

INCLUSIVE LITERATURE AS A PART OF FORMATION OF INCLUSIVE CULTURE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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The world's inclusive practice has a remarkable literary experience: a variety of themes, characters, stories for both young readers and adults. Inclusive literature becomes more popular in Ukraine: literature for the little ones, teenagers, adults. “Today in Ukraine, inclusion is promoted at the highest state level, so the appearance of works of fiction where main characters are people with disabilities or special educational needs meets the demands of the time. As we know, inclusive literature has a clear and important purpose: it can help people become more tolerant of individual characteristics both in education and in other areas of life” [1].

N. Golovchenko is sure that inclusive literature can perform educational and educative functions on the formation of an atmosphere of tolerance in Ukrainian society [2]. O. Osmolovska believes that this literature helps to form a positive perception of disability and personal diversity: “the portrayal of characters with disabilities in literature is closely related to the attitude towards disability in this society. Misunderstanding of the nature of disability, its complete rejection in society often led to a certain demonization of literary characters with disabilities. Such heroes were supposed to evoke fear, rejection and, at least, pity and sadness. Often, disability was used to reinforce the character’s negative image. This was especially evident in children’s literature. A pirate or a thief with some injuries was more frightening. Disability has often been a true companion to poverty and social gaps” [3]. O. Derkachova, O. Titun, S. Ushnevych write about inclusive literature as an important component of the modern educational process, as well as the formation of readers' interests. [1; 4].

One of the brightest books for young readers are Oksana Drachkovska's ‘The Non-jumping Bunny and His Brave Mother’ (2019), and ‘The Non-jumping Bunny Travels’ (2021) [5; 6], written after the author became the mother of a child with a disability. In the center of events is a Non-jumping Bunny in a wheelchair. The author raises the problem of friendly space for people with disability: Bunny can’t get to school because he can’t get through the river in wheelchair, he can’t move free in the city, etc. The books have a happy end, but without magical or miraculous healing. “Both Bunny and his Mother overcome all obstacles and create a comfortable space

not only for them but also for others” [1]. This is a fairy tale about the fact that we are all different, that we should not give up, even when it is very difficult or unbearable. It is a tale of indifference, understanding and empathy. The illustrations in the book are designed so that the child understands the environment in which a person with a disability can move freely. The writer, “using the form of a fairy tale, reproduces her own vision and perception of reality, raises current issues of our time. In her literary tale, everything is based on the individual selection of living themes in the interpretation of reality” [1].

The main character of Oksana Lushchevska's book ‘Avia, Bird Dispatcher’ (2015) [7] describes a dove Avia, living near the airport, who always wanted to fly freely, but had weak wings. He can’t fly but he teaches other birds how to fly safely between the planes.

Another book by Oksana Lushchevska, ‘Guardians for Giraffe’ (2018) [8], combines the themes of environmental responsibility and inclusion. The writer tells about the origin of the story in this way: “The text was finally made up when I met a girl wearing an occluder to cure the lazy eye. If she does not wear it, then there is a risk that the girl will have a lazy eye. When I met a baby girl Marusia – a happy smiling baby! - who wears a variety of occluders, it became clear for me that it is my key to the text, which was left unwritten ... It is a pity that children wearing occluders are almost absent in children’s literature, if it were so, it would help understand and accept this problem by peers. I heard the same idea from Marusia’s mother” [8]. This is a story about the ability to listen to a friend and build harmonious relationships in the family.

As we can see, these books introduce young readers the different world, they are about that we are all different, but all of us are important to this world. Some of the authors choose the form of fairy tales and fairy tale characters which young readers know from folk tales, although endowing them with features not typical of traditional fairy tales about animals and their life, some depict children of primary school age, and reading about their peers is always interesting. Such books teach to respect other, to support, they help to understand better the problems and difficulties that people with disabilities have to overcome every day, not only because of the intolerance of the environment, but also often because of the lack of barrier-free space.

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