

The reality-fiction opposition in children's literature



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GRIN Verlag Jan 2011, 2011. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 211x146x10 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Bachelor Thesis from the year 2010 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1, University of Graz, language: English, abstract: Since the 1970s, scholarly interest in children's literature has grown, and numerous studies looking into the complexity and thematic and structural depth of the texts have been published. Simultaneously, the notion of metareferentiality has sparked interest among scholars from various disciplines. Metareferentiality, though not unique to the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries, is said to be one of the key cultural phenomena of our time. And yet, these two fields of interest, namely children's literature and metareferentiality, have only very rarely been studied in the same context. Metareferential elements in children's books are often seen as phenomena of dream worlds. Thus, they allow a traditional, non-critical reading in which the metareferential elements do not necessarily trigger medial awareness in the readers but can be explained logically and within the framework of the represented story worlds. Consequently, the epistemological status of reality would not be threatened by these texts. However, as this paper aims to prove, such a reading (for instance) of the Alice-stories, Die Unendliche Geschichte and The Book of Lost Things, although undeniably possible, falls short of the true scope of the texts. As will be shown, all four books address the question of the status of fiction with reference to its opposition to reality, albeit in different ways. In their treatment of the subject, they are clearly metafictional texts with epistemological and ontological concerns that require experienced readers to fully grasp their messages. Nevertheless, they are still publicly perceived as children's literature and are enjoyed by children and adults alike. After...



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