


VIEWS ON THE PICTUREBOOK			Literature
			Keywords: picturebook, illustrations, fairy tales, curriculum, crossover.
Milena Mileva Blažič	Faculty of Education. University of Ljubljana. Ljubljana, Slovenia.		
Arburim Iseni	Faculty of Philology. Department of English Language and Literature. University of Tetovo - Tetovo, North Macedonia.		
Abstract			
<p>The article presents selected Slovenian and foreign definitions of the picturebook, its classification and theories. It presents the literary-historical and theoretical development of the picturebook in Slovenia, drawing on foreign (M. Nikolajeva, S. Beckett, B. Ktimmerling-Meibauer) and Slovenian (M. Kobe, D. Haramija and J. Batic) scholars. We try to present the picturebook as an object of study and therefore examine the development of the integration of picturebooks into the Slovenian school system through the curriculum.</p>			

METHODOLOGY

The method of the paper is based on descriptive and analytical-interpretative research methods. The data processing process of the discussed (foreign and Slovenian) theoretical perspectives on picturebooks included the features of qualitative analysis, textual analysis methods and comparative analysis of the different perspectives. The research problem was to find common and distinctive features in the analysed views, both foreign (M. Nikolajeva, S. Beckett, B. Kummerling-Meibauer) and Slovenian (M. Kobe, D. Haramija and J. Batič). The introduction of picturebooks into curricular reading and teaching programmes relates to the literary-historical development of Slovenian picturebooks, theoretical views and production.

LITERARY AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

As we explain in our article on Slovenian picturebooks and literary-historical turning points (Blazič 2018: 90-95), Slovenian picturebooks are divided into five periods, with a special place given to the first Slovenian picturebook Martin Krpan z Vrha (Martin Krpan from the Peak, 1917). The picturebook was not published until 1917 in the collection Knjiznica za otroke (Children’s Library), although the first part had already appeared in the Slovenian Herald (1858). In 1855, Levstik wrote two parts of Martin Krpan’s book (Martin Krpan, 1917), the first part of which was published in the Slovenskinarod (1858). The first part is a fairy tale, while the second part is a fairy tale and refers to Andersen’s fairy tale The Lighter (at that time Levstik was translating Andersen from German). During its literary reception, Martin Krpan has become a youthful read, i.e. it is mainly read by children and/or young people as a picturebook. In the period 1900-1918, the so-called Schwentner picturebooks or “picturebooks”, i.e. book editions with pictures or illustrations, were published (Schwentner 1911: 51-52).

Even before the publication of the first Slovenian picturebook that met all the criteria (Slovenian author and illustrator, publication in Slovenia and the stated purpose of a “library for children”), picturebooks with illustrations by G. Kaspari began to appear, e.g. *Lahkihnoznaokrog* (1912). The word picturebook also appeared in 1939, when an article by A. Siroka, *A Short Conversation with the Author of a picturebook*, appeared in *UciteljskiTovaris* (Teacher’s Companion). The author uses various expressions, such as “executed the drawings”, and “supplied the illustrations”. R. Klopčič used the phrase ‘executed the drawings’ in his adaptation of *Dedek Miha* (1939) and the phrase ‘supplied the illustrations’ in Gustav Silih’s novel *Belidvor* (1938).

A special place in Slovenian literary history is occupied by the picturebook *Makalonca* by F. SaleskoFinzgar from 1944, who drew the material for his fairy tale from the stories of shepherds, although the thousand-year-old written story of *Makalonca* is documented in the Arabic fairy tale collection *A Thousand and One Nights*. *Makalonca* is the title of a collection consisting of four fairy tales, namely *Makalonca*, *HudobinPotepin*, *The Son of Card player* and *The Valley of the Serpent*. What is less well known is that the Slovenian architect J. Plečnik designed the graphic design. He added ornaments, red initials, handwritten letters, vignettes and introductory sentences in black.

The period from 1918 to the end of the Second World War was characterised by female authors who had a great influence on the development of Slovenian youth literature. They introduced many innovations: Genres (fairy tales), book forms (picturebooks), sensibility (illustrations), and the audience among children and young people also grew.

In the period after the Second World War and until Slovenia’s independence, the magazine *Ciciban* (1945-) made a significant contribution to the development of youth literature, illustrations and picturebooks, as did the Academy of Fine Arts (1945-), from which the first Slovenian academic illustrators M. Stupica, M. JemecBožič, A. GosnikGodec and J. Reichman graduated. The illustrators made an outstanding contribution to the development of the original Slovenian picturebook, which is a work of art. Among the numerous book collections, especially those of the publishing house Mladinska knjiga, founded in 1945, the collections *Cebelica* (1953-) and *Veliki slikanice* (1967-) are worth mentioning. The development of literature for young people was promoted by the Pioneer Library (1948-) and the magazine *Otrok in knjiga* (1972-). During this period, picturebooks became popular, e.g. *Muri the Cat* by Kovič with illustrations by J. Reichman (1975), *Martin Krpan* by Levstik with illustrations by H. Smrekar (1917) and T. Kralj (1954), the popular *Mojca Pokrajculja* with illustrations by M. Vogelnik (1943), M. Kralj (1954) and M. Mancek (1976), E. Copatarica’s *Kitty Copatarica* with illustrations by M. Vogelnik (1943), M. Kralj (1954) and M. Manéček (1976). *Peroci*, illustrated by A. Gošnik Godec (1957, 1982), and the radio play *Zvezdica Zaspanka* by F. Milčinski Jezek, published in book form with illustrations by M. Cerjak in 1995 and with illustrations by G. Vahn in 2004.

In the period following Slovenia's independence and accession to the European Union, the Slovenian publishing industry has become highly commercialised. The values of neoliberalism with the rise of consumerism are visible in the publishing industry, many self-publishing houses appear, some publishing houses go bankrupt shortly after their foundation (e.g. EPTA), and prizes are created, some of which are directly linked to the picturebook, e.g. Kristina Brenkova's prize for the original Slovenian picturebook (2004), and others are indirectly linked to it, e.g. the original Slovenian picturebook (2004) (also award for illustration named by Hinko Smrekar). Popularisation of picturebooks was probably also promoted by the organised storytelling events that began in the 1930s under the titles "Fairy Tale Lessons for King Alexander's Birthday" (1931) and "Slovenian Writer Tells a Fairy Tale" (12 May 1932 in the Blue Hall of the Hotel Union). *Prize* (1993). In the period after 1991, the picturebook became a central book form with several titles and different genres.

LITERARY-THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

K. Brenk mentions in her unpublished manuscript *On Illustrations in Children's picturebooks and Books for Young People* (1967), among others, illustrated alphabet books, adaptations, reproductions, Schwentner's picturebooks, M. Gaspari, Martin Krpan, illustrations in the magazine *Mladi rod*, the painter K. She also mentions beehives, refers to M. Stupica, L. Osterc, I. Subica, M. Volk, etc. Based on this manuscript, she probably wrote the accompanying text to B. Hurlimann's *The World in a picturebook: Modern picturebooks from 24 Countries* (1968), which gives new dimensions to the beginnings of youth literature. M. Stupica writes the following about the illustrations in Valjavec's *The Shepherd*:

'What a luminous richness, drawing from a treasure trove of folk creativity, is found in these few pages. A world full of beehive ornaments, inscriptions of folk symbols, rustic log cabins and home-made stoves, beautiful hundred-petalled flowers lined up in front of the small, insatiable viewer. /.../ She is an excellent draughtswoman, her colour palette is cheerful, optimistic, aesthetically restrained. Despite her high level of training, the painter is very close to the children's world of longing /.../ Her pictures are narrative /.../ No wonder that Slovenian texts have found their way onto the European cultural market through her illustrations (Brenk 1967: 11).

K. Brenk published the first international monograph on Swiss picturebooks during her time as an editor at the Mladinski book publishing house in Ljubljana (1949-1973), in which Slovenian illustrators, in particular M. Stupica, are also mentioned several times. B. Hurlimann *The world in a picturebook*. In the chapter on Eastern European picturebooks, Slovenia was mentioned in the chapter on Yugoslavia. In the bio-bibliographical appendix she lists the following Slovenian illustrators (and also publishes some of their illustrations): M. Bizovicar with an illustration from Prezihov Voranc's book *Prvimaj/The First May* (1961), A. Gosnik Godec (Prezihov Voranc: *Levi devzej/The Left Devzej*, 1962) and L. Osterc (E. Peroci: *Hisicaizkock/The House of Dice*, 1964).

Most attention was paid to M. Stupica and her illustration from M. Aymé's book *Swans* (1968). When M. Stupica was mentioned, her illustrations abroad were also mentioned, e.g. from the translation of M. Valjavec's fairy tale *The Little Shepherd* (1958) into German (*Der Hirt*, trans. Else Byhan). The fairy tale was published by AltantisKinderbuch in 1967. Hurlimann also quotes illustrations by M. Stupic, namely poems by the German poet J. Kruss *Frosch und Vogel*, *Huhn und Hahn*, from 1964. She also mentions the illustrator M. Vogelnik and publishes her illustration of Andersen's *Thumbelina* (1957) and I. Seljak Copié and his illustration of I. Andric's *Aska and the Wolf* (1963).

In 2004, the K. Brenk Prize for the original Slovenian picturebook was established. During this time, classic works became picturebook literature for young people (e.g. Martin Krpan, Preseren's ballads and romances...). New picturebook formats emerged: e-Macek Muri (2001), Tipanka A. KermaunerSnezarova (2004), picturebooks without text, e.g. M. Kastelic's *The Boy and the House* (2015), L. Praprotnik-Zupančič's interactive iPad picturebook *1001 Fairy Tales* (2011).

This period also saw the publication of the first academic monograph on the picturebook, *Poetikaslikanice / Poetics of the picturebook* (Haramija and Batic 2013). In this work, the authors, who are key Slovenian scholars of youth literature and picturebooks and have made a significant contribution to the development of Slovenian youth literature, define the picturebook as a unity of text and illustration, which are also linked in terms of content through a "content-form relationship" or interaction between literary and visual reading: "/s/ The picturebook has three semantic components: Text, illustrations, and the content-form relationship between text and illustration" (Haramija and Batic 2013: 23). In the article *Theory of the picturebook*, they refer to the theory of M. Nikolajeva and consider the Slovenian findings of M. Koba and I. Saksida, who originally developed analyses of picturebooks regarding their multimodality:

A picturebook is a particular form of a multimodal book that expresses its form simultaneously through a linguistic and visual code. Every picturebook has three basic components, namely text, illustrations and a content-form relationship (interaction). A holistic literature-image reading of picturebooks leads to a deeper understanding of picturebooks, as the combination of the meanings of the text and the illustrations influences the transaction, i.e. the transfer of meanings from the text to the illustrations and vice versa (Batic and Haramija 2014: 5).

M. Kobe is one of the first PhD students to have worked in the field of young adult literature with a particular focus on fairy tales and picturebooks. She has written systematically about picturebooks. Her notable contributions include *Adaptations of Classic Works of World Literature for Young People in picturebooks for the Youngest* (1972), *Slovenian picturebook in Space: Some Aspects* (1976), *Slovenian picturebook and Book Illustration for Young People: 1945-1975* (1978), *Slovenian picturebook 1976-1986* (1986), *The Study of Youth Literature, Its Tasks and Possibilities* (1982), *The Study of Youth Literature, Its Tasks and Possibilities* (1982).

In her monograph *Views on Youth Literature* (1987), she defined and classified the Slovenian picturebook as “a typical genre of youth literature” (Kobe 1987: 22), and she and M. Augustin defined the term picturebook in the *Encyclopaedia of Slovenia* (1997). In her article “*Introductory words on the picturebook*”, Kobe defines the picturebook as a “visual-textual monolith” (Kobe 2004: 42).

INTERNATIONAL VIEWS ON THE PICTUREBOOK

Many relevant monographs on the picturebook have been published, especially since 2000, so that only a few will be mentioned here as suggestions for further research. The monograph by E. Arzipe and M. Styles, *Children Reading Pictures: Interpreting Visual Texts*, 2002 (2015, 2023), has had a major influence on Slovenian and international research into literature for young people. D. Haramija and J. Batič, for example, also consider the theoretical background of the monograph *Postmodern Picturebooks* by L. R. Sipa and S. Pantaleo: *Play, Parody, and Self-Referentiality* (2008), as well as S. Pantaleo’s monograph *Exploring Student Response to Contemporary Picturebooks* (2008). Visual literacy is promoted by British researcher, illustrator and Professor M. Salisbury, who has published 100 Great Children’s picturebooks and launched a postgraduate programme in children’s illustration in 2015. In this monograph he discusses the trends in 20th century art from the Russian Constructivists, the Italian Futurists, and the post-war Neo-Romantics to the early 21st century. Together with M. Salisbury and M. Styles he is co-author of *Children’s Picturebooks: The Art of Visual Storytelling* (2012, 2020). A comprehensive monograph by B. Kummerling-Meibauer, *The Routledge Companion to Picturebooks* (2017), has five chapters (concepts and themes, types of picturebooks, interdisciplinarity, fields, adaptations and revisions). In his monograph *The Pleasures of Children’s Literature*, one of the chapters is dedicated to picturebooks (Nodelman 2002).

Relevant cognitive theories on picturebooks include the work of M. Nikolajeva, S. Beckett (2009) and B. Kummerling-Meibauer (2014, 2017, and 2020). M. Nikolajeva emphasises, among other things, the complementarity of verbal and visual text (2001, 2003), S. Beckett understands the picturebook as a hybrid genre (2012). B. Kummerling-Meibauer reflects on pictures, text and illustrations and the “theory of mind” or multimodality of picturebooks (cf. M. Nikolajeva summarises the bifurcation theory of the picturebook in her article *Verbal and Visual* (2003). She defines the picturebook as a two-dimensional medium in which communication takes place through visual and verbal signs. The hermeneutic analysis begins with the whole or the general, continues with the details, then returns - this time with greater understanding - to the general and from there back to the details. This movement from one to the other and back again takes place in the so-called hermeneutic circle. In the picturebook, the reader opens up the whole by exploring the verbal and visual details. Wherever he begins - with the verbal or the visual - he awakens expectations, which in turn lead to new experiences, which in turn awaken new expectations. The reader thus moves from the verbal to the visual and back again, constantly deepening their understanding (Nikolajeva 2003: 7). Her study of the interaction between text and illustration,

which can be symmetrical as words and pictures tell the same story, is complementary (filling in the gaps of the other), graded (pictures emphasise and exceed the meaning of the words and vice versa - a complex dynamic), contrapuntal (contradictory dynamics) and adversarial (incompatible interaction; ambiguous message). M. Nikolajeva (2003) analyses the relationship between the verbal and the visual, the scene (internal, external; Description, representation), characterisation (verbal or visual actions), perspective (showing or telling), point of view (who looks) and narrative voice (who speaks), time and movement-temporality (complementarity and compensation of causality and temporality), simultaneous sequence, modality (objective and subjective perception in narration), (non-)mimetic use and the audience of two generations. He mainly analyses Anglo-American picturebooks and deals extensively with the original picturebooks by M. Sendak (e.g. *Where the Wild Things Are*, 1963, in Slovenian language *Tam, kjer so zverinedoma*, 2013).

S. Beckett (2012) has introduced the concept of the picturebook as a genre with several titles. She categorises picturebooks into art picturebooks, picturebooks without text, picturebooks with allusions to art, celebrity picturebooks and multi-generational picturebooks. According to her typology, art picturebooks include, for example, *Lenora* (F. Preseren, *M. L. Stupica* (1991)) and *The Ugly Duckling* (H. C. Andersen, *M. Stupica* (2009)). Slovenian picturebooks without text include *Amalietti's Maruska Potepuska* (1977), *Ferdo, velikiptic* (Ferdo, the Big Bird) (Peklar 2016) and *The Little Boy and the House* (Kastelic 2015). One of the first celebrity picturebooks was published by the singer Madonna (English Flowers 2003), and a similar picturebook is *Hey, Velededi* (McCartney 2019).

B. Kummerling-Meibauer is a leading researcher in the field of young adult literature and picturebooks. Two of her works on picturebooks, *Picturebooks: Representation and Narration* (2014) and the volume she co-edited with N. Goga, focus primarily on picturebooks as didactic tools, works of art, or as books defined by the connections between illustrations and text (Kummerling-Meibauer and Goga 2017: 1). We can see that picturebooks are particularly well suited for a holistic study of the relationship between general cognitive development, linguistic competence, visual competence and reading and writing skills, as these are usually the first books that young children come into contact within Western societies. She points out that in the complex relationship between images and texts, it is necessary to consider the relationship between the images on the image level, the relationship between the texts on each page on the text level, and the close relationship between the images and the text (Kummerling-Meibauer and Goga 2017: 1). The picturebook is suitable for developing understanding and empathy for the feelings of another (Kummerling-Meibauer 2020: 7), as different people understand and feel the same thing differently, which makes the picturebook a suitable medium for combining empathy and cognition: "Theory of mind is the key to a holistic understanding of picturebook stories, which typically depict the interaction of characters whose emotions, desires, beliefs, and intentions drive the narrative on both textual and visual levels" (Kummerling-Meibauer and Goga 2017: 1). The literary character on the visual and textual level is created through the representation of the

characteristics of the literary character, their verbal and non-verbal behaviour, their physiognomy and body language, the representation of the character's mental and emotional state, the inferences about the character's characteristics based on the representation of the imaginary space in which the character is located, and the representation of the character from different perspectives together.

In order to identify with literary characters, children need to be able to transfer their prior knowledge of real people to fictional beings, but this is not a given. Firstly, they must learn to distinguish between a real person and a (literary) character. Identification is a complex cognitive concept, but there are textual cues that support identification, such as sympathy for a character who is similar to the reader, empathy for a character who is in a certain situation, and an affinity for a character who is the reader's role model. When children are three or four years old, this is very noticeable because then they are able to act out a scene that lasts a long time. Role play is a cognitive skill that requires the ability to use objects and pretend they are something else (e.g. that a shoe box is a bed for a doll), to attribute properties or actions to objects (e.g. that a teddy bear is sleeping) and to include invisible objects (e.g. an invisible dog as a playmate) (Carlson and White 2013 in Kummerling-Meibauer 2017: 1).

THE PICTUREBOOK IN THE SLOVENIAN PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

There is a connection between the development of the picturebook, the theoretical views on the picturebook and the Slovenian curriculum or the point in time when the picturebook as a concept and as an individual example became part of the reading curriculum. Therefore, we analysed the curricula (hereafter UN) for Slovenian in primary school from 1869 to 2018. When comparing the results with literary-historical findings on the development of the picturebook in Slovenia, we found certain parallels. We were also interested in how the structure of the curricula affects the development of reading skills in the first and second three-year cycle and what kind of reading skills they provide for (how pupils should learn verbal and visual reading and in what proportion).

The UN from 1848 to 1918 has been shown to have similar developmental characteristics to other juvenile literature. Although there were no Slovenian picturebooks between 1848 and 1918, we also analysed the curricula from this period. The focus was on the acquisition of reading, writing, grammar, spelling and writing. In the period from 1918 to 1941, however, the UN already listed literary works for the 'reading list' (UN 1936). The focus here was on works of adventure and adult literature, which in the course of their reception became so-called 'youth reading' (e.g. Swift's *Gulliver*, Scott's *Ivanhoe*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*), but frequent reference is also made to the reading of fables and fairy tales (UN 1926). After 1945, literature became an integral part of the curriculum, with fairy tales and picturebooks recommended at the beginning of the school year (UN 1946). Lists of translated literature appeared from 1953 to 1991; the most frequently recommended authors for young people were Andersen and the Brothers Grimm, mostly in the

form of picturebooks. The terms fairy tale and picturebook became a constant in the curriculum from 1945 and especially after 1954. After 1991, the proportion of translated literature decreased, with the Brothers Grimm (year 1) and Andersen (year 2) being the constants. In the period from 1945 to 1991, according to the sources found so far, picturebooks were mentioned in the UN for Slovenian in primary school for the first time in 1946 in year 2, then in 1948 in year 2, again in 1950 in year 1, 1959 in year 3 and 1984 in year 1. The list deliberately includes works that are already familiar to the pupils, as they were already accessible to them in the period before reading. As the content of these works is already familiar to the pupils, it is easier for them to concentrate on their reading technique. The choice of such picturebooks is particularly stimulating for pupils who are less successful in reading (UN 1984: 12).

The UN 1998 specify that, in addition to reading a well-known picture book, pupils should try to “read” a story themselves, memorise illustrations and parts of texts and songs that they have already learned by heart through repeated listening (UN 1998: 19), read an unknown shorter text (UN 1998: 19) and combine pictures and words (create picturebooks) (UN 1998: 24). In the UN 2018, the picturebook appears in the category of literary genre and type: first grade students attempt to read a story alongside a familiar picturebook, using illustrations and parts of the text that they already know by heart (UN 2018: 14), the concept is also found in the category of content or conceptual understanding (UN 1998: 19). In second grade, they read “silently (quietly) an unknown shorter text (picturebook)” (UN 2018: 14), and in third grade they combine pictures and words (make picturebooks) (UN 2018: 17). Among the literary content for the first three years, the picturebook is mentioned in connection with the cross-curricular integration of the Slovene language and visual arts (“learning about quality picturebooks and literary and visual ‘reading’ of picturebooks” (UN 1998: 71)), and the picturebook is also mentioned at the end.

Conclusion

In this article we have presented selected Slovenian and international definitions, classifications and theories of the picturebook. We have presented the literary-historical and theoretical development of the picturebook in Slovenia, drawing on international (M. Nikolajeva, S. Beckett, B. Kummerling- Meibauer) and Slovenian (M. Kobe, D. Haramija and J. Batič) researchers. As a genre with several titles, the picturebook became the most important book form in Slovenia after 1991. This was influenced by several factors, including the development of youth literature at universities, (self-)publishing, the hyperproduction of picturebooks, but also by the opening of topics through which young people can be educated, especially problem-orientated topics such as illness, refugees, otherness, special needs, death, wars. It makes sense to present our subject of study as a teaching subject, and therefore we have analysed the development of the integration of picturebooks into the Slovenian school system through the curriculum. We found that they are increasingly systematically and diversely included in Slovenian primary school curricula, which contributes to the categorisation of picturebooks.

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