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The Simulation of the Fairy Tale
Morphological and Receptive Examination of the Modern
Fairy Tale Paraphrase

Theses of Doctoral (PhD) Dissertation

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1. The aim of the study

As a practising teacher I get into contact during my everyday work with children, adults and „nearly” adults, who I learn a lot from based on the experience they gain during their pedagogical practice. I learn the changing values of the fast moving world, and together with this I am watching (a bit helplessly) how much the children, their views, preferences and ways of thinking change. They grow up with the books which can be found on the shelves of the bookshops, their titles evoke the well-known classical tales, stories, but their content usually falls short of the level expected. We must (or at least should) choose from these works to find the right ones for bedtime or the lessons, provided we can. As I have been teaching future primary school English teachers for several decades, it is very important during my practical work to be able to judge and tell my students which fairy tale is worth approaching and how to approach the modern re-written versions if we want to use them during teaching and to acquaint a story through enjoyable reading. I would have liked to make an attempt to show how the re-written versions of tales are „constructed”. During this process I wondered how the re-written versions could be categorized, after a morphological examination how the modern re-written versions of the classical stories could be modelled. I would have liked to follow up the content which was preserved or (which was even more important) lost during the process of re-writing. The second part of my dissertation focused on the recipient – in our case the children. During a preliminary research the children gave their opinions about how fairy tales appealed to them, then, after the preliminary testing they evaluated the fairy tale categories.

If we talk about fairy tales anywhere, we tend to think about them on an exclusively literary basis, which is absolutely wrong. As I have shown it in my dissertation, the analysis and interpretation of fairy tales and their meaning take us to several fields. According to Péter Büki (1995) we can summarize it briefly in the following way: „The aim of art, and of folk tales as well, neither only entertainment or education, nor delectation, but the representation, experience and processing of the cumbrous events of life on an artistic scale” (Büki, 1995. 50.) (own translation). It means that they have places not only in the academic field of literature, but psychology as well, but we must not forget either that the stories of tales are „[...] social representations, 'ways of creating the world', which continuously go through changes due to the effects of historical time. Both intentional (conscious) and unintentional (subconscious, unconscious, half-conscious or insensible) processes play a role in their creation and reception. They transmit complex (everyday, scientific, artistic) knowledge. They unite and connect practical (pragmatic) cultural content and which is beyond pragma (transcendent, mythological,

spiritual, mental etc.), and the acquisition ways transmitting and receiving it. The fairy tale is not the grasp of reality but the grasp of the quintessence of reality. On this level it is a model which transmits the interpretation of the world from generation to generation. Diminishing the complexity of the world, it provides a model for the events of life. In this sense, it helps the mental, psychic, spiritual survival as well” (Tancz, 2009. 47.) (own translation). Annamária Kádár (2017) can see the resources which can be learned from the fairy tales in the following: resilience, namely flexible resistance ability, the state of learned helplessness, stable, reliable and predictable environment, a followable model, quality time experience, from which she considers the first one, namely resilient behaviour, to be the basis of the rest. She presents its five levels as well, which are emotional stability, a good problem solving skill, the inner sense of the self, well developed resilient skills (eg. belief in our own strengths and abilities) and the ability of serendipity, namely the ability to find valuable things. Tibor Vidákovich (2009) proved it experientially that the developmental effect of fairy tales on children could be traced, in particular regarding the furtherance of the development of correlation handling ability, because the usage of the correlations found in fairy tales helps predictive thinking, the development of predictive abilities. Tibor Vidákovich’s experiment points out that in case of 4-8 year old children the furtherance of the development with fairy tales makes a big difference to the teaching of the content of the different subjects during the integration of capability development.

Fairy tales are important not only from the point of view of individual development, but they have an important socialization role as well. „The content found in folk tales is valid and relevant psychologically, at the same time it is general, important and it reflects descriptions, solutions concerning the whole life of the community. [...] Folk tales, as peculiar stories, are suitable for the support of personality development, the forming of the community and in various senses for the facilitation of education” (Kovács – Stiblar, 2014. 47.) (own translation). The tales help through the identification with the hero the listeners of the tale by experiencing the tale to cope with the problems of real life more easily, to find a way in their own life for the reproduction of the idyllic state lost in childhood, to find their welfare and happiness. This identification has a remedial effect during upgrowth. We have to bear in mind one thing though. „It is very important that this „remedial” effect of tales through identification works only in case of „good” tales. Because of the fact that adults (including one part of writers as well) do not necessarily understand this symbolic language of tales, they re-write them because they find them too frightful, they reshape them because they find them too abstract, they shorten the tales because they find them too long, which loose their magic because of that” (Gyenes, 2009. 134.).

Jack Zipes (1981) also points out that the 'improvement' attempts of tales have been made with clear indications. „From the beginning, pedagogues, clergymen, publishers, and the government controlled children's literature and printed books to promote their interests. [...T]hese individuals and groups always sought to set their own socialized models for the socialization of the young. The context of the texts and disputes remained decisive” (Zipes, 1981. 20.).

2. The research method

Several researchers tried to elaborate free association methods in the previous centuries, but the present research is based on a method of recent origin, which was developed and published by Lorand B. Szalay and James Deese entitled *Subjective Meaning And Culture: An Assessment Through Word Associations* (1978). Originally, the free association method was used for the exploration of diverse cultural differences, but the authors acknowledged themselves in the last chapter of their book that their method could be used in other fields as well. Subjective meaning becomes available with the help of association for the empirical research. It reflects the structure of our perceptions, belief and attitudes, its further advantage is that it minimises the interrogator's intervention, and in addition to this, the associations are independent from the intention of the communication and the relations between words are not tied up by the rules of syntax or morphology.

2.1. The preliminary research and the exploratory research

For a start we have done a preliminary research. Several methods built on association techniques are known, from which we have used the so called association group analysis for carrying out the research among children. For the conduct of the research we asked primary school teachers teaching in different settlement types (bigger towns, small towns and villages) of Transdanubia. The aim was that mainly second grade students (those who had already learnt to write) wrote down those words or phrases which came into their mind in connection with the question why they liked tales. The research was anonymous and resulted in 373 sheets of paper, which contained the elements listed by the children. The children surveyed could write down the things that came into their mind without a time limit. After that the responses were recorded on a computer. The only difficulty here was to decide which words or phrases were synonymous. In this way a list containing 233 items was created, which was given to five „coders” afterwards. Their task was to group the cohesive concepts, which had been called

„meaning components” by Szalay and Deese. They had to name the categories and there could be no more than twelve categories. As a result of this, a basis for comparison was created to be able to compare the results gained during the reading of the pairs of the tales to subsequently. Altogether nine categories were created, their denomination was decided on the basis of the usage by most of the coders. According to this we can see the percent of comments divided into categories:

1. characters – 20%
2. effect on the recipient – 18%
3. mediatory medium – 15%
4. plot – 13%
5. characteristics and tasks of tales – 13%
6. unrealistic content – 8%
7. aesthetic experience – 7%
8. scene – 3%
9. other – 3%

If we look at all the tables and choose the first eight elements which were written by most students, we get the following ranking:

1. funny (187) – effect on the recipient
2. exciting (104) – effect on the recipient
3. it has a moral (58) – characteristics and tasks of tales
4. interesting (49) – effect on the recipient
5. beautiful (49) – aesthetic experience
6. there are animals in it (49) – characters
7. good (41) – effect on the recipient
8. negative characters always come to grief (30) – plot

On the basis of this it can be said that for the children taking part in the survey the most important thing is what kind of effect the tale has on them, because four elements of the list above (namely half of them) belong to this category. Consequently, entertainment, excitement, curiosity are very important for the children today, which points to the fact that the entertaining, modernized re-written tales will surely appeal to them, especially if there are animal characters in them or all the characters are animals.

After that, before the examination of the reception, some exploratory research was done. The first attempt was of technical character when we wanted to see how long the children were able to pay attention. Four second grade pupils (two boys and two girls) were listening to the

tales continuously and, at the same time, they indicated how much they liked them on a piece of paper containing six thermometers of different colours, which was practically a 0-5 (six-grade) scale. Furthermore, on the other side of the paper, they also wrote down some words or expression coming into their mind, why they found pleasure in them. It took about two and a half hours and they naturally became exhausted. It became clear after the first attempt that they liked modern, funny, amusing stories very much, at the same time they wrote quite a lot of words and expressions about the original tales, far more than their modern pairs.

During the second testing we used a bigger sample, altogether ninety children were involved in it. We picked one tale from the six pairs and we first told thirty second grader (fifteen boys and fifteen girls) children the classical story. Subsequently, we told its modern pair to thirty (fifteen boys and fifteen girls) students. As a next step, we told the tales together in another school to thirty (fifteen boys and fifteen girls) pupils in the second grade. On all three occasions the children indicated on a thermometer how much they liked the tale, and in addition to that, they wrote down or listed with the help of free association what kind of elements or characters they liked in the tales. We wanted to know during this pretesting what kind of influence the tales had on each other, whether the children's judgement was influenced if they did not listen to the stories separately but one after the other. It was important because we were keen to find out if we could tell the original and the re-written tales together during the further research, or we could do that only separately. The table below (Table 1) summarizes the results of the exploratory research according to which we could draw three conclusions:

1. They preferred the modern tale to the classical one (332 > 287)
2. There was no significant difference between „separately” (169 vs. 163, and 141 vs. 146) and „together”. The preferred modern tale minimally upgraded the classical tale which the children had liked less (146 vs 141).
3. Basically, they liked the tales because the maximum (30x6) = 180 points were approached by the 169 points of the „unspoilt” modern tale listened to separately.

During the first testing two things were observed which could be compared to the subsequent research: one of them was that the children liked the modern tale more, the other one was that they gave the tales more points in the top range (that is 3-5) than in the lower range (that is 0-2) of the scale. It could also be seen that the original tale and the re-written version did not disturb each other, so the pairs of tales were told one after the other to the same children.

	modern separately	modern together	Σ	classical separately	classical together	Σ
category (0)	1		1	4	2	6
category (1)				1		1
category (2)	1	4	5	2		2
category (3)	1	2	3	1	5	6
category (4)	1	1	2	7	14	21
category (5)	26	23	49	15	9	24
Σ	30	30	60	30	30	60
weighted score sum	169	163	332	141	146	287

Table 1.: The results of the exploratory research (own edition)

2.2. The values of the testing of the reception measured on the scales

We did the tests six times in six separate schools. As we had already been to a school during the exploratory research where the children listened to the classical and the modern tales together, we did not repeat this pair of tales. The children got a sheet of paper after they had listened to the tale, on one side of which they indicated their gender, then listed what they liked in the tale. On the other side of the paper they could find six colourful thermometers, by indicating one of them they expressed their opinion about the tale. The six thermometers represented a six-grade scale 0-5 painted with different colours from blue (cold colour – I do not like it) to red (warm colour – I like it), which helped the children to orientate themselves more easily. First of all they got acquainted with the original story, they indicated on a thermometer how much they liked it, then they wrote words and expressions formulating in this way their opinion. After that they listened to the modern tale, and they did the same procedure again. After each story-telling the children indicated by a show of hands if they had already known the tales they heard before. Altogether one hundred and eighteen schoolchildren took part in the survey in six schools. As everybody listened to two tales, we got results on three hundred and sixty survey sheets. First the results of the scales were evaluated with the help of a statistical software. Every sheet got a code. The tales belonging to a type were indicated by a letter, the classical story was always numbered one, while the modern version two, then F (boy)

or L (girl) showed their gender, and the sheets were numbered from 1 to 15. The different types of tales got a letter so as to identify them more easily (in Hungarian), so the totally overlapping version was indicated by letter A, the classical story by the letter K, the redundant tale inserting an episode by the letter E, the hypercorrected version by the letter H, the over-modernized one by the letter T and the shortened story by the letter R. In this way the code contained three variables on the basis of which the information was recorded. With the help of IBM SPSS Statistics 22 program the results were analysed, then charts and graphs were created so as to make the results more transparent. We examined with the application of Chi-square analysis if there was any relationship between the variables.

3. Hypotheses, research questions

At the beginning of the dissertation the *research questions* below have been formulated, the answers of which are the following:

Research Question 1.: How can the modern re-written versions of fairy tales be categorized?

It is Propp's (1999) merit that he concluded that there was some logic in narrative structures which was based on centuries-old rules. We would have liked to touch exactly these narrative structures through the different re-written tale types, which were categorized afterwards. Ildikó Boldizsár (1997) has already pointed out in connection with re-written versions of tales that „[...] on one hand, the fairy tales are given to the story-tellers as fixed forms, the individual gets them as „cultural heritage”, and they are not created during one-time creative act, on the other hand, they are „open works of art”, inasmuch as they offer infinite possibilities for continuous and re-use, artistic freedom which keeps the strict structural rules” (Boldizsár, 1997. 184.) (own translation). Boldizsár herself has set up categories for that, the basis of which is the relationship with miracle. According to her categories „ [...] reduction, amplification, fortification, weakening, substitution according to religious conceptions, substitution based on the principle of reality and modification belong to revised fairy tales; inversion, inner substitution, substitution based on the principle of reality, literary substitution, modification, substitution of unknown origin belong to deformed fairy tales; substitution based on the principle of reality, modification, inner assimilation, assimilation based on the principle of reality, assimilation according to religious conceptions, literary assimilation and specialization and generalization belong to assimilated fairy tales. It can be seen that substitution and

assimilation according to beliefs or archaic substitution and assimilation do not belong to any of the groups, so they have to be regarded as the exclusive characteristics of the ground-form, while substitution and modification based on the principle of reality could be found in all four groups” (Boldizsár, 1997. 206.).

Margot Blankier (2017) got another categorization when she examined the adaptations of fairy tales in her study. She examined the texts from the point of view of the 'hypotext' and the 'hypertext' (namely the original text and the text derived from that) and relying on Jack Zipes' thoughts she came to the conclusion that the re-written versions basically had two types. She called one of them duplicates, while the other one revision. „Whatever modifications it may make, the deep structure – the essential story, though not necessarily the structure or signs – of the tale is preserved, and thus the duplicate is essentially the same as the source: the sensibilities of the original tale are merely repeated, with only superficial modifications. „Revisions,” on the other hand, are created with the intention of producing something new” (Blankier, 2017. 112.). Blankier based her categories on the relationship between 'hypotext' and 'hypertext' and set up six categories as well. She called the first one 'celebration', during which the original narrative gets into an undefined, nostalgic and idealized historical past. The second type is 'adjustment', which means the modification of certain elements of the source text, she called the third one 'Neoclassical imitation', which is the combination of the appreciation of the past and the satirical comments on the present. Blankier's fourth category is 'colonization', which goes hand in hand with the clearing and redesign of the source text, as a result of which the narrative gets into a new cultural milieu. 'Analogue' rather evokes than recreates the source text, while 'parody', whose purpose is quite often humour at the expense of the source text, can result in a text more critical than humorous. Blankier herself thinks about her categories that it is almost impossible to create an exact taxonomy, as there are too many unique cases of adaptations, so it is practical to examine them separately.

The categories set up in the dissertation are arbitrary. The modern re-written versions available today show similarities in each group, so the pairs of tales selected would have liked to represent them. The re-written tales have been examined together with their original pairs, so the classical story and its modern re-written pair have been arranged side by side after resolving them according to morphological units, namely the smallest meaningful parts. The examination was based on Propp's work entitled *Morphology of the Folktale* (1999 in Hungarian), and a table about the structure of tales compiled by Bárdos (2018) based on Propp. After that the elements of tales were examined from the point of view if there was total, partial or no overlap between them. I have called the tale where the plot of the two stories followed

each other and the overlap has had the highest value (42% total and 18% partial) a totally overlapping re-written version. Its example is the tale of Snow White and its modern pair. The story the basis of which is a classical one (in this case the story of Hamlet) and the modern tale is an adaptation based on it (here The Lion King) has been called a re-written classical story. Maybe the most books are available in the book market from the so-called shortened re-written versions, when the classical story is shortened and simplified significantly. To illustrate this, I have chosen the Little Red Riding Hood story. Relatively few moments remain in the tale which can be regarded as the pillars of the story, the other elements do not show any correspondence. The fourth type has been called redundant tale because it seems to be a kind of complement of the original tale and it creates an episode-like story which happens to the well-known characters though, but only its atmosphere and milieu connect it to the original tale. For the illustration of this type a Cinderella story has been selected. The fifth category set up is called hypercorrected tale, which overlaps quite a lot at the most important points of the story, but in this case it seems as if the end of the tale needed some correction, so the essence of the story is interpreted in a new way. In the case of the Frog Prince story more than one third of the elements are the same. The tales found in the last category have the same ratio of common elements, as the ratio of the overlap in case of the over-modernized re-written tale (here the tale of Kalamona Who Has Tied up the Wind) is 37%. This type is the closest to Blankier's category called parody.

Research Question 2.: Do the structural changes of modern re-written tales result in the changes of their content as well compared to their original versions?

The first part of the dissertation was dedicated to the presentation of the answer to this question. With the help of the division of the modern and classical stories into morphological units and the arrangement of their elements side by side two things could be grasped. One of them is the pair of each element and their order, which reveals the correspondence and difference of the structural level of the story. The more correspondence we find, we can presume that the more the re-written version follows the original one, as we could see it in the case of the Snow White story during the examination of the structure and the plot as well. If we compare the mere number of the morphological elements of the classical and modern stories independently of the totally and partially overlapping elements or the elements that have no pairs at all, we can point out some interesting things.

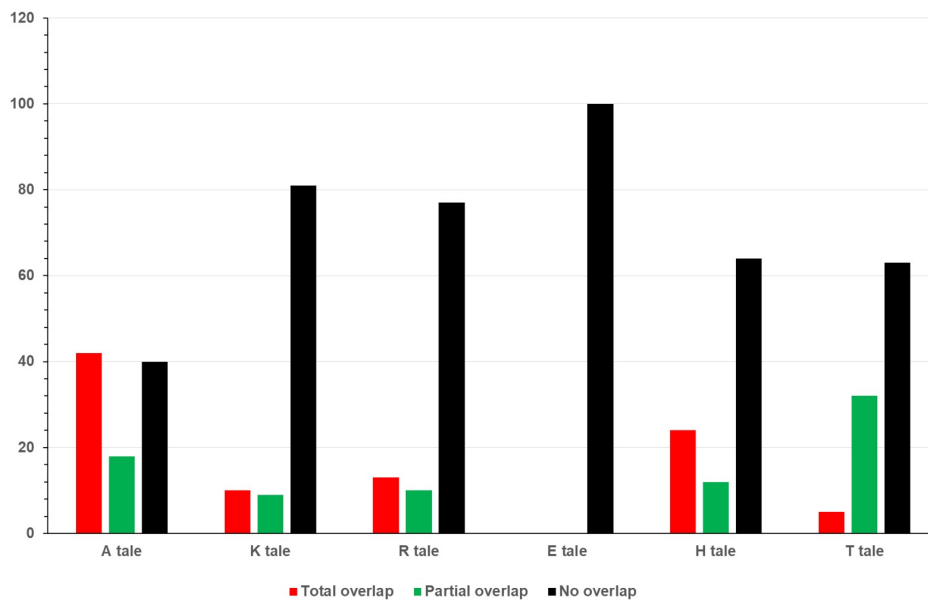


Figure 1.: Total and partial overlap of morphological elements, or the lack of overlap in case of different re-written types. A: totally overlapping re-written version; K: re-written classical story; R: shortened re-written version; E: redundant re-written version; H: hypercorrected re-written version; T: over-modernized tale (own edition)

In case of the totally overlapping re-written version, the classical story, the hypercorrected version and the over-modernized tale, the modern stories consist of more or less the same number of elements as the original ones. This number is 55 – 49 if we look at the totally overlapping re-written version, in case of the classical story it is 54 – 51, 35 – 38 in case of the hypercorrected tale, while both the original and the modern tale consist of 64 – 64 elements in case of the over-modernized tale. The short tale has significantly been curtailed though, as the original story consisted of 48, while its modern pair only 11 elements. A similar situation can be observed in case of the redundant tale as well, where the episode-like insertion is a story consisting of 22 elements compared to the original 87. The „gaps” carry a lot of information, namely the empty spaces which do not have a pair. If the original tale has more empty spaces, that is there are more elements in the modern tale without pairs, then the modern story has probably been shortened, as we can observe it in the case of the very short Little Red Riding Hood tale. In case of the redundant tale – as we would have liked to emphasize it with its name – the modern story „pushes up” the original one, the common points are only the characters and the atmosphere of the story, but the structure and the plot do not meet, though. There is a relatively high number of common elements (36%) in case of the hypercorrected tale, but the end of the tale, as it „corrects” the story considered to be „wrong”, shows a difference at any

rate. The over-modernized tale displays the same ratio of elements in common as the previous one, but as we could see it during the more elaborate analysis of the tales, the line of the plot was extremely simplified and the story lost a lot of excitement and miracle. We could also experience during the more detailed analyses that not only the plot but the characters of the story changed a lot, their place and role were altered in the tale. It had already been observed by Propp himself in his work entitled *Historical Roots of the Wonder Tale* (2006 in Hungarian): „The way of the further development of the tale is that the composition is preserved tenaciously, but the characters are exchanged. The material of the substitution is provided by social existence, the changing form of life” (Propp, 2006, 353.) (own translation). The best example of this is the changes of everyday life.

Research Question 3.: How well do the children of today know the classical tales used in the research?

It was made by a simple survey before reading the tales. There were some tales which were known by all the children, but there were some which nobody knew. It has not been recorded which child knew the tales, so we can estimate the prominence of a tale within a group only on average. The results were the following:

Snow White - 30 students (100%)

Little Red Riding Hood – 30 students (100%)

Cinderella – 26 students (87%)

The Frog Prince and Iron Henry – 10 students (33%)

Hamlet – 0 student (0%)

Kalamona Who Has Tied up the Wind – 0 student (0%)

The following *hipotheses* have been formulated at the beginning of the dissertation:

1.H: The children today prefer all kinds of modern re-written tales to classical tales even if some types of re-written tales do not meet the requirements of fairy tales in all cases.

At the beginning of the research we examined the null hypothesis, as we were curious to find out if there was a significant difference between the pleasure in classical and modern tales. The analysis of H_0 shows that in case of the comparison of classical and modern tales there is a

significant difference between the two groups of tales. So it maintains the validity of H_1 . In this case the type of the tale is the independent variable, the categories of classical and modern are the dependent variable. The examination of the results, the two-factor variance analysis without repetitions, can be seen in the following figure (Figure 2) in the form of a bar graph:

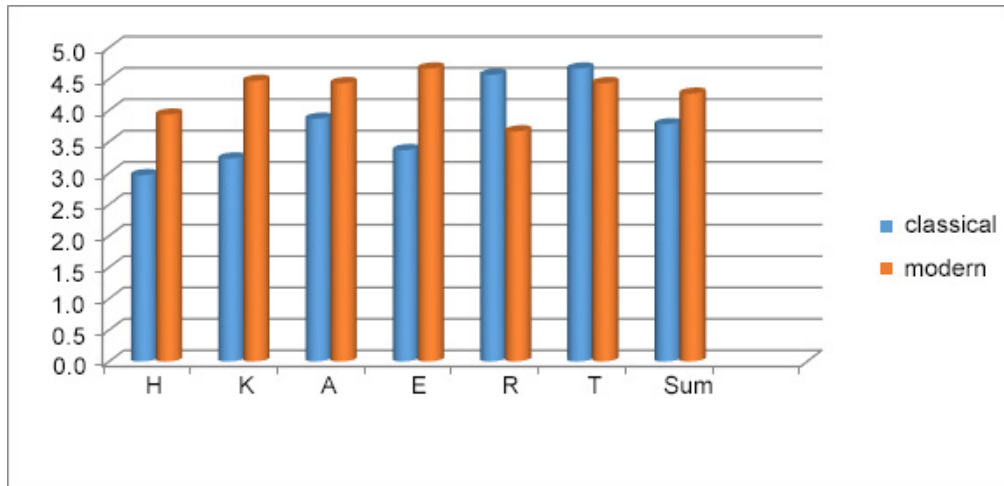


Figure 2.: The pleasure measured on a scale in case of the two types of fairy tales. H: hypercorrected tale, K: classical story, A: overlapping story, E: redundant tale, R: shortened story, T: over-modernized tale

The values measured on a thermometer – namely on a scale – reflected nearly the same as the results of the exploratory research. The children gave higher scores to both types, so both the original and the re-written versions fell rather into the category of 'like it' than 'do not like it'. Within this the highest scores showed undoubtedly that they preferred the modern tale. Based on the average scores of the pairs of tales we could see an order, according to which their favourite was the tale of Kalamona Who Has Tied up the Wind, which was followed by the overlapping tale, the story of Snow White, then the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Among the tales which they preferred less we could find the Cinderella story, then the classical one and lastly the tale of the Frog Prince. We could also see above that in case of the first three tales the children gave higher scores, while in case of the last three they gave lower ones. If we look at the values of the pairs of the tales independently, we can see that except for the shortened and the over-modernized tales, the children preferred the modern re-written versions according to the data on the scale, as it can be observed in Figure 2. Applying the methods of the preliminary research and examining the written answers to the individual elements in every case, the situation was not as clear, though. They wrote much more about the original tale in case of the over-modernized tale, which reflects some contradiction. In case of the overlapping tale the

comments seemed to be more balanced, although the children connected them to different qualificatives. It is probable that they liked both tales almost equally, although they wrote about the classical story that it was beautiful and nice, while about the modern one they wrote that it was funny, interesting and entertaining. As if the general expectations connected to the two types of tales could be seen here. In case of the third tale the written answers confirmed the satisfaction with the shortened version measured on a scale, which means that they voted for the original story instead. Some contradiction can be found in case of the fourth pair of tales as well, because it turns out from the comments that they did not like many things in connection with the modern story, so we have good reasons to assume that except for the Christmas atmosphere nothing else in the modern story had an effect on them. In case of the last but one pair of tales, which is the story of Hamlet – The Lion King, the new, namely the last one got more comments. The last tale according to the ranking is the Frog Prince story, where the children wrote much more about the original tale than its modern version, although they gave higher values to the last one on the scale, which is some contradiction again.

If we look at all the answers for all the tales arranged in one table, we can find some further contradiction as well. While they wrote during the preliminary research that they liked a story most if it was entertaining for the recipient, here we can observe that they wrote comments mainly about the plot, the characters and the unrealistic content. These are the elements that make a tale become a tale. The values indicated on the thermometer and the comments added to the tales have not resulted in the same order. During the oral telling of the stories they wrote more comments about the original tales, while they indicated on the thermometer that they preferred the modern version. This hypothesis has only been partially verified, as the children claimed on the basis of the satisfaction indicated on the thermometer that they preferred the modern version except for the Little Red Riding Hood story and the over-modernized tale – that is not in all cases. Something else could be observed from the written answers though. In case of the over-modernized tale, contrary to the satisfaction measured on the scale (as there was a slight difference in favour of the original story), they wrote nearly three times as many comments about the traditional tale, which means that it moved their imagination and they liked it definitely more. The overlapping tale showed a lot more balanced picture during the association research, but the number of elements was a bit higher in case of the original story than in case of the modern one. We could experience the same with the Little Red Riding Hood story, although it showed preference for the classical tale on the satisfaction scale. In case of the redundant re-written version, namely the Cinderella story, the number of the written comments for the modern tale about their liking was a bit higher than the ones written

about the original one, but they mainly expressed their feelings of loss in connection with the modern story. In case of the adaptation of the classical Hamlet story, The Lion King, they mentioned more things in writing, which coincides with the results indicated on the thermometer. The hypercorrected re-written tale in the last place is a bit controversial, too because the classical story got a lot more comments than the modern one. It can be seen in the comparative table (Table 2) below:

Type of the tale	Classical	Modern	Average on scale	Number of comments
T	4,7	4,4	4,55	478 (c:353+m:125)
A	3,9	4,7	4,2	374 (c:194+m:180)
R	4,6	3,7	4,15	188 (c:105+m:83)
E	3,4	4,7	4,05	129 (c:58+m:71)
K	3,2	4,5	3,85	130 (c:52+m:78)
H	3,0	3,9	3,45	214 (c:131+m:83)

Table 2.: Comparative table based on the values given to classical and modern tales, and on the written answers. H: hypercorrected tale, K: classical story, A: overlapping story, E: redundant tale, R: shortened story, T: over-modernized tale. c: classical tale; m: modern tale (own edition)

To sum up, it can be concluded that the children's first thought was – except for the shortened tale and the over-modernized tales – that they preferred the modern version. When they had to write comments on them, then they wrote more words or expressions about the original story except for the Hamlet story, where they unequivocally preferred the modern one, and we can assume that they regarded the story of The Lion King as the starting point.

2.H: The satisfaction with modern tales is influenced by the fact how well the children know the original stories.

For the analysis of this hypothesis we have used two-factor variance analysis without repetitions, and the values given for the modern re-written versions of tales can be seen in a form of a bar graph in Figure 3. Here the type of tale is the independent variable, while the preference for modern tales is the dependent variable. It can be observed that the order of the tales according to preference is the following: redundant tale, overlapping re-written version, re-written version of a classical story, over-modernized version, hypercorrected tale and

shortened version, which can be compared to the different groups' knowledge about the original stories.

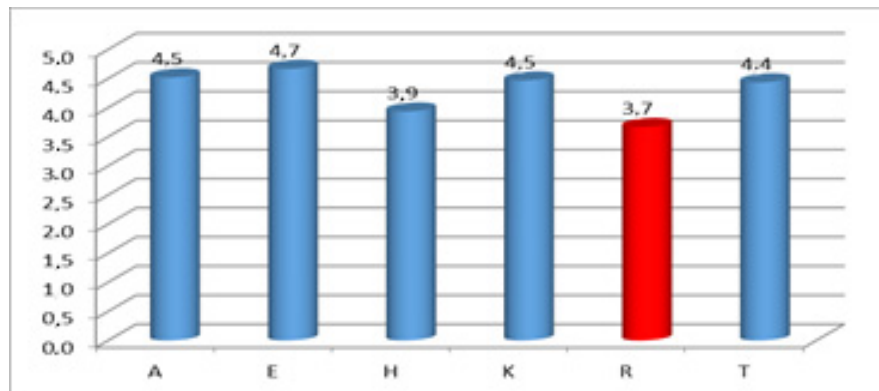


Figure 3.: Satisfaction with modern tales according to the values measured on a scale. H: hypercorrected tale, K: classical story, A: overlapping story, E: redundant tale, R: shortened story, T: over-modernized tale.

The statement has been verified from several aspects as well, but the satisfaction scale is not unidirectional, so liking can have a negative sign, too. The most preferred modern tale was the Cinderella story, in case of which we can observe a sort of feeling opposed to the expectations. Quite a lot, 87% of the children had already known this tale, and yet they listed among the comments what was missing from the modern tale. Everybody knew the story of Snow White, but as an overlapping version was created from that – one which followed the original story the most – this was the second in the order of preference after Cinderella, perhaps it was because they did not feel anything missing from the tale. Nobody knew the story of Hamlet, but it got to those ones where the modern version was given relatively high values (presumably because they had already either seen or read the modern story). Among the comments we can find some which criticised it because the story was too long. As we could see above, children today wait for excitement, entertainment, but they would like to get it easily and fast, they are unable to concentrate on long stories, they get bored with them soon. In this respect these comments are not surprising at all. They attached high values to the modern tale of Kalamona Who Has Tied up the Wind as well based on the first impression, but nobody had known its original story among the children before. During the preliminary research we could see that one of the categories with the most comments was the effect on the recipient, or rather the associations which were written by most of the children fell into this category: funny, exciting, interesting, good. Thus the children today look for excitement, curiosity, they expect from a tale to be entertaining. It means that they like a tale if it is able to trigger excitement of adequate intensity,

in addition, it offers something new for them. Only one third of the children knew the story of the Frog Prince, according to the values of the satisfaction scale it was in the penultimate place, but the number of comments showed that they were rather attracted to the original story, as well as in the case of the Snow White story, which was known by 100% of them. Everybody knew the story of Little Red Riding Hood, but they did not like its modern, shortened version based on the comments, so here the attachment to the original one was stronger than in the case of a tale they had not known before. Perhaps it is due to this fact that on the satisfaction scale the shortened (and empty) version of the Little Red Riding Hood story got into the 'do not like' category. It took a short time to listen to it, they did not have to pay attention for a long time, still they lacked something. Consequently, how much the children know a tale has an effect on how much they like its re-written version. On one hand, they prefer interesting, exciting stories with novel experience, on the other hand, they wait for the traditional content in case of already known tales, they can touch the missing parts and formulate them.

3.H The children's gender listening to the tales does not influence the satisfaction with the tales.

The analysis of boys' and girls' preference with the help of two-factor variance analysis without repetitions can be seen in the following bar graph (Figure 4). The independent variable is the type of tales, while the dependent variable is the gender of the children.

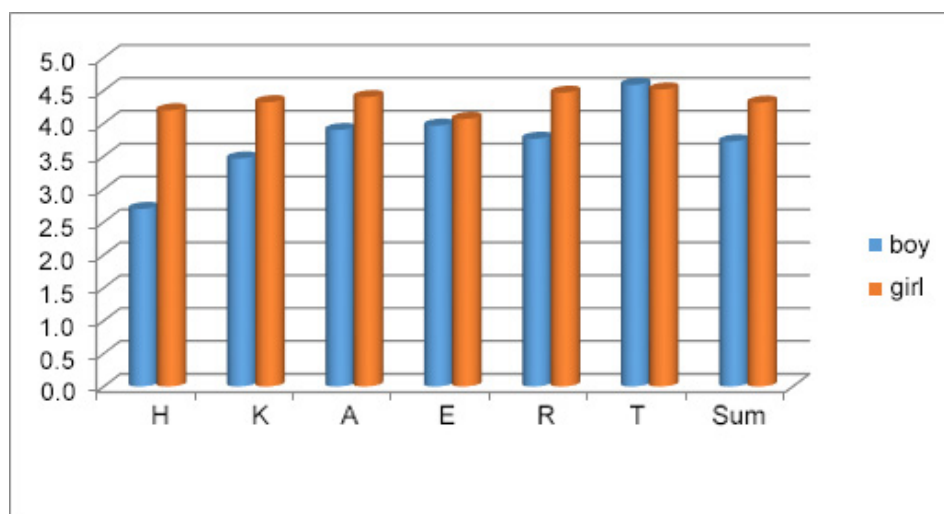


Figure 4.: The satisfaction with tales according to gender and types of tales measured on a scale. H: hypercorrected tale, K: classical story, A: overlapping story, E: redundant tale, R: shortened story, T: over-modernized tale.

It can be seen in Figure 4 that there is a difference between boys' and girls' on the basis of satisfaction measured on a scale. The girls liked the tales more than the boys except for the over-modernized tale, although it can be said based on the values that the girls liked it best as well. A relatively big difference can be observed in case of the hypercorrected tale and its original story, which can probably be attributed to the modern story regarded 'girlish' by the boys. Maybe it is not by accident because this tale is a Barbie book. If we compare it with the written answers, the results are the following: in case of the over-modernized tale the children wrote altogether 478 comments to the tales, during which the boys wrote more things than the girls, but we could see that it accords with the higher degree of satisfaction indicated by the boys on the thermometer. The tale which induced the second highest degree of satisfaction was the overlapping one, which was preferred on the basis of the scale and more comments were written by the girls accordingly, altogether 374. The average value of pleasure put the shortened Little Red Riding Hood and its pair into the third place, in case of which the boys wrote a bit more comments about the original story, while only one comment less about the modern story than the girls. The satisfaction measured on a scale showed the girls' preference, though. It can also be interesting that according to the amount of comments this tale was in the fourth place. Regarding the average values of the redundant pair of tales on the scale, it got to the fourth place, according to the number of comments, it was in the last place. The girls' and boys' values on the satisfaction scale tilted liking a bit towards the girls and the number of comments about it reflected the same. The classical story and its re-written version was the penultimate according to the values of the satisfaction scale and the number of comments as well, the story preferred definitely by the girls resulted in the same amount of comments from both the boys and the girls about the original tale, while in case of the girls definitely more about the modern one. The girls liked the hypercorrected tale more than the boys, which got to the last place regarding the average satisfaction values on the scale, but it could be interesting that this tale was not the last one on the basis of the comments about it (altogether they wrote 214 comments about it), in which respect it was in the fourth place. Furthermore, it can be interesting that the boys wrote more comments about both tales in spite of the fact that we could experience very low values in their case on the satisfaction scale. Thus the answers indicate that the girls liked the tales more, except for the over-modernized tale, where they met a pair of tales unknown for them before, in connection with a story whose hero is an adolescent boy and another 'detective' story, which are presumably closer to boys.

4.H: The children today get their experience of tales through reading or listening to tales.

This hypothesis seems to be falsified on the basis of the preliminary research. The coders have set up categories while grouping the expressions written by the children, and studying them we can answer the question how they get experience connected to tales. We can find reference to it in several categories. Among the comments about characters we can find the following ones as well: Spiderman, Garfield, Tom and Jerry. They are cartoon and/or film characters, so it is clear based on the list what they consider to be a tale and they probably did not think about stories performed orally. In connection with aesthetic experience they also formulated something like: it is drawn nicely, the place is beautiful, there are nice flowers in it, there is a rainbow in it – which suggest visual stimuli. In the category of mediatory medium we can see a range of comments referring to this: musical, it is told by an enjoyable story-teller nicely, there is dance in it, I like the tales on TV, we can read and watch it as well, it is good to watch on TV, it is good to watch, I have favourite TV channels, it starts with a song, because it is in Hungarian, because it is in English, rhythmical. But some comments got into the 'Other' category as well, which is thought-provoking according to the hypothesis: girly, outgoing, there are stupid things in it. The category of mediatory medium was the third most important for the children on the basis of the results of the preliminary research. It is true we cannot determine the number of children who listen to a story or who read tales, but it seems based on the list that there are a lot of children who rather watch tales than listen to adults telling a tale to them. It can be interesting to mention the research by Andrea Havlikné Rácz and Éva Pozsár (2013), which was done among the parents of kindergarteners and looked for the answers to two questions: what the characteristic features of the traditions of telling a tale are in families and what kind of factors influence it. The authors came to the conclusion that on one hand telling a tale at home was mainly connected to the mother, and on the other hand the parents considered telling a tale at home to be vitally important though, still only 40% of them declared that they regularly watched tales on a screen (not on TV!) in the family. We must not forget that this research was done among kindergarten age children, we may presume that getting into elementary school, or upper primary this ratio – if it is not lower (presumably it will decrease) – will not surely be higher. Perhaps Máté Tóth's research (2019) qualifies this pictures even more. During this a country-wide, representative research with 1500 samples also looked for the answers to questions whether the parents told tales to their children or what kind of consequences it had concerning the establishment of further reading habits. As a similar

research was conducted in 2017 as well, possible a shift into positive-negative direction could also be observed from the data. Based on it the following result was born: „The parents in their answers could strongly distort the results in positive direction, primarily concerning the frequency of telling a tale. Interestingly, the ratio of those does not change significantly in the different age groups (about 8-9%), who are or were never told a tale to. At the sam time it is noteworthy that in 2017 the ratio of families not reading a tale t all was only about 7% ” (Tóth, 2019. 24.) (own translation).

Last but not least I would like to say a few words about the preferences of children today. The preliminary research showed that they knew a lot about tales, but they met them through several channels. There are some Grimm tales considred to be classic (Frog Prince) or well-know Hungarian folk tale (Kalamona Who Has Tied up the Wind) which they did not know at all or only few of them, which is why we can presume that they are not the ones they watch in films or on television. As long as satisfaction on the scale showed that it was quite 'trendy' to say that something modern must be better, the comments written about the tales did not bear witness to that. They find a modern unknown story amusing, yet it turns out from their answers that the original story touches them more deeply. If they meet a story already known, they miss the elements from the modern version which made the original story beautiful and magical.

4. Further Directions of the Research

Concerning my plans for the future I have determined to find a well-known tale with all re-written types and tell them to children. Perhaps it could be seen even better which version was closer to them, what kind of elements they were missing from each type. I would like to repeat my research every five years and get a picture about the changes concerning the situation between the children's preference and the modern re-written types of tales and the actual changes reflected in them. Together with this we could draw some similar conclusions about the parents, their changes as well. I would like to survey how often the parents of the children in my future research read or tell a tale to them, so I would like to take into consideration more variables. I would also like to examine if the categories of the re-written tales have general characteristics, which can be seen on the basis of the morphological examination of at least ten tales in each category.

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