

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE CONTEXT OF LOGOTHERAPY

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Abstract

Today, the eternal question of finding the meaning of life is perhaps more present than ever. Regardless of our living situation, our material conditions of poverty or well-being, or our different life circumstances, there is still the need to answer questions such as: Why are we here? What is the meaning of existence? What is the meaning of my life? What makes sense in what's going on around us? These questions are deeply rooted in human nature, are very complex, and put us into reality wider than any disease, as they have existed as long as humankind. Viktor E. Frankl, the creator of logotherapy or, as it is often called, the third Vienna school of psychotherapy, provided answers to these and many other questions through his life and work. He came to the conclusion that we are people in the full sense of the word only when we realize a meaningful task, or when we forget ourselves because of love toward another, and place others in the center of our interest. In particular, he emphasized responsibility as a formal-ethical value, which in itself is a prerequisite for all other values, without determining their order. Looking at the upbringing of children and children's literature in a logotherapy context, the question arises as to how and to what extent literacy can help introduce pre-school and early school-age children into thinking about meaning and values. The paper explores logotherapeutic elements in works of children's literature, as well as the possibilities of mediating basic logotherapeutic concepts and values for pre-school and early school-age children. It also presents and analyses the results of the research conducted with the students of the final semester of the Faculty of Teacher Education, the values and literary works that transmit them, the hierarchy of values, i.e., the selection of literary works which contain logotherapeutic elements.

Keywords: *meaning, teacher's vocation, children's literature, logotherapy, Viktor Frankl*

1. INTRODUCTION

Questions on the meaning of teaching literature are more present today than ever, if we put them in the context of digitization, electronic literature, networking, and the quick reception of information. However, this dilemma has been present since ancient times. With the invention of the printing press, general literacy began to arise, and printing certainly had far-reaching consequences on the formation and the reception of knowledge. Knowledge was not solely the asset of the privileged anymore, and from history, we know that reading was not always considered a blessing. From Plato's conversation with Phaedrus (Plato 1997), we learn the story of the Egyptian god Thoth, according to legend, the inventor of the die, chess, numbers, geometry, astronomy, and writing, who visited the Egyptian Pharaoh and offered to transfer these inventions to his people.

The Pharaoh discussed the advantages and disadvantages of each of these divine gifts, until Thoth came to the art of writing. "This is", Thoth said, "the branch of knowledge which shall improve their memory; my discovery provides the recipe for both memory and wisdom." But the Pharaoh was unimpressed. "If people learn this", he told the god, "it will imprint forgetfulness in their souls; they will stop exercising their memory because they will rely on what is written, no longer remembering from within themselves, but using external marks. What you have discovered is not the recipe for memory, but for reminding. And you do not offer true wisdom to your disciples, but a mere illusion of it, as while telling them of many things without teaching them anything, you are making them believe that they know a lot, and most of them will know nothing. And as people filled with not wisdom, but imaginary wisdom, they shall be a burden to their compatriots."

For Socrates, the text that is read is merely words in which sign and meaning are intertwined with intricate precision. Punctuation, interpretation, remarks, comments, association, rejection, symbolic

and allegorical meaning, all these do not come from the text but from the reader. The text, like a painted canvas, Socrates said, is simply "the Moon in Athens"; the reader, however, has enriched it with an ivory face, the dark sky, a landscape of ancient ruins among which Socrates once walked. (Manguel 2001, p. 72).

Alberto Manguel, in his aforementioned book (ibid. 72) gives the example of Richard de Fournival, Chancellor of the Cathedral in Amiens, who, around 1250, disagreed with Socrates' opinion in his Preface to "Bestiaire d'amour": "When somebody listens to a story being read aloud, listening about the events, he sees them in the present." According to de Fournival, reading enriches the present and actualises the past; memory perpetuates these properties in the future. For de Fournival, it is the book, and not the reader, which keeps and transmits memory. De Fournival's students relied on the library stored in their heads, from which they shall, thanks to the complex mnemonics they had studied since their earliest days, be able to pick up a chapter or a verse as easily as finding a specific topic in a library of microchips and documents.

When writing ceased to be the privilege of a certain stratum of people, another thing happened: suddenly there was a multitude of perspectives and a differentiation of knowledge on one hand but on the other, focusing on only one medium: the book, i.e., letters and images. In the 19th century, there was a new way of forming knowledge and a transition from positivism to a natural, scientific understanding of the world. Later, with the advent of technological media – photography, film etc., the so-called second media revolution began, which led to the multimodality of meta-media computers. It is marked by rediscovering multimodality, this time triggered by technology (as opposed to the monomodality of print), which also influenced the way of interpersonal communication between people.

Today, we know that books have not been destroying memory, but rather encouraging it. The aforementioned Egyptian Pharaoh is an example of an eternal fear – that technological advances would destroy something we consider precious. This fear is especially present in relation to spiritual values. Equally, we know that no new medium succeeded in ending the previous one: film has not ended theatre yet, electronic literature does not mean the end of printed books, regardless of the prophecy by Marshall McLuhan, who in the 1960s wrote his *Gutenberg's Galaxy* where he wrote that the linear way of thinking, brought by print, is about to be replaced by a more global way of perception and understanding, through television images and other sorts of electronic devices (McLuhan & Quentin, 2001). Reading an interactive text gives an illusion of freedom, but still only an illusion. The reader is freer when using the printed final text, into which they can engross oneself over time, than when using a "movable" text in which only some, but still limited manipulations are allowed. A physical text can be interpreted in many ways (but at the same time does not tolerate just any interpretation or "manipulation") and leaves the reader free to always find new meaning for themselves in any given moment.

It has never occurred, in the history of culture that the new medium ended the old one, but it has certainly changed it. The problem imposed in modern society, i.e., the modern electronic community of the so-called global village, is primarily the problem of loneliness – which is growing, despite the contact with the entire world through the galactic network. We are witnessing the influx and the availability of a massive amount of information, but also the inability to choose and distinguish, to navigate the world, the increased feeling of disorientation, the inability to listen to our conscience and of sound judgement, and the inability to find meaning in our lives and the reasons to remain in this world. This problem does not only affect adults, but also children. There is a need for a new form of critical competence which relates to the selection of information. Rewriting a literary work by changing its structure, which interactive hypertexts offer as a possibility, enables practising creativity and freedom, which is not entirely possible with printed books. By reading a written story, we have to accept and realise that in life, there are immutable things, the law of necessity. If we wish to be truly free, and not only have the illusion of freedom, we have to learn exactly this: in life, there are immutable things, the blows of fate on which we can have no influence, but the attitude towards them, how we shall stand in the given circumstances of Life and Death, this depends only on us. Books and stories still offer such wisdom. With their linearity, they structure the world and give it meaning. The

story is a complete circle, its plot flowing linearly from beginning to end, and allows for an overview of its events and perceiving its meaning. To raise a child so that it becomes capable of dealing with the blows of fate, seeing that the life of every person, despite the circumstances, is filled with meaning and that the child is about to receive a special task only for him or her, is one of the greatest pedagogical tasks of today. Literature gives us great help in realising this task. If we put literature, and in this case, children's literature, in the context of logotherapy, we can identify significant links and establish guidelines for further work with quality literary texts which will promote the aforementioned important attitudes.

2. ON THE LOGOTHERAPY OF VIKTOR FRANKL

Logotherapy was developed by Viktor E. Frankl (1905 – 1997), the world-famous Viennese neurologist and psychiatrist. It is considered the "Third Viennese School of Psychotherapy" (after Freud and Adler). Viktor E. Frankl (1905. - 1997.), was a Viennese psychiatrist and neurologist, a University Professor whose life path was characterized by personal experiences of suffering and experiencing the horrors of World War II in Nazi concentration camps. Frankl defined logotherapy as "meaning-oriented psychotherapy" and states that, compared to psychoanalysis, it is a "less retrospective and less introspective method, focused on the meaning which the patient will fulfil in the future" (Frankl 2015, p.92). The work of Viktor E. Frankl is based on two basic foundations: meaning and the spiritual dimension. At the heart of logotherapy is the realization that people, by nature, are focused on meaning and values. People should have life goals they are trying to achieve, with which they grow and become more mature. Thus, the point is that each of us must discover the strengths and capabilities we have, and use them meaningfully, even under adverse circumstances. The spiritual dimension, according to Frankl, is a crucial human dimension. It is opposed to the physical and psychological dimension, it can shape things, it can adapt, it can distance itself (Frankl, 1982). It allows us not to accept everything, both from others and from ourselves.

As the key problem of today, Viktor Frankl sees man's attitude toward meaning (Frankl 1999) and, therefore, the introduction of logotherapy in education, that is, placing works of children's literature which we use in teaching in a logotherapeutic context, can certainly be of valuable help for both teachers and for children and young adults in finding meaning. It is known that Frankl reflected on what happens if we ignore the will to meaning, i.e., if it is replaced by the will to pleasure, power or self-realization. This leads a person to a situation of existential vacuum, followed by a state of noogenic neurosis. To prevent this from happening, and to help a child become motivated by the awareness of its own mission in the world and its own uniqueness, it is necessary from the earliest days to discover values or meaning with them, to tell them that they are co-creators of the world and the social reality in which they find themselves. Developing the ability of conscience as an "organ of meaning" to recognize at a given time and place the challenge of values and the need to realize them, and to answer the questions that life asks of us, should be part of every educational activity (Velički and Velički 2018, p. 334).

3. WHICH STORIES CAN TRANSMIT MEANING?

The question posed at the very beginning is: what sort of children's literature can transmit meaning? If we limit ourselves to only narrative forms, we come again and again to a very broad terminological definition. The term "story" includes various types of prose, such as short stories, fairy tales, fables, anecdotes. Therefore, if we consider this part of children's literature, i.e., stories, from a logotherapeutic perspective, they should have the potential to find meaning, the capability of delving into a specific situation, in the sense of describing situations and finding solutions. They would have to show a way out of a seemingly hopeless situation. Thus, stories should indicate a solution to a problem, instil hope, but also include unexpected twists, and sometimes paradoxes. However, sometimes the stories which lack a happy ending can act in a logotherapeutic manner, because they shock, they indicate what might happen. In the upbringing of children, we need stories that contain structural analogy of real life, stories which show that a certain structure (a model / behavioural or

situational pattern) manifests itself in real life and how it can be changed meaningfully. To find such stories, it is important to adopt the fundamental attitude which directs our interest primarily toward models and patterns in thinking, acting, and experiencing, and pays less attention to the content itself (Hammel 2009, p. 27). The same author concludes that the art of therapeutic storytelling (and in this case, the logotherapeutic view of children's literature includes this aspect of storytelling) lies less in finding stories which would be "therapeutic", but rather in identifying which part of associative and metaphorical expression of a certain story corresponds to the situation, and vice versa, which part of a certain situation corresponds to the story, i.e., we have to be able to adapt the story to the context (ibid., 242) and the possible life situations in which the child might find themselves.

From literature, we are aware of the concept of bibliotherapy, which relates to the planned use of literary texts (prose, poetry, myths, legends, children's literature) and literary expressive devices (metaphors, similes, allegories, rhymes, and rhythm) for facilitating and encouraging various ways of coping with stress. The mutual action that is being developed between literature and the reader or listener causes identification and emotional reactions leading to a cathartic experience (Ayalon 1995, p.49). The use of narrative therapy is good when it changes the stories that bind us, into stories that set us free. Here it must be emphasized: we can tell others our life stories, or write them for others, but there is no genre of telling our own life story to ourselves. Even Augustine's confessions were directed to God, and Rousseau's to other wounded narcissists. The story requires two (Kearney 2002, p. 52). We might say that, by reading, we become more mature; the lives described in books shape us, educate us, and act on a deeper level within us, and are therefore more effective. For this reason, stories can also play a therapeutic role.

In his essay "What a Psychiatrist Says about Modern Literature", Viktor Frankl points out that it is literature that should fight against the loss of will to meaning, avoiding mere self-portrayal and placing itself "on the stage" of meaninglessness and the absurd. Frankl argues that true meaning is yet to be discovered, it cannot be created, however, meaninglessness can be created by writing, as he especially warns against: "However, literature has its choice. It does not need to be a symptom of today's mass neurosis but can provide a significant contribution to therapy. Because it is the people who went through the hell of despairing over the seeming meaninglessness of existence who are called to sacrifice their suffering for others. A true self-portrayal of their despair can help the readers, who are equally suffering from a meaningless life, in overcoming this suffering, whether it is only about feeling not alone in this respect or feeling the absurdity transform into solidarity. (...) Of course, as long as literature has this therapeutic function, as long as it realises its therapeutic potential, it must not allow itself to sadomasochistically divert into nihilism and cynicism. If the writer is not capable of immunising a person against despair, he must not allow himself to infect the reader with his own despair." (Frankl, 2011, 106 / 109).

In the context of these reflections, a study was conducted on the possibilities of finding meaning with the help of literature based on the basic tenets of logotherapy.

4. RESEARCH

4.1 Aim of the research

The aim of the study was to find out what future teachers, students of the fifth (final) year of the Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb, think about the possibilities of finding meaning with the help of literature based on the basic tenets of logotherapy.

4.2 Materials and Methods

4.2.1 Materials

The study was conducted using a survey questionnaire containing the following questions:

1. What would you read/tell/recommend children to read if you:

- wished to tell them that joy was important and that it was one of the possible strategies for surviving in crisis situations?
 - wished to tell them that there was meaning in suffering?
 - wished to encourage children (explain to them that, apart from what happens to us in life, the things that we cannot influence, there was also a space of freedom)?
 - wished to mediate essential values to them:
 - a) kindness,
 - b) modesty,
 - c) generosity,
 - d) humility?
2. What would you read/tell/recommend children to read if you:
- wished to give them hope?
 - wished to explain to them the importance of empathy?
 - wished to tell them how crisis represents a chance for something new?
 - wished to tell them that hatred and hostility do not bring happiness?
 - wished to tell them about the importance of responsibility?
 - wished to explain to them the concept of – dignity –?
 - wished to tell them that, regardless of what happens to us, we decide how we feel?
3. What would you single out as the most important of the above? (3 quotes)

4.2.2 Methods

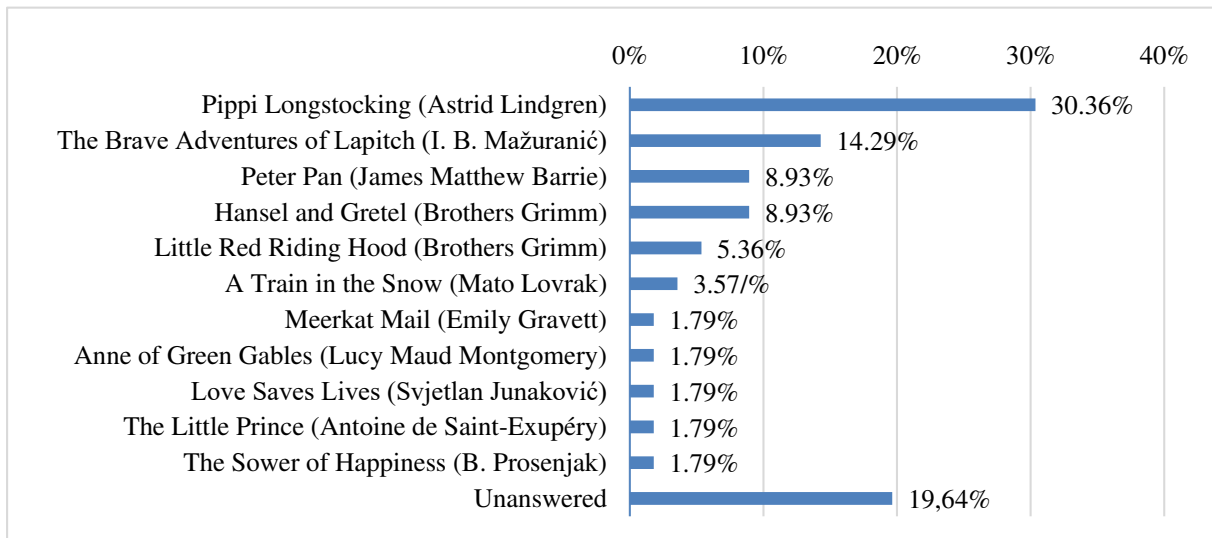
The data was collected using a paper-and-pencil questionnaire. The study involved 56 respondents who filled in the survey themselves. The participation in the questionnaire was completely voluntary and anonymous, and the respondents were able to resign from answering it further at any point in time.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive analysis yielded the following results:

1. What would you read/tell/recommend children to read if you:
- wished to tell them that joy was important and that it was one of the possible strategies for surviving in crisis situations?

Graph 1: Joy

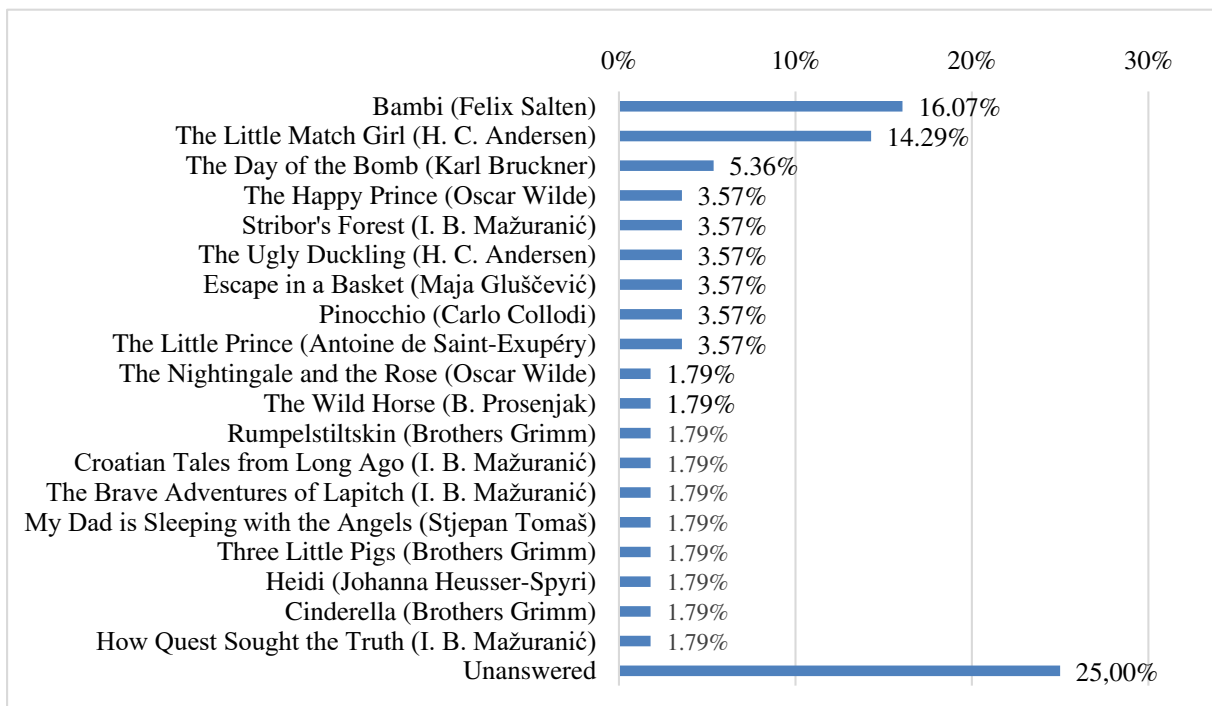


Most respondents (30.36%) listed Astrid Lindgren's Pippi Longstocking book as their first choice if they wanted to inform children that joy was important and that it was one of the possible strategies for survival in crisis situations. Next is a book by the Croatian author Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, The Brave Adventures of Lapitch, (14.29%) and, following in the same percentage, the books Peter Pan by James Matthew Barrie and Hansel and Gretel by the Brothers Grimm (8.93%). 19.64% of respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 1)

What would you read/tell/recommend children to read if you:

- wished to tell them that there was meaning in suffering?

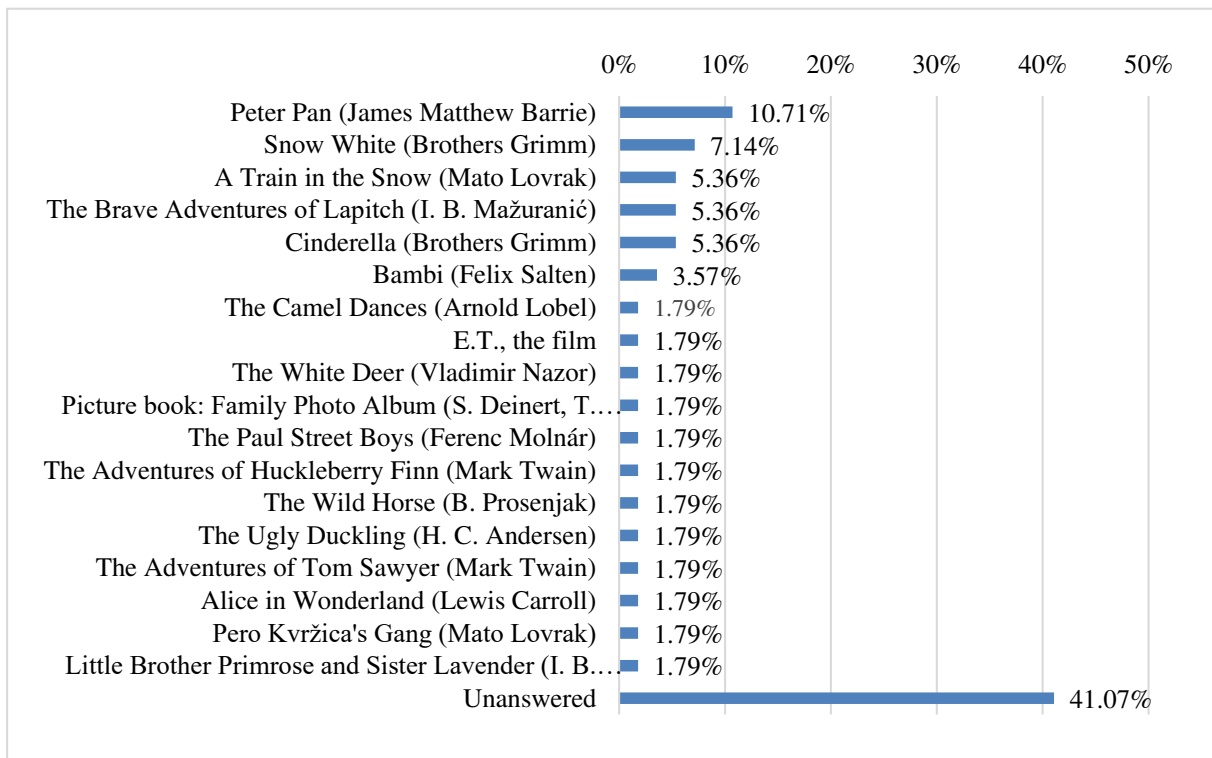
Graph 2: Suffering



The majority of respondents (16.07%) listed the book Bambi by Felix Salten as their first choice if they wished to tell children that there was meaning in suffering. Next is Hans Christian Andersen's story, The Little Match Girl (14.29%), and The Day of the Bomb by Karl Bruckner (5.36%). 25% of respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 2)

- wished to encourage children (explain to them that, apart from what happens to us in life, the things that we cannot influence, there was also a space of freedom)?

Graph 3: Courage

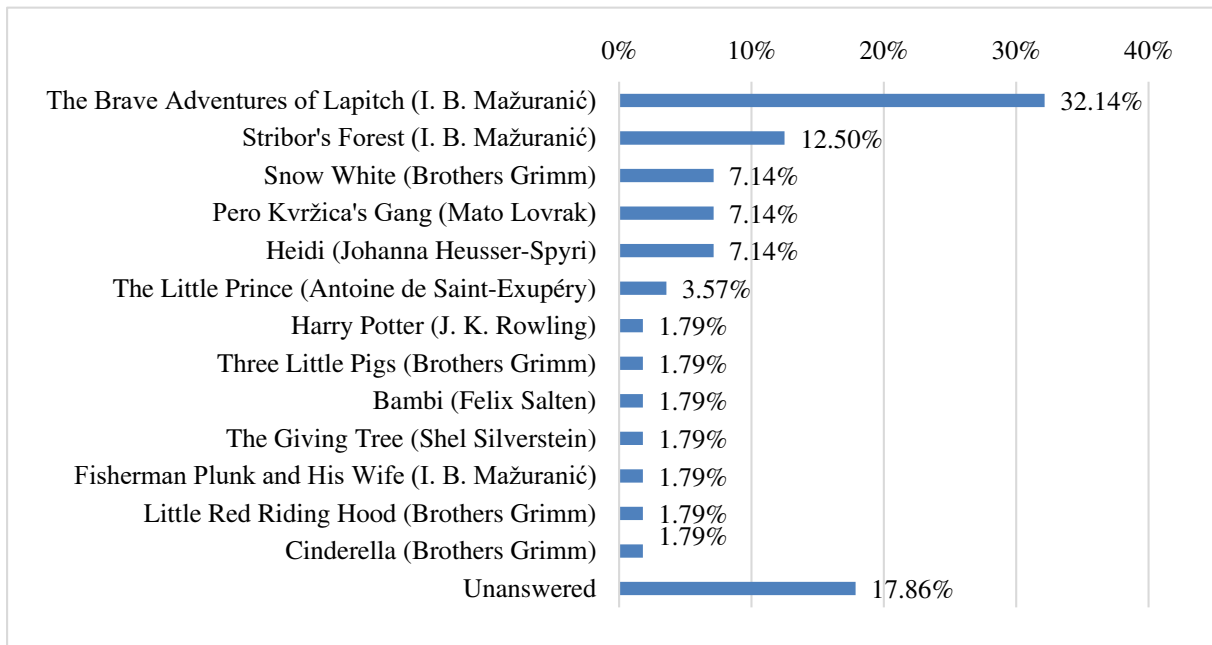


The majority of respondents (10.71%) listed Peter Pan by James Matthew Barrie as their first choice if they wished to encourage children, i.e., explain to them that, apart from what happens to us in life, the things that we cannot influence, there was also a space of freedom. Next was the fairy tale of Snow White (7.14%), and, in the same percentage, the following works: The Train in the Snow by Mato Lovrak, The Brave Adventures of Lapitch by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, and Cinderella by the Brothers Grimm (5.36%). 41.07% of respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 3)

- wished to mediate essential values to them:

a) kindness

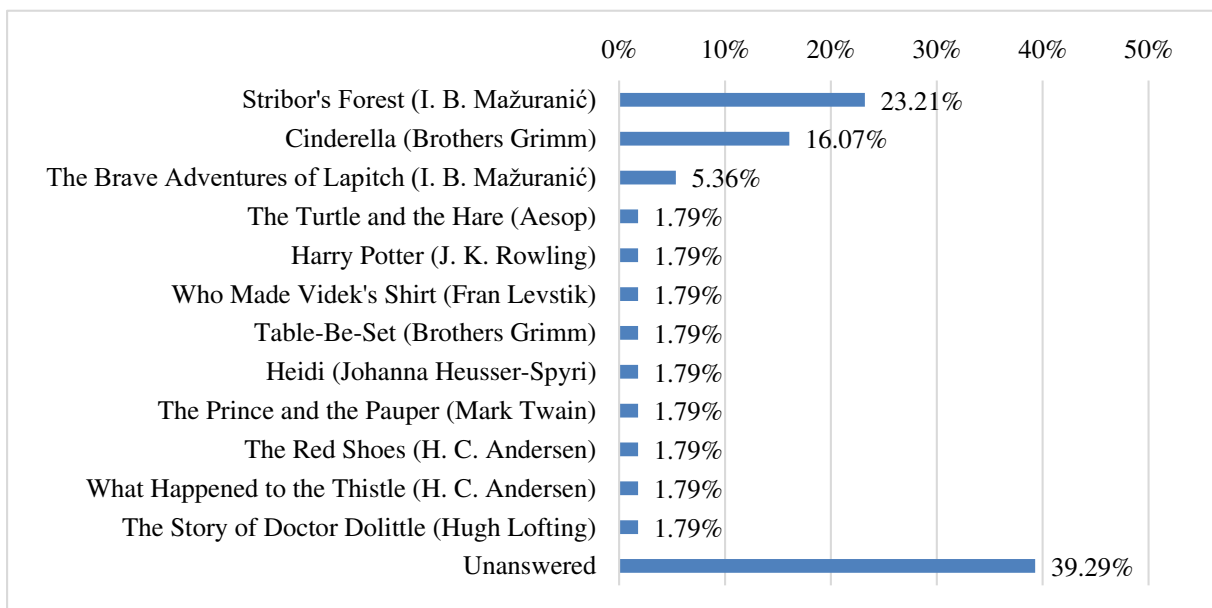
Graph 4: Kindness



The majority of the respondents (32.14%) listed the book *The Brave Adventures of Lapitch* by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić as their first choice if they wished to mediate the virtue of kindness to children. Next is the story *Stribor's Forest* by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (12.50%) followed by, in the same percentage, *Snow White* by the Brothers Grimm, *Pero Kvržica's Gang* by Mato Lovrak, and *Heidi* by Johanna Heusser-Spyri (7.14%). 17.86% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 4)

b) modesty

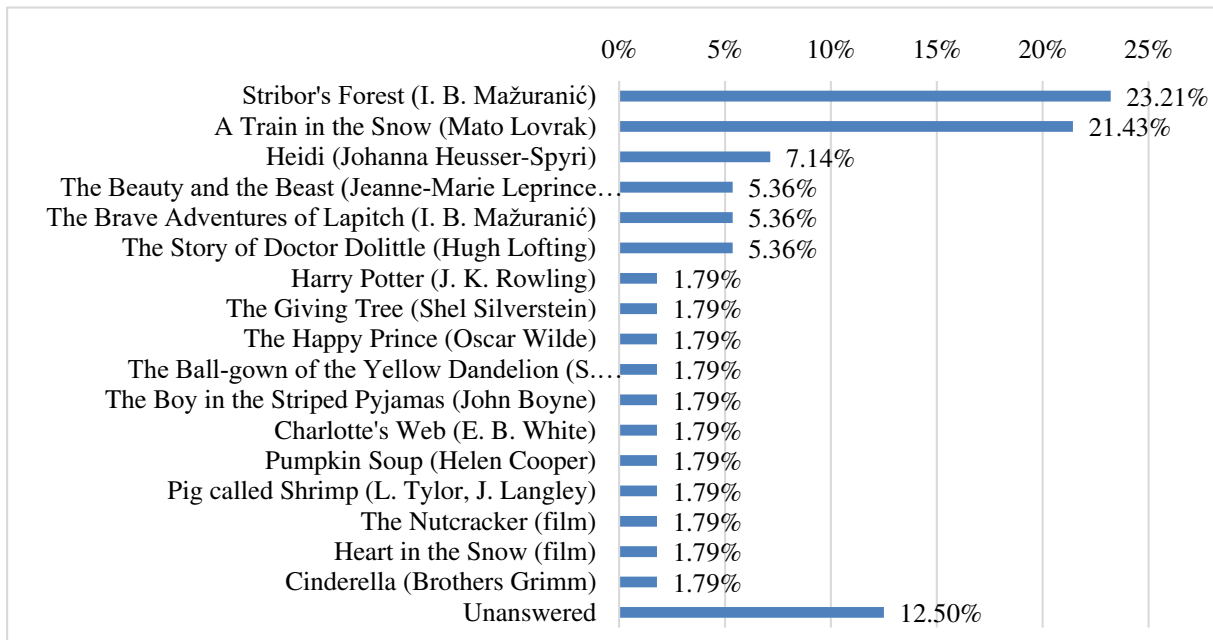
Graph 5: Modesty



The majority of the respondents (23.21%) listed the story Stribor's Forest by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić as their first choice if they wished to mediate the virtue of modesty to children. This is followed by the fairy tale of Cinderella by the Brothers Grimm (16.07%) and the children's novel Brave Adventures of Lapitch by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (5.36%). 39.29% of respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 5)

c) generosity

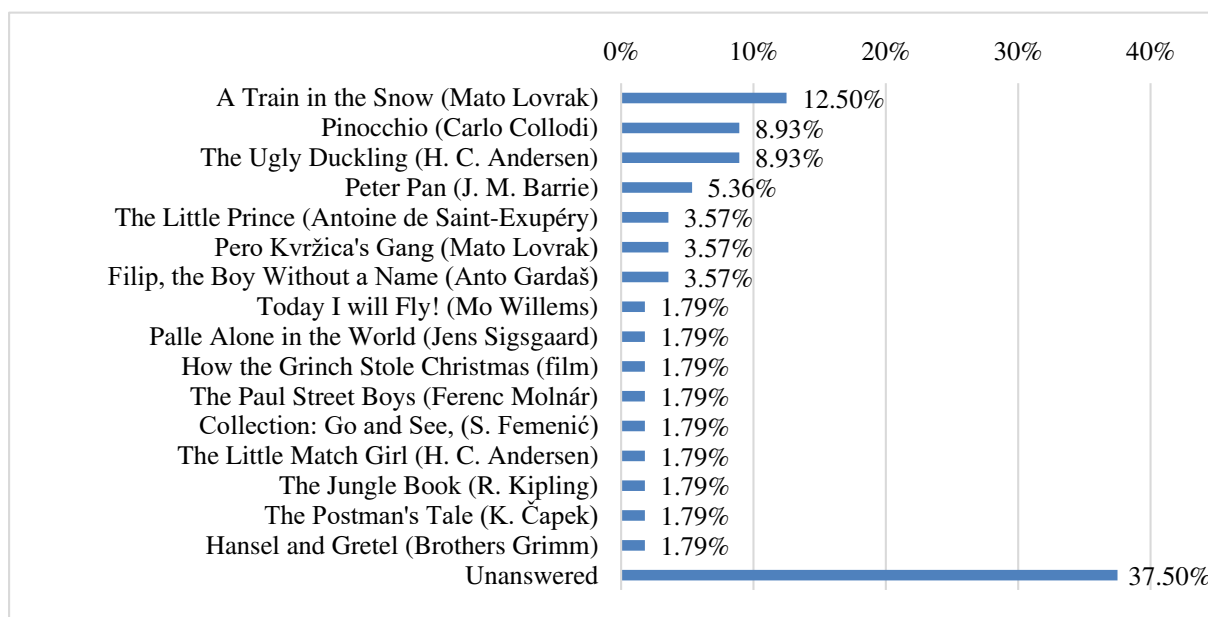
Graph 6: Generosity



The majority of the respondents (23.21%) listed the story Stribor's Forest by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić as their first choice if they wished to mediate the virtue of generosity to children. This is followed by the children's novels A Train in the Snow by Mato Lovrak (21.43%) and Heidi by Johanna Heusser-Spyri (7.14%). 12.50% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 6)

d) humility

Graph 7: Humility

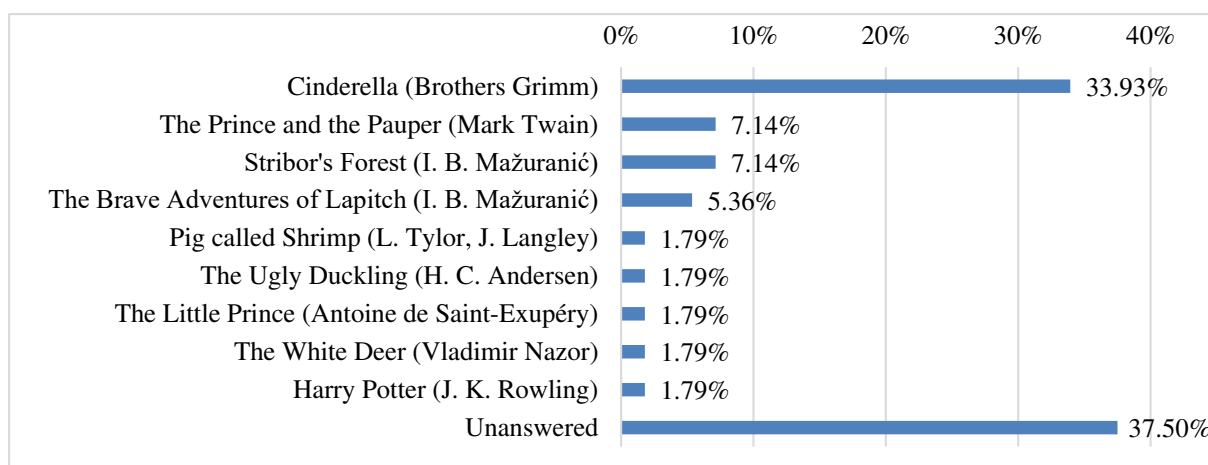


Most respondents (12.50%) listed the book *A Train in the Snow* by Mato Lovrak as their first choice if they wished to mediate the virtue of humility to children. Their second most frequent choices were, in the same percentage, the book *Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi and the story *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen (8.93%), followed by the book *Peter Pan* by J. M. Barrie. 37.50% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 7)

2. What would you read/tell/recommend children to read if you:

- wished to give them hope?

Graph 8: Hope

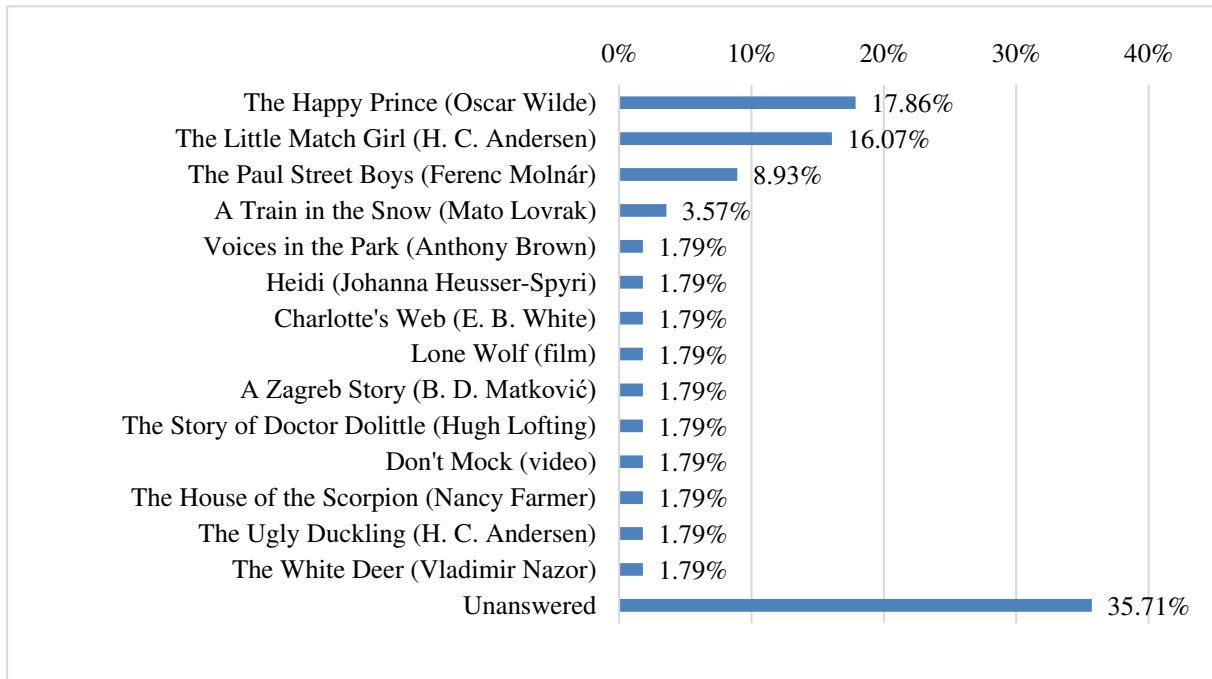


Most respondents (33.93%) listed the fairy tale of *Cinderella* by the Brothers Grimm as their first choice if they wanted to give children hope. Their second most frequent choice was *The Prince and the Pauper* by Mark Twain, and the story *Stribor's Forest* by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (7.14%), followed by

the children's novel Brave Adventures of Lapitch by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (5.36%). 37.50% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 8)

- wished to explain to them the importance of empathy?

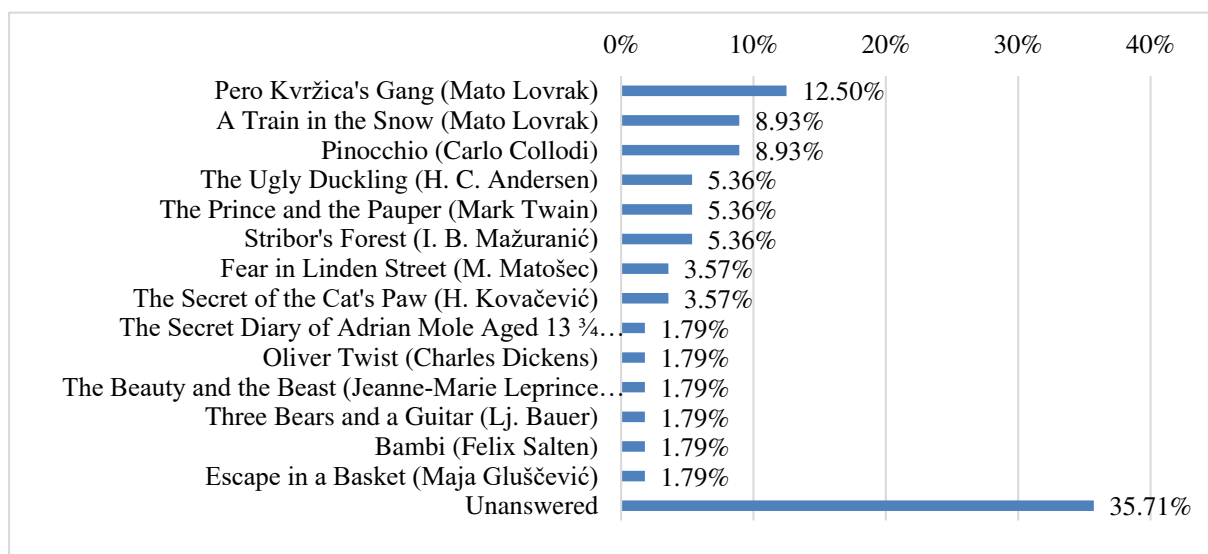
Graph 9: Empathy



Most respondents (17.86%) listed The Happy Prince by Oscar Wilde as their first choice if they wished to explain the importance of empathy to children. Next was the story The Little Match Girl by Hans Christian Andersen (16.07%), followed by the children's novel The Boys of Paul Street by Ferenc Molnár (8.93%). 35.71% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 9)

- wished to tell them how crisis represents a chance for something new?

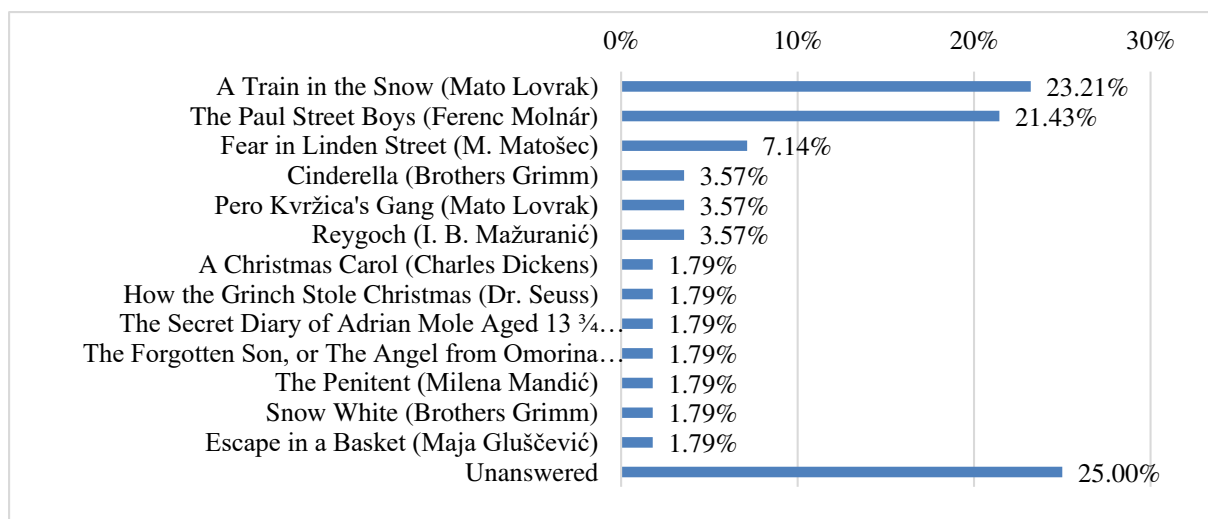
Graph 10: Crisis - chance



Most respondents (12.50%) listed the book *Pero Kvržica's Gang* by Mato Lovrak as their first choice if they wished to explain to children how a crisis can represent a chance for something new. This is followed, in the same percentage, by the works *A Train in the Snow* by Mato Lovrak and *Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi (8.93%), followed by, in the same percentage, *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Andersen, *The Prince and the Pauper* by Mark Twain, and *Stribor's Forest* by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić. 35.71% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 10)

- wished to tell them that hatred and hostility do not bring happiness?

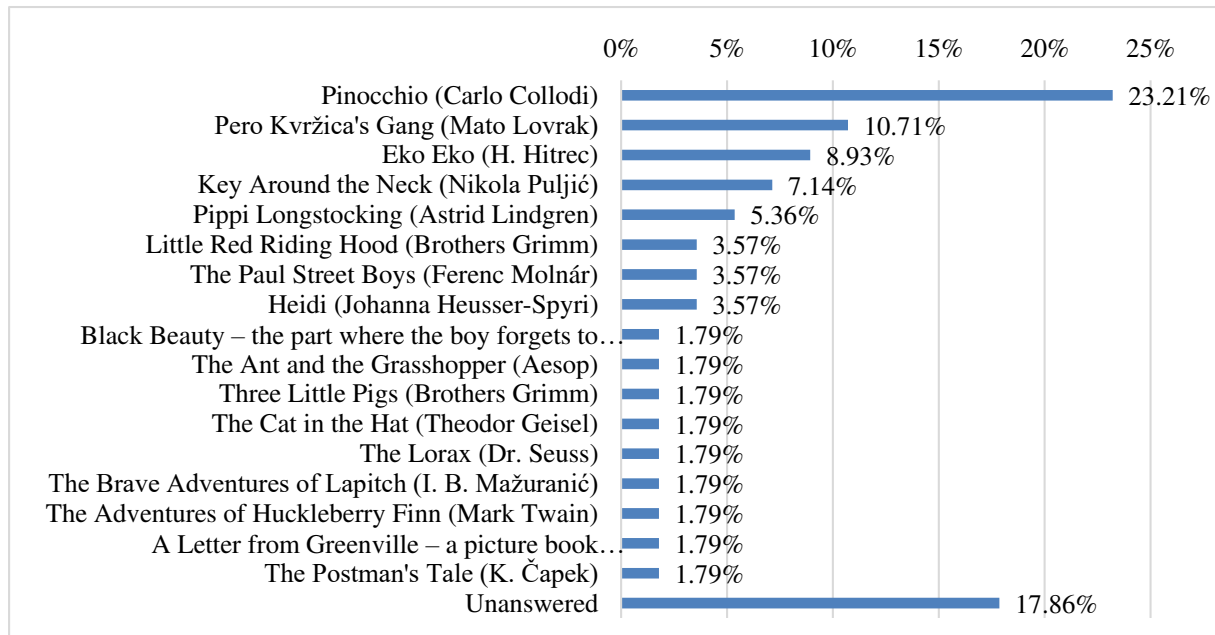
Graph 11: Hatred and hostility



Most respondents (23.21%) listed the children's novel *A Train in the Snow* as their first choice if they wanted to tell children that hatred and hostility do not bring happiness. This is followed by the children's novel *The Boys of Paul Street* by Ferenc Molnár (21.43%) and *Fear in Linden Street* by Milivoj Matošec (7.14%). 25% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 11)

- wished to tell them about the importance of responsibility?

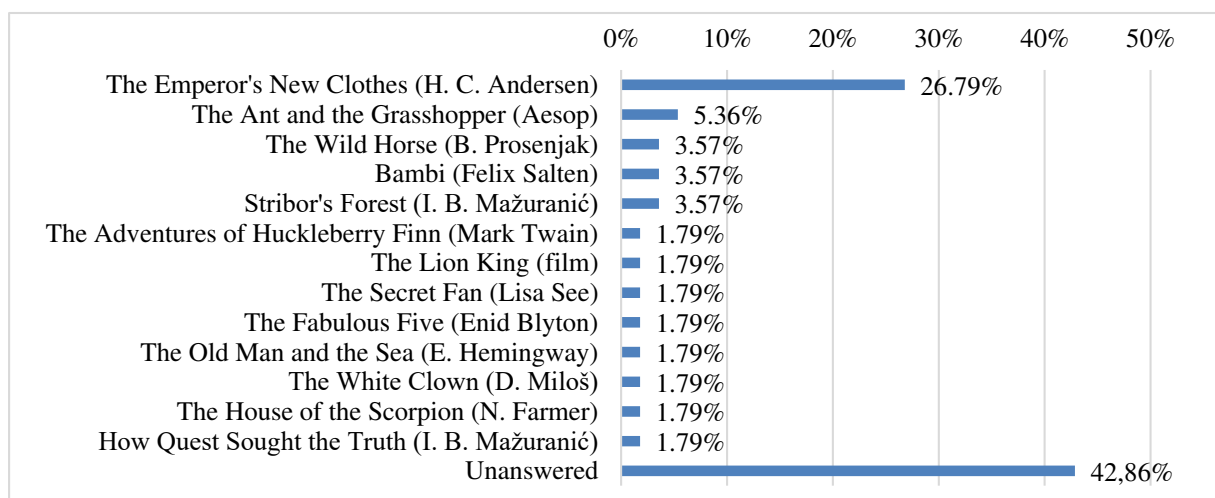
Graph 12: Responsibility



The majority of respondents (23.21%) listed Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi as their first choice if they wanted to explain to children the importance of responsibility. This is followed by Pero Kvržica's Gang by Mato Lovrak (10.71%) and the book Eko Eko by Hrvoje Hitrec (8.93%). 17.86% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 12)

- wished to explain to them the concept of – dignity –?

Graph 13: Dignity

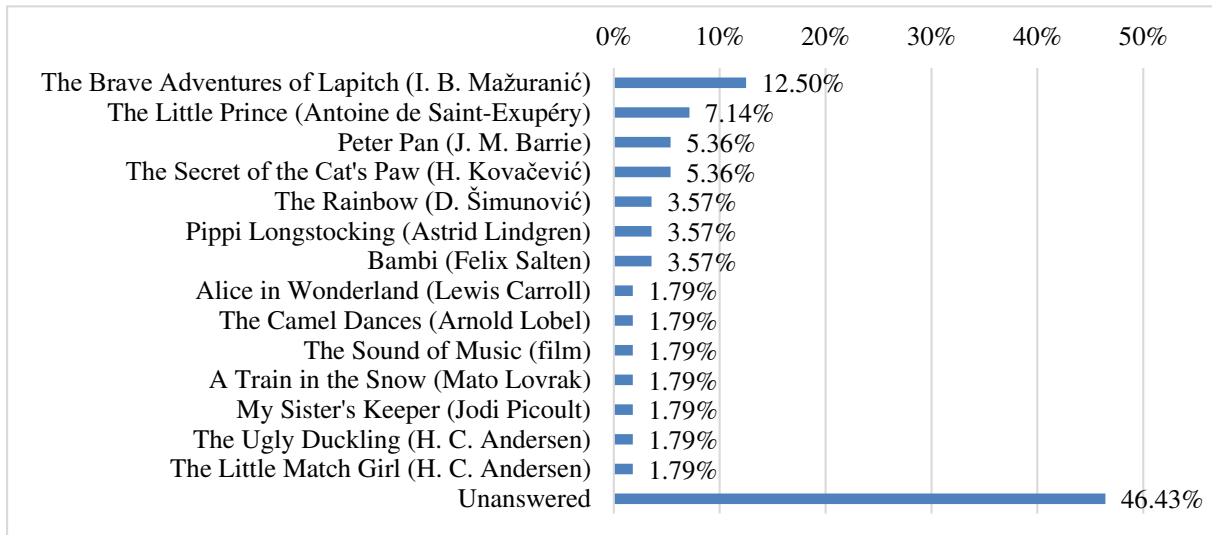


The majority of the respondents (26.79%) listed The Emperor's New Clothes by Hans Christian Andersen as their first choice if they wanted to explain the concept of dignity to children, followed by

the fable The Ant and the Grasshopper by Aesop (5.36%) and, in the same percentage, the following works: The Wild Horse by Božidar Prosenjak, Bambi by Felix Salten, and Stribor's Forest by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (3.57%). 42.86% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 13)

- wished to tell them that, regardless of what happens to us, we decide how we feel?

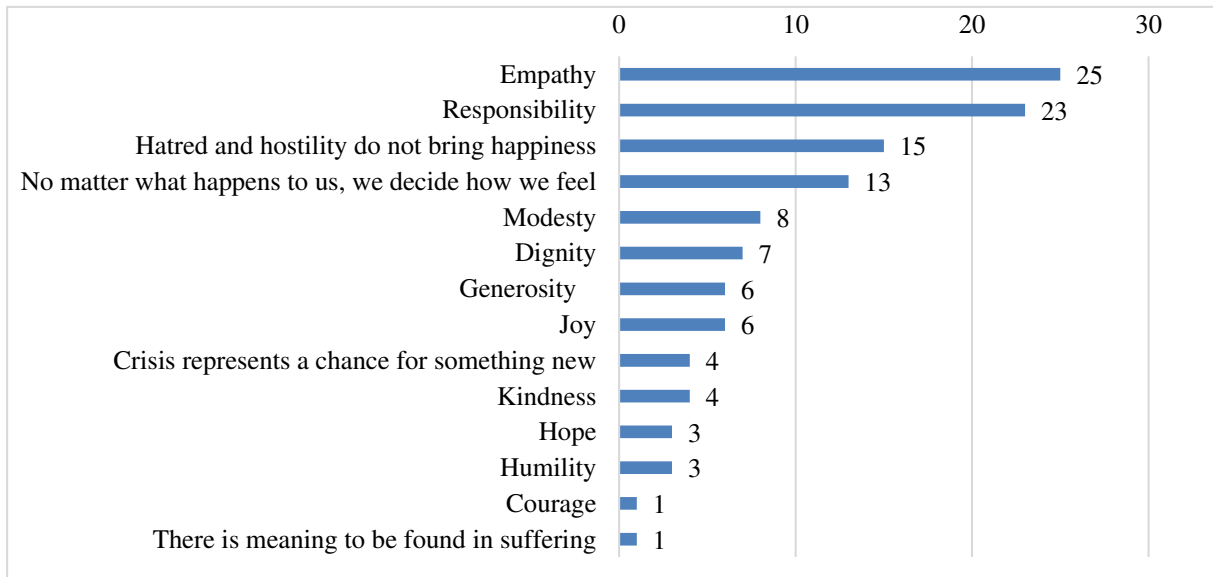
Graph 14: We decide how we feel



The majority of the respondents (12.50%) listed the work Brave Adventures of Lapitch by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić as their first choice if they wished to explain to children that regardless of what happens to us, we decide how we feel. This is followed by The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (7.14%) and, in the same percentage, the following works: Peter Pan by J. M. Barrie and The Secret of the Cat's Paw by Hrvoje Kovačević. 46.43% of the respondents did not answer this question. (Graph 14)

3. What would you single out as the most important of the above? (3 quotes)

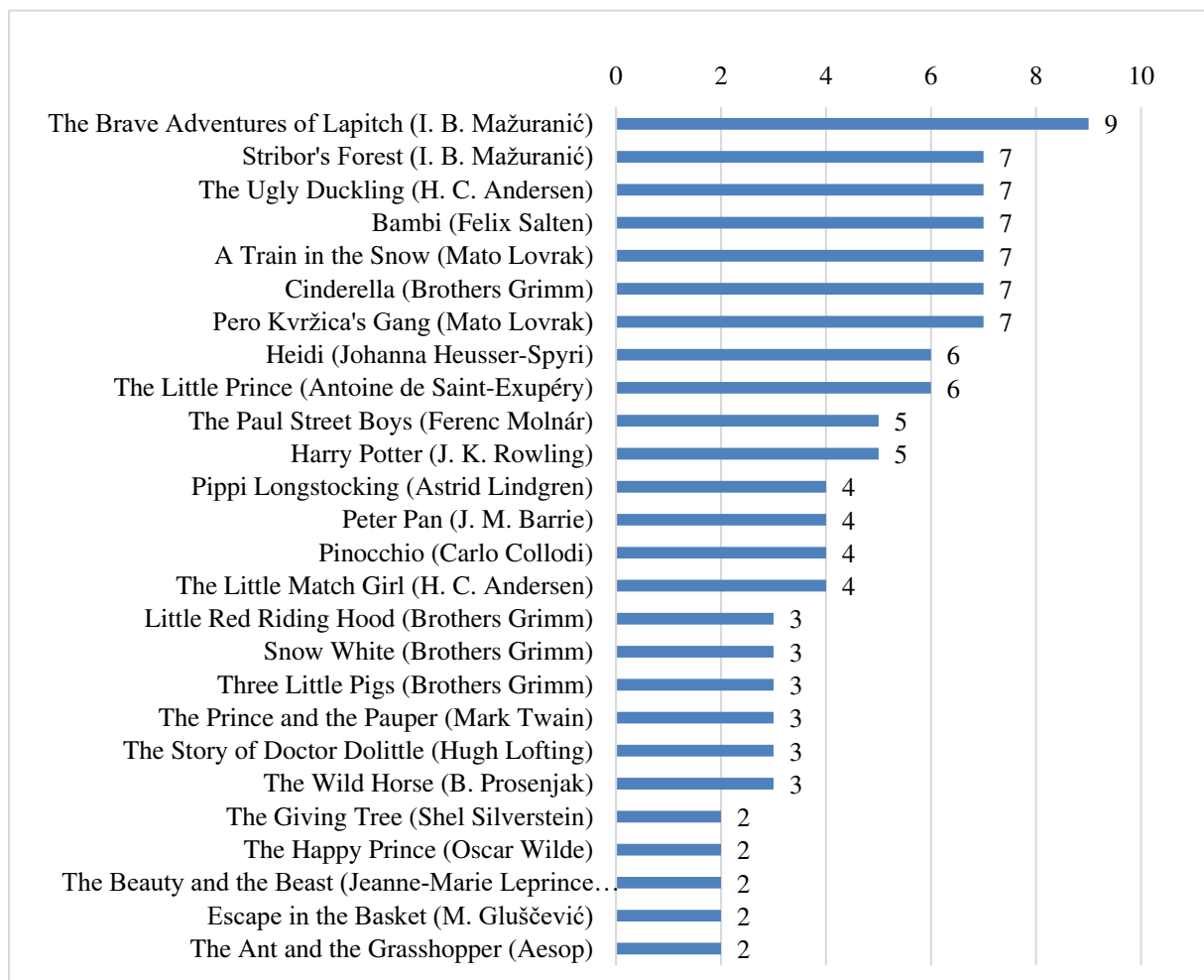
Graph 15: Values and attitudes which should be conveyed to children



As the most important values and attitudes which should be conveyed to children, the respondents singled out empathy (25 respondents) and responsibility (23 respondents), followed by the claims that hatred and hostility do not bring happiness (15 respondents) and that we decide how we feel (13 respondents). The fewest number of respondents chose courage (1 respondent) and the claim that meaning could be found in suffering (1 respondent). One respondent chose, respectively, forgiveness and honesty as important virtues not covered by the questionnaire, which indicates the interest and the reflection of the respondents. Why virtues such as kindness (4 respondents), hope and humility (3 respondents), and courage and the meaning of suffering (1 respondent) received such a small number of votes, remains an open question for future research. (Graph 15)

The survey included 14 entries. The following works were listed along most of them:

Graph 16: Frequency of mentioning individual works



The data on the frequency of mentioning individual works and their suitability for mediation of particular values and virtues indicate the selection of canonical works and writers of children's literature, both domestic and foreign: Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, Hans Christian Andersen, Felix Salten, Mato Lovrak, the Brothers Grimm, Johanna Heusser-Spyri, Ferenc Molnár, J. K. Rowling, Astrid Lindgren, J. M. Barrie, Carlo Collodi, Mark Twain, Hugh Lofting, Božidar Prosenjak, Shel Silverstein, Oscar Wilde, Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, Maja Gluščević, and Aesop. The first two places belong to the Croatian writer Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić and Hans Christian Andersen, whose names were listed along with the highest number of claims. (Graph 16)

In addition to the above, it should be examined which works the respondents identified as the most important for the mediation of the proposed claims:

- Joy is important and it is one of the possible strategies for surviving in critical conditions.

Pippi Longstocking (Astrid Lindgren)

- There is meaning to be found in suffering.

Bambi (Felix Salten)

- Courage (Explain to children that apart from what happens to us in life, the things that we cannot influence, there is also a space of freedom)

Peter Pan (J. M. Barrie)

Values and attitudes:

a) kindness

Brave Adventures of Lapitch (Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić)

b) modesty

Stribor's Forest (Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić)

c) generosity

Stribor's Forest (Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić)

d) humility

Cinderella (Brothers Grimm)

e) hope

A Train in the Snow (Mato Lovrak)

f) empathy

The Happy Prince (Oscar Wilde)

g) crisis represents a chance for something new

Pero Kvržica's Gang (Mato Lovrak)

h) hatred and hostility do not bring happiness?

A Train in the Snow (Mato Lovrak)

i) responsibility

Pinocchio (Carlo Collodi)

j) dignity

The Emperor's New Clothes (Hans Christian Andersen)

k) ... we decide how we feel.

Brave Adventures of Lapitch (Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić)

6. CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy and its theoretical tenets in the field of education can also relate to the reflections of future teachers on the meaning of teaching and learning, as well as adopting a view of the human personality focused on meaning and values in the range, as quoted by V. Frankl, between being and needing. In addition to the research, the aim of the survey was to motivate students, future teachers, to reflect on which values were desirable and how they can mediate them to children. The analysis of the results showed that literary works contain within themselves educational potential as well as the potential for transferring values and attitudes. In their selections, the students primarily focused on the school curriculum. Very few of them decided to mention any works that were not on the list of required reading or in literature textbooks. In any case, this is interesting, because they were not told that the conversation about the works had to be held in the classroom, during Literature lessons. Therefore, they had set their own restrictions. Such a selection of works leads to the conclusion that the students' thinking is rather moulded, i.e., insufficiently engaged. Nevertheless, it seems that it was the very literary works belonging to the lists of required reading that have marked certain collective attitudes and values, which, despite the frequent social turmoils, contributed to the formation of such student views. The Brave Adventures of Lapitch and Stribor's Forest by Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić and A Train in the Snow by Mato Lovrak have, according to the students' opinions, and among the works of Croatian writers, the greatest power in mediating values and meaning, as well as in the formation of attitudes. Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (1874 – 1938) was a Croatian author who is also recognized worldwide as one of the most important writers for children. She has been nominated for

the Nobel prize four times. Croatian Tales of Long Ago is considered to be her life's work, and this collection includes the stories individually mentioned in this study (Stribor's Forest, How Quest Sought the Truth, Little Brother Primrose and Sister Lavender, Fisherman Plunk and His Wife, and Reygoch). Brave Adventures of Lapitch is a Croatian children's novel published in over 130 editions. The works of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić have been translated into more than forty languages. Because of her masterful creations, she was called "the Croatian Andersen" and "the Croatian Tolkien". Mato Lovrak (1899 – 1974) was a Croatian writer, author of numerous short stories and children's novels, which were also made into feature films. He is considered a classic of Croatian children's literature, and the period of his work until the 1950s is celebrated as "the era of Lovrak", in which the novel became the main form of Croatian children's literature. Croatian writers in this study are equally ranked first – together with the great figures of children's literature such as Hans Christian Andersen, Astrid Lindgren, Johanna Heusser-Spyri, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Ferenc Molnár, J. K. Rowling, J. M. Barrie, Carlo Collodi, the Brothers Grimm, Oscar Wilde, Hugh Lofting, et al. Based on the results of this study, we conclude that the expanding of the reader's horizon and becoming familiar with various works that can assist in finding meaning are imposed as an important pedagogical task. After analyzing the student's selections, the need to discuss meaning becomes clear, as well as the need to teach students the basic tenets of logotherapy, so that their future teaching has meaning and brings joy, to both them and the children entrusted to them. In a conversation held with the respondents after the survey, there was a shift in thinking. It was probably related to the fact that we talked about meaning with the students, i.e., that for them, as they said, it was the first time that the question of meaning was included in the methodology of their work. After the analysis of the survey, each question should be thoroughly discussed, and the problems of "great topics of life" should certainly be included in individual learning units: joy and its various forms, strategies of coping with crisis situations, questions on the meaning of suffering, the connection between meaning and health, personal values, questions of conscience, as well as the questions on the inevitable fact of dying and death itself. After the survey in which we consider the current state and determine our starting point, the aim of our further work is directing students toward the spiritual dimension of human existence, so that they are able to respond appropriately to difficult situations and use the tenets of logotherapy in their actual (school) everyday life. In addition, the current state examined by the survey also defines the starting point for our future work, i.e., it determines which ideas, attitudes, and values should be examined further.

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