

THE AMBIVALENT STATUS OF TEXTS

The Case of Children's Literature*

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PREFACE

Once a text is produced (written, published and distributed) at a certain point of time, it occupies a certain position in the literary polysystem (determined by the different constraints of the literary polysystem and the literary life, see Even-Zohar, 1978a and Shavit, 1978). The text acquires thereby a certain status. This status tends to vary in accordance with the dynamic changes of the literary system. But, at a given point, in a given period, a text normally has a univocal status in the system it has entered. This is the case with most of the literary texts. However, some texts maintain a status which cannot be seen as univocal, but rather as diffuse. This phenomenon of a diffuse status, well known in other semiotic systems such as social systems, implies that a certain sign (in this case, a literary text) enters into more than one opposition of status within the same system. As long as a static notion of literature was prevalent in literary theory, as well as the tendency to classify texts into well-defined, closed categories (a tendency which was a result of the identification of the notion of structure with the notion of homogeneity), literary research has found it difficult to deal with texts which have a diffuse status. Children's literature read primarily by adults is a typical example of a class of texts whose status is not univocal. Scholars find it difficult to deal with and account for texts read by adults which at the same time are considered to be classics in children's literature, i.e., texts which formally belong to one system (the children's) and are primarily read by the reading public of another system (the adult). Moreover, texts, originally labeled as children's literature, which have a dominant position in the canonized system for children, usually have to be rewritten (abridged and simplified) in order to become readable texts for children. In this paper I intend to deal with

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texts which will be described as having an ambivalent status in the literary polysystem.

1. THE NOTION OF AMBIVALENCE

My point of departure will be the dynamic notion of the literary system as developed by the pioneers of semiotics in Russia (Tynjanov, 1971; Jakobson, 1960, 1971) and their followers (Even-Zohar, 1974; Lotman, 1976a, 1976b). Lotman's notion of ambivalence (Lotman, 1977) is of special importance for my discussion, although, I believe, it has to be reformulated in order to become suitable for the analysis of the specific group of texts I intend to deal with.

Lotman points out the opposition between univalent and ambivalent texts, and describes the latter as those texts which give the system "its flexibility and the heightened degree of non-predictability in its behavior. It is for this reason that the internal capacity of the object for creating information (the inexhaustibility of hidden possibilities) is far greater than its description would indicate" (Lotman, 1977).

Lotman's notion of ambivalence encompasses at least three different kinds of texts: (a) texts which have survived many literary periods, have functioned differently in each, and were consequently read differently during each period; (b) texts, which from the historical point of view changed their status in the polysystem, that is, were pushed from periphery to center and vice versa, or from adult to children's literature, etc.; (c) texts which can potentially be realized in two different ways by the same reader, at the same time (cf., Hrushovski, 1974).

Thereby, Lotman's notion of ambivalence not only refers to a vast range of different texts, but, according to his concept, almost *every* text could be described, from the historical point of view, as ambivalent, because nearly almost every text has historically changed its status in the literary polysystem.

Unlike Lotman, I would like to reduce the scope and the range of the notion of ambivalence to include one case only, i.e., the case of texts which synchronically (yet dynamically, not statically) maintain an ambivalent status in the literary polysystem. That is to say: texts which belong at the same time to more than one system, and consequently are read differently by at least two groups of readers.¹

I find this notion especially helpful in dealing with well-known texts of children's literature like *Alice in Wonderland*, *Watership Down*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *The Little Prince* and so forth. In describing this group of texts, I would like both to characterize their features as well as to account for their tendency to continually maintain a diffuse status. My discussion will deal mainly with the following aspects: the writer, the reader, the structure of the text, and will raise the following questions:

(1) What does a writer achieve by producing an ambivalent text?

¹ By "differently" I mean that the readers' expectations, as well as their norms and habits of reading, and consequently their realization of the text, diverge. I do not refer here, however, to ambiguities due to the possibility of a multitude of readings and interpretations.

- (2) What is the structure of an ambivalent text, and how does it function in each system?
- (3) How is the text realized by different groups of readers (in this case children and adults)?

1.1 *The Writer*

An ambivalent text provides the writer for children with a larger range of options in manipulating the text than does a univalent text. The writer has the option of producing a text composed of models which are in disagreement with each of the prevalent systems (the adult and the children's) and could not be exclusively accepted by either.

By addressing the text both to children and adults and pretending that the text was written for children, the writer makes the acceptance of the text by both systems possible. The adults are ready to accept it as a text for children which could be read by them because of its sophistication. Their "stamp of approval," on the other hand, apparently opens the way for the acceptance of the text by the children's system. In such a way, the writer for children is not only able to overcome many of his limitations in writing for children (due to the poor self image of the children's system, see Shavit, 1979), but is also able to ensure the acceptance of the text, which otherwise would have been rejected by both systems.

The existence of two different groups of readers not only makes it possible for the writer to enlarge his reading public and reach readers who otherwise would not have read the text, but it also enables the elite to recognize the dominant status of the text in the canonized system for children. The writer therefore can reinforce his status in the literary system and ensure a higher status for his text. This acquired status enables the writer to produce a much more sophisticated text and bring in new models. In such a way the writer is able to change the existing norms in the children's system, and at the same time to use the text as a key to his success and for gaining recognition.

1.2 *The structure of the text and its function in each system*

My assumption is that since it is ambivalent the text may be accepted more easily by the center of the canonized system of children's literature, despite the text's new models. (The center of any canonized system — the formal center in other semiotic systems — is usually reluctant to admit new models and endeavors to preserve the well-established.)

The ambivalent text then is able to bring into the system new models (which might have existed, as such, only on the periphery of the system) and participates in the mechanism of change in the literary norms. Historically speaking, several texts of this kind become a model for imitation, which thus participates in the opening of a new period in the history of this literature. From the historical point of view, this explains why more ambivalent texts tend to be produced in transitional periods and less in stable periods, because of the diffuse status of the system at transitional periods (cf. Yahalom, 1978). The ambivalent text is

marked by the co-existence of at least two different models — a more established and a less established one — in the same text.

Unlike the case of parody, where one of the models is used to parody the other (Ben-Porat, 1979), the case of the ambivalent text differs in some respects. Despite the inevitable parodization of the more established model, the two models equally enable the dual (equivocal) reading by two different groups of readers: children and adults. What makes this double reading possible is clearly the mutual exclusivity of the models structuring the text. While one of the models is conventional, more established and thus addresses the child-reader, the other, addressing the adult-reader, is less established, more sophisticated, and sometimes based on the deformation of the more established model. The deformation of the latter is accomplished in several ways: parodization of some elements; bringing into the model new elements; changing the motivation for existing elements; changing the functions and hierarchy of elements; changing the segmentation of the text; breaking the rules of time and space, etc. (For a partial analysis of the deformation of models, cf. 2.4 below.)

Of the two, the more established model is clearly aimed toward the child-reader, while the interplay between the two models, the more established and the less established, is realized by adults only. The text functions differently within each system at the same time. While it functions in transforming the norms of the center of the canonized system for children, it is merely “accepted” by adults, as it fulfills the adult system’s requirements. All the same, this acceptance is crucial to the text, as it determines and reinforces the text’s status in children’s literature. Ambivalence makes it possible for the text to break the prevailing norms and at the same time to achieve a prominent status within the center of the system, the norms of which the text violates. The text attains a very high recognition in spite of the fact that it is incompletely realized by children, and that children prefer the adapted and the abridged versions.

The ambivalent status of a text makes the following phenomenon possible: the existence of a text which maintains a high status in one system (the children’s) but still is read primarily by the reading public of the other system (the adult).

1.3. *The Reader*

The ambivalent text is deliberately aimed toward two different groups of readers: children and adults. The opposition between the two groups is not only one of age-group, but also of reading habits and norms of realization of the text. This opposition could be described as an opposition between a norm of more structuring and a norm of less structuring of the text.

As the norm of complexity and sophistication is prevalent for some literary periods in the canonized system for adults, those adults who belong to the elite’s consumers of the latter system are more likely to realize the sophisticated text in full, while children, who are used to reduce and simplified models, are only aware of the well recognized, established models. Thus, the less sophisticated readers totally ignore several levels of the text. (The readiness of an inferior system to accept the well-established models only is characteristic not only of

other systems in the literary polysystem, but also of other semiotic systems, especially of social systems, cf. Even-Zohar, 1978a.)

This opposition between the reader's preference for a more sophisticated version vs. a less sophisticated one manifests itself in the existence of annotated and abridged versions respectively. The annotated version indicates a certain level of sophistication of a text and of its status. It is undoubtedly addressed to adults, while the abridged texts, which tend to be based upon the well-established model only, are addressed to children.

In such a way, the ambivalent text has both a pseudo-addressee and a real one. Therefore, the child appears to be much more an excuse for the text, rather than its genuine addressee.

2. ALICE IN WONDERLAND — A TEST CASE

It is my contention that many of the so-called "classics" for children can be described as ambivalent texts: *Winnie the Pooh*, *The Hobbit*, *Watership Down*, etc.

In this paper I have chosen to deal with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* just because it was Carroll himself who wrote three different versions of the same story. The difference between the three versions (which in principle differ from one another as the adaptations of *Alice* for children, produced by several writers, differ from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*) demonstrate, as I will show later, the characteristics of the ambivalent text. Carroll's three versions primarily differ from one another in the status attributed to them by the writer, as only one of them was meant to be an ambivalent text, while the other two maintain a univalent status. In the best-known version, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Carroll deliberately tried to produce an ambivalent text and manipulated the text accordingly. On the other hand, when writing the succeeding version, *The Nursery Alice*, Carroll tried to extricate the text from its ambivalent status and deliberately transformed it to appeal just to children, making it a univalent text. Thus, by contrasting the univalent and ambivalent versions we can detect and uncover the features of an ambivalent text.

2.1. *The Three Versions of Alice*

Carroll wrote three different versions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The first one, titled *Alice's Adventures Underground* was given to Alice Liddell, the daughter of Dean Liddell of Christ Church, on November 26, 1864, as a Christmas present (Townsend, 1977:96). This version was not published as a book for almost twenty years, and only in March 1885, after Carroll's second version became very successful, was the manuscript published. As the facsimile edition indicates, the first version was primarily published as a historical document, and not as a book for children. The text known to us as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was the second version written by Carroll after his friends encouraged him to publish the first version as a book.² Carroll felt

² The novelist Henry Kingsley found the manuscript in the Liddells' house and urged Mrs. Liddell to

reluctant to publish the first version as it was, and changed a great deal of it, mainly in respect to the level of sophistication of the text. This version became the best known of all and is the most sophisticated. It was published as a book on July 4, 1865 and in quite a short time became a children's classic, making Carroll very famous.³ However, in 1890, Carroll found it necessary to write a third version, geared especially for children: "Aged from Nought to Five" (in Carroll's preface to *Nursery Alice*).

Examination of the different structures of the three versions shows very clearly Carroll's awareness of the different models underlying each of the texts. Carroll felt that the warm welcome given to his first version, especially by his adult friends, permitted him to produce an enlarged and more sophisticated text, containing blurred distinctions between reality and fantasy and unconventional rules of space and time. When Carroll wrote the third version, which he purposely addressed to the child, he based the text solely on the conventional model. The more sophisticated elements are conspicuously absent.

As in the case of comparing an original vs. translated text, the comparison of the different versions which are based on different models enables us to detect and to expose the features of each of the models: the more conventional and the less conventional. Thus, Carroll's three versions demonstrate different options for manipulating existing models and attributing a status to a text, and also enable us to describe the text-processing and account for it. I would like to stress that the case of *Alice* is not "the exception rather than the rule." Rather, this text is unique in that it was the writer himself who produced three different versions, consciously addressing them to different audiences. In each case, the author acted in accordance with the demands of each system. It is worth noting that translators who adapted the text for children acted in principle precisely as Carroll did, without being acquainted with this simplified version, *Nursery Alice*. That is to say, they deleted systematically all the elements which together built the sophisticated model and based their adaptations on the more established model only (cf. Carroll, 1945, 1973).

To take a look at one example, in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Alice's fall into the rabbit hole takes a long time, more than realistically possible according to the laws of gravitation. The sense of this continuous fall is created by the combination of elements from space with the elements of time (cf. Alice's attempt to pick up the marmalade jar). The elements of space function as indicators for the prolonged passing of time. In some adaptations (e.g., Carroll, 1945, 1976) translators deleted (as did Carroll in his simplified *Alice*) all

persuade the author to publish it. But Carroll was not convinced until George MacDonald read it to his children with overwhelming success (Green, 1969b: 55).

³ Within two years the book had sold 13,000 copies, although Carroll (who had to pay for most of the publishing expenses) did not expect to sell more than five or six thousand. Green claims that the "two books had become accepted classics with old and young well before the end of the century and could be quoted without reference or excuse in the sure knowledge that all readers would take the allusions on the instant" (Green, 1969b: 57).

the elements which functioned as indicators of passing time, and had Alice simply fall.

The nature of the abridged versions of *Alice* is typical of most adaptations for children, and in particular, of those of ambivalent texts (see, for instance, the adaptation of *Winnie the Pooh*).

2.2. Historical background

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was written at the beginning of a new period in the history of English literature, and could be accepted by the literary system due to the enthusiasm of the Romantic movement for fantasy and consequently for fairy tales. Carroll was not the first to write a fantasy story, but rather was preceded by several texts, which enabled *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to become a turning point in the history of English children's literature. The acceptance of the model of the fantasy story by children's literature was made possible only after it had been accepted by adult literature, mainly through translations of Perrault, Grimm and Andersen. At the beginning of the 19th century, the prevailing norms of English children's literature continued to be didactic and realistic. The publication of a selection of fairy-tales in 1809 (edited by William Godwin; see Darton, 1958: 219) was rather exceptional. Fairy-tales began to be widespread in English literature only toward the middle of the 19th century. Grimm was translated into English in 1823–1826 (eleven years after the first volume had been published in Germany). Perrault was translated only in the middle of the century (more than fifty years after *Contes du temps passé* was published in France) and Andersen was translated into English in 1846.⁴ However, translations turned out to be just the first in the overflowing stream of fairy-tales and fantasy stories to be published in the following years (among them were Kingsley's *The Heroes*, 1856; Keary's *Heroes of Asgard*, 1857; Dasent's *Tales from the Norse*, 1859; Paget's *The Hope of the Katzekopfs*, 1844; Ruskin's *The King of the Golden River*, 1851; Mrs. Craik's *Alice Learmont*, 1852; and Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, 1855).

Thus, the admittance of the model of the fantasy story, which was rejected by English literature for more than a hundred years, became possible through translations and cultural interferences (cf. Even-Zohar, 1978b). Previously rejected fairy-tales became, toward the middle of the 19th century, almost the prevalent norms of the children's system. When Nathaniel Hawthorne wished to adapt Greek mythology for children, he wrote to his publisher in 1851 that he would "aim at substituting a tone in some degree Gothic or romantic ... instead of the classical coldness which is as repellent as the touch of marble" (quoted in

⁴ The fairy-tale "invasion" into English children's literature can be seen by the fact that no less than three volumes of Andersen were published in the same year (1846): *Wonderful stories for children* by Hans Christian Anderson [sic] translated from the Danish by Mary Howitt (Chapman and Hall); *Danish fairy-legends and tales* (Pickering) – no translator is given, but she was Caroline Peachey; and *A Danish story-book and The nightingale and other tales*, both translated by Charles Boner and illustrated by Count Pocci (Cundall), translated from German versions (Hürlimann, 1967: 51).

Townsend, 1977; 91–92). Nevertheless, before fairy-tales could be accepted by children's literature, they had to be transformed and adjusted in accordance with the demands of the children's system. The attempt to meet these demands explains two dominant features, characteristic of early English fairy-tales and fantasy stories for children:

(1) Fairy-tales for children always had a moral, like any other story for children. The moral had to demonstrate that fairy-tales were for the development of the children's moral character. This is for instance the case with Cruikshank's adaptation of *Cinderella*. When the King proposed to celebrate the wedding of Cinderella and the prince by making the fountains flow with wine, the fairy Godmother objects, arguing that the strong wine is "always accompanied by ill-health, misery and crime," and consequently the king "gave orders that all the wine, beer and spirits in the place should be collected together . . . and made a great bonfire on the night of the wedding" (quoted by Townsend, 1977: 92).

(2) In all fairy-tales a clear distinction was made between reality and fantasy; writers considered it their duty to emphasize the imaginary character of the text. At the end of the 18th century a certain Mary Jane Silner wrote in her forward to *The Adventures of a Pincushion*: "As I would not willingly mislead your judgment I would, previous to your reading this work, inform you that it is to be understood as an imaginary tale" (quoted by Townsend, 1977: 47). Her words continued to echo in English children's literature for more than half a century.

2.3 Carroll's Manipulation of Existing Models

The description of the historical situation in English literature shows very clearly that *Alice* was not considered unique or a "classic" (a text of great importance) just because it was a fantasy story. I believe *Alice* was considered a turning point in English literature for children (see Darton, 1958; Townsend, 1977: 94; Green, 1969a: 7)⁵ thanks to Carroll's manipulation of the existing model of the fantasy story and other prevailing models in English literature of that time, which altogether created a new model (see below 2.4.). In this respect, the *Alice* case is very similar to that of Gogol's "The Nose." Gogol used all the models existing in several systems, literary and non-literary, and manipulated them in several ways in order to produce a new model, based on the deformation of already existing models (see Vinogradov, 1922). Historically speaking, texts considered as a turning point (or "masterpieces") are not the first to admit a new model to the system, but rather gain their status by manipulation of existing models. The ambivalent character of the text liberated Carroll from limitations imposed on children's fantasy and gave him the liberty to produce a sophisticated text. Queen Victoria's enthusiasm for the book only reinforced its status, and the fact that it was sold at a very high price of 7s. 6d. only made it "an immediate and lasting success" (see Townsend, 1977:55). This commercial success became of

⁵ Alice's status as a turning point in the history of children's literature can be discerned in histories of children's literature, which divide history into "Before Alice" and "After Alice" (see for instance Muir, 1969).

course possible only due to the fact the book was bought by adults, as no one would have dreamt of paying so much for a children's book, the price of which was normally much lower.

2.4. Characteristics of "Alice" as an Ambivalent Text

A full and detailed description demands a separate article. Nevertheless, I would like to describe, at least in principle, some of the structural features characteristic to the text as an ambivalent text.

(1) The text is based on three different models, which existed in children's literature of the time. Carroll combined these models and deformed them.⁶ As the title implies, Carroll mixed together two eminent models of children's literature: that of the adventure story and that of the fantasy story, and added to them the model of a nonsense story. (Lear's famous *Book of Nonsense* was first published in 1846.) The first model was prominent in children's literature in the preceding fifty years, while the other two were just gaining recognition. Carroll's manipulation of the existing models could be described in the following manner: Carroll brought into the model of the fantasy story elements of the adventure story and the nonsense story. Thus he changes both the motivation for the existing elements as well as their hierarchy, especially in regard to the rules of space and time and the relations between reality and fantasy. Fantasy is described by Carroll in terms of a real occurrence, and vice versa. Therefore, it is very difficult to distinguish between what happens in reality and what happens as fantasy. For instance, Alice grows back to her normal size when she is still with the cards, i.e., she comes back to reality when she is still in the fantasy world.

"Who cares for *you*?" said Alice. (She had grown to her full size by this time.)
"You're nothing but a pack of cards!" (Carroll, 1968: 130).

In another case, Alice's sister is dreaming the whole story again, as if it were something that really happened (Carroll, 1968: 131–132).

In such a way, the transition from real to unreal can be "explained" only in accordance with the conventions of a nonsense story, i.e., it cannot be logically explained (unless we accept the internal "logic" of the story). The same holds true for the transition of time and space. For instance, Alice is at one moment inside a room, then the room becomes a small pool (the pool of tears) and later it becomes part of the outside world (Carroll, 1968: 19–27).

The relations between fantasy and reality are especially confused at two decisive points: the beginning and the end of the story. In both cases it is impossible to explain definitely either of the episodes as a dream or as a real

⁶ It seems that Carroll was aware of the novelty of the text. Writing later in his diary he said: "I distinctly remember how, in a desperate attempt to strike out some new line in fairy-tales, I had sent my heroine straight down a rabbit-hole" (quoted by Hürlimann, 1967: 66). In a letter to his friend he declared that "I can guarantee that the books have no religious teaching whatever in them — in fact they do not teach anything at all" (quoted by Green, 1969: 51). This was quite a provocative declaration at the time, and surely meant a new concept of children's literature.

event. This confusion of reality and fantasy was clearly aimed toward adults and Carroll systematically eliminated this confusion in the *Nursery Alice*.

On the whole, Carroll did not manipulate the existing models by deleting elements, but rather by changing their functions. In such a way, despite the deformation of the conventional model, Carroll left open the option to read the text either as a simple fantasy story or as a simple adventure story. The reader could, in a sense, realize only the well known, established elements, and thus construct the established model.

(2) Carroll gave up totally the moral level, which was considered mandatory in children's literature, but not any more in adult literature. In this respect Carroll violated almost a sacred norm of children's literature, but as I said, the adults' acceptance of the book made this violation possible. However, in Carroll's time children liked the book exactly because of its lack of moral. Lord Bertrand Russell who was answering a question on whether children are used to reading *Alice* today, replied: "My experience is that they don't, and I think this is because there are so many more children's book now and because, when I was young, it was the only children's book that hadn't got a moral. We all got very tired of the morals in books" (quoted in Gardner, 1969: 151–152).

(3) Carroll parodized some elements of the established models of children's literature, especially the model of children's verses. For instance, when Alice sings "You are Old, Father William" (Carroll, 1968: 70–71) her verse is a parody of a didactic poem "The Old Man's Comforts and How He Gained Them" by Robert Southey (1774–1843). In another case Carroll made a parody of the best known poem of Isaac Watts' (1674–1748) "Against Idleness and Mischief" (from his *Divine Songs for Children*, 1715).

In the annotated *Alice* Gardner argues that "most of the poems in the two *Alice* books are parodies of poems or popular songs that were well known to Carroll's contemporary readers" (Gardner, 1977: 38).

Parody, as Tynjanov argued (Tynjanov, 1921), is typical of change of norms in the literary system, and indicates the approaching end of a literary period. In the parody the writer is remodelling the already existing models and thus produces a new model, or as Erlich formulated it: "This is, the Formalist critics imply, how literary change comes about. The old is presented, as it were, in a new key. The absolute device is not thrown overboard, but repeated in a new, incongruous context, and thus either rendered absurd through the agency of mechanization or made perceptible again" (Erlich, 1969: 258).

In the case of *Alice*, Carroll used parody as one of his tools in a direction which made the text a turning point in the history of English children's literature. Thus, parody not only functions in creating the nonsense level of the story but also participates in Carroll's endeavor to break the prevailing norms. Carroll's manipulation of the existing models resulted in the production of a new model which served as a prototype of children's books to follow. As MacCann said: "*Alice* set a precedent in children's books. The influence of such imaginative and irreverent story-telling opened the way for the development of the fantastic genre in children's literature" (MacCann, 1969: 133).

2.5. *Producing the Univalent Text*

Examination of the three versions of *Alice* shows rather clearly that the features described in 2.4. are characteristic of the ambivalent text only. When Carroll transformed the ambivalent text into a univalent text (in the *Nursery Alice*), he acted in principle as follows:

(1) Carroll made it a simple fantasy story, like any other fantasy story in his day, reminding the child almost in each chapter that this is a dream, and that such a thing could not happen in reality. For instance, when Alice falls, Carroll says: "It was just like a very deep well: only there was no water in it. If anybody really had such a fall as that, it would kill them, most likely; but you know it doesn't hurt a bit to fall in a dream, because, all the time you think you're falling, you are really lying somewhere, safe and sound and fast asleep" (Carroll, 1966: 3).

(2) Carroll has totally changed the tone of the text and thereby made it a conventional didactic story. For instance, Carroll says: "You'll never guess what it was: so I shall have to tell you" etc., etc. (Carroll, 1966: 7). The opposition between the tone of the story in the two versions indicates how well Carroll was aware of his potential readers in each case.

(3) The confusion of reality and fantasy, which is so characteristic of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, is transformed into a clear distinction between them. Moreover, the fantasy is motivated in the *Nursery* version as something that happens in a dream. Carroll finds in this version a logical motivation for all of the events, e.g., when Alice wakes up "she found that the cards were only leaves off the tree, that the wind had blown down upon her face" (Carroll, 1966: 56).

(4) In the *Nursery* version Carroll omitted all the elements of parody and satire. This explains why none of the satirical poems appears in this version. By doing so Carroll simplified the text and adjusted it (in accordance with the prevailing attitudes toward children's literature) for the child reader.

In the foregoing discussion I have tried to formulate the notion of ambivalence and to characterize the structure of the ambivalent text and account for it. I have tried to show how the ambivalent text liberates the writer from his limitations as a children's author, and at the same time ensures his status in the literary world. By producing an ambivalent text the writer uses the child-reader almost as an excuse for creating new models and changing the literary norms. The writer manages to manipulate the models in such a way that he can be accepted by each system on a different basis. From the historical point of view, ambivalent texts, although read very little by children, open new options for children's writers and become a model for imitation for the many children's books to come.

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