

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN FAIRY TALES

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ABSTRACT

The impact of gender role stereotyping in children's literature has been examined in numerous studies. The purpose of this study was to analyse how fairy tale constructs gender stereotypes through language and to what extent does fairy tales endorse or challenge stereotypical ideas about men and women through lexical choices grammatical structure and foregrounding. Five fairy tales were analysed: *Hansel and Gretel*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Rumpelstilskin*, *Cinderella* and *Rapunzel*. It was found that the lexical choices used to portray male and female do not discriminate between both gender stereotypes. In the grammatical structure, depending on the title of the fairy tale, there were differences seen where the title which was more female oriented, women were portrayed to be passive and non-female oriented active roles. The foregrounding in the fairy tales portrayed women to conform to stereotypical female stereotypes of being oppressed, the foregrounding of evil characters played only by women and that women are only objects of gratification.