

# CHAPTER 1

## GENERAL PEDAGOGY AND HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY

### THE IMAGE OF A POSITIVE HERO IN THE UKRAINIAN MAGICAL TALE

**Vita Kyrychenko<sup>1</sup>, Oksana Denisyuk<sup>2</sup>, Natalia Osipenko<sup>3</sup>, Larysa Yovenko<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Ukrainian Literature, Ukrainian Studies and Methodology Department, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, e-mail: [vita-kyrychenko@ukr.net](mailto:vita-kyrychenko@ukr.net), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1420-2303>

<sup>2</sup>Senior teacher of Ukrainian Literature, Ukrainian Studies and Methodology Department, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, e-mail: [denisyuksenia@ukr.net](mailto:denisyuksenia@ukr.net), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1669-0724>

<sup>3</sup>PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Ukrainian Literature, Ukrainian Studies and Methodology Department, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, e-mail: [n.s.osipenko@udpu.edu.ua](mailto:n.s.osipenko@udpu.edu.ua), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7542-7821>

<sup>4</sup>Doctor of Sciences (Pedagogy), Professor, Professor of Ukrainian Literature, Ukrainian Studies and Methodology Department, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, Uman, Ukraine, e-mail: [yovenko310@ukr.net](mailto:yovenko310@ukr.net), ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1035-071X>

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**Abstract.** The article examines the features of the image of a positive hero of a magical fairy tale, its content, context, and educational potential. The purpose of this article is to study of the characteristic features of the image of the positive hero of the Ukrainian fairy tale and the identification of his educational potential. The study of the image of the positive hero in Ukrainian magical fairy tales employs a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating folklore studies, literary criticism, and cultural anthropology. This method allows for an in-depth examination of the narrative structures, thematic elements, and cultural significance of the tales. The primary sources for this study include a comprehensive collection of Ukrainian magical tales, scholarly articles, and historical texts that provide insights into the evolution of these stories and their roles within Ukrainian culture. The types of heroes of magical tales are highlighted, their national and universal virtues are analyzed. Mythologemes and archaisms of the fairy tale "Kotygoroshko" were studied. It was concluded that the images of positive heroes of fairy tales in their own actions, activities, exploits, communication with other characters appear as integral human characters, exponents of the best virtues of the Ukrainian people. Heroes are consistent in their actions, value honor, justice, loyalty to family, people, and Motherland above all else. They wage an implacable struggle against evil in all its forms and always win. These are strong, courageous, honest, reliable knights, devoted to the end of the fight for the truth.

**Keywords:** hero, fairy tale, public duty, folklore, oral folk art, educational potential.

**JEL Classification:** A 20, I 20, Z 13

**Formulas:** 0; fig.: 0; tabl.: 0; bibl.: 7

**Introduction.** It is impossible to form a "servant of the people", to productively organize the process of education of civic duty, honor, to activate human abilities in the field of a new society and quality of life, without knowing the soul of this people. That is why it is now necessary to preserve the living spirituality of folklore, to use it in the educational process as a means that stimulates the desire to become a real person.

Oral folk art is the source that distinguishes an ethnic group from other peoples, and also has a powerful educational potential in the formation of the best human virtues: truth, justice, loyalty, patriotism, humanism, kindness, respect for elders, etc.

The analysis of available folklore sources showed that the fairy tale is a kind of reflection of reality and reflects the ideas of our ancestors about the world system, society, and man. Dominant in the fairy tale is the contrast between chaos and space, where the former was the zero point from which the categories of good and evil, truth and injustice, happiness and unhappiness are demarcated. As N. Sivachuk notes: "The basis of the fairy tale is the antithesis between dream and reality, which always has a utopian solution, since the dream always triumphs and wins. The fairy-tale plot develops as a result of the conflict between the realities of life and their inconsistency with the folk aesthetic ideal" (Sivachuk N., 2003).

**Literature review.** The image of the hero of the fairy tale was considered by V. Voytovych, V. Davidyuk, L. Dunaevska, V. Ishchenko, V. Petrov, O. Talanchuk, V. Khytruk, V. Shevchuk, Yu. Shilov, and others.

The concept of the positive hero in Ukrainian magical tales has been extensively explored, highlighting cultural, psychological, and narrative dimensions. V. Voytovych has been pivotal in defining the archetypal features of heroes in Ukrainian folklore, emphasizing the intrinsic link between the hero's journey and the cultural ethos that shapes these narratives (Voytovych, 2005). Similarly, V. Davidyuk's work contributes by analyzing the moral and ethical underpinnings that guide the hero's decisions and actions within these tales (Davidyuk, 2021).

L. Dunaevska offers a comparative analysis, placing Ukrainian magical heroes in a broader Slavic context, thus providing insights into unique and shared traits across regional folklore (Dunaevska, 1987). V. Ishchenko delves deeper into the narrative structures, exploring how these heroes embody societal values through their quests and challenges (Ishchenko, 2010).

V. Kyzylova focuses on the linguistic aspects, examining how language and narrative style in Ukrainian tales serve to elevate the hero's positive traits (Kyzylova V., 2012). O. Talanchuk shifts the lens towards the audience's reception, investigating how different age groups perceive and interpret the hero's image (Talanchuk, 1993).

**Aims.** The purpose of this article is to study of the characteristic features of the image of the positive hero of the Ukrainian fairy tale and the identification of his educational potential.

**Methodology.** According to this antithesis, characters are also divided as bearers of good and evil, their aesthetic expression is beautiful and ugly, while the winners in a duel necessarily become the first. A detailed study of fairy-tale heroes allows us to conclude that these are not psychologically developed characters, but types that pass through all plots. Fairy-tale characters are carriers of some main quality that defines

the image, therefore they are presented generalized, idealized, hyperbolized, according to folk aesthetics, morality, and spirituality.

The ideological content of the tale is the moral face of the Ukrainian, his life and everyday ideals, his struggle not only with the enemies of the homeland, but also with evil in all its manifestations. Fairy tales are a source of research into national characteristics, the color and details of traditional life. Thanks to a fairy tale, a person can learn about historical events and heroes, people's aspirations for the highest goal, understanding of happiness, etc. This folklore genre is a training ground for revealing the information content of the national idea, every modern aspect of which, perhaps somewhat in a veiled form, is written in the folklore epic of our people.

**Results.** We were interested in fairy tales, which scientists sometimes call heroic and fantastic, because they organically combine mythical, fantastic and heroic beginnings. They vividly reflect not only the national-mental features of the Ukrainian ethnos, but also certain historical and factual contributions that make it possible to reveal the basis of the national ideal in the existing models.

They are called heroic because in the center of the storyline there is an image of a hero-hero, a knight, thanks to whose valor, wisdom and victory the described events take place. Epic time is a consequence of the changes that took place in the communal and tribal formation. Patriarchy put forward a heroic personality in the form of a male individual. Socio-economic factors required the so-called emancipation of an individual from the communal and tribal way of thinking and behaving. In the binary opposition "individual/collective", the first concept was activated to a great extent, which enabled the heroic individual to show a certain independence and initiative in his actions.

Therefore, it is in a magical fairy tale that the image of a real hero emerges, who has supplanted a faceless person, and is the bearer of certain moral and spiritual values of an ancient society and the embodiment of a social ideal, and his happy fate is a means of embodying a national ideal.

Despite all the mixing and layering that the fairy tale has experienced, it serves as a vivid example of everyday folk creativity. This world of figurative generalizations, everyday and mythological, educated many generations on their historical path. People's consciousness divides all heroes only into positive - real and negative - false. A negative hero is punished, and a positive one is rewarded. L. Dunaevska divides fairy-tale characters according to their functions into villains, benefactors, and the underprivileged (Dunaevska L., 1987).

Characteristic types of heroes of fairy tales can be distinguished:

- a hero-seeker who helps someone else in trouble. He is looking for kidnapped princesses or queens, fights with a snake, brings his father rejuvenating apples, etc. Heroes who are looking for a bride are included here;

- a hero-victim who is kicked out of his native home, kidnapped, etc. Heroism in a fairy tale does not depend on the social status of the character, it can be either a prince or an ordinary peasant. Important, in our opinion, is the fact that in the vast majority of texts there is no description of his appearance, because in the folk worldview, priority was given to internal qualities, not external beauty. On a subconscious level, the

listener imagined him as an ideal personality in which everything is beautiful - appearance, inner world, actions. His main features are selflessness (he acts not for his own good, not for his own benefit and not on his own behalf), readiness to come to the aid of a girl, a tribe, a family.

The main character of a magical fairy tale must show kindness, respect for parents and older people, whose last will he always fulfills. The fairy tale popularizes the humanistic qualities of the individual - the ability to understand others, to sympathize with the weak, in need of help, to be a savior who does not know fear and doubt. Along with moral virtues, the hero was sometimes endowed with extraordinary physical abilities necessary to perform a feat - he could climb mountains, drink rivers, uproot oak trees, throw into the sky and catch a huge mace. Тобто, образ героя створюється у різних площинах – моральній, розумовій, фізичній. That is, the image of the hero is created in different planes - moral, mental, physical.

**Discussion.** We consider it important that the archetype of the hero is combined with the anti-hero in the fairy tale. We must emphasize that in some fairy-tale texts, the trickery of the main character is given special importance. The problem of cunning is one of the most difficult problems of fairy-tale poetics. Cunning is a powerful weapon of the weak against the strong. Therefore, cunning in the fairy tale is not only not condemned, but also heroized. From a modern point of view, the hero's morality is not quite perfect, but this motif reflects the morality of an ancient era, when in a difficult struggle with nature and violence, a weak person had a chance to win only thanks to tricks. The deceived in such cases are always much stronger than the hero, they are mythical (giants, snakes-dragons), sometimes even demonic creatures who are defeated by a weak person.

In fairy tales, the hero often has to endure a fight with an opponent. Its most striking form is snake wrestling. The motif of snake wrestling is international, but the Ukrainian fairy tale illustrates it in a very bright and detailed way.

The snake is the most complex and mysterious image of world folklore and world religion and is in a certain relationship with the hero of the tale. By tracing the development of fairy-tale storylines, you can record the function of battle or struggle and victory. Abduction is not the only, but the most common form of solution. Possessing magical means, the hero wins. The right person is stolen, the enchanted is disappointed, the dead comes to life, the captive is freed. It is here that the hero reveals his own heroism, his cunning, cleverness, wisdom, dexterity. The fact that all this is done by magical means in any case does not diminish his heroism. This is a special, specific fairy-tale heroism, which differs from the heroism of epic poetry and has a somewhat different character.

The heroine of many fairy tales is the ideal image of a Ukrainian woman - wise, tolerant, devoted, beautiful both in soul and in appearance. Female characters are an artistic embodiment of the best features of the Ukrainian national character, which is manifested in exceptional kindness, chastity, prudence, diligence, hospitality and benevolence.

In heroic tales, the feats in the name of the freedom of the native land, people, chivalry, courage, strength, courage of a woman-mother, bride are poeticized by the

means of fiction. As O. Talanchuk notes: "And although the folk heroic tale is formed as a reflection of the rite of initiation-initiation of a man into a warrior, a groom, a worthy successor of the traditions of his tribe, although its structure is close to the fairy-tale heroic epic of many European and other peoples of the world, in the process during her life, she absorbed the features of the Ukrainian mentality, began to personify the morals and customs of the Ukrainian people (Talanchuk, O., 1993).

The paraphernalia of warriors, landscapes, rituals, the folk way of speaking are what the Ukrainian storyteller brought to the worldwide fairy-tale heroic tradition. And also - the ideal of a warrior-hero - strong, courageous, kind and, most importantly, honest both in a fight and in everyday life" (Talanchuk, O., 1993).

No matter how fantastic the images of positive heroes may be, in all their deeds, actions, exploits, in communication with other characters, they appear as integral human characters, exponents of the best virtues of the Ukrainian people. They are consistent in their actions, above all else they value honor, justice, loyalty to their native ethnic group, the Motherland. Heroes fight against hostile, evil forces and always win.

This is how our ancestors wanted to see reality, their everyday life, this is how they wanted to see their heroes - strong and courageous, honest and immortal, real knights, devoted to the end of the fight for the truth. All this determined the ideological direction, the characters of the images of the positive heroes of heroic-fantasy tales.

In the center of fairy tales, where the heroic component prevails, the images of heroes Kotygoroshka, Suchenko, Chabanets. Their actions are aimed at a feat, at a duel with the forces of evil (Snakes) in the name of the happiness of other people (father, mother, sister, brothers, countrymen). Among the heroic tales, a significant number have a distinct historical motive, their heroes are celebrated in chronicles (Ilya Muromets, Kyrylo Kozhumiak). In such samples there are descriptions or mentions of attacks by Turks and Tatars, i.e. actual events of the past. Other works are devoid of a specific historical basis, because they present events as possible, timeless, taking place "in the thirty-ninth kingdom", "beyond high mountains, beyond deep seas", etc.

In Ukrainian fairy tales and legends, the image of a child hero, a warrior, etc. is common (the fairy tales "Pokotyhoroshko", "Soldier's Sons of Heroes", "About the Golden Mountain"; legends "Seven-Year-Old Heroes", "Mikhail and the Golden Gate", "Dovbush's Childhood", "Young age of Oleksa" etc.). This sacralization of the infant, the child hero, can be connected with the ancient ancestral archetype of orderly integrity, which acts as a symbol of rebirth. В основі вірувань у надприродні якості дитини – культ дитини, її обожнення. Beliefs in the supernatural qualities of the child are based on the cult of the child, its deification.

Attention is drawn to the mythologems of the fairy tale "Kotygoroshko", which is about a large peasant family. The brothers plow the land, the sister brings them lunch. The Serpent attacks the village and takes all the brothers and sisters captive. Parents are sad. After that, the mother miraculously has a son born from the eaten pea (related to moisture: water, river, tear, saliva), who grows very quickly. It is called Kotygoroshko. He asks to make him an iron mace of 50 poods.

Having received the mace, the hero tries to throw it far beyond the clouds. Mace flies for several days. Kotyhoroshko goes to look for his brothers and sister. On the

way, he goes through a series of tests: he eats an ox, drinks a hundred barrels of wine, jumps over 12 horses, tames a stallion. The snake, married to the hero's sister, meets his brother-in-law and treats him to copper nuts and iron bread. Here is a new test of Kotygoroshka: he destroys an iron log, a herd of horses and an iron bar. After that, the fight between the Cat and the Snake begins, which ends with the fact that with the help of his mace, the Cat kills the Snake, frees his sister and revives the brothers. While returning home, he has a conflict with his brothers and leaves the house "for the world."

V. Ishchenko calls Kotygoroshka a national liberator, capable of protecting his relatives and destroying the enemy: "The image of a charming little Ukrainian son does not cause any controversy. He, as if from heavenly help, started from nature - an ordinary pea, but with his strength, ingenuity and love he defeated the power of the enemy... Saving the past - the image of parents, the present - brothers and sisters, the hero thus gives the future to all of Ukraine" (Ishchenko V., 2010).

The mace of Kotygoroshka is a two-tiered symbol that signifies the extraordinary power of ancient heroes with legendary names. Over time, the mace became a symbol of hetman power, so for Kotygoroshka it is not just a weapon, but a sign of power. All this brings the main character closer to the image of a Cossack. "Kotygoroshko is the Ukrainian national hero that we miss so much, he is a Cossack, but not an individual whose actions are controversial, but a collective image of the liberator of Ukraine. This is an uncompromising "seven-year-old hero" - a type of the people's hope for future generations, the ideal of a people's power that does not age, is forever rejuvenated and renewed" (Ishchenko V., 2010).

What is interesting in this tale is the presence of a significant number of archaisms. There are no social divisions, mounted warriors, or special military equipment. The main character covers distances on foot, fights on foot; his weapon is not a sword, but only an iron club forged from small iron pins. Horses are always associated only with the Snake: they are either herds of the Snake encountered on the way, or horses from his stable. The tale contrasts a foot plowman with the owner of horse herds. Especially interesting is the juxtaposition of copper and iron, which is not found in other fairy tales. The products of archaic gathering - peas, nuts - here are copper, and the products of agriculture - beans, bread - are iron. The fairy tale also emphasizes the various reserves of iron in the Kotygoroshka and Zmiya families: the hero's mace is forged from various trifles, and the Zmiya also has iron chairs, and a huge iron log, which seems to be the personification of iron stored in reserve. Archaic is a large family of 10-12 people and home-made agricultural tools made by the plow brothers themselves. One gets the impression, notes N. Sivachuk, that this tale can be compared with the earliest conflicts between plowmen-proto-Slavs and pastoralists-nomads, which took place during the period when copper was replaced by iron, when the southern neighbors of the Slavs had an indisputable advantage in the production of iron, iron weapons (Sivachuk N., 2003).

Such a long existence of the fairy tale "Kotygoroshko" is due to historical realities, because it preserves the memory of those times when steppe nomads attacked agricultural villages, took the population captive, and only individual heroes-warriors

managed to free the captives. As you know, this situation has been repeated for more than three millennia.

The Cossacks, who were perceived as saviors, were endowed with legendary skills and physical abilities by the popular imagination. Yes, in the fairy tale "Where did the Zaporozhians come from?" the birth of a positive hero is supernatural: the girl ate the ashes because they were very beautiful and became pregnant. In addition, he has other magical abilities (understanding the language of animals, the ability to neutralize enemy creatures: "As he calls out to the viper: - Step, - he says - unbeliever, in your direction, it's time for you to pee Christian blood! The viper fell to the ground and crawled away... » (Ishchenko V., 2010). So, it is about the magical abilities of the Cossacks, one of the aspects of whose magic was the possession of eternal youth and constant renewal.

The hero of a magical fairy tale is constantly helped by supernatural forces and benevolent assistants, while in a domestic fairy tale he is initially humiliated and neglected, shows his own intelligence, perseverance, exerts maximum physical and mental strength and wins in a duel with an offense. A positive hero of a household fairy tale is active, active, resourceful, which becomes the key to his victory. The image of the heroes of the social and domestic fairy tale is characterized by typification, which also determines the way of depicting their enemies and minor characters.

All the characters of fairy tales are static, finally formed - the story does not indicate the factors, does not depict the circumstances under which they crystallized, under the influence of which their character was formed. In the action, no character changes his belonging to a certain category (a benefactor does not become an evildoer and vice versa), the moral and value characteristics of images do not change. Most researchers see a prerequisite for a fairy tale in the fact that good and justice prevail (hence their supporters), and evil is punished. Although a pre-Christian approach can be traced in the interpretation of good and evil: the hero often wins by trickery or deception, acquires the necessary object by stealing it, etc., and at the same time his actions are not condemned. The helper of the main character (animal, bird, baba-yaga) is perceived positively, even if it harms other characters of the fairy tale. So, regardless of later textual layering (with Christian views on good and evil), many fairy tales preserve the pre-Christian principle of benefit and harm (harming others for the benefit of one's own). Therefore, the motive of the victory of good over evil is only a conditionally transformed motive of the victory of "own" over "others". That is, the main character ("his") emerges victorious from the world of "strangers" or "the dead".

**Conclusions.** Thus, despite the significant fantastic element in depicting the images of positive heroes of fairy tales, in all their activities, exploits, communication with other characters, they appear as integral human characters, exponents of the best virtues of the Ukrainian people. Heroes are consistent in their actions, they value honor, justice, and loyalty to their family, ethnic group, and Motherland above all else. They fight against evil in all its forms and always win. This is how our forefathers hoped to see their everyday life, this is how they - strong, courageous, honest, reliable, real knights, devoted to the cause of the struggle for the truth - they wanted to honor their

heroes. All this determined the ideological direction, the characters of the images of the benefactor heroes of fantastic tales.

**Author contributions.** The authors contributed equally.

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