

PHILOSOPHICAL META-STORY ABOUT THE LITTLE PRINCE AS A SYNERGY OF BOOK AND FILM INDUSTRIES: ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF FILM ADAPTATION OF LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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ABSTRACT:

The present study explores the ways in which children's and young adult literature is adapted to film, as these stories allow the autonomous world of childhood, distinctly different from the adult perspective, to emerge. At the same time, however, literary testimony presented through children's perception and interpretation of reality can bring contemporary social or existential problems closer to the adult reader through imagery accessible to people of all ages. A representative result of the confrontation of the children's and the adult world is also the literary work of the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, originally intended for children. The depth and topicality of the philosophical fairy tale *The Little Prince* (originally in French, *Le Petit Prince*, first published in 1943) lie in the fact that it is one of the world's most translated fairy tales, which has been the basis for numerous dramatic adaptations, re-editions and film adaptations. The main aim of the study is, therefore, to clarify the way the philosophical metanarrative of *The Little Prince* is expressed in the literary source and in the audiovisual film of the same name, *The Little Prince* (*Le Petit Prince*, 2015, directed by Mark Osborne). In order to achieve this goal, we apply a narrative analysis of both research materials based on analytical categories defined in the methodological section of the study. The identification and subsequent comparison of the chosen analytical categories is the starting point for determining the mode of filmic adaptation of the literary subject matter. The categorisation of film adaptations of literary works according to L. Giannetti and T. Leitch becomes the focus. Within the theoretical delineation of the issue under discussion, we point to its interdisciplinary character (the 'intermingling' of media and communication studies, literary criticism, but also media philosophy, film studies and other related disciplines), emphasising the cultural overlap of the philosophical metatheory of *The Little Prince*. This timelessness opens up space for further research into the possibilities of the story's cinematic adaptations and interpretative planes. Characteristic logical-conceptual procedures are employed to achieve the stated aims.

KEY WORDS:

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, film adaptation, literary model, literature for children and youth, narrative analysis, philosophical meta-story, *The Little Prince*

1 Introduction

One of the most common practices in film production is the adaptation of a literary work into an audiovisual form. In the considerable period during which film and literature have acquired the status of mass media and have become an integral part of mass communication, these communication means have undergone many changes which are also reflected in contemporary film adaptations of literary texts. The creative processes of literary text adaptation are already evident in any attempt to use individual story components (e.g., illustrations, motifs, themes, characters, etc.) in variable media platforms¹ addressing audiences of different ages.

In film production, one of the most used and successful sources of inspiration is undoubtedly children's and young adult literature, which forms the preconditions for interdisciplinary research.² Then also research objects, such as, for example, various kinds of media content (media texts) possess a special narrative value created in association with the new conditions of reinterpretation of the original literary texts.³ However, the meanings communicated by these texts go through different stages of reception and interpretative ability, influenced not only by the age or reading maturity of the recipient, but also and predominantly by lived experience (of both the author and the reader or interpreter), which shape the individual world view and one's own value system. The basic feature of quality children's books, therefore, lies precisely in the unobtrusive encoding of profound experience within an interpretative and meaningful story that respects the particularities of the children's world and, through them, also tells us about the adult world. Z. Stanislavová even speaks of "a refined confrontation of the child's and the adult's point of view in connection with the children's book".⁴

We consider the literary work of the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry to be a representative example of the confrontation between the world of children and adult life. The depth of the philosophical meta-story contained in the fairy tale *The Little Prince* (*Le Petit Prince*, 1943) and its timelessness are reflected not only in the number of translations of the work into various languages and re-releases, but also in the number of its (film and television) adaptations. For this reason, the main aim of the present study is to clarify the way the philosophical meta-story of *The Little Prince* is expressed in the literary source material and in the eponymous 2015 film primarily intended for a child audience.

The study builds on our own research, supplemented by a necessary reflection on theoretical knowledge from the field of film studies (categorisation and procedures of film adaptations of literary works) and other related disciplines. Particular attention is paid to the interpretation of the philosophical metanarrative of *The Little Prince* in the given literary text (*Le Petit Prince*, 1943) and in its film adaptation (*Le Petit Prince*, 2015, directed by Mark Osborne), which is based on the narrative analysis of the defined categories – the narrative components of the motion picture. The given research method is used to elucidate the possible interpretative planes of the examined literary text and the related media text in order to highlight the transmedia character (cultural overlap) of the explored philosophical metanarrative in the sense of a 'grand narrative' explaining and legitimising both the form and aspects of a certain culture.

2 Film Adaptation of a Literary Work

Although, in J. F. Lyotard's view, the narrative systems of late modern works are not interested in 'big heroic stories' featuring a hero/ine who experiences 'great dangers', undertakes 'great journeys' or presents 'big ideas',⁵ A. Plencner, on the contrary, argues that the first decade of the third millennium is characterised

precisely by the popularity of cultural products using "grand narratives". In this context, the author speaks of historical and parahistorical novels, massive mythical sagas, as well as stories about (super)heroes with complex characters and demonstrable humanistic qualities. The need to create heroines and heroes as bearers of a certain value system seems to be historically constant. Even in a late modern sociocultural environment, therefore, the general need to search for value frameworks and role models through establishing contacts with similar meta-stories does not subside.⁶ The rapid development of transmedia systems of communication, or communication through multiple media platforms, has further enhanced the power of the stories in question. These creative filmic representations of literary stories have strong 'transmedia potential', simply thanks to being able to combine the production and creative elements of film and literature through specific modes of film adaptation.

Film adaptation, understood as one of the possibilities of creative and interpretative transposition of a work, is defined as the transformation of works of fiction – mostly epic or dramatic texts – into a film script and then into a movie. According to O. Levinský and A. Stránský, the main task of film adaptation is to preserve the idea of the original work and to find the most appropriate and effective way of realising its cinematic expression.⁷ Those texts (literary or media) that meet all the prerequisites to become adequate 'templates' for the final audiovisual product can be successfully transformed into animated or live-action films. We are talking, for example, about stage dramas, radio plays or digital games, but also personal diaries, autobiographies, comics or other (not only literary) genres. Many interested theorists, e.g., L. Hutcheon or D. Andrew, point to the increasing popularity of film adaptations of literary works.⁸ This type of elaboration of the source material is more than advantageous for filmmakers – the literary work, as a product, is finished, market-tested, the story and characters are known, all that is needed is to spread awareness of these narrative aspects amongst a predefined media audience (ideally, the so-called pre-sold audience aware of and interested in the original story).

L. Giannetti divides film adaptations of literary works into loose, faithful and literal. A loose adaptation captures the main ideas, situations or characters derived from the source material while allowing them to develop independently and combine with each other. A faithful adaptation is an attempt to re-create the source material in film form. The emphasis in this case is on reproducing the narrative scheme, the dialogues and the character development itself as accurately as possible. A literal adaptation is generally limited to film versions of theatrical plays and is seen as a special case rather than the general rule. Films are rarely able to fully follow their literary sources, so literal adaptation is hardly finding its way into the mainstream at present.⁹ The ways, in which the literature and the media text (film) are linked, are discussed by T. Leitch in connection with concepts such as "intertextuality" (one text is dominated by other texts, including, e.g., quotations, allusions referring to them), "paratextuality" (the attempt to link both texts absolutely, for instance, by using the same titles), "metatextuality" (the motion picture functions as a commentary, for example, references originating from its literary source are placed in the script), "hypertextuality" (the connection of both texts without the need for quotation, the same titles, etc.), and "architextuality" (similarity of the two texts based on casual remarks and common rules). However, according to T. Leitch, these concepts almost always overlap and complement each other. It is therefore almost impossible to define a single system of the adaptation process valid for all literary texts adapted into audiovisual works.¹⁰ Nevertheless, adaptations tend to contain a set of general features, the narrative components, thanks to which we can at least partially assess the relationship between the film and the source material, e.g., the recognisability of the original literary story in the film work, the fulfilment of its message, or the degree to which the main characteristics of the book are preserved in the film.

1 See, for example: LEHOTSKÁ, M., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: Filmová adaptácia životopisných literárnych diel. In SEDLÁK, J., CEPKOVÁ, P., ŠIMONČIČ, M. (eds.): *ŠVOUK 2018: Sekcia umeleckej komunikácie. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2018, p. 88-114.

2 See also: CHRENKOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: Text as an Artifact – Theoretical-Methodological Reflection. In KUSÁ, A., ZÁUŠKOVÁ, A., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L. (eds.): *Marketing Identity: Digital Mirrors – Part II. Conference Proceedings*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2018, p. 242-253.

3 See: RADOŠINSKÁ, J. et al.: *Empirické aspekty filmov o superhrdinách*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2019.

4 STANISLAVOVÁ, Z.: Hodnotový vzostup slovenskej detskej literatúry. In *Slovenská detská kniha*. Bratislava: Literárne informačné centrum, 2008, p. 155.

5 LYOTARD, J. F.: *Op postmodernismu*. Prague: Filosofie, 1999, p. 97-98.

6 Compare to: PLENCNER, A.: Filmový hrdina s mesianistickými črtami. In *Communication Today*, 2013, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 34; RADOŠINSKÁ, J.: *Teoretické aspekty filmov o superhrdinách*. Trnava: FMK UCM, 2018, p. 48.

7 LEVINSKÝ, O., STRÁNSKÝ, A.: *Film a filmová technika*. Praha: SNTL, 1974, p. 9.

8 For more information, see: HUTCHEON, L.: *A Theory of Adaptation*. New York: Routledge, 2006; ANDREW, D.: *Concepts in Film Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.

9 GIANNETTI, L.: *Understanding Movies*. 10th Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001, p. 405-409.

10 LEITCH, T.: *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to The Passion of the Christ*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009, p. 93-95.

The process of film adaptation of a literary text is one-way – the literary text ‘tells’ us a story, which is then ‘shown’ to us by the film. During such a transition, however, the adaptation needs to be dramatized in some way. This means that the literary text and its inner thoughts are ‘transferred’ into the spoken word, sounds, music and visual imagery.¹¹ This results in a complex cinematic treatment of the literary source, which is likely to appeal to different types of recipients¹² because of the quality of the narrative, but also thanks to its own formal (audiovisual, visual or auditory) components.

Literature for children and young people clearly has the potential to be ‘captured’ and further developed in a variety of creative ways, for example, through the adaptation process as a part of film production. Although children’s literature is able to communicate the autonomous world of childhood, which is distinctly different from the world of adulthood, authors of children’s books can use them to bring basic questions of values and morality closer to the adult reader.¹³ The clever juxtaposition of the two different worlds, then, allows us to see the literary work of the French writer Antoine de Saint-Exupéry as exceptionally culturally significant. His work with iconic imagery and a refined language encoding the underlying meanings in unconventional narrative techniques makes the philosophical fairy tale *The Little Prince* a representative research material worthy of wider scholarly attention underlining the interdisciplinary nature of the addressed issue.

3 Methodological Definition of the Problem

Each research inquiry is preceded by a clear definition of the methodological background according to the nature of the research materials and the stated objectives of the research. Given that the main objective of the present study is to explore the method of film adaptation used in terms of a specific literary work, explaining the rationale behind the choice of research material is crucial.

The work of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the French writer and aviator, is primarily represented by his authentic writings – personal diary entries written during the author’s life. Besides publishing texts based on vaguely defined genre schemes, such as *Voldenuit* (1931) and *Terre des hommes* (1939), his only book intended for a child reader is the philosophical fairy tale *Le Petit Prince* (1943), which is one of the ten best-selling French books of the last century.¹⁴ Since the present study does not work with the original 1943 edition, which was published by *Reynal and Hitchcock* in New York during the author’s lifetime, the source material for the analysis is the 2003 Slovak translation involving no interference with the original content of the first edition.¹⁵ We are interested in this particular story because of its resonance in relation to contemporary readers of all ages, which is reinforced by the high rate of reissues and translations worldwide. The book has been translated into hundreds of languages and dialects, including a Braille translation, and was voted the best book of the 20th century in France.¹⁶

The Little Prince’s position as one of the most translated fairy tales of all time has given rise to numerous adaptations and dramatic re-creations.¹⁷ Its most recent and critically acclaimed film adaptation to date (winner of *The César Awards* in 2016 for Best Animated Film and nominated for Best Animated Series or Television Film at *The Saturday Awards* in 2017), with the eponymous title *The Little Prince* (*Le Petit Prince*, 2015, directed by Mark Osborne), becomes the second part of our research material. We assume that the positive response of the professional and general public to this animated film, which is also the first feature-

11 Compare to: LODGE, D.: Adapting Nice Work for Television. In REYNOLDS, P. (ed.): *Novel Image: Literature in Performance*. London : Routledge, 1993, p. 196-200.

12 RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., RUSŇÁKOVÁ, L.: *Globalizovaný filmový priemysel*. Trnava : FMK UCM, 2020, p. 24.

13 See: PETRANOVÁ, D., HOSSOVÁ, M.: Critical Thinking as a Key Competency. In CHEN, L. (ed.): *ICASSR 2015: 3rd International Conference on Applied Social Science Research. Conference Proceedings*. Paris : Atlantis Press, 2016, p. 244-248.

14 WEBSTER, P.: *Život a smrť Malého prince*. Plzeň : Mustang, 1995, p. 6.

15 DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, A.: *Malý princ*. 6th Edition. Bratislava : Mladé letá, 2003, p. 56.

16 *Malý princ patrí k najpredávanejším knihám všetkých čias, autor sa jeho slávy nedožil*. Released on 6th April 2018. [online]. [2022-02-19]. Available at: <<https://style.hnonline.sk/kultura/1722573-maly-princ-patri-k-najpredavanejsim-kniham-vsetkych-cias-autor-sa-jeho-slavy-nedozil>>.

17 Remark by authors: *The Little Prince* (directed by Stanley Donen, 1974), *Malý veľký princ* (directed by Libor Vaculík, 1995), *Le Petit Prince – TV series* (directed by Pierre-Alain Chartier, 2010 – 2013) and many others, especially theatrical performances.

length animated adaptation of the fairy tale about *The Little Prince*, stems primarily from the quality of its creators’ work with the narrative components of the original story, with its interpretative levels and with the dramatization itself.

Respecting the nature of the stated aim of our study, we employ narrative analysis. Narrative analysis is understood as a description and interpretation of the narrative structure, or the formal arrangement of individual elements of the plot, or narrative components into a linear form. It belongs to the group of empirical methods aimed at qualitative (or rarely quantitative) analysis of textual, visual, auditory or audiovisual communication. Since the purpose of narrative analysis is to study content, we identify it as a variation of so-called qualitative content analysis. In the present study, we focus on the qualitative form of narrative analysis, i.e., the analysis of the narrative properties and features of the mentioned literary work and the audiovisual media content based on it.

The first analytical category (**genre structure**) offers a brief description of the basic characteristics of the fairy tale and related subgenres, also identifying and interpreting the set of formal and content elements included in the analysed material, the target group of its recipients, i.e., a certain age group to which the literary work and the media text are primarily addressed, and **the main idea (original idea)** of the works. The main idea is framed by the story’s **theme and the subject matter** – while the theme refers to the meaning included in the story, the subject matter, to some extent, indicates the possibilities of its interpretation. Similarly, another recognisable narrative element is the **main plot**, which determines the dynamic development of the primary storyline and directly refers to the main idea and genre. The background of the main plot is often complemented by several subplots based on cultural, moral, social, interpersonal or intrapersonal (internal, mental) conflicts. The essential element of the story is its **main protagonist** (or even several main characters), who confronts supporting and minor characters and thus represents a certain archetypal function present within the story. The narrator joins the story’s plot and characters as the third Aristotelian epic principle, which constitutes an important component of any literary and film work, depending on its genre affiliation, but also on the nature of the particular work. The relationship between the *syuzhet* and the *fabula* is defined by the compositional aspect of the narrative, focusing on the identification of **space and time**, that is, on the ways in which the action is situated within a particular temporal and spatial framework. By unifying the analytical categories of space, time and plot, we indicate the dramaturgical composition of the story. This involves capturing the sequential development of the narrative through Aristotle’s dramatic arc (exposition, collision, crisis, peripeteia, catastrophe), as well as the continuity of the individual sections that make up the resulting storyline.

The formulation of research questions is the logical precondition of any qualitative research. Respecting the main aim of the theoretical-empirical study, the chosen research material, the research method and the relevant analytical categories, we pose the following research questions:

RQ1: How are the narrative categories of the literary source transformed into its film adaptation?

RQ2: In what ways is the philosophical metanarrative dramatized in the film?

RQ3: Considering L. Giannetti and T. Leitch’s line of thought, which type of film adaptation of a literary work is dominant in case of *The Little Prince*?

4 The Narrative Components of the Literary and Cinematic Work *The Little Prince*

In terms of personality formation and psychological development of an individual, childhood is considered to be a period that significantly determines the quality of life in adulthood; therefore, these two worlds do not function as separate entities even in literature primarily intended for a child reader. Like literature for adults, literature for children and young people conveys knowledge of reality within artistic images, influencing the

emotional sphere of children and shaping their aesthetic perception and feeling,¹⁸ as well as their value system. Literary testimony presented through children's perception and interpretation of reality is therefore able to materialise contemporary social or existential problems through means of expression that are also accessible to the adult reader, as de Saint-Exupéry says in the very beginning of *The Little Prince*: "I beg the children to forgive me for dedicating this little book to an adult. I have a very serious reason: that adult is my best friend in the whole world. I have a second reason: that grown-up can understand everything, even children's books. I have a third reason: the adult lives in France, where he has experienced enough hunger and cold. He really needs something to comfort him. If all these reasons are not enough, I agree to dedicate this book to the child that the adult once was. All adults were children first. (But few of them remember it.)"¹⁹

The very **genre structure** of the literary text analysed, *The Little Prince*, suggests that it is a fairy tale understood as a sensory representation of more or less universal human problems, which was created by passing stories from generation to generation.²⁰ Since the philosophical aspect of de Saint-Exupéry's fairy tale is the dominant syuzhet (it is even referred to as a philosophical fairy tale by literary critics), the question of the 'suitability' of this book for a certain age group comes to the fore, especially if the message of the story is hidden in its abstract features. Although de Saint-Exupéry himself admitted that he was inclined towards abstraction, it was real life that constantly brought him back to reality.²¹ However, in terms of child readers' reception, the author's abstract philosophical musings are hidden behind the narrative. The child reader intuitively identifies **the theme** of The Little Prince's wanderings from Planet B612 across unknown asteroids to find what he is missing on his planet, a loved one. **The narrator of the story** is de Saint-Exupéry himself, who is also one of the supporting characters of the story, The Pilot meeting The Little Prince. The narrative illustrates **the main idea** of the work – the threat to the world of childhood posed by the principles of the adult world and a value system far removed from childlike innocence. To emphasise the fragility of the child's world, the author works precisely with imagery, which is enhanced at a metaphorical level by the threat of the invasive spread of the baobabs. This symbolism is ultimately evidenced by the author's isolated drawings accompanying the literary text as important semantic visual components of the philosophical metanarrative – an existential journey to find people. The main idea determines **the main plot of the story**, which can be understood as a confrontation between the children's world and the adult world through the actions and decisions of the main character – The Little Prince. During his journey across the galaxy, he encounters several minor characters who together develop the central plot conflict. Secondary plotlines involve sociocultural aspects (the main character's confrontation with several worlds, planets) moral issues (the main character's confrontation with different moral values), interpersonal struggles (the main character's interactions with secondary characters, including, for example, The Rose, The Fox or The Snake) and intrapersonal motives (the main character's confrontation with himself) and they ultimately lead to the resolution of the main plot.

The author embodies the children's world in **the fragility of the main character**, i.e., a child with easily recognisable external characteristics (the author's famous illustration of The Little Prince – an innocent boy with blond hair, a thoughtful look, holding a sword and dressed in a long, festive cloak; see Figure 1) and engaging personality traits. Describing the function of the main character in the story, including an assessment of their internal character traits, can be done by matching the character to the relevant archetypal character. Indeed, fairy tales depict archetypes in their simplest and most concise form, in which they provide the best guides to understanding the processes unfolding in the collective unconscious. Although C. G. Jung distinguishes a number of archetypes that are projected into fairy tales, in the context of the main character of the literary work in question we speak of the archetype of the Divine Child. The Divine Child is a symbol of truth and wholeness of being, representing the opposite of the ego determined by instincts and situations (the example of the adult man, the pilot and the author of the fairy tale under analysis in one person). In fairy tales, the archetype of the Divine Child appears as an innocent figure with supernatural powers or special

abilities. The birth of this child represents the arrival of a change, a rebirth.²² The very name 'Prince' refers to the uniqueness of the main character, to his untouchability and superhuman, even divine character, while the adjective 'Little' emphasises his position as a child.

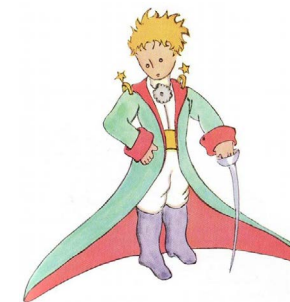


Figure 1: The original drawing of *The Little Prince* in the eponymous book by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
Source: DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, A.: *Malý princ*. 6th Edition. Bratislava: Mladé letá, 2003, p. 11.

The Little Prince's journey as the initiation of a quest leading to other people and thus towards adulthood begins with his departure from his home planet B612 into **the unknown space** of asteroids inhabited by various *pars pro toto* characters representing the adult world. These secondary characters, the inhabitants of the asteroids (The King, The Prodigal, The Drunkard, The Businessman, The Lamplighter, The Geographer), represent certain human qualities, thus suggesting a confrontation between two worlds of values. The last stop of The Little Prince is Earth, where a new storyline opens, linked to the figure of a grown man – a lone pilot shipwrecked in the Sahara Desert. In addition to being situated in space, the story is also framed by a **specific time**, which is tied to two storylines. The first storyline is fixed on the narrator-pilot character, who in the opening flashbacks to his own childhood memory (the experience of a six-year-old boy), then begins a narrative of eight days spent in the Sahara Desert (an event from six years ago), until finally the narrator returns to the present after several temporal ellipses (discharges). The second line relates to the figure of The Little Prince, and is therefore based on abstraction – we learn only vicariously about what preceded The Little Prince's encounter with The Pilot, without a more concrete anchoring of the story in time.

The Little Prince's wanderings are, in fact, the story of a grown man at a certain existential stage during which he begins to experience his own transience and loneliness in a crowded world, and so encounters his younger alter ego. In *The People's Land* (originally published in 1939 as *Terre des Hommes*), de Saint-Exupéry speaks of the process of self-discovery that every human being undergoes when they struggle with obstacles. For this, however, they need a tool.²³ For him, it is the revelation of The Little Prince that is the tool for self-discovery – that side of himself that has been increasingly repressed by the demands of contemporary society. Through the story of The Little Prince, P. Webster identifies de Saint-Exupéry as a model for the figure of the child and equally for the figure of The Pilot, the adult.²⁴ The hidden language communicates the philosophical and moral questions arising from a felt pity for a world divorced from the absolute truths of childhood, which in de Saint-Exupéry's case is intimately connected to a deep Catholic faith and idyllic memories. In de Saint-Exupéry's words, "the world of childhood games and memories will always remain more real to me than this, perhaps I really only lived in childhood".²⁵ De Saint-Exupéry's life has, therefore, become a significant **subject matter** for the creation of a children's story that is really about inner torment. P. Chevrier notes that de Saint-Exupéry's personality can be characterised by his faith in man and the instinctive search for moral values that goes with it.²⁶ It is this search that also shapes the poetic content of his stories.

18 RUSŇÁK, R.: *Svetová literatúra pre deti a mládež v didaktickej komunikácii*. Prešov: University of Prešov, 2009, p. 9. [online]. [2022-01-12]. Available at: <http://moodldata.pf.unipo.sk/publikacie/ucebnice/Svetova-literatura-Rusnak.pdf>.

19 DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, A.: *Malý princ*. 6th Edition. Bratislava: Mladé letá, 2003, p. 6.

20 BETTELHEIM, B.: *Za tajemství pohádek: Proč a jak je číst v dnešní době*. Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2000, p. 60.

21 CHEVRIER, P.: *Saint-Exupéry*. Prague: Vyšehrad, 1986, p. 52.

22 JUNG, C. G.: *Archetypy a nevědomí. Výbor z díla. II. svazek*. Brno: Nakl. Tomáše Janečka, 2003, p. 156-161.

23 DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY, A.: *Zem lidí*. Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ, 1963, p. 7.

24 WEBSTER, P.: *Život a smrt Malého prince*. Plzeň: Mustang, 1995, p. 7.

25 DESCHODT, E.: *Saint-Exupéry*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1987, p. 5.

26 CHEVRIER, P.: *Saint-Exupéry*. Prague: Vyšehrad, 1986, p. 47.

The story of *The Little Prince* is dynamic; its dynamism lies in the sequential **development of the storyline**, which starts from the exposition and, through the individual sequences, moves towards the final part of the Aristotelian drama, the catastrophe. The exposition opens with a retrospective return to the narrator's childhood experience. The symbolic significance of the child's drawing of the Great Snake devouring the elephant is obscured from the adult's view due to its iconic resemblance to a hat. The narrator is already hinting at this moment at the future conflict of two worlds – the child's and the adult's. The gradation of the conflict into a collision begins when The Pilot (the narrator) finds himself abandoned in the Sahara Desert due to a plane engine failure, and continues with the encounter with a child from another planet – The Little Prince. He learns about this child character's world through The Little Prince's experiences that preceded this encounter. The Little Prince's voluntary abandonment of his home planet, and with it his beloved but overly proud Rose (the rose as a symbol of love and uniqueness), began his journey across the galaxy; thus, his journey to find people. In the next part of the dramatic arc, the crisis, The Little Prince is introduced to the various characters and values that make up the adult world, deepening the conflict already hinted at during the exposition. For The Little Prince, however, the discovery of earthly life is also a discovery of the strength of interpersonal relationships (The Fox as a symbol of friendship) or the transience of life (The Snake as a symbol of death). The apparent incompatibility of two different worlds is disrupted by a plot twist, which lies in a new reality – in the building of a relationship between The Pilot and The Little Prince. It is a process of 'taming' in the sense of accepting the presence of the other person in one's own life. At this stage, however, one can register several verbal hints of The Little Prince's planned departure in search of The Rose. The above indicates the direction of the storyline towards catastrophe. Even though The Little Prince chooses a voluntary departure from the world of men based on an encounter with a poisonous Snake, his metaphorical death is not gratuitous. For The Pilot, this act results in a catharsis that involves an emotional reverberation of the dramatic action unfolding within him. He forms a kind of 'legacy' within himself, returning to it six years later as the message that the story of The Little Prince carries. With the philosophical metanarrative of *The Little Prince*, he ultimately brings closer the possible symbiosis of two seemingly irreconcilable worlds, leaving hope for all generations.

The original (literary) version of the story of *The Little Prince* has become a worldwide phenomenon, which has been interpreted and discussed worldwide. However, film adaptations have to acknowledge the risk of inadequate or shallow treatment of the message the original narrative carries. In this case, preserving the quality of the original work requires a careful translation of the narrative components into audiovisual form. Dramatization is an important prerequisite for the creation of a new work²⁷ that opens up another dimension of the literary source, limited by the imagination of the child or adult reader. In a film, the imaginative capacity of the recipient is predetermined by the dramatic elements inserted, above all by the image, editing, music, etc., which explicitly evoke the emotion intended by the creators.

The main idea of *The Little Prince*, directed by Mark Osborne, is contained in the image of the contemporary adult world as a place full of perfectionism, drabness, orderliness, but above all loneliness, which seeks to replace carefree, playful and naïve childhood. The threat to the world of childhood imposed by the principles of the adult world and a value system far removed from childlike innocence is hyperbolised in the film at the level of multiple contrasts (e.g., light-hearted childhood is represented by bright colours and rigid adulthood is expressed in shades of grey or by extreme portrayal of the adult protagonists' problematic character traits). The very conception of the main idea suggests that **the subject matter** of the film is related to its literary predecessor, which is explicitly preserved in the film through direct references to de Saint-Exupéry's original story. The affinity with the book is also expressed through the dual animation, i.e., through classic animation techniques (stop-motion puppets; see Figure 2) combined with modern animation techniques (computer-generated imagery; see Figure 3).

27 See, for example: ŠEVČOVIČ, M.: *Princípy grafického média v tvorbe slovenských autorov*. Bratislava : Comenius University in Bratislava, 2021; RADOŠINSKÁ, J., KVETANOVÁ, Z., VIŠŇOVSKÝ, J.: To Thrive Means to Entertain: The Nature of Today's Media Industries. In *Communication Today*, 2020, Vol. 11, No. 1, p. 4-21.



Figure 2: Classic animation technique (stop-motion puppets) used in *The Little Prince* (2015)
Source: OSBORNE, M. (Director): *The Little Prince* (BLU-RAY 3D + 2D). [DVD]. Montreal : On Animation Studios, 2015.



Figure 3: Computer-generated imagery (*The Little Girl and the Fox*) compared with classic animation technique (*The Little Prince*)
Source: OSBORNE, M. (Director): *The Little Prince* (BLU-RAY 3D + 2D). [DVD]. Montreal : On Animation Studios, 2015.

The theme of the film is the journey of a little girl in search of a loved one and the prematurely lost principles of childhood, which she gradually rediscovers through meeting a slightly eccentric and good-hearted neighbour – a former Aviator – and immersing herself in his life story. Based on a carefully elaborated life plan laid out in charts, diagrams and schemes, the Little Girl's perfectionist Mother seeks to prepare her daughter for adulthood. The entrance into this world is symbolically represented by the admission interview to Werth's academy (after all, de Saint-Exupéry also places a dedication to Léon Werth at the beginning of the book). However, the plan is increasingly disrupted by the neighbour's narration of *The Little Prince*'s extraordinary world, of which he himself was a part, and in which one can only see real things and values through the heart, not through numbers as the defining measure of the quality of the adult world. The two storylines hinted at (the story of *The Little Prince* vs. the story of *The Little Girl*) are distinguished by the different animation techniques mentioned above.

The two storylines are linked by the figure of the former Aviator, the friendly elderly neighbour present in both the literary source (The Pilot who meets The Little Prince in the desert) and the film adaptation (The Aviator who tells the story of his encounter with The Little Prince to The Little Girl). The above suggests a dual conception of **the position of the narrator** in the story. In the case of references to the literary Little Prince, the narrator acts in the first person singular (the so-called I-narration) – The Aviator reads to The Little Girl the story he has experienced and, through the prologue of the fairy tale in question, stylises himself in the position of the author of the literary work in question, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. The second storyline, reflecting the current events (the plot centred around the little girl), leaves the characters to speak for themselves; the narrator is thus present in the plot only as a non-participant observer.

Although the film adaptation is built upon two different storylines, both centred around the story of The Little Prince, The Little Prince is not featured as the main character in the film; paradoxically, the title does suggest that he is the main protagonist. In this case, the main character is The Little Girl whose quest for her prematurely lost childhood and loved one is also intertwined with The Pilot's search for The Little Prince. Not once in the entire film is the first or last name of any of the characters uttered. In this way, the characters retain a certain anonymity, as they represent specific character types, not individualities, much like all the minor figures included in the plot (e.g., The Aviator, The Mother, the Businessman, The Conceited Man, The Fox). The secondary character in this case is also Mr Prince himself, i.e., the awkward adult form of The Little Prince, who has lost his original identity in the film and thus also lost his status as the 'Divine Child'. Instead, he becomes the 'Wanted Person', one of the archetypes defined by the Russian philologist V. J. Propp. This archetype is, in fact, the object of the main protagonist's interest.²⁸

By preserving the original idea of the literary work, its **main plot** is also preserved, which is manifested in the film as a confrontation between the children's world and the adult world through the actions and decisions of the main character, but this character is no longer The Little Prince. The pivotal conflict unfolds against the backdrop of the intrapersonal conflict that The Little Girl experiences within herself as she struggles with what society expects of her and what she actually desires. The character of The Aviator also experiences a parallel condition, albeit from the opposite perspective – society expects him to be serious and earnest due to his advanced age, but instead he prefers his childish, fantasy Self, on the basis of which he is labelled a fool. The main plot is supplemented by secondary plotlines including sociocultural (the main character's confrontation with the adult world resembling a 'separate planet' to which the main character arrives in order to find The Little Prince), moral (the main character's confrontation with different moral values) and interpersonal issues (the main character's interactions with secondary characters, e.g., The Mother, the Aviator, Mr Prince, the Businessman, the Conceited Man).

The main plot is usually dependent on a particular **genre structure**. The analysed film is primarily aimed at a child audience, which is indicated by the transformation (simplification) of the original philosophical dimension of The Little Prince's meta-story – in the book materialised primarily in the monologues of the main character. The philosophical dimension in this case is partially replaced by the dominant plot component – the resulting story is therefore comprehensible, full of dynamics, plot twists not creating such an extensive space for philosophical reflections. From a generic point of view, this is a fairy tale for children in which good triumphs over evil, i.e., it is a genre with a characteristic 'happy ending' achieved by the actions of the characters.

Spatially, the plot is anchored in a realistic big-city environment, whose daily routine is disrupted by a fantastic (fairy-tale) space tied to the figure of The Aviator. From the second half of the film onwards, the world of the big city is hyperbolised into the form of a separate planet without stars, where characters intertextually referring to the literary source (The Conceited Man, the Businessman) 'rule' and where Mr Prince himself is located. A more explicit intermingling with the space of the literary original occurs with Mr Prince's liberation from the adult world and subsequent arrival on his home planet B612. In terms of **time**, the plot is framed by the main character's summer vacation, taking place primarily in chronological order, as evidenced by the timing of The Little Girl's preparation for the entrance exams (53 days). However, the established linearity is broken by the numerous narrative insertions related to the book, which in this case are not anchored in a specific time – this also testifies to the timelessness of the philosophical metanarrative of The Little Prince.

28 PROPP, V. J.: *Morfológia rozprávky*. Bratislava: Tatran, 1969, p. 35-67.

In the film, the whole story of The Little Prince, known from the literary source (the narration of The Aviator supplemented by cartoon scenes – de Saint-Exupéry's illustrations – of individual events from the book), is gradually 'told', but when identifying **the storyline**, we focus exclusively on those parts of the plot that are related to the main character of the analysed animated film. The main character's initial failure at the Werth Academy entrance interview triggers the following sequence of events, the so-called Plan B, which reveals the characters involved (The Mother and The Little Girl, her daughter) and their relationship with each other. The character of The Little Girl is introduced through the environment she enters, through the criteria of the adult world. In the second phase of the Aristotelian structure, a problem emerges – a collision occurs when a propeller from a neighbour's plane crashes through the walls of the house and literally destroys the main character's meticulously laid out life plan. This act hints at a future conflict resting on the contrast between the child's and the adult's perception of the world. The collision is deepened by the gradual revelation of a hitherto unknown world – the first intertextual reference to the story of The Little Prince reaches the character through a paper airplane privately taken from the house next door and is supplemented by miniatures hidden in a donated coin jar (a miniature of a rose, a sword, an airplane, a planet and The Little Prince). This eventually sparks The Little Girl's interest and she decides to visit her mysterious neighbour. It is a step towards the formation of a new friendship, with the ongoing dialogue hinting at the future direction of the plot and the definite breaking of the set timetable. The crisis lies in the escalation of the clash between two opposing forces (different ideas about the main character's future from the point of view of the child and his mother) after the incident involving The Little Girl and The Aviator with the police. Forbidden by her mother to seek The Aviator ever again, the main character returns to her original plan and routine of life, but discovers that she is not happy this way. The realisation of her own loneliness in the adult world leads her to decide to help The Aviator repair the plane and find The Little Prince. The plot twist, however, lies in the conflict that takes place between The Aviator and The Little Girl after the end of the book's story is told – the metaphorical departure of The Little Prince from the world, which also hints at The Aviator's departure from The Little Girl's life. The Aviator's subsequent hospitalisation represents a new reality and initiates The Little Girl's final decision not to give up the world that The Aviator has brought closer to her through his narrative. At this point, the story of de Saint-Exupéry's book is completed and the possibilities of its continuation are opened up through the basic conflict typical for fairy tales (the struggle of good versus evil) and the prospect of achieving a happy ending. The dramatic plot gradually moves towards closure at the moment when The Little Girl arrives in the hyperbolised adult world represented by the characters familiar from the original literary work and finally finds Mr Prince. The following course of events relates to the main character's attempt to 'revive' Mr Prince's memories of his own childhood. The Prince's return to planet B612 and to The Rose, of which only dust has remained due to the influence of time, completes the thought-emotional process – understanding the cycle of life, the transience, but also the eternity of memory. Catharsis, therefore, lies in The Little Girl's acceptance of the fact that a loved one must one day pass away, but will always remain in her heart, because *"only with the heart can one see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye"*. The message of this story is ultimately carried by The Little Girl's mother, who, like her daughter, awakens from a cruel, competitive world where humanity is disappearing and understands the true value of love.

5 Discussion: From Literary Masterpiece to Engaging Film

The established analytical categories (narrative components) that we identified in the selected research material in the previous chapter become the starting point for considering the transformation of the given narrative categories of the literary source material into its film adaptation (RQ1). Although the eponymous title of both versions of the story suggests that they will be faithful treatments of the same philosophical meta-story, the very genre determination of the book as a philosophical fairy tale (primarily aimed at an adult reader) and its film adaptation as an animated fairy tale (primarily aimed at a child recipient) foreshadows

their distinct character. The fundamental difference lies in the level of abstraction of the philosophical framework as the dominant line of de Saint-Exupéry's *Little Prince*. The inclusion of the literary text in the genre of a philosophical fairy tale is based on the fact that it contains numerous philosophical reflections on the meaning of human existence, which are intended to appeal mainly to an adult reader capable of identifying the hidden metaphorical level of the dialogues or inner monologues of the characters. Since the reception by a child reader is largely limited and depends primarily on the capacity for imagination and interpretation, the depth of the philosophical metanarrative clearly takes a back seat to the comprehensible plot component in a given reception. This is where the film adaptation comes into question. Although the philosophical level (the metanarrative) is still present in the 2015 animated fairy tale, the level of its elaboration is considerably adapted to the possibilities of the child recipient, especially by means of dramatization. Therefore, it is the plot component, based on the original philosophical meta-story, which is dominant in the animated motion picture and which becomes comprehensible to all ages through dramatization. Finally, the predilection for creating numerous film adaptations is primarily related to the natural human desire to fill in the gaps in the understanding of the adapted text by working with image, sound, etc. – that is, symbolic or technical codes. Therefore, the ways of dramatizing the original philosophical metanarrative in the analysed film (RQ2) serve to bring the basic questions of values and morality in terms of the human life journey closer to us. In this case, it is the thoughtful work of the filmmakers with the visual and auditory components that supersedes the limited imaginative capacities of the younger recipient. It is thus a reflection on the shift from the imagination to the actual seen and heard.

While identifying the ways of dramatizing the philosophical metanarrative in the film, we focus on those means of expression that can direct the recipient to understand the narrative value of the work and to feel a certain emotion. Among the many ways of dramatization, we mainly emphasise symbolic codes such as colour, sound dominated by instrumental music, environment or objects and their positioning in the image. The given symbolic codes are ultimately intertwined with the narrative analysis of both parts of the research materials (e.g., working with de Saint-Exupéry's illustrations in the literary text, working with the image in the movie). The use of colour in the film indicates the gap between childhood and adulthood, as well as the contrast between two diametrically different value systems. While the childhood world is represented by vibrant, contrasting colours, the roboticized adulthood is expressed by shades of grey that do not in any way break out of the labelled conformity. The film's instrumental musical component, produced by some of the foremost film composers of our time, Richard Harvey and Hans Zimmer, carries numerous emotional meanings as they dramatize and/or 'soothe' the visuals. Thus, the musical component of the analysed work to a large extent shifts the presented narrative towards an even more intense reception experience. The environment in which the image and related sound recordings are situated, as well as the positioning of individual elements (people and objects) on the screen, have symbolic significance. To a large extent, they intertextually refer to the book's source material and preserve the link between the literary text and the film image. At the same time, however, they also distinguish them as two separate stories – the story of *The Little Prince* is visually processed through stop-motion animation and the story of *The Little Girl* through cutting-edge animation techniques. A certain separation of the two stories in terms of their different graphic treatment suggests that the original spatial anchoring of the plot (B612 home planet, asteroids, planet Earth, the Sahara Desert) will be retained, but at the same time it will also be extended to include a space that relates exclusively to the cinematic image (the big city and its hyperbolised form – a separate adult planet).

In addition to being situated in space, the plot in both works is embedded in a specific time frame. In the literary text, however, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry works with a non-linear time – the author-narrator begins with a description of his own childhood memory, then the plot unfolds over eight days spent in the Sahara Desert with numerous temporal ellipses, before finally anchoring his narration of the events of six years ago in an undefined present. The narrative category of time thus significantly affects the level of intelligibility of the text. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the linearity of time is maintained in the film (the plot is framed by the main character's summer vacation). The chronological sequence of events in the film is disrupted by numerous narrative insertions linked to the book. It follows that the narrator is an active meaning-making agent in the literary text. Besides being one of the characters, he is also a kind of a narrative guide. In the film,

however, the characters narrate for themselves; the function of the narrator, and thus of the author himself, disappears (except for the recollection of the story of *The Little Prince* in the first person singular). This fact speaks of a change of the subject matter – while the subject matter for the literary text is Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's philosophy of life or his authentic experiences, the subject matter for the film text is the book, in which authorship is always ultimately manifested.

The main idea of the threat to the world of childhood posed by the principles of the adult world and a value system anchored far away from childhood innocence remains stable in both versions of the story, but the difference lies in the way of its thematic treatment. The theme of the existential journey to find people – the journey of *The Little Prince* in the literary text and of *The Little Girl* in movie in search of a loved one – forms the basis for two separate stories related to the actions of two different main characters. The most significant transformation of the narrative categories of the literary text into the film adaptation occurs in relation to the main characters. The literary *Little Prince*, as the archetype of the Divine Child, loses his original identity in the film, and from the second half onwards the essence of this character is replaced by the archetype of the Wanted Person. The initial position of the film's main character – *The Little Girl* – is different in this case, as she does not appear as a character with supernatural powers or special abilities, and her positioning in the plot does not suggest any change or rebirth. There are partial variations in the case of supporting and minor characters, but these are not essential to the meaning of the story, as in both texts they represent certain personality types dominant in the adult world (e.g., *The Prodigal*, *The Businessman*). An important secondary character, through which the narrative develops at the level of building the relationship between a child and an adult, in the film is *The Mother* of the main character in addition to *The Aviator*.

The Mother's efforts to prepare her daughter for the adult world according to clearly established rules and the main character's subsequent actions, by which she breaks out of conformity, are hinted at in the film's main plot. Similarly, in the book, the main plot is expressed through *The Little Prince's* encounter with various character types representing the adult world. The confrontation between childhood and adulthood is thus an essential plot device present in both texts, but the ways it is executed differ at the level of a number of sub-conflicts that ultimately culminate in the final stage of Aristotle's dramatic arc. Although the narratives contained in the book and in the film are necessarily different, it should be pointed out that the development of the storylines according to the different phases of the dramatic arc (exposition, collision, crisis, peripeteia, catastrophe) has been maintained. Within the framework of the set research questions, we focus on the identification of those narrative categories that are directly related to the literary source material and to some extent transformed into its film adaptation. For this reason, the question of the relevance of comparing those dramatic phases of the film that take place after the end of the literary story of *The Little Prince* comes to the fore. The peripeteia represents a turning point that shifts the plot to a new course that is unfamiliar to the reader of the book, yet the filmmakers continue to preserve the original message of the story. Indeed, the catharsis of the animated tale lies in the acceptance of the fact that life is fleeting, but the memory of a loved one remains forever alive. In both cases, the genre determination of the tale foreshadows the nature of the final resolution of the conflict through catharsis. The difference, however, lies in the emotion that both texts leave in the recipient. While the literary text, with its open ending (the metaphorical death of *The Little Prince*), leaves the reader grieving for the loss of a loved one and raises questions about the continuation of *The Pilot's* life, in the movie, good clearly 'triumphs' over evil in the form of a happy ending. Indeed, despite the presence of the death motif in *The Aviator's* character, the sadness is balanced by *The Mother's* rapprochement with her daughter and the preservation of the true values embodied by *The Aviator's* presence in *The Little Girl's* life.

6 Conclusion

The degree of similarity between a literary work and a related audiovisual text depends primarily on a proper understanding of the meaning of the original literary story and also on the experience, skill or emotional disposition of the filmmakers. On the basis of answering the first two research questions, it can be concluded that there are a number of parallels and differences between the literary source material we have

analysed and its film adaptation. The aforementioned suggests an ambiguous determination of the type of film adaptation of a literary work following the taxonomy proposed by L. Giannetti and T. Leitch mentioned in the theoretical part of the study (RQ3). Starting from the claim that films are only in exceptional cases able to identify themselves with literary works without any interference in their original narrative structure, literal adaptation does not find its application even in the case of the film adaptation of the philosophical fairy tale about *The Little Prince*. We believe that a truly literal film adaptation of the literary text in question would not even be possible, because (post)production cinematographic techniques would simply not be able to grasp and express in an audiovisual way the true depth of the philosophical ideas and metaphorical references contained in Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's text.

The fidelity of the adaptation depends on the ability and skill of the filmmakers to elaborate the raw, primary narrative in order to convey the 'heart and soul' of the literary source material. Preserving what is important inside the literary work and trying to bring 'what is important' outward, into the film, is the typical process of creating a faithful adaptation. Although an unaltered version of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's literary text is also present in the film, in the form of a faithful adaptation of almost the entire story of *The Little Prince* by means of plot insertions processed by stop-motion animation, the filmmakers in this case mostly follow the creative practices typical of a loose adaptation. A loose adaptation primarily captures the main ideas, situations or characters drawn from the source material, while allowing them to develop independently and combine with each other. Looking at the central storyline of the animated fairy tale *The Little Prince*, we find that, in addition to maintaining an identical main idea and main plot that is directly related to the primary idea of the original story, its creators freely conceptualise generic, thematic and spatiotemporal grasp of the narrative, the characters and functions of the main protagonist, secondary characters and the narrator in the story, or the storyline itself – these narrative components are 'assured' of independent development, which creates space for their mutual combination. Despite the fact that it is a free adaptation, the presence of numerous intertextual (quotations or allusions of the adapted literary text), paratextual (linking the two texts by the same title) and architextual references (common rules in the creation of both texts, e.g., the application of Aristotle's dramatic arc in the construction of the narrative) to the original literary text is significant. Thus, in this case of film adaptation, too, we can speak of the overlapping and complementary nature of the adaptation practices in question.

It is obvious that one of the primary evaluations of film adaptation practices is based on the question of 'fidelity', which, according to J. M. Welsh, usually leads to the idea that "*the book is better than the film*".²⁹ Certainly, the question of a film's fidelity to its literary source becomes the basis for evaluating the ways in which a literary source is adapted to film, but in this context, it is necessary to view film as a separate text with its own identity and aesthetic principles. The aforementioned statement becomes the starting point for determining which type of film adaptation was used while creating the movie inspired by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, precisely on the basis of two independent narrative analyses of the selected research material. Despite the fact that we offer a comparison of the qualitative data contained, there is no critical evaluation or qualitative comparison of the works – the film and its literary source.

It also remains a fact that many film studies scholars, in connection with research on film adaptations, deliberately omit discussion of screenplays and focus exclusively on comparing the literary source and the finished film, which, according to P. Lev, is a pity, because additional important information can appear in screenplays, especially when the initial script differs significantly from the film or the literary source material. The study of the screenplay then raises the question of whether the screenplay is an independent work of art or merely an intermediate stage between the literary work and the film. However, when trying to analyse screenplays, we encounter several problems – the availability of the full script is often problematic, access to internal archives might be required, or there is a lack of understanding of the connections between screenplays (multiple drafts of the storyline), literary works and film adaptations – which are usually associated with time-consuming and content-intensive, methodologically sophisticated research.³⁰ However, the problems outlined

29 WELSH, M. J.: Introduction: Issues of Screen Adaptation: What Is Truth? In WELSH, M. J., LEV, P. (eds.): *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. xiv.

30 LEV, P.: The Future of Adaptation Studies. WELSH, M. J., LEV, P. (eds.): *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 338.

above are by no means insoluble. For this reason, we conclude that the study of the ways in which literary texts are adapted to film opens up space for further research, extended, for example, to include reflection on screenplays as literary texts in their own right. In terms of the possibilities for further research, there is also a special place for identifying the child recipient and their interpretive abilities, which can open up a new dimension of the message conveyed by the genre of the fairy tale. Children's and young people's literature and its film adaptations appear to be an important part of contemporary media research, as they are very much involved in shaping the value framework of the new generation.

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