be able to survive without protection and financial assistance from the dwarfs.

Lastly, the protagonist character of Snow White that is symbolized by passive and obedient characteristics stereotypically implied about how women should act towards men. In the story, when Snow White was unconscious (apparent death) due to the influence of the magic apple from the Evil Queen, a prince came and kissed her to free the curse. After she woke up, the prince also asked Snow White to marry and she immediately agreed without any resistance. This storyline may look cute, especially for children, but in reality, a woman who is not in a conscious state cannot give consent to be touched nor even to be kissed by a foreign-strange man. In particular, the character Snow White in the story is still at a very young age of 14, and is not yet fit for the mature realm of romance such as kissing and marriage. This is considered to be in the realm of sexual harassment and pedophilia against underage girls. In the end of the story, it's narrated that Prince Philip and Snow White have married and live together happily ever after. This part also implies that a woman with docile characteristic towards her man is going to have a comfort and

safety life forever. Whereas in male-dominated reality women are required to submit and surrender if they want to live happily.

It can be concluded from three aspects of Bayer's socio-cultural analysis, Snow White's story is very strong from a feminist perspective and is closely related to social reality. The protagonist Snow White represents stereotyped and marginal traits for women in a patriarchal society, such as having to be obedient, innocent, and good at cooking and managing the house. Meanwhile, the antagonist character of the Evil Queen also represents the existence of a beauty standard made by society where women must be beautiful to be accepted around them. This makes competition between women intense and can be detrimental to fellow women. It is also inseparable from the character of a prince who suddenly comes is described as a foreign male figure who can manipulate, harass and deceive innocent girls with the lure of love and happiness.

Snow White is indeed a good reading to teach children about daring to dream and love as they have been identified in fairy tales of princesses from an outside perspective. However, in the socio-cultural point, Snow White's fairy tale also holds a lot of moral messages for children with well guidance from their parents and closest adults. Among them are important messages to protect ourselves from strangers, understand the concept of consent for physical contact with the opposite sex, that both men and women can choose their roles and identities in society and household, and recognize our own values as a form of self-love so that we can be more confident, smart and not easily swayed by societal standards. It is hoped that children will not only accept the storyline in Snow White at face value, but also be able to equip themselves with this implicit moral message which will be useful for their growth and development as individuals.

Conclusion

Picture books that contain contemporary literature have a positive impact on their readers. Even though it is intended for children from the age range of zero to early adolescents, it turns out that the social representations in this picture book also have several messages for parents and other adults such as teachers who accompany their little ones. Through the Bayer's contemporary children theory to analyze the *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Snow White and Seven Dwarfs* fairy tales, it is found that social values that focus on the aspect of justice and crime and gender teach children to be more careful and take care of themselves from an early age. Due to the undeniable

fact that children are one of the minor groups that can become targets of crimes, especially sexual harassment. Adults can also understand this children's story so that in the future they can provide better protection and attention to their children and are not negligent in their duty of guarding their hearts so that they can grow into good individuals. Through mentoring and providing proper knowledge to children, they can learn their social situation from an early age so as to enable them to grow sensitivity, tolerance, be up to date on current issues and the role they will take in society when they become individuals. grow up later.

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